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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 23 September 1985, at 3 p.m.

- President: Mr. DE PINIÉS (Spain)
- later: Mr. MOSELEY (Bahamas)  
(Vice-President)
- later: Mr. GUISSOU (Burkina Faso)  
(Vice-President)
- Address by His Excellency Mr. Alan García Pérez, President of the Republic of Peru
  - General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Stray (Norway)  
Mr. Caputo (Argentina)  
Mr. Gama (Portugal)  
Mr. Nzeyimana (Burundi)  
Mr. Hameed (Sri Lanka)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ALAN GARCIA PEREZ, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): This afternoon the Assembly will hear an address by the President of the Republic of Peru.

Mr. Alan García Pérez, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted into the General Assembly hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Peru, His Excellency Mr. Alan García Pérez, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President GARCIA PEREZ (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. President of the United Nations General Assembly and representative of Spain, a country in which the Latin American community asserts its roots, acknowledging it as a fundamental ingredient of its own identity.

Mr. Secretary-General, symbol of Peru's commitment to the international community and of our faith that the transformation of Peru is linked to change and justice in the world.

Representatives of all nations:

For some this is a ritual, a declarative and symbolic meeting. We have not lost faith, because we know that those who are listening to us are a bureaucratic agency, but rather that they fully assume their role as representatives of mankind in the face of selfishness, poverty and violence in our world.

Of course we could ask whether in its 40 years of existence the United Nations has fully achieved its purpose, whether peace really exists in the world. And we might answer that nuclear peace is but a balance of insecurity and terror, that this apparent peace expresses its tensions by shifting its conflicts to the poorest

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countries; and that it conceals an unequal and unjust economic system in which the central nations dominate the others for their own benefit by manipulating interest rates, prices, wages and therefore wielding power in the poorer countries, in order to maintain profound injustices that generate violence.

But to say all this would be to repeat the litany that has so often been heard in this hall.

I have come here to state once again that in spite of this, the United Nations remains the highest representation of mankind and that we have come to it because we believe in the equality of human beings and of nations, and because we believe that history will not be determined by the laws of the marketplace and of conflict, but rather that its meaning will henceforth be the affirmation of freedom. Thus, our first words are an appeal for the democratization of this Organization which, in accordance with its Charter, is based on the principle of equality among its members.

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but in which the Security Council is governed by the realities of the last great war and the five Powers possess a right of veto that is incompatible with that equality. That right of veto is a blot upon our Organization because it is an institutional recognition of force, and the vicious circle is completed because in order to eliminate the veto the agreement of the Council, on which those Powers with the veto right are represented, is necessary.

One group of countries, nowever strong, cannot contradict the universal nature of this Organization. No Power, however much it may contribute financially, can demand a weighted and contribution-linked vote in which each nation is valued on the basis of the amount of money it contributes. We prefer a poorer organization, a less bureaucratic one, but an organization prouder of its moral dignity. In this connection we would propose that the economic contribution of all countries be the same, because higher contributions by the richest must be rejected if they in turn require the mortgaging of our destiny.

The strength of the United Nations does not reside in the number of offices or functionaries that it may have throughout the world; the strength of the United Nations should reside in the moral power of the equality of all its Members and in its capacity to act without vetoes.

In this, which is the highest court of mankind, we commit ourselves to a bid for life and, without surrendering to defeatism, we proclaim that, while assemblies and words may not have conquered selfishness, we, the poor of the world, have not lost our hope in the meaning of history.

To those who use arrogant force, we respond in the words of the old Spanish philosopher: they will succeed but they will not convince. They may succeed through the power of their bombs and their money, but they will not convince the universal democracy of consciences, and in spite of them the hope for a better mankind will continue to be felt.

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I speak on behalf of a nation that is struggling, a nation that does not give up. I have not come here to repeat what has been said already of the world order and what all of us must do in the future to change it; I have come to state what we are doing at present, and the message that I bring to you is a message of determination. We believe in the solidarity of countries and in their common future, but today we affirm that action is the duty of all countries. That is what we are proposing in respect of each of the subjects on which I should like to dwell at this time: the debt problem, human rights, drug trafficking and disarmament.

In connection with all these issues, we have but one message: we have the will to act here and now.

Many believe that Peru is a country of drugs, death and violation of human rights. I have come here to say that there is much more to the truth. We are a part of the impoverished peoples of the earth, a part of Latin America, and our problems have as a root cause our link with the international economy. For lack of a national programme of action, our country has been at the service of external interests and each of the economic cycles of this century has stemmed from changes in the international system.

Peru was at the beginning of this century a country that was primarily an exporter of raw materials at a time when these were required by the international economy. At that time the Andes region and its peasant population were kept under the landowner system. At the end of the Second World War, Peru began its process of industrialization, but this was the result of the expansion of world industry, whose transnational corporations sold their machinery and established their branches in the capital of my country.

Furthermore, when foreign foodstuffs were introduced in consumer markets the poverty of the peasants worsened, causing a greater exodus towards the cities.

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In this framework, the world crisis meant that new adjustments were needed in Peru. When the richest countries moved towards protectionism and strove to collect their debts, we were forced to open up our borders and destroy our industries in order to buy from world industry, and also to recycle our debts, with ever-increasing rates of interest.

As a result of all this, a grave crisis is shaking my country. The disparity in regional development reflects the gap between the administrative industrial bloc and the marginal peasant and urban sector. Furthermore, the gap between rich and poor is widening. Our per capita production has gone back to levels comparable to those of 20 years ago and inflation and unemployment are on the increase.

This is the tragic situation which my country is now confronting, but Peru is a country that has made democracy effective by asserting its will. Peru does not want to be a ship adrift at the mercy of shifts in the international economy. Peru does not want to remain within this vicious circle, devaluing its currency because inflation increases when interest rates go up in order to compensate for previous devaluations. Peru has decided to manage its own economy and not be managed by it, and that is why democracy in my country is the concrete expression of our national will.

We know that to carry out a democratic revolution we must be anti-imperialist and fight against hegemonism. We know that transformation is not a national fact of life, but rather an international commitment to action.

That is why we are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and why we assert the unity of Latin America; that is why we seek to strengthen the Andean Pact and that is why we shall participate in all forums that affirm the solidarity of all peoples on earth.

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In the face of today's crisis we cannot wait; we must act. We cannot go on talking and writing letters that the wealthy of the earth refuse to read. Our people cannot await action by the irresolute. Supranational organizations cannot become an impediment to the will of our people. That is why I have come before this Assembly to set forth what we in Peru are doing to ensure the establishment of a nationalist, democratic Government of the people.

We affirm as nationalism the right of our people to autonomous existence, the right to work, and to defend our industry from the liberal opening up that in recent years has overwhelmed it. We affirm as nationalism the recovery of our natural wealth.

Here one fundamental issue arises: the foreign debt, as a major hindrance to the development and well-being of our peoples. The foreign debt expresses a relationship between the rich and the poor of the earth; its root cause is the imbalance of the prices of raw materials and manufacturing and industrial resources.

Throughout the centuries the countries that are today underdeveloped have financed the mercantile and industrial economics of those that are now wealthy countries, and in the last few years we have fallen into debt in order to finance a model of industrialization and consumption imported from abroad. As a result, the debt has become a cause of conflict between the poor South, of which our American continent is a part, and the industrial, imperialist, financial North. This must not be confused with an issue that pits East against West in a conflict of hegemony.

