



General Assembly

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 9 October 1985, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. DE PINIÉS

(Spain)

- Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations [122] (continued)
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Giheno (Papua New Guinea)
Mr. Kutesa (Uganda)

Address by Father Walter Lini, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu

A statement was made by:

Mr. Bako (Niger)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 122 (continued)

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/40/645/Add.5, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General informing me that, since the issuance of his communication dated 17 September 1985, the Central African Republic has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of that information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GIHENO (Papua New Guinea): My delegation and I would like to congratulate you most sincerely, Sir, on your election to the presidency of this important fortieth anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly. In wishing you success in all your deliberations, I assure you of my delegation's support and confidence in you throughout your term of office.

I wish to extend our congratulations also to your predecessor, Mr. Paul Lusaka, on the matter in which he discharged his responsibilities and guided the deliberations of the thirty-ninth session.

Ten years ago, when my country was admitted as a Member of the United Nations, my Prime Minister, Michael Somare, stated from this rostrum that our fundamental commitment was to the maintenance of peace and security throughout our region and the world. He also stated that Papua New Guinea would undertake to uphold the principles and purposes of the Charter. As our track record indicates, Papua New Guinea has lived up to its commitments. On this fortieth anniversary of the

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

founding of the United Nations, let me reaffirm Papua new Guinea's obligation and commitment to upholding the fundamental principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

In his 1984 annual report to this Assembly, the Secretary-General stated that

"The original intent of the United Nations was to provide a framework in which Governments of different persuasions could, in their wisdom, work out solutions to international problems and, if necessary, together take action to put those solutions into effect rather than engaging in conflict".

(A/39/1, para. 2)

The main purpose was, and continues to be, to unite our commitments and obligations to maintain international peace and security.

Papua New Guinea, which last month celebrated the tenth anniversary of its independence, is a young, flourishing democracy whose Government is structured on the Westminster system. We have had changes of Governments, all through the democratic parliamentary process and in accordance with our Constitution.

The Papua New Guinea Government's basic approach in the conduct of its foreign relations is one of active and selective engagement. Successive Papua New Guinea Governments have tried to strengthen and consolidate relations with countries with which we share important interests. An important aspect of this policy is Papua New Guinea's developing relations with member States of the South Pacific Forum and the Association of South-East Asian Nations, with member nations of the European Economic Community and the Non-Aligned Movement, with the People's Republic of China, Japan, the United States of America and the Republic of Korea.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

Papua New Guinea's relations with the island developing countries of the South Pacific are based on culture, ethnicity and shared interests. Co-operation with these countries is generally conducted through two regional organizations. They are the South Pacific Forum and the South Pacific Conference.

In recent years, leaders of the South Pacific island countries have increasingly become concerned with certain regional issues which have not been given the necessary attention and the publicity they deserve. Pacific leaders realize that one of the best ways of tackling pressing issues of crucial importance to the people and countries of the region is by promoting regional consultation and co-operation.

Our relations with the independent island countries of the South Pacific are among those of primary concern to us. We welcome increased, constructive participation in regional affairs by metropolitan countries with traditional ties to the region, as well as by Japan, China and South Korea. We are critical of Governments which deny the rights and independence of island Governments.

Papua New Guinea, together with other South Pacific Forum countries, has long advocated a nuclear-free zone in our region. For several years now we have protested in the strongest terms possible at the French Government's nuclear-weapon-testing programme on Mururoa Atoll. However, despite those protests, the French Government continues to conduct nuclear tests on Mururoa. Papua New Guinea strongly condemns this arrogant attitude and calls upon France to comply with the wishes of the people of the region.

We welcome Prime Minister Nakasone's pledge that Japan will not dump nuclear wastes in the Pacific.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

Recently, with other members of the region, Papua New Guinea has signed a treaty that would make the South Pacific a nuclear-free zone.

As has been expressed here on numerous occasions by Papua New Guinea representatives, we consider colonialism an anachronism of our time. We therefore find it disturbing that as long as 25 years after the adoption of the historic 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 19 Non-Self-Governing Territories and one Trust Territory continue to languish under this system of the past. Papua New Guinea believes that the people of dependent and Non-Self-Governing Territories must be given the opportunity to exercise their inalienable right to genuine self-determination.

With regard to the special problems of small dependent Territories, they must not be denied self-determination simply because of their size, geographic location, population or limited natural resources, and it is for them, and them alone, freely to express the form they wish to adopt in order to achieve the objectives of resolution 1514 (XV).

If dependent peoples are to be able to make an informed and reasoned decision on their political status, adequate political education must be conducted by the administering Power concerned to enable them fully to understand the options available to them, as well as the likely implications of those options. There must be a greater and more meaningful participation by the indigenous peoples in the affairs of their respective dependent Territories. Appropriate Administering Authorities should promote investment in self-help projects appropriate to the needs and resources of those dependent Territories. In this respect, it is essential that they review the use of transnational corporations in the economic development of these dependent Territories.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

While colonialism is gradually being phased out, certain parts and peoples of the world continue to be saddled with the burden of conflicting territorial claims by metropolitan Powers. Papua New Guinea hopes that the anguish and uncertainty of these peoples can soon be ended. We urge those responsible to resolve the difficulties in a manner that avoids a further impasse.

In this regard, we remind those States disputing each other's territorial claims that they have an obligation to respect the wishes and well-being of the peoples of those dependent Territories.

Like other independent Pacific island countries, Papua New Guinea is particularly concerned about the remaining dependent Territories of the Pacific region.

We are indeed happy to note that after years of painstaking negotiations between the United States and the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, a compact of free association, agreed to between the parties, is pending before the United States Congress for ratification. We urge the United States Government to honour the originally agreed arrangements under the compact that was negotiated and accepted by both parties.

In contrast to the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, a third political entity in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Palau, has yet to conclude an appropriate compact of free association with the administering Power. We trust that this impasse is only temporary and that both parties will soon find a mutually acceptable formula whereby Palauans will be allowed to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination at the earliest possible date.

Papua New Guinea, however, stands firm in its criticism of any attempts by the Administering Authority to circumvent the Palauan Constitution for reasons of

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political expediency. We shall therefore continue to advocate respect by the administering Power for the provision in the Palauan Constitution which outlaws the entry of nuclear weapons into Palau.

Of particular concern to us is New Caledonia, which presents a crucial and highly pressing decolonization issue that still remains unsolved. Since our independence 10 years ago we have felt obliged to support the aspiration to independence of our Pacific island neighbours. Our resolve in this respect is as resolute as it ever was. We will continue to persist in our endeavours to bring pressure to bear on France to grant the indigenous population of New Caledonia the genuine exercise of its inalienable right to self-determination. Until several months ago we had some reason to believe that France had a genuine intention to accord New Caledonians their inalienable right to self-determination.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

It is with the deepest sense of regret that I report here today that the French Government plans to boost its military presence in New Caledonia. It appears quite clear to us that the planned increase in the French military presence in New Caledonia proves beyond reasonable doubt the intention of France to maintain New Caledonia as a colony indefinitely.

Papua New Guinea fails to understand why the French Government should make such plans while calls for the decolonization of New Caledonia and modalities for the exercise of self-determination by the New Caledonians are yet to be resolved.

In the light of the events that followed the Territorial Assembly elections last year, this latest move by the French Government can only be viewed by Papua New Guinea as an act of intimidation of the Kanaks and as an effort to influence the outcome of any act of self-determination.

We are encouraged, however, to learn that, despite an active campaign by the French anti-independence sector in New Caledonia, the Kanaks won three out of four regional elections last month. Nevertheless, the majority of the seats in the Central Congress are still held by those in favour of the French anti-independence settlers. This does not guarantee that New Caledonia will become independent in the near future.

We urge the Administering Authority to make further arrangements, including appropriate electoral reforms, to facilitate the full implementation of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV). In this regard we call upon the United Nations to consider the applicability of the United Nations Charter and the historic 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in line with the recent Forum communiqué.

Papua New Guinea shares a common land border with the Republic of Indonesia, which is an important member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The effective and orderly administration of the Papua New

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Guinea/Indonesian border is governed by the Basic Agreement on Border Arrangements, signed in 1979 between the two countries and revised in 1984. On the part of Papua New Guinea, the success of the border régime established under the Basic Agreement is based on good understanding and actively encouraged through a policy of independent neighbourly co-operation between the two countries.