Secondly, the original indebtedness has been inflated by the application of usurious interest rates. Interest has been, in the central countries, not only the cost of productive capital, but also a tool for the procurement of capital to

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cover the deficit produced by military expenditures. That is why two thirds of Latin America's debt has been re-exported to the banks by the dominant sectors of our countries. And if the effects of unequal trade are added to the interest rates, we see that these have amounted in real terms to nearly 25 per cent.

Thirdly, the over-valuation of the dollar as a currency of exchange based upon the permanent devaluation suffered by our own currencies has reached, according to some estimates, nearly 40 per cent, and we are required to repay our debts in that currency.

I give the following dramatic example from my own country. We purchase corn from the United States to feed chickens with which we are repaying in kind our debt to the Soviet Union. Thus, a country that is threatened by hunger has to repay its foreign debt with food. We therefore become a stopover for products that travel from one Power to another.

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If to that we add the fact that the rich countries have been applying protectionist trade policies, by closing their markets to our products, we can see why the debt situation has become untenable for our economy.

We must ask: what has been the response to the debt problem in recent years?

First of all, new credits have been requested to repay earlier debts, and higher interest rates and commissions have been accepted. The result has been more indebtedness than before. The anti-trust laws of the United States have been violated by the banks, which have joined in cartels to avoid free competition in the placement of credits. Likewise, federal credit laws have also been violated as banks have renegotiated with countries that they know are bankrupt, solely in order to ensure the payment of interest, waiving the payment of principal, which is the capital of the depositors.

Secondly, and as a condition for this financial merry-go-round, the harmful terms of the International Monetary Fund have been accepted, directing our countries' economies towards debt repayment.

The letters of intent that express these terms are in fact letters of colonial submission to the prevailing injustice. While the richest countries close their borders, we must open ours, thus destroying our industrial facilities and indebting ourselves in order to continue to buy from foreign industry. A second factor of the letters of intent is the requirement that we devalue our currency in order to maintain the external competitiveness of our products; that, in other words, means that we are increasing the amount of work we must accomplish for the payment of our debt. The third factor stipulates that the domestic interest rate must be linked to devaluation, thus promoting inflation in a permanent vicious circle of unemployment and productive paralysis.

The International Monetary Fund explains all these results as the consequence of excessive expenditures by the State and State participation in the economy. The

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Fund's final instruction is, therefore, fiscal austerity. Investments and social expenditures must thus be cut back in order to guarantee the timely servicing of the foreign debt. These are how the letters of intent have been applied in recent years for the impoverishment of our peoples. As I have said, rather than being letters of intent these are in fact letters of colonial submission to injustice.

Furthermore, we say that the International Monetary Fund does not have the moral authority to preach austerity in our country, because during the seventies, when it was necessary to place petrodollars in credits for poor countries, the International Monetary Fund promoted indebtedness. In those years, it encouraged waste and unproductive investments; it was an accomplice of excessive growth in public administration. The International Monetary Fund, moreover, demands austerity only of the poorest countries; it favours the most powerful nation on earth. Since the non-convertibility of the dollar was declared in 1971, the United States has been the only country that has been able indefinitely to issue currency to cover its own deficits. What has been the role of the International Monetary Fund in adjusting the United States economy?

As President of Peru, I announce that at the next meeting of the International Monetary Fund, in Seoul, we shall demand decisions on the reform of the monetary system and the distribution of world liquidity in a fairer manner. Otherwise, we are not interested in belonging, nor is it to our advantage to belong, to an agency that benefits a single country.

We therefore reiterate that the International Monetary Fund shall not be the intermediary between us and our creditors. In the dialogue with our creditors we shall not accept as a pre-condition the mortgaging of our sovereign economic independence nor the imposition of internal political conditions through the signing of letters of intent with negative terms for our people. I repeat before the whole world that my responsibility as Head of State is to the Peruvian people,

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that the Peruvian people is the primary creditor as far as I am concerned and that the Peruvian Government has been elected by the people, not by some financial cartel that wishes to satisfy its own appetite.

In conclusion, we affirm that in current conditions the foreign debt - as a result of its unjust origins and because of the methods by which it has been increased - cannot be paid by any of our countries, because the effort to service it on time will keep our democracies trapped in misery and violence. Thus, we are faced with a dramatic choice: either debt or democracy. That is the crossroads faced by Latin America at present; that is the crossroads at which the poor world now finds itself. We must decide what road to take.

We believe that the objective must be the unity of the debtor countries and a radical change in the present situation. To that end, we need to harmonize our positions with those of the countries of Africa and Asia, and to co-ordinate Latin American action. One hundred and sixty years of independent life in Latin America have shown us that the isolated development of each country is a model doomed to failure. None the less, we persist in our solitude. As in the title of the great novel, our countries have lived through 160 years of solitude. Exporters of commodities, purchasers of factories, debtors: we have continued on the same path, because the siren songs of the International Monetary Fund and of the banks beckon one and all towards isolated solutions which are only fading hopes or letters of intent that are immediately unheeded.

We call for unity on the part of the Non-Aligned Movement and on the part of the Latin American countries. Unity on this subject is a specific test for non-alignment, because political dialogue will serve not only to deal with debt servicing but also to place the international economic order in a new context. Thus the debt which is the result of our weakness will be the instrument of our strength and an impetus to our unity. That is the great route to follow: unity.

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But Peru cannot wait for a series of meetings without concrete results. We shall not fall into the vicious circle of waiting for unity in the future and not doing anything until then. We do not believe in waiting passively; rather, we shall wait actively, not only by proposing the maximum of audacious actions but also be committing ourselves to a concrete struggle.

Therefore, we have taken a decision that we shall maintain: Peru will assign to its debt only one out of every ten dollars, one tenth of what is paid to it for its work and its exports. This is a responsible and revolutionary decision, because it is the decision of a poor country that imports foodstuffs and industrial inputs, whose debt is with Western banks, and which has suffered and is suffering from the pressure by the International Monetary Fund. Our responsibility in this decision is to face up to its consequences.

We do not have a privileged relationship with any Power, because we do not struggle against dependency by being the instrument of another hegemony. We do not adopt any spectacular positions, advocating non-payment while repaying one part of the world punctually, and repaying with strategic sovereignty a substantial debt that, for that reason, is not demanded under pressure by the other part of the world.

We do not want, in a Messianic way, to export a 10 per cent model of payment. All we want to do is prove that a major step can be taken and that if many others decide to take it, we can open up the avenues to the future. In the future, if we unite, other solutions will also exist, but, between the rhetoric of great speeches and the realism of decisions, we have chosen the latter. For, if our relationship with the industrialized world is expressed through debt, it has its historical origin in the unjust difference between the prices of imports and those of exports.

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Today prices of copper, silver, fishmeal and oil exports are lower while real interest rates rise. We are convinced that by linking these two aspects we can change these assymetrical relations. And this is the way in which we are staking on the future and setting our own terms of payment. If interest is the cost of money within a given term, then by setting a maximum payment the term is extended and by being extended interest rates are in fact varied.

Someone has hastened to say that what we are doing is accumulating more debt. But that passive pessimism does not distinguish between two different elements: that of the creditor, for whom interest accumulates, and that of the debtor, who by setting a maximum payment is laying down his own rules, independent of the accumulation of debt that the creditor presumes he has. This means that the uncertainty of the future becomes a problem for the creditor, rather than for us.