This is not to say that management of the common land border has not been without any difficulties and problems. We have had differences of views on various aspects of border development and administration. However, our ability to exercise a high level of flexibility and mutual respect in trying to understand and appreciate each other's style of approach to solving border problems has contributed immensely towards minimizing the chances of their escalating into serious border conflicts such as have been experienced by others in similar situations.

Papua New Guinea has developed close and meaningful relations with individual ASEAN member States. Our relations with ASEAN are unique, in that we are the only country that enjoys special observer status with ASEAN. We have actively sought co-operation with ASEAN and I am pleased to state that we have been invited to participate in selected technical and functional areas.

Our relations with member countries of the European Economic Community (EEC), Japan, the People's Republic of China, South Korea and the United States of America have markedly increased over the past few years. We welcome this increase in our relations with those countries and look forward to exploring new areas for co-operation.

As a special observer vis-à-vis the Non-Aligned Movement, Papua New Guinea hopes to maintain an active outlook on matters that affect the interests of the third world. We have supported and will continue to support issues of major concern to less-developed countries that are advanced by the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement. We would like to record our appreciation to the many

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prominent leaders of the third world who have made a commitment to pursuing collective third-world interests.

Once again the General Assembly is meeting at a time when the very fabric of international peace, security, stability and prosperity is being assailed by increased global disharmony and economic inequity. As the Secretary-General observed in his report, the past year has been a time of great-Power tension, of heightened violence in several parts of the world, of continued economic difficulties and of a deterioration of the situation in many developing countries.

It is Papua New Guinea's view that the United Nations must produce a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. During the last two sessions of the General Assembly, Papua New Guinea supported resolutions which formed a basis for the development of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We will continue to lend our support this year. We would also like to see the United Nations mandate a working group of the Conference on Disarmament to allow urgent practical work to be done towards such a treaty.

Respect for the national sovereignty of all States and for international borders is an important principle in international relations and must be upheld. The use of superior economic and military strength to invade small countries for the purpose of securing spheres of influence is a matter of the utmost concern to Papua New Guinea. We have witnessed a resurgence of this deplorable phenomenon in Kampuchea, in Cyprus, in Lebanon, in Afghanistan, in Angola, in Namibia and, more recently, in Botswana. Papua New Guinea strongly condemns the perpetrators of those outrageous acts.

The Papua New Guinea Government condemns the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the subsequent installation of a puppet régime. We reaffirm our support for the principles embodied in the 1981 Declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

The Papua New Guinea Government firmly believes that the withdrawal of all foreign forces is necessary for genuine dialogue.

Papua New Guinea believes that the crisis in the Middle East can never be resolved unless the principal parties to those conflicts recognize that they all have a right to exist. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), to which Papua New Guinea subscribes, offer a framework for the settlement of the conflict.

The question of Namibia has long been a focus of international attention and United Nations efforts. However, no amount of international censure of South Africa's illegal presence and activities in Namibia has elicited the right response from the Pretoria régime. Papua New Guinea has no reason to believe that South Africa has any genuine intention of implementing the United Nations plan for Namibia's independence, as contained in Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which is the only internationally recognized formula for Namibia's independence. Papua New Guinea continues to support that resolution.

In spite of the fact that the United Nations has declared apartheid to be a crime against humanity, South Africa continues to run its affairs on the basis of that obnoxious system. Papua New Guinea strongly deplores the current violence directed against blacks and extends its condolences to the innocent victims.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

Papua New Guinea welcomes the recent direct dialogue between North and South Korea in the hope that it will lead to a reduction of tension in the Korean Peninsula. Papua New Guinea urges Members of the United Nations to help create a better political environment for a peaceful solution of the Korean question by encouraging both sides to continue the dialogue.

Papua New Guinea welcomes the adoption of the Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982. However, we are disappointed that since then certain countries not only have sought to alter various fundamental provisions of the Convention but also continue to find reason not to accede to it. Of particular interest are the provisions relating to the exploitation and management of fisheries. Papua New Guinea and other South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency countries have been negotiating a multilateral fisheries access agreement with the United States.

We are concerned, however, that the United States has been reluctant to recognize the rights of coastal States over highly migratory species within their 200-mile economic zone. Furthermore, past experience has shown that coastal States face a very real threat of economic sanctions by the United States for exercising their rights over their 200 mile economic zone. Papua New Guinea appreciates that there have been some changes in the United States attitude, and therefore, looks forward to an early, and favourable, conclusion of the above-mentioned agreement.

Papua New Guinea recognizes that the recovery that has been under way in parts of the world economy has spread unevenly, and has by-passed entirely a large part of the developing world. In many developing countries growth and development have been severely hampered, and in some countries have halted altogether. Papua New Guinea is concerned at the very real risk of many more developing countries facing an unmanageable crisis of debt and development should the economies of the industrial States fail to achieve a lasting recovery.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

In this respect, Papua New Guinea welcomes the view expressed by the leaders of industrial countries represented at the Bonn summit in June that the prosperity of developed and developing countries has become increasingly linked and therefore we should all work together in a spirit of true partnership. Like other developing States, Papua New Guinea's economic prospects are largely determined by external economic factors which are beyond our control. Consequently the notion of true partnership in international economic co-operation has a very real meaning for our economic survival and the provision of basic human needs.

In this, the 40th anniversary of the United Nations, Papua New Guinea would like to urge all Member nations to give a real and practical meaning to that partnership. We need prompt and practical action now if we are serious about dealing effectively with the important challenges that confront us today. Some of the proposals for action include increasing the resources of and lending by multilateral institutions, strengthening commodity export earnings, moving decisively to meeting the Official Development Assistance (ODA) targets and ensuring greater and more secure access to markets in developed countries.

The Papua New Guinea Government welcomes the commitment made by participants in the London economic summit last year and the Bonn summit this year to urge resistance to and reduction of protection. But, as I have already suggested, what we seek is prompt and practical action. In addition, the Government of Papua New Guinea has acceded to the Common Fund set up under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). My Government does not see why there is continuing delay in bringing the Fund into operation.

(Mr. Giheno, Papua New Guinea)

Papua New Guinea appeals to all Member States of the United Nations to show a greater degree of responsibility, commitment and dedication to the world community. As for Papua New Guinea, recent negative trends and developments have in fact increased the importance which we attach to the United Nations, and strengthened our commitment and dedication to its principles and objectives.

The United Nations Charter commits us to preserving peace and fostering social and economic development. All we Member nations have undertaken to resolve our disputes peacefully and to respect the independence and territorial integrity of all sovereign States. This Organization provides the only universal framework within which we can keep those promises and pursue those vital ideals and goals collectively.

What better year to recommit ourselves to the United Nations than this year - the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. It is not going to be easy, but it can be done, and do it we must. We cannot hope for an equitable and peaceful world if we become complacent about the status quo. We must therefore put behind us our animosities and mistrust towards each other, and unite once more, as the founders did in San Francisco, with the common goal of preserving the United Nations as an instrument for peace and equity. Papua New Guinea believes that we are up to that task, for we are not only forty years older but, hopefully, forty years wiser.

Mr. KUTESA (Uganda): I wish to extend to you, Sir, my delegation's sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of this historic session of the United Nations General Assembly. My delegation shares fully the warm sentiments expressed so eloquently by previous speakers on your personal qualities which make you eminently qualified for the task entrusted to you. I have no doubt whatsoever that under your able leadership the deliberations of this commemorative

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

session, marking the 40th anniversary of the United Nations, will be very fruitful. In this connection, I wish to pledge the full support and co-operation of my delegation to you in the discharge of your enormous task.

I wish to take this opportunity to register my profound appreciation for the wise and able leadership demonstrated by your predecessor, Ambassador Paul Lusaka, throughout the 39th session of the General Assembly.

Permit me also to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, for his untiring efforts in the search for solutions to the numerous world problems. I wish to commend, in particular, his efforts in mobilizing relief assistance for famine stricken areas of Africa and his attempts to find solutions to the problems of southern Africa.

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

The world has witnessed in the past year a dangerously deteriorating situation in southern Africa caused by South Africa's increasingly aggressive posture towards its neighbours and a heightened degree of oppression and intimidation directed against the black majority in that country.

The unprovoked murderous attack on Gaborone, leaving more than a dozen dead and a considerable amount of property destroyed, the unprovoked invasion of Angola, the continued support of rebel forces in Mozambique in spite of the Nkomati accord, the failed mission to blow up the Malongo oil complex in the Cabinda Province of Angola, and the recent air raid in support of UNITA, are viewed by my Government as a deliberate policy on the part of South Africa to destabilize its neighbours in a desperate attempt to delay the forces of change for as long as possible.

In South Africa itself, the volcano of discontent, which has been rumbling for a long time, is finally erupting. No amount of repressive measures can stem the tide of the march to equality and freedom in South Africa.

The imposition of a state of emergency, the imprisonment, detention and banning of black leaders, the indiscriminate murder of blacks in funeral processions, and the arrest of eight-year-old school children protesting inferior education, may delay but will certainly not stop the move to dismantle apartheid.

The time for cosmetic reforms short of the complete dismantling of apartheid has long past. We urge the Pretoria régime, in the interest of all racial groups in that country, to abandon repressive measures and to initiate meaningful dialogue with all genuine leaders of the black community. As a first step in this direction, the South African authorities should free all political leaders, including Nelson Mandela and the Rev. Allan Boesak, unconditionally.

On the eve of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Decolonization, we are faced with a stalemate on the question of Namibia's

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

independence. The Pretoria régime continues to frustrate all efforts to bring about an end to its illegal occupation of Namibia. The setting up of the so-called "interim administration" in Namibia by South Africa is yet another plot designed to perpetuate the status quo.

The international community is duty bound to address itself seriously to this stubborn defiance by the apartheid régime. In this connection, my Government fully supports the demand made by the Security Council, earlier this year, for the immediate and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) as the only acceptable basis for a peaceful settlement of the Namibian problem. I wish also to reiterate Uganda's total rejection of all attempts to make Namibia's independence contingent upon factors that are extraneous and irrelevant.

Until South Africa takes the necessary steps for the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), Uganda will continue to support the call for the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa in accordance with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. In this connection, it is gratifying to note that several countries have taken heed of the Security Council's call to those Member States which had not done so already to take certain voluntary economic measures against South Africa.

Uganda has noted with particular satisfaction the limited economic measures announced by several Member States against South Africa in recent months. We would like to encourage them to move even further towards mandatory sanctions as the quickest and less painful means of bringing about change in South Africa. We would also like to appeal to those Member States which wield considerable economic clout in South Africa and which have yet to introduce voluntary economic measures against South Africa, to review positively their stand on the question of economic sanctions.

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

We realize that because of their considerable investments in the South African economy the sacrifice of these countries resulting from the imposition of mandatory sanctions would be greater than that of other Member nations. However, the danger posed to these same interests by the violent revolution that is unfolding in South Africa has to be taken into account. It is perhaps the perception of this fact that has led to contacts between the African National Congress (ANC) and leading South African businessmen.

The view that economic sanctions do not work is not shared by my delegation. It is clear that the limited measures taken or threatened to be taken by some countries which hitherto have been strong supporters of South Africa, have already had a greater impact on the apartheid régime than the policy of "constructive engagement", which has strengthened, rather than weakened, apartheid.

The majority of blacks in South Africa support the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions, even though they realize that they would probably be the worst affected. They know that this sacrifice is no greater than the supreme sacrifice paid by hundreds of their brothers and sisters gunned down in the streets or murdered in detention. The front-line States have also indicated their strong support for mandatory sanctions despite the fact that they too are likely to be adversely affected.

My delegation has noted with deep concern the escalation of the arms race, particularly since the advent of the "Star Wars" concept. We are opposed to the militarization of outer space. It is regrettable to note that despite the convening of two special emergency sessions of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the manufacture and stockpiling of new and more sophisticated nuclear weapons continues at an alarming pace.

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

I wish to reiterate my delegation's conviction that international peace and security can be maintained only through general and complete disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament, under effective international control. In this connection, Uganda supports fully the initiative taken by the six Heads of State or Government who called upon all nuclear-weapon States to freeze the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons as a first step to be followed by an armaments reduction programme leading to general and complete disarmament in their Joint Declaration of 22 May 1984.

It is a sad reflection on our values that we should be prepared to spend billions of dollars annually on the refinement of our destructive capabilities instead of directing these resources to the solution of the world's economic, social and humanitarian problems.

The situation in the Middle East remains troubled because of the lack of any progress towards a just and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine. It was with great distress and indignation that my delegation learned of the bombing raid staged on 1 October by Israel against the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) headquarters in Tunisia. We are all aware of the fact that the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem and the root cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was held in Geneva in 1983, recommended the convening of an international peace conference with the participation of all concerned parties, including the PLO and the two super-Powers. My delegation supports this move because it believes strongly that a negotiated peace that recognizes the inalienable right of the Palestinians to self-determination in an independent State of Palestine, as well as respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of all States in the region, offers the best hope for all concerned in that part of the world. We urge all concerned to work tirelessly for the convening of the peace conference.

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

With regard to the Iran-Iraq conflict, Uganda, as a fellow member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement, urges both parties to end this terrible conflict, which has cost both countries so dear in terms of both lives lost and property destroyed. It is time for both countries to respond positively to the many appeals and many mediation efforts that have been directed to them.

Uganda continues to follow developments in Cyprus, a fellow Commonwealth member, with keen interest. We will continue to support and encourage the Government and people of Cyprus in their search for a lasting solution on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. In this connection we commend the efforts of the Secretary-General in mediating between the two communities.

With regard to the situations in Afghanistan and Kampuchea, we urge all the parties concerned to seek comprehensive political solutions, which should provide for the withdrawal of foreign forces and ensure respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of both countries. We will continue to render our support to all efforts intended to achieve this goal.

Uganda calls for effective measures to end all forms of foreign interference in Central America. We fully support the Contadora Group in its efforts to find a peaceful solution for the region, as contained in the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, of 7 September 1984. The Act represents an important step towards lasting peace and the promotion of economic and social development in the region. We appeal to the five Governments, of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, to do all in their power to conclude negotiations with the Contadora Group with a view to signing the Act as early as possible.

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

Permit me now to brief this Assembly on the present situation in Uganda. Today Uganda celebrates the twenty-third anniversary of its independence. Regrettably, for more than half of its independent existence Uganda has known nothing but civil conflict, with its attendant consequences of lawlessness, political instability, economic decline and moral decay.

Uganda, once described by one of the greatest of statesmen, Sir Winston Churchill, as the pearl of Africa, started out on its independence road with great promise and high hopes. During the first few years of its independence Uganda experienced rapid development in all fields, particularly in the social sector. Unfortunately that rapid development and progress suffered greatly owing to political instability, which culminated in the military coup staged by Idi Amin. The 1971 military coup brought development and any progress to a complete halt.

The world does not need reminding how brutal and chaotic Amin's dictatorship was. Suffice it to say that the consequences for Uganda were ruinous. The fall of Amin in 1979 presented the people of Uganda with a golden opportunity to make a fresh start along the road to reconciliation, peace, unity and development. Regrettably, this opportunity was allowed to slip through our hands. Amin's fall was followed by three short-lived administrations in the space of less than two years.

Following the general elections of December 1980, the validity of whose results were greatly disputed, the new Obote administration was faced with another civil conflict. Some Ugandans who disputed the fairness and validity of the election results decided to go to the bush to conduct a guerrilla war against Obote's Government. This war has been extremely costly to Uganda in terms of lives lost, property destroyed and development opportunities lost.

(Mr. Rutesa, Uganda)

On numerous occasions Dr. Milton Obote was urged by prominent personalities both at home and abroad to enter into dialogue with the various groups fighting his administration in order to save Uganda from further bloodshed and suffering. He stubbornly refused to heed this advice. This stubborn refusal ran counter to his stated policy of reconciliation and no revenge as the basis for reunifying Uganda and its people.

This, then, was the backdrop to the military coup d'etat which took place in Uganda on 27 July 1985. Explaining the reasons for the action taken by the army, General Tito Okello Lutwa, Chairman of the ruling Military Council and Head of State, said:

"For many years now our country has suffered continuously from a process of political and moral decay and the abuse of power by the authorities of the day. Corruption has been widespread. The human rights guaranteed by the Constitution have frequently been violated. Tribalism, conflicts and indiscipline have been widespread in all sectors of national life. These ills were killing the country slowly. The action taken by the men of the UNLA on Saturday, 27 July 1985, was therefore aimed at stopping this dangerous trend and restoring peace and order in Uganda."