Under traditional terms, in 1986 we should have to pay \$2.4 billion to service the debt, plus \$3.1 billion owed from the year before, which would in all represent a commitment of \$5.5 billion payable in 1986. This amounts to 160 per cent of our exports, estimated at \$3.4 billion for next year.

In accordance with our decision, the maximum amount to be paid would be \$340 million which would be allocated on a priority basis to the international financial agencies and to government-to-government credits, because we must achieve our economic autonomy. But at the same time we must accept the fact that we require a technological exchange with the world in order to support our development. And an important element of government-to-government co-operation and credits from international financial agencies, granted on favourable terms, is the fact that they must be repaid.

Furthermore, Peru is a responsible country that does not simply blame its foreign debt on the international economy and the banks. We are a people seeking a

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revolutionary transformation and, as such, must make a critical assessment of our own history and acknowledge that due to a previous lack of unity and awareness and because we allowed ourselves to be dominated by groups linked to foreign interests, we have responsibilities that we must assume.

When the time comes for decision, Peru will continue to maintain its aims until circumstances change, protectionist barriers are brought down, the true value of our exports is recognized, and we regain the fruits of our labour.

I know that the response to this decision may be the imposition of sanctions and amendments or, as has already been announced, that the Peruvian debt may be declared value-impaired in October. As President of Peru, I wish to say that it is not necessary to wait until October to declare this. The Peruvian debt is already value-impaired here and now. We acknowledge this. But what we should ask ourselves is how and by whom was our economy impaired and what historical answer must we give to this situation.

That is why our second objective is the complete democratization of our society as a way to resolve the crisis we are confronting.

We consider the human being to be the highest priority of society and state and we affirm that democracy should be initiated and based on suffrage and freedom of speech.

There can be no democracy without participation. There can be no socialism without freedom. Universal suffrage cannot be replaced by a sectoral or corporative vote in the work place.

Universal suffrage cannot be replaced by a Messianic attitude where one exponent becomes for decades the possessor of truth and history and dooms his people to disability and silence.

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Universal suffrage and freedom cannot and must not be sacrificed to the offer of bread that justifies dynasties and national mortgages.

We firmly believe that it is possible to establish governments that are governments of bread and freedom and that a contrary attitude, whatever its motto or support, is nothing but tyranny.

But we believe that democracy must also be based on an equal distribution of social resources, a harmonious development of regions and of economic sectors. Democracy must be an economic model that breaks through the vicious circle, that isolates a centralist industry in the face of marginal agriculture, in which millions of Peruvians are doomed to poverty.

Democracy must be the universalization of the right to work, to health, to education, to participation. Democracy must be the genuine and only possible road to socialism. On this point the Peruvian Constitution is original. Where other constitutions begin by defining the state, ours begins by speaking of the human person.

From this standpoint, I wish to approach the second subject of my statement, the painful issue of terrorism and subversion, that in recent years has caused thousands of deaths, thousands of injuries and enormous material losses.

While repudiating totalitarian and dogmatic terrorism, we also reject the concept that the means justify the end, since such ethics lead to the acceptance of the concept that might is right.

We will fight subversion with resolute firmness but with respect for the law and for human rights. We acknowledge that subversive action has been possible not only because of lack of foresight and the absence of a well-planned social and economic policy, but because subversion has been nourished by the exasperating poverty in which millions of neglected compatriots are living.

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It is no coincidence that terrorism has arisen in the most economically depressed zones of the country. It arose in what we have called the Andean trapezoid, whose population has been subjected from colonial times to exploitative bossism and to a rigid centralist system. Millions of Peruvians were left mired in a subworld of oppression. United by the same language, mainly Quechua, united by the same culture - the Andean - and united by the same system of agricultural production, these Peruvians were neglected and injured by a state that never represented them.

Ayacucho, the region where terrorism initiated its activities, is in that Andean trapezoid. In Ayacucho, out of every thousand births, over 270 die before the age of one, whereas the average in Latin America is 73 per thousand.

In Ayacucho, 74 per cent of the population is illiterate. In some places only one out of every hundred houses has water and only five out of every hundred has electricity.

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That is Ayacucho, the historic centre of the peoples of America, where the great final battle for independence was waged. And it is precisely by taking advantage of such flagrant injustices that terrorism found a fertile ground for profiting from the despair of the people by pitting them, precariously armed, against the forces of the State. That is why we cannot pay the foreign debt at a rate in excess of 10 per cent of our exports; that is why we call for regional agreement in order to stop spending millions of dollars on weapons, millions that could save the neglected from poverty. For the incidence of terrorism and violence also feeds upon political circumstances, and in order to fight it we must understand it as not only the action of a Messianic and totalitarian group. We must take political action and make an effort to incorporate these millions of human beings into civilization by establishing democratic institutions and a State presence and by reclaiming agriculture and considering farmers as the very sustenance of our nationality.

Therefore, a close relationship exists between our economic history, our foreign debt and the poverty that promotes violence in the Andes. That is why I have dwelt at length on this subject, for in the case of my own country we may see the immediate future of other Latin American countries if poverty continues to increase and if advantage is taken of it by totalitarian and extremist forces.

Thus, we are convinced that only a new international economic order can open the way for a lasting and democratic solution to violence. All of this, of course, must be accompanied by vigorous action that will firmly oppose subversives, but within the framework of law.

Our bona fides of democratic introduction to the world is our respect for life and for the rights of individuals. Nothing justifies torture, disappearances or summary executions; barbarism must not be fought with barbarism.

True, the action of public order against anonymous and collective subversion produces reactions of irrational aggressivity, but in no case can that justify

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the suppression of facts or permitting such acts to remain unpunished. That is why the Peruvian Government has taken drastic decisions in recent days. We will energetically defend democracy with the law and with social justice, in the conviction that we are acting in the name of life.

Because we act in the name of life, we believe that politics must be an ethical reflection of respect and of morality. Thus far, the expansion of economic interests has governed the world, sacrificing peoples and individual human beings. Corporations, banks and super-Powers have oriented the world towards serving the needs of production and consumption because by controlling consumption and publicity human beings can be made to serve the logic of that economy.

I should like here to move to the third subject of my statement: narcotics traffic as an activity that corrupts institutions and degrades man. We believe that drug consumption is but the exacerbation of consumption as a logic of capital. To consume, to consume to the point of self-destruction, is the caricature of the economic system. The same greed for profit that dehumanizes capital is reflected in drug addiction, that is, the consumption of dissatisfaction. Drugs are thus revealed to be a different state of consumer capitalism.

The only raw material to have increased in value is cocaine. The only successful multinational business originating in our countries has been drug trafficking. The most advanced efforts at Andean integration have been made by drug traffickers. But to what is this due? According to liberal economic theory, production is regulated by demand, and it so happens that the main market is in the United States of America. For Peru, drug consumption is not a national problem, but I can say that, in spite of that, within the first 50 days of our Administration we have dealt the most successful blows to the international drug traffic. Twenty-two airports, three helicopter landing strips, five long-range light aircraft, hundreds of kilograms of drugs and eight large factories have been

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discovered and seized. All of that means that the consumption of drugs in the United States of America will suffer a yearly reduction of approximately 80 tons, worth \$5.6 billion. We could therefore ask the United States Administration, since we have done this in 50 days, what it is doing for the human rights of individuals who keel over in Grand Central Station and so many other locations. We might well ask when the United States Administration will act in a legal and Christian fashion to eradicate and condemn drug consumption here in the United States, which is the primary market thereby distorting our agricultural life.