He went on to emphasize that

"The fighting which has been going on in some parts of the country for the last five years has caused too much suffering to the people of Uganda. It has been a haemorrhage draining the life and energy of the nation. The stopping of all fighting and the establishment of peace in the country therefore constitutes a high priority for the Military Council."

From the foregoing it is quite clear that the new Government's domestic and foreign policies will be dominated by a genuine desire on the part of the Government for lasting peace and tranquillity in Uganda in particular and in our

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

region as a whole. It is for this reason that, right from the outset, the Government has set as its top-priority task the ending of all fighting in the country. To this end the Military Council has vigorously pursued negotiations with all the groups which were fighting Obote's Government.

I wish to report that the negotiations have been successfully concluded with all fighting groups with the exception of the National Resistance Army, led by Yoweri Museveni. These groups are now participating fully in the governing of the country through their membership of the Military Council.

However, negotiations with the National Resistance Army are progressing well under the wise and able chairmanship of His Excellency President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, who has graciously set aside his important State duties in order to assist us in our search for peace.

There is need for a genuine and comprehensive process of political reconciliation in our country. Our recent history teaches us that no single group, whether political, religious or tribal, can succeed alone in bringing peace and tranquillity to Uganda. It is for this reason that the Military Council has decided to involve all political groups in the formation of a new Government of national unity. We believe that all groups should participate fully in the affairs of the country.

The Chairman of the Military Council has urged all political groups to use this opportunity positively for the benefit of the entire country. He has warned them not to resort to their old methods of scheming for power and manipulating the people of Uganda.

It is the policy of the Government to ensure that there is no revenge against and no victimization of anybody. Members of the previous Government are free; relatives and friends of those who were in power are free; those who wanted to join

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

their family members who have left the country have been allowed to do so, and they will not be harassed or victimized in any way. Only persons with criminal charges against them are in detention.

As a result of the conflicts which have been going on within the country for the last several years, there are many refugees outside the country as well as displaced people within the country. It is the policy of the Government to move as rapidly as possible to resettle the refugees and displaced persons. Already many refugees are pouring into Uganda through the districts of Arua from the neighbouring countries of Zaire and Sudan. The Government will spare no efforts to assist these people to resettle in the country. Similarly the Government will work very hard to ensure that the people who were displaced within the country as a result of the fighting, especially those in the Luwero triangle, will be given all assistance in resettling on their land and in their homes.

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

The people of Uganda are tired of living in conditions of fear and insecurity. The establishment of security, law and order throughout the country is a top priority for the Government. We are committed to bringing to book criminal elements that kill innocent citizens, destroy properties and loot houses and business premises. We shall work to make the police a more effective and efficient force. We need the co-operation and goodwill of all citizens and all peace-loving countries to make possible the re-establishment of law and order throughout the country.

We are aware of the serious economic hardships being experienced by Ugandans throughout the country. We realize these are difficult problems to solve. Their solutions require correct policies as well as discipline in all sectors of national life. The Government is undertaking an urgent review of the state of the economy in order to put in place policies that will ensure economic recovery.

Allow me to outline briefly the Uganda Government's proposals for the peace talks now taking place in Nairobi. The Government has proposed, first, a call for an immediate and effective cease-fire to be observed by all parties. Secondly, all parties are to stop recruitment, mobilization and deployment of forces immediately on reaching agreement; all acquisition of arms should also end. Thirdly, the Military Council has offered six seats on the Council to the National Resistance Army. Fourthly, the Military Council has called for complete disarmament in Uganda as a prerequisite for genuine and lasting peace in Uganda. This would involve disarming all the forces in the country, including the Government forces, under the supervision of a peace-keeping force drawn from friendly countries. Fifthly, the Military Council has called for the creation of a new broadly based and

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representative national army. Sixthly, it has proposed the convening of a national conference to discuss key national issues, which include a viable constitution for the country; and a programme for free and fair elections to be held soon after. The national conference will represent a wide cross-section of all organizations in Uganda.

I wish to take this opportunity to clarify one important point which may have caused alarm and disquiet in some quarters. This is with regard to the reports that "Amin's soldiers" have returned to Uganda. The Chairman and Head of State has been very clear on this subject. He has called on all Ugandans living in exile to return home in a spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness so that we can all participate effectively in the reconstruction of our nation. Following the liberation war in 1979 many people in the West Nile region of Uganda, including some soldiers who served under Amin, fled into exile. They later regrouped and started a guerrilla war against Obote's Government. Some of these groups have returned, and they constitute some of the fighting groups with which the Military Council has concluded peace agreements. These people who have been allowed to return are Ugandans mostly from the West Nile region of Uganda. The Government has also made it abundantly clear that any Ugandan, irrespective of which fighting group he belongs to, who is known to have committed acts of atrocity or broken the law in any way will face the due process of the law.

The past year has been a very difficult one for Africa. Many countries on the continent have suffered from natural disasters of frightening proportions. Prolonged drought together with accelerated desertification in several countries, particularly in Ethiopia and Sudan, has led to considerable loss of life and displacement of populations. This serious situation has been compounded by the continued deterioration of the economies of African States. These economies are

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being suffocated by the crippling burden of debt servicing, the dwindling incomes from primary commodity exports, the high interest rates and declining development assistance.

We believe that the task of revitalizing our economies lies squarely with ourselves. It is in recognition of this fact that the African Heads of State or Government meeting in Addis Ababa in July resolved to address themselves boldly to the root causes of our economic malaise. They adopted a package of measures intended to achieve self-reliant and self-sustained development at the national and continental levels. We are well aware that these noble goals may be beyond our reach, given the present state of depression, without substantial external assistance.

We are convinced that Africa's economic problems differ from those of other regions only in the degree of their severity. Their solution, therefore, cannot be tackled in isolation. It is to my delegation a source of great disappointment to note that the initiatives taken by the developing countries to redress the structural imbalance and inequalities of the present global economic system have been resisted by a few developed countries. We appeal to these countries to refrain from adopting retrogressive policies which run counter to the goals and objectives of the international development strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade and which frustrate the establishment of the new international economic order.

We in Uganda are most appreciative of the response of the international community to the drought and famine crisis in Africa. We hope, however, that it will be possible for the donor countries to move a stage further from the supply of food aid to the provision of long-term assistance geared to the general improvement of food production within the African continent.

(Mr. Kutesa, Uganda)

On behalf of the Government and the people of Uganda, I wish to reaffirm our firm support for the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the efforts the Organization is making to maintain world peace and security and to promote international co-operation in the economic and social fields. It is my firm conviction that the salvation of the human race lies in our collective effort to create a more stable, equitable world based on humane values and an awareness that after all we are all part of a large universe about which we know so little.

ADDRESS BY FATHER WALTER LINI, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu, Father Walter Lini.

Father Walter Lini, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu, His Excellency Father Walter Lini, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Father LINI (Vanuatu): The commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations represents a historic milestone for all mankind. This is less a time for celebration of what we have achieved and more a time for reflection on and rededication to our sometimes forgotten ideals.

Your selection, Sir, to preside over this session of the General Assembly is a well-deserved tribute to your integrity and your diplomatic skills. It is also a tribute to your country, which you have faithfully represented here at the United Nations for so many years. We applaud your selection and the much-deserved honour bestowed upon you and Spain.

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

We also commend your illustrious predecessor, Mr. Paul Lusaka of Zambia, for the exemplary manner in which he discharged his duties. All of us were the beneficiaries of his exceptional abilities and his dignified manner. For this, we shall always be grateful.

We are also grateful to the host country and the host city for the manner in which we have been received. Many people have worked very hard to ensure the comfort and safety of the various delegations represented here today. We appreciate the patience, understanding and goodwill of the people of this great nation and this great city. The presence of so many Heads of State or Government here at the same time has not been easy to manage, but all involved have done a commendable job. The general public, representatives of the various city, state and federal agencies, and the members of the United Nations Secretariat have all earned our thanks. I trust that this same teamwork and spirit of co-operation will in the future symbolize the international community's relationship with the City of New York.

The Secretary-General of our Organization has earned a reputation for candour and objectivity. His analytical and thought-provoking annual report enhances that much-deserved reputation. As he has so capably pointed out, the question before us now, as always, is

"not so much the future of the United Nations as the future of humanity and of our planet and the role of the United Nations in that future".

(A/40/1, para. 1)

The opening of this session has, in some quarters, generated an almost unprecedented interest in the Organization. The news media and general citizenry of countries which have in recent years been indifferent to the United Nations seem to have a heightened sense of awareness of some of the items on our agenda. Our

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day-to-day work still does not capture much of their attention, but at least this session seems to have generated some interest in our work. One might have to go back to the early sixties, or even to the inception of the United Nations, to recall a comparable level of interest.

Unfortunately, interest in an event does not always bring with it knowledge or understanding of the various perspectives on a substantive question. One of the challenges we face is how we can transform the interest in this event, the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, into a broader knowledge of and appreciation for the substantive work of this Organization.

There are cynics who do not believe that the United Nations serves any useful purpose. There are some people who feel that what good the United Nations does is outweighed by waste and inefficiency, divisive political debates and strident rhetoric. There are others who know better, but because the United Nations no longer serves their interests to the extent it once did, they deliberately distort and misrepresent the history of this Organization, and they seldom miss an opportunity to smear its good name.

No legislative body anywhere in the world is without its critics. This is true of legislative bodies in big countries and small, and in new States and older, more-established States which call themselves democracies. Criticism itself is healthy and can be a constructive tool for development and advancement. It can also be a dishonest effort to intimidate rather than reform.

The United Nations is perhaps easier to criticize because, although it has the appearance of a legislative body, it does not have the powers of a legislative body. Those who wish to prolong a political crisis know that the United Nations cannot enforce its will without the co-operation of its Members. Thus, it does not

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make sense to maintain, as some do, that the United Nations has not been able to solve any of the world's major political problems.

As we all know, and as the Secretary-General has restated,

"The United Nations cannot - and was not intended to - solve all the problems of the international community ..." (A/40/1, para. 9)

We created an imperfect Organization. Our own sovereign rights as individual nations limit the scope and effect of our decisions as the United Nations. If we wish to create a stronger Organization - one which has an ability to implement its decisions - it is up to us to do so.

That is not a new theme. Everyone here knows that it is true, even though some do not wish to admit it. On the other hand, all of us know that the United Nations has managed to accomplish a great deal in other, very important areas.

Today, millions of people have homes to live in and food to eat because of the work of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Millions of people can read and write and see the irreplaceable treasures of their own cultures because of the work of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Millions of people no longer fear certain diseases because of the work of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Racism and colonialism are no longer acceptable modes of international behaviour, thanks in part to the United Nations.

Are not these things that we should all be proud of? Why is it that some among us can take pride only in how many people they are capable of killing or maiming in a few short seconds? Why is it that some among us can take pride only in how many material possessions they have in relation to how few others have? Why is it that some among us can take pride only in competing with nature's ability to destroy rather than with nature's ability to create?

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

This year, more than ever before, millions of people are hoping and praying that we, the leaders of the world, will come to our senses and hear what they have been saying. Most people do not want to hear fancy words and unfulfilled promises. Most people do not want to live in fear and with uncertainty and insecurity. They want us to listen as well as talk to each other. They want us to reason together and devise ways to ensure that this generation leaves a world for the next generation to inherit. They want us to assure them that the stars above us will continue to be for lovers to gaze at, for thinkers to ponder over, and for scientists to explore - but not a place to store the instruments of war.

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

Every year the opening of the general debate generates a great deal of anxiety and anticipation here at the headquarters building, and in most of our capitals. The first few days of the debate are usually highly charged and full of great expectations. Everyone seems to wait breathlessly for new pronouncements on the problems of the world. This is particularly true when the pronouncements are being made by the larger, more powerful countries, which have the ability to affect those problems.

As the debate continues, however, and smaller countries take the rostrum, the interest of the opinion-makers seems to flag. They say that the speeches take on a strident and familiar tone. To them, each day seems to be a little bit less dramatic than the one before, and unless a new crisis arises, or a highly visible personality arrives on the scene, they lose interest and direct the public's attention elsewhere.

Thus, when at this historic session the President of Tanzania, Mr. Julius K. Nyerere, addressed the General Assembly for the last time, the public's attention was indeed directed elsewhere. President Nyerere is one of the most respected figures of this century. He has always been an articulate and reasonable voice for the discriminated against, the disadvantaged, and the disenfranchised of this world. We of the developing countries treasure him as one of our elder statesmen. We shall miss him here at the General Assembly.

I know that I speak for many others when I applaud his words and say that his last address deserved far better coverage by the news media. What more persuasive evidence can be presented on behalf of the need for a new international information order?

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

Ironically, while this historic session marked Mwalimu's last address to us as President of Tanzania, it also marked the first address to the General Assembly by one of the developing world's younger statesmen, Mr. Alan Garcia, President of Peru. The symbolism of this coincidence should be noted.

One is a son of Africa, the other is a son of South America. Both of them spoke for others as well as the people of their native lands, and both belong to us all. Both had the courage and conviction to address difficult subjects with imagination and originality. Both electrified this hall when they spoke.

I cite these two addresses as examples of the careful thought and analysis every nation has brought to this session.

Mr. José Sarney, President of Brazil, set the tone for us with his stimulating opening address. Each successive speaker has placed his own unique signature on our dialogue. We only hope that the message is being received and will be given careful consideration.

Who better to remind us of the very nature of our international democracy, and of our responsibility vigorously to oppose the apartheid régime of South Africa than President Nyerere? Who better to illustrate to us the perils of the illicit drug trade, addictive monetary policies, and an equally addictive arms race than President Garcia, representing a small developing country whose democracy is threatened by all three?

Vanuatu is, as members of the Assembly are aware, a very small developing country situated in a region that some delegates might not often think of as they ponder the great issues of the day. There are, however, some facts about our region that should be borne in mind, particularly on this, the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

In 1945 most of the current Members of this international community were colonies. Our region was no exception. Our people were exploited, undereducated and socially segregated in our own land, as were most colonized peoples. Although we ourselves were not among the rich and powerful of this earth, our region was fiercely contested during the Second World War. Veterans of that fighting insist that it was the most intense of any combat anywhere in the world.

One of the nations of our region had, on a per capita basis, the highest number of men in uniform, the highest number of men in combat overseas, and the highest number of casualties. When the United Nations was formed, this nation and another from our region were considered by some to be the spokesmen for the small countries, the reason being, of course, that other smaller countries were still colonies.

We ourselves, although still a colony during the war, remained loyal to the allied cause when one of our colonizers was occupied by the forces of fascism and the Vichy government established. When that country was liberated by allied forces we shared in the joy of its people, even though we ourselves were still a colony.

When the war ended, we watched with amazement as millions of dollars worth of material and equipment, some of which we could still use today, was dumped into the ocean or otherwise destroyed. We, of course, did not understand such waste.

We also heard the mighty roar and saw the terrible flashes of nuclear bombs as the land, the seas, and the whole environment of our region were used to test new, more powerful weapons of destruction. Peace had come, we were told, but our environment knew no peace.

Today, our environment still knows no peace. One of our former colonizers - the same one whose own liberation we fought for and cheered - continues to test its

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nuclear weapons in our environment. It tells us that these tests are safe and that we are free to come and inspect the test sites for ourselves. It ignores our moral objections to nuclear weaponry.

We note that there is no conclusive scientific evidence that these tests are safe. Even if they were, we would still oppose the use of our region for the testing of these weapons. If the tests are so safe, let them be conducted on the land of the testing country. Then there will not even be a need for us to be invited to inspect the test sites.

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The nation that continues to test those nuclear weapons in our region is also the nation that continues to maintain a colonial presence in our region. The two policies go hand in hand.

An independent New Caledonia would not be a support base for nuclear testing in the South Pacific. We doubt that an independent French Polynesia would be the site of nuclear tests.

We are told that these tests and visits to our ports and waters by nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered vessels are necessary to help defend us and our way of life. At this point, we wonder if our would-be defenders even understand our way of life. In our innocence, we have always believed that freedom means that the people of a particular society are free to make their own decisions. If we do not wish to be defended with nuclear weapons or nuclear-powered vessels, our wishes should be respected.