A liberal economist would recommend we keep our hands off this risky issue, but we believe that the State cannot be indifferent to corruption and vice. That is why we consider the fight against drug trafficking to be our duty, because it is a crime against mankind. We are not doing it for the granting of a loan; we are not doing it to receive assistance of a few million dollars that is offered us and that we will not accept in the future; we are doing it because our own conscience is enough to defend youth, whether Peruvian, American or from any other part of the world.

However, I affirm from this rostrum that another and equally serious crime against humanity is increasing in interest rates, reducing in the prices of raw materials and its wasting of economic resources in death-dealing technologies while hundreds of millions of human beings live in poverty and are encouraged to acts of violence.

Lastly, I should like to refer to the position of Peru with regard to the rest of the world, which brings me to the fourth part of my statement. We are Latin Americans, and we are fighting for the integration of our continent in its anti-imperialist stance, because only in this way will we have a respected voice on the subject of the debt; only in this way will we be able to strengthen the multilateral treatment of the major problems facing the world; only in this way will we avoid the extension of the borders of the great Powers towards us.

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As a route towards that integration we support the peace efforts of the Contadora Group to safeguard the sovereignty and self-determination of the peoples of Central America, and as a committed continent we have, with other countries, constituted the Front for Support of Contadora, willing and united, ready to be present if a Power attempts to violate with its weapons the sovereignty of any country, for we understand that in that region the destiny of Latin Americans is also at stake.

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We affirm the need to strengthen the Andean Group, by working for a new and more up-to-date Protocol, and by proposing the expansion and more effective application of the Andean Reserve Fund, a financial organization which has already surpassed the International Monetary Fund in its disbursements within the region.

We wish to enter into bilateral compensated trade agreements that could free us from the use of hard currencies, and affirm our economic integration. We have already taken the first steps towards an agreement of this type with Brazil.

But one subject now stands out on the international scene, and that is the arms race. We are a peace-loving nation, respectful of international treaties, and we are not part of the arms race. We do not represent the strategy of any Power, nor have we been infected by the egocentric view of security that characterizes the big Powers. For them, their own security involves the insecurity of others, but the arms race results in the insecurity of all.

That is the logic and the neurosis of the weak. We believe that the best defence is an affirmation of the nation as a people, and that the social requirements of our countries mean that we must limit our expenditures on arms. That is why we propose a regional agreement in Latin America for a substantial reduction of expenditures on weapons and will spare no effort to achieve this.

I am convinced that more human beings have died because the money channeled into weapons was not used to help them, than the sum of all the dead from all the wars that have occurred in our history.

Each bullet, which in 99 per cent of all cases is used in shooting practice, represents a food ration that could have been given to a child to save him from death. But today, the sale of weapons that swiftly become obsolete is a very important part of world trade, and that renewable technology involves not only competition between our peoples but also high earnings for the weapon-selling nations which are jointly responsible for the crisis, and for the arms

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dealers. These professional death dealers are the promoters of intrigue between our nations and spur on our rivalries.

In this, as in other subjects, we have not limited ourselves to proposing collective action while waiting passively for a consensus to emerge. We believe in consensus, but we also believe in our own determination. The determination of each of our countries must be renewed: determination makes it possible for a country to set a maximum limit for debt payment; determination that compels us to subversion while respecting human rights; determination compels us to fight drug trafficking without asking for compensation. Determination also requires us to act. We have made a substantial reduction in the purchase of highly sophisticated war planes agreed with France. And, while we are not paying our debt, neither shall we use our money for the benefit of the industry of death. On the initiative of our own navy, we have dismantled war vessels, and our armed forces, in the context of a new world, are being oriented towards action for the development of the nation.

We are moved by any fear of being weak towards others. We do not seek to arm ourselves and to achieve a false sense of power in regard to others. We have confidence in the peoples of the world. We do not feel attacked by anyone, and with that confidence, and sustained by our willpower, we are ready to take action consistent with the principles I have outlined.

The poor peoples of the earth are not enemies to one another. But we do have a common enemy that has penetrated our borders and our history with poverty, with domination and with injustice. It is imperialism which divides us and which trades on our lack of unity.

In the face of this imperialism, we affirm our participation in and identification with the Non-Aligned Movement, with its authentic and substantive originality because we are not instruments in the bipolar strategy of the big Powers.

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We do not believe our peoples can in any way benefit from the Manichean East-West conflict. The only result of this conflict of fundamentalist views, is the outbreak of limited conflicts in the countries of the periphery.

We affirm the role of the principles of non-alignment maintained by Nehru, Tito and Nasser, and in Latin America by Haya de la Torre since 1924. He proposed as a principle of anti-imperialist action the integration of Latin America to build democratic socialism. On our continent, integration is the guarantee of non-alignment, which does not consist of freedom from one hegemony in order to sustain a natural alliance with the countries of the East.

This is why I reiterate from this forum that we are poor but dignified people, free and ready to unite, and that in the face of the armed power and wealth of the super-Powers we exalt the moral power of justice.

We call on a united Europe to reflect upon itself and to realize that it has more in common with the poor nations than with bipolar hegemonism. Europe is also a field of political and military strategy, its lands bristling with their own and foreign nuclear weapons; it is undermined by insecurity, and its economic development is, regardless of its own wishes, dependent on the technology and economic orientation of the great Powers.

And in the broader framework of all countries, we affirm the interdependence of North and South. We believe that the strategy defined in the 1950s and 1960s has not been implemented, and is still confining itself to such traditional categories as South-East Asia, the Middle East, the North Atlantic and the Caribbean, thus ignoring the growing globalization of decisions and of conflicts.

That is why we also address the peoples of the industrialized countries and of the major Powers, reminding them of our common humanity.

(President García Pérez)

And here I should like to present a greeting to the American people, to the people of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Kennedy and Luther King, and my tribute to its democratic conscience and the outstanding individuals here who understand Latin America and the Third World without any imperialist zeal.

And from this rostrum we greet mankind, all mankind everywhere, particularly the poorest in Africa and in Asia, who use their consciences as weapons so as not to be the passive objects of an irrational course of history and an irrational world.

My greetings go out to those who raise their eyes to the future and to justice.

We have come here to say that, in poverty but with dignity, Peru has begun to walk forward towards peace, independence and justice. In the name of the poor of the earth, in the name of God, because it is the hour for action and the time for resolve.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Peru for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. García Pérez, President of Peru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: SECOND REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/40/250/Add.1)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In paragraph 2 (a) of its second report (A/40/250/Add.1) the General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled "International relief to Mexico".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this item in its agenda?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In paragraph 2 (b) of its report the General Committee recommends that this item be considered directly in plenary meeting. May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I understand that the Latin American Group will circulate a draft resolution this afternoon and I hope very much that in view of the nature and magnitude of the tragedy which has afflicted Mexico the General Assembly will be ready to take prompt action on it. I propose to hold a meeting of the General Assembly to deal with this item tomorrow at 9.30 a.m., when the draft resolution of the Latin American Group will be submitted. I hope that we shall be able to act with the necessary expedition so as not to interfere with the programme which has been established for the general debate in the Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

## GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. STRAY (Norway): Let me begin by expressing the deep sympathy we all feel with the people of Mexico following the serious earthquakes that struck their country and their capital last week. The tragic and widespread consequences, loss of life, human suffering and material damage have made the deepest impact world-wide. The international community stands ready to help the Mexican people in the enormous tasks that now lie ahead. Let me also join the previous speakers who have congratulated you, Sir, on your election to the very important office of President of this session of the General Assembly. I feel confident that your wise and firm leadership will contribute greatly to the successful outcome of our work this autumn.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations calls for reflection and assessment of the future role of the Organization. In his report the Secretary-General says:

"We must be realistic about our difficulties and the dangers that we face.