Ours is a parliamentary democracy. We follow the will of our people and not the will of others our people never elected. The people of the South Pacific have chosen to reject nuclear weaponry, which we all have a very strong reason to detest. We appeal to those who have it within their power to free our children from the fear of nuclear tests to respect our wishes and to do so. Their failure to do so will not lead us to change our position, but it may lead us to change our belief in their sincerity.

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. One of the greatest achievements of the United Nations is that the process of decolonization is now almost completed. The United Nations is now an almost universal international body.

Unfortunately, some do not like that. To them, smaller countries such as ours should be seen - primarily by tourists - and rarely heard. The same voices that did

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not want to extend the right to vote to all of the people in their own countries now decry the spread of international democracy and the right of all nations to have an equal vote in the world body.

We are told that the size of a nation's financial contribution should determine its influence here at the United Nations. This is an interesting proposition that deserves closer examination. Let us not for the moment even examine how and from what and where the wealth of the wealthy nations was created. After all, we must not dwell on the past. What is interesting about the proposition is the fact that by extending the argument we would have a situation where nations that now consider themselves democratic would be encouraged to give greater weight to the votes or opinions of their wealthiest taxpayers. Perhaps some nations do this already. I do not know. This is not, however, our notion of democracy, and it is not what we do in Vanuatu.

Another fact to be considered is that there are different ways to measure contributions to the United Nations. Based on contributions as a proportion of gross national product, Vanuatu is the largest contributor to the operational activities for development of the United Nations system. Should we, therefore, insist that, unless nations vote the way we want, we will reduce our contribution? Should we now demand a weighted voting system in the General Assembly? I think not.

Yes, decolonization has changed the United Nations. We think it is a change for the better. It now more accurately reflects the thinking of most of the world's people. And, after all, is it not true that one of the things we most abhor about apartheid the fact that the Government of South Africa does not reflect the thinking of most of that country's people? If we cannot accept the principle of one nation, one vote here, then how can we champion one person, one vote in South Africa, or elsewhere?

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In any event, let us leave those who are troubled by our present democracy to ponder how they might turn back the clock a century. The rest of us have some unfinished business to attend to in this century.

In our region, the people of New Caledonia want their independence. The neighbouring States of the South Pacific Forum support the right of the people of New Caledonia to determine their own future and to be an independent nation. The foreign ministers of the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement also support that right.

To its credit, the administering Power has taken some constructive steps in the process of decolonization, but a great deal more remains to be done, particularly in the face of provocations by extremist elements within the settler population. Those settlers hope that their militancy and their lawlessness can coerce the administering Power into a failure to fulfil its commitment and its duty to facilitate that decolonization process.

In the face of those dangerous provocations New Caledonia's colonized people, the Kanaks, have been remarkably restrained and conciliatory. At the same time they refuse to deviate from the path of self-determination and independence.

The recent elections held in New Caledonia demonstrated the depth of the feelings of the indigenous people that they be allowed to assert their own identity and reclaim their own country. The elections also showed that the settlers are, at this point, determined to remain French. It is they, and not the colonized people or the administering Power, that have drawn the battle line in New Caledonia. It is they, and not the indigenous people or the metropolitan Power, that constitute a clear and present danger to the peace and security of our region. Therefore, it is now time for the United Nations to be seized of this problem and to assist in assuring a peaceful but speedy transition to independence.

Wather Lini, Vanuatu)

What distinguishes New Caledonia from other colonial situations in the South Pacific is a recognition by the administering Power that the status quo cannot continue. The administering Power has not yet made such a clear determination with respect to its other colonies in the South Pacific. However, we expect that eventually it will.

Unfortunately, there is in our region a disguised colonialism as well. That problem is proving to be much more difficult to address.

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

Too many Members of this international community believe that colonialism is an evil policy of European States only. Too many of us do not believe that a third world country that is itself a former colony can be expansionist. None of us want to believe that a country we admire for its anti-colonial past would succumb to the temptation to attempt the annexation of smaller, more vulnerable neighbours. However, this is exactly what has happened in our region, and on more than one occasion. We fear that it might even happen again.

East Timor was never a part of Indonesia, and its people were never asked whether they wanted to be Indonesians. If, as Indonesia claims, East Timor's people are happy with the current state of affairs, why is that territory still closed to outside observers, and why does the military resistance of the Maubere people continue?

Fortunately for East Timor's people, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have now been permitted some access to the territory. This access, however, is still very limited and tightly restricted. That there is any access at all is due primarily to the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and a bi-partisan group of members of the United States Congress. We commend their efforts, and thank them for acting when others did nothing.

We are encouraged by the negotiations between Portugal, the Administering Power, and Indonesia, the occupying Power. However, we feel that nothing of substance can be negotiated without the participation of the representatives of the people of East Timor.

The situation in East Timor is not on the General Assembly's agenda this year, and there will not be a resolution on that subject for us to consider. However, this does not mean that the plight of the people of that country should be

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forgotten or ignored. Most of the nations represented here will never permit that to occur.

It is true that we have a very long agenda, and each year it seems to grow longer. Some of the problems even appear incapable of resolution. Perhaps this is because in some instances in the past, some members of the international community were unaware of what was happening in other parts of the world. Others simply chose to excuse or ignore the type of abuse which is now occurring in East Timor.

The colonial histories of East Timor and West Papua were different. The political climate at the time that each was annexed was also different, as were the social conditions that existed in each country. However, had enough voices been raised when West Papua's people were denied the right to make their own choice, perhaps the rights of East Timor's people would not have been trampled upon.

By now, most people have forgotten what happened in West Papua. Its people have not. Every day we in that region are ourselves reminded by them. Indonesia wishes we would forget. We wish that we could. However, only Indonesia can make us forget, and not by calling us names, but by permitting those Melanesian people to decide freely for themselves who they are and what they want to be.

We sometimes look at what the earth possesses and wonder why greed and avarice drive some men to treat others as sub-humans. What is it that drives some to fear and despise others because they look different, sound different, or maintain different religious or political beliefs? All over our globe this seems to be the case.

The late W. E. B. DuBois once said:

"The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line ..."

He was right, and nowhere is this more evident than in southern Africa.

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

Long after other societies have come to grips with their own racial contradictions, South Africa continues to believe that every man, woman and child should be judged by the color of his or her skin. Long after other societies have realized that it is not even in their best economic interests to maintain such outdated notions South Africa continues, when it comes to racial attitudes, to live not even in the 19th century, but in the 18th century.

Forty years after the death of Adolf Hitler and the demise of his brand of fascism, his heirs exercise State power in Pretoria and masquerade as a respectable Government. Why do we tolerate this? How can anyone call that State a friend? What do those who call that Government a friend have in common with it? Please tell us; we should like to know.

I will not go any further, not here today. I simply state that my Government is prepared to support any concrete measures that the United Nations may adopt to oppose that illegally constituted and illegally maintained régime. Comprehensive international action is required. Partial or selective measures will not work. They will only permit and encourage South Africa to export the impact of those measures to those front-line States it holds as economic hostage. Disengagement from South Africa must be followed by comprehensive constructive involvement with the front-line States and those South Africans who are trying to free their country.

Some may wonder why Vanuatu, a small country in the South Pacific, is so passionate on the subject of South Africa. Those who wonder do not know much about our own history. Although we are far removed geographically from the centres of world conflict, we are not an island unto ourselves. In the 19th century, our country was depopulated by slave traders who took many of our own people to work for them in other countries. Our country was also depopulated by the purposeful introduction of diseases from which we had no immunity.

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In a relatively short period of time our population was reduced from over 1 million people to considerably fewer than 100,000. We knew genocide before the world knew the word.

That is why we will never accept any form of racism no matter what it is called. That is why we join with others who express the hope that just a portion of the massive sums of money spent on armaments could instead be spent on research on cancer, heart disease, sickle-cell anemia and the newest deadly killer, AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). That is why we associate ourselves with those who have spoken out so forcefully against the illicit production, transportation and consumption of drugs. The drug traffic is to us the new slave trade, turning so many promising youths into useless, but dangerous, zombies.

Even though we are geographically far removed from the major population centres of the world, we know how far and how fast a deadly disease can spread. We know how quickly organized crime can corrupt any society and erode the sovereignty of its people.

Our region is one which is very susceptible to earthquakes and hurricanes. We ourselves suffered the crippling effects of a severe hurricane earlier this year. It caused considerable damage to our economy. We are now recovering slowly but surely. Most of our neighbours have also been victimized by very bad hurricanes in the last few years, particularly Fiji. Thus, we understand the suffering of the people of Mexico; we comprehend the full nature of their tragedy, and we mourn with them.

Developing countries are always more vulnerable to natural disasters because our economies are more fragile. We have fewer resources to begin with and therefore less to call on when these disasters strike. The disaster relief

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assistance of the developed world is always welcome and appreciated. However, we often wonder why it takes a disaster to mobilize massive international aid and co-operation.

How many people would have been saved in Africa, and for how much less money, if proper development assistance had been provided beforehand and effectively directed? How many more calamities can we avert in the future by taking a long, hard look today at the economic practices which lead to unequal levels of development and weak national infrastructures? Is it not better for us to sit down together now and plan for the future than merely to wait to react to the next disaster?

International co-operation must in the near future become much more than a phrase or slogan. The future well-being of this planet demands that we pull together. The United Nations may not be perfect, but it is all that we have. It is up to us, all of us, to make the next 40 years better than the first 40.

One area we can start in is that of the law of the sea. The almost limitless resources of the sea-bed give us an opportunity to demonstrate that mankind is not by nature selfish. There is plenty for everyone, and there is an international treaty that recognizes and codifies that fact.

Why then have some chosen to act separately? What is there to gain? The rest of us have demonstrated our willingness to negotiate and assign importance to their capital and their technology. What else can we do? What else do they want us to do? We hope that reason will prevail and that before long the entire community of nations will sign in this painstakingly negotiated and drafted Convention and work within its confines to make it a success.

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

As a developing small island State in the South Pacific, we have a great deal at stake in that treaty, as in all other forms of international co-operation. Thus, we welcome the negotiations towards concluding a multilateral access treaty between the States of our region and the United States. We hope that the resulting régime will lead to a more equitable arrangement for the development of fisheries in our region. We will, however, always be faithful to the long-term development needs of our own people and to our international commitments.

The United Nations is a young Organization and most of its Members are young States. We are one of its youngest. The concept of international democracy is itself young, and still developing. Occasionally, the international community may even make mistakes, but that is one of the costs of democracy. Consider the alternative. Reflect back to what we left behind only 40 short years ago.

We have come a long way, and we have a lot further to go, but we can only make the journey together - all of us, large and small, developed and developing, North and South, East and West.

Debate and disagreement are healthy and will help us on our journey so long as we maintain an ability to engage in dialogue and to respect each other's points of view. It is wrong to try to judge us by whether or not we always agree with each other or with any one of the Members. After all, who is to say that any one of the Members is the one that is always right?

Families do not always agree, and we are a family of nations. However, there are a few items on our agenda about which we are all in agreement. Let us give our Organization a birthday gift of our collective resolve to support our Secretary-General in his efforts to move those items forward.

(Father Lini, Vanuatu)

Let us welcome Namibia to our ranks as an independent State. Let us end apartheid once and for all. Let us engage in meaningful global negotiations. Let us commit our resources to the elimination of poverty, illiteracy and disease. Let us convene a global conference on drug trafficking and drug abuse, as proposed by the Secretary-General. Let us support the Contadora process. Let us stop building weapons of mass destruction. Let us pledge not to destroy the world before the next generation has a chance to make it a better world. Finally, let us work to strengthen rather than undermine the United Nations.

Father Walter Lini, Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. BAKO (Niger) (interpretation from French): Just a few days ago, Mexico, its land and its great people suffered one of the most devastating and extensive earthquakes. We can still see the heartrending pictures. Therefore, at the outset it is my duty to address to the delegation of that friendly country the sincere condolences of the delegation of Niger.

Your accession to the presidency of the General Assembly at this session, Sir, at a crucial and very significant moment in the destiny of our Organization and of the peoples comprising it, is a well-deserved tribute to you and to your outstanding qualities as a statesman and negotiator, as a talented diplomat whose style and spirit have so greatly enriched the work of this General Assembly. This unanimous tribute extends beyond you to your country, to your King and to your people. We pay tribute to Spain's undying devotion to the ideals of the United Nations, and appreciate its consistent and distinguished contribution to the solution of the problems faced by the world today.

In your distinguished post, you follow an outstanding son of a great nation, Ambassaor Paul Lusaka, who, in a masterly, sophisticated and distinguished manner, presided over the work of the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session. Africa is rightly proud of him.

Now, on behalf of my country I should like to express thanks and sincere congratulations to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his dedication in carrying out his work. His keen awareness of the problems of the countries of the Sahel, his initiatives in the area of the maintenance of peace and the solution of problems affecting the community of nations earn him our deepest respect and our encouragement.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

The international community is getting ready to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. It is a very fitting commemoration, for indeed what better opportunity than this anniversary for reflection and taking stock? What better opportunity than this to recall and extol the foundations of the United Nations? What better time than this to propose to the community of nations a more noble image, a more human approach, a goal consonant with its unshakeable faith in man? The Charter of the United Nations reflects an enlightened vision, a noble and realistic vision, of international relations. The ideals it embodies, the principles it sets forth, are still relevant today and deserve our full support.

Our support for the Charter stems from our devotion to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, our love for peace and security, our commitment to preserve a world balance, our ability to organize and maintain effective solidarity among all the nations of the world, and our sincere desire to build and strengthen economic and social progress for the entire human race.

As has been recalled by President Seni Kountche, our leader, we of Niger are a people that loves peace, peace in dignity, peace with respect for other people's values, peace which involves a reasonable and fair sharing of the fruits of co-operation among the peoples of the earth.

That explains our stubborn rejection of all injustice, domination and use of force. It explains why we share the impatience and frustrations felt by developing countries in the face of this crisis that is undermining the world economy and hindering our efforts to achieve happiness, calm and peace. Above all, it is what kindles our unshakeable faith in the United Nations and our burning desire to see its work directed with more resolve and highest priority to a search for solutions to the conflicts affecting the world.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

Here I am thinking of the imminent danger to world peace and security posed by the survival of apartheid and colonialism in southern Africa. South Africa's illegal occupation of the territory of Namibia, 25 years after the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, is undeniably a serious and continuing challenge to the authority and credibility of the United Nations.

After more than half a century of brutal and degrading colonialism, and following the Security Council's adoption of resolution 435 (1978), Africa hoped that Namibia would swiftly accede to international sovereignty. But today we are obliged to note that South Africa is still occupying Namibia, which means that there have been seven more years of indescribable suffering for the people of Namibia, and countless numbers of raids and acts of aggression against the front-line States: seven years of hope and trust betrayed.

Within South Africa itself, the minority régime in power is constantly pursuing and strengthening its loathsome policy, which it calls a policy of the separate development of the races, to that end using a whole arsenal of laws and regulations. Everything is permitted for some; they can do what they want with the others. Yet nothing is permitted for the others in their own land.

The General Assembly and the Security Council have in turn stated and declared that apartheid is incompatible with the United Nations Charter, and the international community has declared it to be a crime against humanity.

Today it is accepted that only through the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and the dismantling of the system of apartheid can a just and lasting peace be brought about in that ravaged part of our continent.

But if South Africa continues to disregard and insolently trample underfoot our collective desires, we have no choice but to continue the struggle in a dynamic, collective and responsible manner. And here I would pay a well deserved

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tribute to international public opinion and I would encourage it, for today it is doing a great deal for the cause of justice, human dignity and peace. Thanks to its support for the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa, South Africa's isolation is increasing with each passing day. Public opinion exposes its blind arrogance and its overweening conceit. Africa would urge public opinion to intensify its pressure and to militate even more for the adoption of economic sanctions and other appropriate measures against the racist and aggressive régime of Pretoria. That is the only language that this régime understands.

Its last barbaric incursion into the territory of Angola is further proof of its intransigence. We condemn that raid as a serious infringement of international rules and of the sovereignty and independence of the people of Angola.

Other parts of the vast African continent have for years been areas of great tension. Dangerous and potentially explosive situations still persist in Chad, Western Sahara and the Horn of Africa.

In our view, these conflict situations constitute a major obstacle to the ideal of African unity, which is the deepest aspiration of the peoples of our continent. They are a distraction, because they sidetrack our people from the paramount tasks of development and social progress.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

In Niger we believe that the settlement of all these conflicts inevitably calls for respect for the principles of international law, to which all of our peoples have subscribed in an act of sovereignty.