But let us also resolve to find the ways by which, together, we can surmount them." (A/40/1, p. 16)

Norway fully concurs with the Secretary-General in his call for such a constructive and forward-looking approach. But, unfortunately, the realities today do not always correspond with the aims and objectives of the United Nations Charter. Too often we see a lack of the political will to assume collective responsibility and to respect and abide by the decisions taken. Political rhetoric and verbal condemnations have often replaced efforts and taken time from the work of seeking realistic and constructive solutions. This is harmful to the reputation of the United Nations and, even more important, it is contrary to the long-term interests of Member States. We urgently need to alter this. Member States must face up to this challenge realistically and reaffirm their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, not only in words but, above all, in deeds.

The challenges we are facing today, grave conflicts the resolution of which requires concerted international action, explain why a strengthening of the United Nations is so important. Let me comment on some of the more pressing problems with which the Organization is faced.

In South Africa the situation is explosive. Opposition to apartheid is growing every day. Apartheid represents a serious violation of basic human rights as laid down in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Apartheid also constitutes a serious threat to peace and stability in southern Africa.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

The response of the South African Government to the legitimate demands for meaningful political participation by the non-white majority has been disappointing, to say the least. One should have no illusions that the recent attempts at reforming the apartheid system will bring any fundamental changes in the system as such. They are mostly directed towards maintaining it in another form.

In July this year the South African Government declared a state of emergency, detaining hundreds of political opponents and using violent means to suppress all political manifestation. These acts of oppression must be strongly condemned.\*

The Norwegian Government firmly believes that effective international pressure must be brought to bear on the South African Government to put an end to apartheid by peaceful means. Norway has therefore repeatedly advocated that the United Nations Security Council adopt mandatory and comprehensive economic sanctions against South Africa.

In the absence of this, Norway and the other Nordic countries have adopted a number of unilateral measures in order to increase the pressure on South Africa to abolish apartheid. In 1978 the Nordic countries adopted a programme of action for this purpose, and in March this year Norway took the initiative in reviewing and extending this programme. The result of this will be that the Nordic Foreign Ministers will finalize an extended Nordic programme of action at their meeting in Oslo next month.

In addition to these Nordic measures, last March the Norwegian Government presented a national plan of action in order further to reduce Norway's trade and

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\*Mr. Moseley, (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

other economic relations with South Africa. This plan has already resulted in substantially reduced imports of many commodities from South Africa.

In the present situation even limited sanctions may have an important psychological effect on the South African Government by making it clear that the apartheid system is unacceptable to the world community. In recent months many countries have introduced various such measures. In July the Security Council, in its resolution 569 (1985), recommended that member States adopt a number of voluntary measures against South Africa. Norway welcomes these developments and urges other countries to implement similar measures. However, mandatory sanctions by the Security Council are still our primary request. Words of condemnation of apartheid are not enough.

Norway also appeals urgently to the South African Government to lift the state of emergency, to release all political prisoners and to start a dialogue with the genuine leaders of the black population with the aim of abolishing apartheid and introducing equal rights for all population groups.

The question of Namibia also constitutes a major challenge to the United Nations. My Government continues to believe that every effort must be made to achieve a negotiated settlement of the Namibian conflict in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978). We have noted in this respect the efforts made by the Secretary-General and by the United States and would encourage them to continue their endeavours. The independence of Namibia is long overdue.

The Middle East continues to be one of the most serious areas of conflict in the world. Lebanon remains in turmoil. There is no foreseeable end to the tragic armed conflict between Iraq and Iran with its meaningless loss of life and endless human suffering.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is still an unresolved issue. We have, however, witnessed some positive developments. The peace initiatives taken by King Hussein

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

of Jordan and President Mubarak of Egypt are steps forward in the search for a settlement. It is our impression that the cautious Israeli response enhances this prospect of renewing the peace process.

Peace and security in the Middle East can ultimately be achieved only through a negotiated settlement that takes due account of the interests of all the parties concerned. Such a settlement must be based on the United Nations Charter and Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and negotiations should take place directly between the parties concerned.

Peace-keeping operations constitute one of the most important and successful tools of the United Nations in its efforts to maintain international peace and security.

The situation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) illustrates, however, the great difficulties that a peace-keeping force may encounter. UNIFIL is still not in a position to fulfil its mandate. In spite of the difficult circumstances in which the Force has operated over the years, UNIFIL's presence has symbolized the will of the international community to restore peace and security and to re-establish Lebanese authority in the area in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

As a major troop-contributing country, Norway is concerned about the present unsatisfactory situation for the Force. It is of particular importance that UNIFIL be given a realistic opportunity to perform the tasks it has been assigned. UNIFIL should be allowed to deploy its troops down to the international border. The parties involved must genuinely co-operate with UNIFIL in discharging its mandate. The security of the forces must not be unduly jeopardized. Responsibility for that rests primarily with the parties; but the Security Council also has an obligation to see to it that the Force's mandate can be implemented in accordance with the Council's own decisions.

Before the present mandate expires in mid-October, careful consideration must be given to all aspects of UNIFIL's presence in southern Lebanon.

In Asia also we are faced with serious conflicts with widespread international consequences. The Soviet Union's military intervention in Afghanistan not only causes great suffering and losses for the Afghan people and increases tension in the region, but it is also one of the major issues preventing normalization between the East and the West. In spite of the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General, the Afghan problem remains unresolved. The core of the problem is the unwillingness of the Soviet Union to consider in a serious way the question of troop withdrawal. We urge the Soviet Union to reconsider its position. A solution would significantly improve international relations.

In Kampuchea we are confronted with a similar situation. Kampuchea has been occupied for nearly seven years by Vietnamese forces. The occupying Power shows no concrete willingness to contribute to a lasting and peaceful solution as drawn up by the General Assembly: first, the total withdrawal of all foreign troops and, secondly, the right of the Kampuchean people freely to choose their own government.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

In Central America, the persistent efforts of the Contadora countries offer the best hope for resolving problems in the area. The aim is to lessen the military tension and build confidence among the neighbouring countries. Durable solutions can best be sought by the countries of the region themselves. In the opinion of my Government, it is of particular importance to prevent outside interference. But other nations should render economic support and co-operation and encourage political and social reforms as a basis for a truly democratic and peaceful development.

Disarmament has remained a central and important concern of our world Organization over the years. The challenge is especially urgent in the field of nuclear weapons. It is highly significant therefore - and it must be welcomed - that the United States and the Soviet Union have resumed their talks in Geneva. Norway fully supports those negotiations as a means of obtaining substantial reductions in the number of nuclear arms and in securing the removal of the most destabilizing nuclear-weapon systems.

It is equally important to prevent an arms race in outer space.

It is our hope that the Geneva talks will result in agreements covering reductions and limitations of offensive and defensive weapon systems.

The maintenance of the non-proliferation régime is of vital importance for international peace and security. During the Third Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that aspect was strongly emphasized. Moreover, the Review Conference has demonstrated the urgent need for further measures to halt the nuclear-arms buildup and to begin nuclear disarmament.

We should continue to take concrete measures also within the United Nations framework to create a favourable climate for new progress in disarmament. Our task

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

must clearly be to broaden the areas of agreement and put the collective weight of the Member States behind our recommendations. In this way our Organization will be able to make significant contributions to our efforts in search of security at a substantially lower level of armament. Similarly, the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament should be expedited; in particular, it would be of special importance to move forward on a comprehensive ban on all nuclear tests.

For our part, we have also stated that we would be ready to support proposals to create a basis for an agreed, balanced and verifiable freeze on nuclear arms in the context of negotiations on substantial reductions.

Although substantial and balanced reductions in nuclear weapon are of primary importance, it is also vital to achieve progress in the field of conventional disarmament. We believe that a verified, lower level of forces in Europe, as a result of the Vienna negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions, would be an important contribution to stability in that region. It would also be conducive to building confidence in East-West relations. The Stockholm Conference on Disarmament in Europe has taken up this particular task. Norway considers it most important that the confidence-building measures laid down in the Final Act of Helsinki be developed further.

The commemoration this summer of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Final Act of Helsinki reminded us that many expectations relating to the process of security and co-operation in Europe have not been met. However, through persistent efforts and by taking small steps at a time it should be possible to reduce mutual suspicion and insecurity and break down the barriers between East and West in Europe.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

We regret that agreement on a comprehensive convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons has not been reached despite painstaking efforts in the Conference on Disarmament. The elimination of all chemical weapons from existing arsenals must be our aim. It is a matter of the utmost concern that such abhorrent weapons have been used in recent years and that they continue to be considered as militarily useful. Both the buildup and the spread of such weapons should be halted and a process of reduction should be started.

International stability depends to a great extent upon our ability to secure a balanced development in all parts of the world. If we succeed in reducing the present levels of armament - as we must - some of the resources released in this process should be used for the benefit of the poorer nations. For those reasons Norway puts great emphasis on and will take an active part in next year's International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

The recently concluded World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women succeeded in adopting by consensus a forward-looking strategy. This is a highly satisfactory result. After 10 years of struggle and confrontation, the Conference was able to affirm a global commitment to seek long-term changes in order to eliminate discrimination against women. We have thereby been provided with an important set of propositions that will guide our renewed efforts to help women to move into the social and economic mainstream of their societies.

The General Assembly should at this session take steps to ensure that the many recommendations are systematically followed up and monitored by the United Nations. Norway intends to participate actively in the deliberations at this session of the General Assembly in order to arrive at a comprehensive approach within the United Nations to issues related to women.

The United Nations has over the past 40 years made substantive advances in elaborating international human rights standards. The Covenants and Conventions that grew out of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights constitute the basis for promoting equal and fundamental rights for people in all parts of the world. Specific mechanisms have also been established by the United Nations to monitor compliance with these agreements. Although the existing international instruments are fairly comprehensive, improvements can and should be made. Norway supports these efforts of the United Nations and stands ready to participate actively and constructively in this field.

In spite of present international rules and regulations, violations of human rights continue to take place to an alarming extent. In many parts of the world, discrimination, arbitrary executions, torture and denial of basic political and civil rights seem to be the rule rather than the exception. The most pressing challenge facing us today in the field of human rights is the practical

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implementation of agreed standards. This obligation rests primarily with the Governments themselves within their area of responsibility. The international community, however, in particular through the relevant organs of the United Nations, has a responsibility to oppose and as far as possible prevent violations wherever they occur. This international responsibility must be exerted in a non-discriminatory way irrespective of where the violation takes place. The application of basic human rights standards must be truly universal.

A priority task must therefore be to strengthen the ability of the United Nations to deal with human rights violations. The establishment of a position such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will in our opinion be a useful instrument to this end.\*

The refugee problem is also a joint responsibility of the international community. It is important that we all contribute to its solution. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees plays a key role in the efforts to alleviate the plight of refugees, in providing humanitarian assistance and protection and in finding countries for resettlement.

International humanitarian work, and in particular assistance to refugees, is an important element and has a long tradition in Norway's foreign policy. This policy will be continued and we will do our utmost to strengthen and support the activities of the High Commissioner.

The United Nations is aptly described as a corner-stone in Norway's foreign policy. To enhance the role of the Organization is an important task for the Norwegian Government. Our aim is an organization that is effective and vigorous, that serves the needs of Member States and that plays a central role in the maintenance of international peace and security, in the promotion of economic and social

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\* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

development and in the protection of fundamental human rights. Only if our Organization can truly be said to be "a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends", as formulated in the Charter, will we be able to build a more peaceful, stable and just world.

Mr. CAPUTO (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all I should like to convey my congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election as President of this fortieth session of the General Assembly. We are greatly encouraged to see our proceedings conducted by a diplomat of such deep knowledge, skill and tact, a son of Spain, a country with which Argentina is linked by the strongest historical ties of solidarity and fellowship.

I should like also to extend my gratitude to Ambassador Paul Lusaka, who so effectively presided over the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

I cannot refrain today from expressing the profound grief of the people and the Government of Argentina over the tragedy that has afflicted the fraternal Mexican people. We offer them our sincere condolences and convey our feelings of solidarity. We have mounted an operation to give the Mexican Government all possible assistance and we hope that the difficult and tragic situation confronting it today will be swiftly remedied.

The post-war international system, which includes as its centre-piece the United Nations, is now 40 years old. Over such a long period of time our Organization has had time to find its place in the functioning of that system, and observers have had an opportunity to consolidate their views of the achievements and failures of the resulting system.

It is an axiom that the United Nations from its beginning was not able to establish an efficient system of collective security. We also know the causes of this failure. The fact is that responsibility for the maintenance of global

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peace and for the territorial integrity or political independence of the smaller nations does not lie solely with our Organization. But even with regard to the objective of peace - and indeed the other objectives of the United Nations, in particular international co-operation - it is worth restating the oft-repeated observation that everything would be much worse today if the Organization did not exist and that, undoubtedly, if it had not been founded in 1945 it would have had to be founded today.

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

It is worth stating that, 40 years after the founding of the United Nations, the picture is one of great achievements and - why hide the fact? - deep disappointments.

Among the most positive achievements of the day, we must, undoubtedly, include the process of decolonization, in which the United Nations played a leading role. The important impact of our Organization on that process was due to the fact that it provided for the colonial countries and peoples the forum of the General Assembly, where they could create an awareness of the inherent evils of colonialism and the injustice of the situation of which they were victims.

As a result of the process of decolonization, we have almost fully achieved the ideal of universality in the membership of the United Nations. It is to be hoped that this universality will become complete. That principle has always been fostered by Argentina, since the time of the League of Nations itself, and it was precisely out of loyalty to that principle that our country temporarily withdrew from that body in 1920.

But this great achievement of our Organization is tarnished by the persistence of colonial situations in various parts of the world. Namibia continues to be a tragic victim of an anachronistic system aggravated by the inhuman practice of apartheid. Other peoples and territories are still suffering under the colonial yoke.