Hence, the independence and sovereignty of Chad must be respected. National reconciliation must be sought, maintained and encouraged by the people of Chad themselves without any outside interference.

The situation in Western Sahara is a matter of grave concern to Niger. There are ongoing efforts to promote the effective implementation of the right to self-determination.

Lastly, the return to peace in the Horn of Africa depends on the will of the countries of that region to respect one another and to abide in their relationships with the rules of good-neighbourliness.

Africa, through the Organization of African Unity, is actively seeking solutions to all these conflicts. We are following with hope the efforts being made by the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Diouf, President of the Republic of Senegal, to ensure peace, justice and democracy. These efforts ought to be strongly supported by the United Nations and by all countries that cherish peace and justice.

The situation in the Middle East is, like the problem of Namibia, another example of a challenge that we must face in order to restore our Organization's authority and credibility.

We would recall that Israel was created by our Organization, but it has been forgetting the lessons of history and trying to deny other peoples' right to exist. This attitude on the part of Israel is at the root of the indescribable

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tragedy that has been experienced by the Palestinian people for decades. They have been driven out of the land of their ancestors, deprived of their rights and properties and unjustly forced into permanent exile.

The United Nations has a major responsibility to the Palestinian people. Admittedly, it has not abdicated all these responsibilities, but, unfortunately, its efforts have come up against Israel's arrogance and intransigence. Israel, flouting law and morality, continues to occupy Arab territories and to harass the Arab people of Palestine and to commit aggression with impunity against States in the region. The destruction a few days ago of the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Tunisian people, is indicative of the incalculable risks in that part of the world.

We continue to believe that a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East and of Palestine necessarily involves a total Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and its right to establish its own independent and sovereign State in its homeland, Palestine, and the full participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in any peace process in the region.

Other parts of the world where the fate of international peace and security is at stake also require attention and urgent action on the part of the international community.

In the Gulf, where war continues between two brotherly countries, Iran and Iraq, the initiative for the restoration of peace must be supported and maintained by all, and we continue to work along those lines.

The continued occupations of Afghanistan and Kampuchea are matters of serious concern to many States. By an overwhelming majority the General Assembly has called

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for the withdrawal of foreign troops from those two countries, for respect for their independence and sovereignty and for the preservation of their non-aligned status.

In Central America, which is in the throes of serious upheaval and instability, Niger hopes that a negotiated settlement of the problems of the region with respect for the sovereign aspirations of each people can be achieved. In this spirit, we applaud and support the efforts of the Contadora group.

In speaking of conflicts, I should like also to mention the situation in the Korean peninsula, where the tension that arose with the division of Korea still exists. In this connection, Niger believes that the problem of the division of Korea is a political problem and that a solution must be sought by peaceful means in accordance with the aspirations of the Korean people.

We are glad that 24 October also marks the beginning of a week which the General Assembly has decided to devote to the question of disarmament throughout the world. This decision reflects the great awareness of the international community as it is faced with the implementation of the fundamental objective of the Charter, namely, to preserve future generations from the scourge of war. Forty years after that commitment was entered into, the risks of confrontation add to the fears of the peoples of the United Nations, which are witnessing an exponential increase in arms expenditures. These expenditures have quadrupled between 1945, when the United Nations was founded, and the end of the first Disarmament Decade. In 1983 global military expenditures rose to \$750 billion. Specialists have estimated that in 1985 the amount will be some \$1,000 billion. Yet it is broadly recognized that a considerable reduction in such expenditures would not only help to ease tension in the world but also help to restore the growth of the world

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economy and would help to increase assistance levels for the support of developing countries.

It was because of the current economic situation in the world that I referred, quite deliberately, to the parallel between the mind-boggling levels of military expenditures and the resources, pathetically small compared to the immensity of the needs, provided for development assistance for third-world countries. The economic problems facing the world are as serious and dangerous as the many conflict situations I have just described. The growing gap between the rich and the developing countries contains the seeds of instability and also crystallizes the threats to peace in the world.

The inability of the mechanisms for trade and co-operation to meet present needs has plunged the world into an unprecedented crisis affecting all international economic, trade, financial and monetary relations. In most countries this crisis has taken the form of rising inflation, serious recession and constantly worsening social tensions. For our developing countries, to these are added a worsening of the terms of trade, difficulties in access to the financial markets, increasingly burdensome debt servicing and a disruptive decrease in development assistance.

Therefore this is an urgent matter, particularly with regard to the agonizing debt problem: more than \$170 billion for Africa alone. This problem is not only a question of contracts anymore. It is part of macro-political vision: too many demands on the part of lenders would inevitably engulf the borrowers and thus have unfavourable repercussions on the lenders. It is in the interest of all for some middle ground to be found.

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However, the problems of the United Nations are also and above all the problems of Africa: namely, the inability of a continent that was the cradle of mankind to feed its own people on its own. This is a situation which results from the difficulties we have encountered in managing our agricultural system, in building the infrastructure needed to irrigate our arid zones, to open our regions to provide for a better distribution of our products, to establish a true African policy for complementarity and co-operation among our States, particularly in the struggle to combat desertification and in the essential area of water control. These difficulties are accompanied by others that are just as troublesome, involving education, health, and housing for our people, whom we wish to enable to manage their lives properly so that they can participate more actively and more honourably in the development of our continent and of the entire world. Many voices have been raised here to emphasize this tragic situation in Africa.

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The General Assembly itself took up this matter at the thirty-ninth session and adopted resolution 39/29, the Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa. In this connection, there is perhaps nothing more serious or that requires action by the world community more urgently than this agonizing problem of hunger in Africa. Nothing that is said or written can really convey the dimensions of this tragedy and its impact on people. And here I should like to thank most sincerely, on behalf of President Seyni Kountche, the present Chairman of the Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, friendly countries, the agencies of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and people of good will throughout the world for the humanitarian assistance that they have given us in this difficult period for our continent.

For almost 17 years Africa has been gripped by an implacable drought that has led to a serious reduction in the availability of water and arable land, the destruction of vast areas of fauna and flora and the death through hunger and thirst of thousands of men, women and children.

This situation is a matter of acute concern to African Governments which, at the national, subregional and continental levels, have tried to take the first steps towards a solution.

At the national level, African leaders have undertaken to redefine agricultural strategies and to maintain, diversify and reconstitute vegetation, to ensure soil preservation, to develop water resources to ensure food security by promoting and developing food crops and livestock.

Efforts to harmonize these initiatives have been made at the subregional and continental levels. Thus, within the context of the Inter-State Committee to Combat Drought in the Sahel, eight countries have developed an agreed programme of rehabilitation, giving priority to water control, combating desertification through

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reafforestation, developing agriculture and livestock and building buffer stocks of grain.

At the continental level, lastly, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had undertaken a thorough re-examination of ways and means of coping with this situation. This has led to the establishment of the special fund for emergency assistance in the struggle against drought and famine in Africa, and major contributions have already been pledged.

Obviously, it is no longer a question of counting exclusively on outside aid; above all, Africa must utilize its resources and its inner strength, the liberating weapon in a victorious struggle against hunger. Only a pragmatic strategy geared to fundamental needs and the political determination to carry out a thorough reorientation of economic systems through reviewing agrarian practices and policies can enable us to take the first steps towards a solution to the food problem.

Yet the African continent, to which most of the poorest countries of the world belong, cannot alone cope with this enormous and serious challenge of nature.

It is therefore more necessary than ever that international solidarity is more effectively directed to saving the lives of millions people in the short term and, in the long term, to enabling the African people to make themselves self-sufficient in food. Forceful, even exceptional measures will be needed to get a dynamic process of rehabilitation and consolidation under way. Those measures must be consonant with those that were taken to assist in the reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War.

President Seyni Kountche said from this very rostrum that

"our world is today drifting away from a sense of measure, of sharing, of generosity".

And he added:

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"There is a danger that by 1990 800 million human beings will live in a state of absolute poverty, in other words, below the level of any rational definition of human dignity. Thousands of men, women and children throughout the world die every day of hunger, if not of diseases that could have been avoided if they had been better fed. Entire nations in the southern hemisphere are not able fully to exercise their sovereignty because, with their pathetic incomes, which are often completely unrelated to their true resources and the tremendous efforts made by their people, they are stagnating."

At this time of political and economic crisis, as we commemorate 40 years of common endeavour, we should ask ourselves: is this the world we pledged to build?

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.