We must also fight against new forms of colonialism that have arisen from the vast inequality that continues to exist between the technologically advanced and the developing countries. This new kind of dependence, aggravated with every passing day by the widening of the technological gulf, is reaching dangerous extremes. An increasingly important element in international co-operation within the framework of the United Nations is everything relating to the transfer of

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technology, so our Organization can assist the efforts of developing countries to achieve more satisfactory levels of efficiency.

In the field of human rights considerable progress has been made as a result of collective action. Apart from regional agreements, including the inter-American agreement signed by Argentina recently, action by the United Nations has succeeded in reducing the number and magnitude of violations of human rights in a number of parts of the world, and it is clear that international public opinion is turning against governments that engage in such violations. In so far as concerns my own country, the intervention of international organizations contributed decisively to the easing of the situations of numerous victims of political persecution and helped save others from a grim fate during a recent dramatic period of our history.

Nevertheless there is still a great deal of ground to be covered. The practice of apartheid in South Africa is an outrage in our century. Torture, imprisonment and political persecution in all its forms are in many parts of our planet deplorable daily realities.

Disarmament has received particularly great attention from our Organization. My country has done a great deal to that end in United Nations disarmament organs, in accordance with an ancient national tradition favouring the rule of law in international relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes between States. The establishment in Argentina of a democratic régime has meant a genuine return to those traditions, of which we are so proud. Accordingly the national Government has bent every effort in its attempts to help curb the arms race and to continue with the development of exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Because of this concern, our President, together with the Heads of State or Government of the countries of a number of continents, took part in a series of concerted efforts, culminating in the New Delhi Declaration, in which we expressed

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the intention to heed the demand voiced by millions who expect their leaders to represent them in their concerns and anxieties in the face of the vast capacity for destruction of existing nuclear arsenals.

Since that time my country has attempted to remain true to the content of that message. On every possible occasion we have highlighted the importance of keeping public opinion informed and alive to the threats it faces as a way of influencing the political will of those who bear primary responsibility for the production of effective disarmament agreements.

In order to take action at the national level in keeping with international obligations, Argentina has substantially reduced its military expenditures. In particular we have reaffirmed our determination - which is repeatedly proclaimed - to use nuclear technology exclusively for peaceful purposes. In a recent message to the disarmament Conference, President Alfonsín stated that:

"with regard to the nuclear question, my country will be a civilian nuclear State. This was supported when the Argentine people approved, in the course of national elections, a programme supporting the use of nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes."

Almost 25 years ago, to avoid the consequences of the bipolarization of the world, the Non-Aligned Movement was founded in Belgrade. I should like to mark its relevance to this fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, because in fact the principal arena for the activities of that movement is none other than our world Organization because we understand that its original principles, in so far as they are respected and enforced, make it an important force for moderation between the positions of the two military major alliances. But they should always be guided precisely by true principles of non-alignment: equidistance between the blocs, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries,

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the peaceful settlement of disputes, the juridical equality of States, and rejection of all forms of domination.

My country is going through a difficult but exciting stage of its history marked by the Argentine people's recovery of its rights and freedoms within the democratic system of life and government necessitated by our evolution as a nation and our characteristics as a society. The Government I represent emanates from the genuine will of the Argentinians and is leading the reconstruction of the country, and its foreign policy reflects the same values that guide its internal policy. Argentinians have made sacrifices to ensure peace, the right to self-determination, the dignity of man, the right to life, the rational and peaceful settlement of disputes. These are the specific needs of every Argentinian and the lasting aims of our nation.

But history has shown that not only efforts and the passage of time produce the true consolidation of political independence. One hundred and fifty years before our Asian and African brothers, we in Latin America formally achieved our liberty. Nevertheless, like them, we remain subject to many different forms of dependence which limit our political capacity to decide on our own destiny.

It is not just a matter of material or economic conditions. The Latin American experience has shown how much we are affected by the confrontation between the major Powers, which even limits our capacity to control our own affairs. In Latin America, many phenomena destructive of the political system cannot adequately be explained by domestic causes, nor by flaws inherent in our political systems. In fact, those internal weaknesses are exacerbated because of external influences and the conflict between the super-Powers.

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

Latin America is now affected in one way or another by the grave situation in Central America. The constant incidents in the frontier region between Nicaragua and Costa Rica have brought about a serious worsening of relations between those two countries, creating such serious tension as to result in a marked decline in efforts to create the necessary atmosphere of trust between the States involved in the conflict, the essential prerequisite for achieving a comprehensive agreement to put an end to the crisis.

We should be aware of the risk involved in postponing a balanced and realistic solution to the points of disagreement. The Argentine Republic believes that positions based on intolerance will only lessen the possibility of bringing about an agreement that is just and honourable for all the parties in the conflict; they will, on the other hand, encourage the use of military options.

The Foreign Ministers of the member countries of the Contadora Group met on 24 and 25 August in Cartagena, where they were joined by the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Peru, Uruguay and Argentina, countries which have constituted a support group, whose objectives are to support and give effect to the peace-making activities of the Contadora Group. We are absolutely convinced of the importance of that initiative, which reflects the political will and capacity for concerted action of Latin America to achieve, from its own standpoint, a negotiated and lasting solution to the Central American conflict.

I should like to repeat my Government's concern over the situation in the Middle East and to endorse the statements made on that serious matter by the Argentine Democratic Government, particularly with regard to the extent to which it is possible to find a just and lasting solution if, on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, the following conditions can be effectively met: first, respect for the right to

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

existence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the countries of the region; secondly, the right of all countries of the region to secure, internationally recognized frontiers; and, thirdly, the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories.

The Palestinian question is another cause of great concern to my Government. We again repeat that it cannot be resolved properly and equitably without support for the actions and initiatives originating at the United Nations, based on international law and the Charter of our Organization. The essential objective of those actions and initiatives is that the Palestinian people should be able to exercise its inalienable right to self-determination and independence, the establishment of its own national State and its own legitimate representation in the negotiations that must be begun to that end.

My Government is also following with growing concern the development of events in Africa, and has given practical effect to its rejection of the policies of racial discrimination, aggression and domination which have been imposed upon the peoples of southern Africa.

The need for a rapid and just solution to that grave conflict is perhaps the most urgent and real challenge facing the United Nations today. It is a challenge that has already existed for 40 years, and its continuation damages the credibility and efficiency of our Organization. For four decades now South Africa has violated with impunity fundamental principles and concrete provisions of the Charter, obstinately refusing to eradicate apartheid totally and for ever, persisting in its illegal occupation of Namibia and carrying out repeated acts of aggression against neighbouring States. The grave events that have been occurring daily in South Africa confirm that the policies of Pretoria are a threat to peace and security in the region. An appropriate reaction to that behaviour is essential,

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not only to put an end to racism and South African expansionism, but also to preserve the political and moral order represented by our Organization.

Argentina repeats its strong condemnation and repudiation of apartheid and its unswerving support for the right of the Namibian people to self-determination and independence in a united Namibia. Together with the vast majority of the international community, we believe that the time has come for the United Nations to adopt, through the Security Council, urgent and effective measures to increase the effective pressure on Pretoria.

For our part, during the past year we have taken concrete steps against South Africa in the diplomatic, economic, cultural and sporting fields. Most recently, the Congress of my country ratified the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. As long as apartheid and the illegal occupation of Namibia continue, South Africa can only expect our support to grow for the legitimate struggle of the oppressed peoples of South Africa and Namibia to establish free, democratic and egalitarian societies in southern Africa.

My Government once again denounces the continuation of the illegal occupation of part of Argentine territory by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In spite of the repeated appeals of the international community to the parties to find a just, peaceful and final solution to the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, the United Kingdom continues to refuse to engage in serious and comprehensive negotiations, in its attempt to consolidate an anachronistic colonial situation. In systematically opposing the implementation of specific United Nations resolutions on the question of the Malvinas Islands, it is also opposing the whole policy followed by the international Organization to put an end to colonialism in the world.

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

The Argentine Democratic Government has on many occasions expressed its firm determination to solve the controversy by peaceful means. It has therefore made concrete offers for the resumption of negotiations, but so far there has been no positive response.

Furthermore, the British Government has made public its refusal to include in any negotiations the subject of sovereignty, which is the very source of the dispute and to which are linked all the other questions affecting relations between the two countries.

In addition to that intransigence, a factor worsening the situation is the excessive British military presence in the south Atlantic. That militarization not only poses a threat to Argentine territory, but affects the whole region, as was recently established by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States.

The construction of a strategic airport in the islands and the extraordinary naval build-up jeopardize the stability of an area that forms part of the Latin American nuclear-weapon-free zone. No one can deny today that those British actions have transformed the Malvinas Islands into an area of strategic interest, drawing in the global conflict between East and West.

Without prejudice to what I have just said, as a clear demonstration of my Government's desire for peace and its negotiating spirit, a little over two months ago we once again proposed to the British Government the start of conversations, in response to the lifting of the commercial restrictions unilaterally imposed by the United Kingdom in 1982.

The fact is that for us relations between the two Governments and countries can be developed on a solid basis only to the extent that the central problem between us - the sovereignty dispute over the islands - is not ignored. To ignore that subject would be to base any restoration of relations on a fiction.

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Furthermore, the Argentine Government, which does not consider it necessary to make a formal declaration of the cessation of hostilities, since there was never a declaration of war, and the cessation has been recognized in a number of resolutions of the United Nations, nevertheless declared, on 10 July this year:

"if this matter" -

a formal declaration of cessation of hostilities -

is viewed by the United Kingdom Government as the remaining obstacle to the initiation of negotiations, the Argentine Government would be prepared to make the declaration as soon as the United Kingdom Government agrees to initiate the general negotiations repeatedly recommended by the international community." (A/40/478, p. 3)

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

In the circumstances, I should like to repeat here, in this hall, our invitation to the Government of the United Kingdom to resume negotiations to find a solution to the sovereignty dispute between our two nations, a dispute which is obstructing the normalization of our relations.

In this connection, and as clear evidence that we have no conflict with the country but with the Government, just a few days ago in Paris President Alfonsín met with the leader of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary opposition in the United Kingdom, the Right Honourable Neil Kinnock, MP, and they both agreed:

"... on the need for the re-establishment of diplomatic and commercial relations between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom. To that end, they expressed their desire that negotiations should be initiated to explore the means of resolving the outstanding problems between the two countries, including all aspects of the future of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

"They also jointly stressed the importance for the inhabitants of those islands of effectively guaranteeing the preservation of their customs, their ways of life and traditions, as well as respect for forms of administration, education and social and economic organization. In that connection, Mr. Kinnock stressed the fundamental importance of taking fully into account the interests of the inhabitants of the islands, and President Alfonsín pointed to the range and the extent of the rights guaranteed by Argentina's democratic constitution." (A/40/662, p. 3)

That is the position of the Argentine Government with regard to a question which calls for a prompt and final solution. For that to happen we need a substantial gesture on the part of the Government of the United Kingdom which would demonstrate a genuine wish to put an end to the controversy.

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

The crisis which has been affecting the economy of the developing countries has grown worse. This situation is fraught with the most serious consequences, particularly for the peoples of our countries; because the right to peace is indissolubly linked to the right to development.

We have been vigorously advocating a total restructuring of the international economic relations, a structure governed by equality and justice. Nevertheless, only a few countries in the North understand that sustained social and economic progress of the South would be of benefit to them. In contrast, there are many countries which maintain an attitude of historical short-sightedness which is reflected in the persistence of protectionist policies, in the substantial reduction of the flow of capital for financing development and an increasing deterioration in the terms of trade. Therefore, we repeat that we are not looking for charity, but for the concrete will to find solutions which would be to our mutual advantage and which could put an end to this world recession.

The situation is particularly serious in some countries represented here because they have suffered from extremely severe climatic conditions which have caused hunger and disease. In other countries, difficulties have been compounded by payment obligations deriving from an external debt that was contracted in a chaotic international market and at real interest rates which have been the highest in history.

In Latin America, together with the Central American crisis, the other major question of concern to our region is precisely that of the external debt of the countries of our region. Of course, this is a subject which affects almost the whole developing world, but the form it has assumed in Latin America has probably hit that region harder than other regions. Indeed, a large proportion of our external debt is connected with floating rates of interest. In practice, this

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

has meant for my country, for example, that over the last four years the external debt has increased by 50 per cent as a result of changes in the rates of interest which, as is only too clear, are entirely outside our control and independent of our will.

In recent years our region has seen exceptional political change. Almost all our countries have put authoritarian régimes behind them and, after a prolonged struggle for freedom and dignity, democracy is now flourishing in our part of the Americas. But if this experience of ours shows that the people are mobilizing in the name of liberty to achieve democracy, history teaches us that they are also mobilizing in the name of well being to maintain democracy. In other words, growth is directly linked with the stability of this hard won democracy. The truth is that this growth is seriously jeopardized by our capacity to generate resources. This is particularly true if a large proportion of those resources are swallowed up precisely by payment of the interest on the debt.

Our countries are now being asked to put into effect internal adjustment programmes, which are frequently necessary for the proper organization of our economies. But those programmes, which call for austerity and effort, to be successful also require prospects of growth, and hence well being. It is the expectation of growth which makes sense of the current efforts. Therefore it is impossible to conceive of a stable situation in which austerity would not be accompanied by growth, or at least by the hope of growth. Thus, the question of resources for development is something today which has a clear cut political corollary, because the ultimate stabilization of our democracy would depend on our obtaining those resources. In the circumstances, the problem of external debt becomes an eminently practical and political problem, and by that I mean to say that although it is vital to continue the debate with regard to the need for a new

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

world economic order, keeping alive our demand for international justice, no one can reasonably suppose that we shall achieve immediate results from such a debate. However, our countries need urgent solutions which, while supporting our general demands, will make it possible to solve the specific and very serious blockages which exist today to our growth. In other words, there is a time for global debate and a time for exploring immediate measures. We think those two approaches are not contradictory and that, furthermore, they are actually complementary. But what does seem a problem to us is the fact that general discussion prevents us from making progress in the search for solutions which would make it possible to retrieve a proportion of the resources which today are earmarked for the payment and external debt servicing. It is vital, therefore, that the industrial countries should also shoulder some responsibility and undertake to eliminate the disruptive factors which have caused the present crisis of indebtedness. This was the sense of the appeal issued by the 11 Latin American countries which subscribed to the Cartagena consensus of June 1984.

The General Assembly has decided to adopt on its agenda of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations an item entitled "The United Nations for a better world". Therefore, we should ask ourselves on this occasion what is this better world to which we aspire and how would we like to see it brought about.

We are convinced that the peoples of the world aspire to a future of peace which would mean more than the absence of war and conflict. What they want above all is a situation which would make it possible for them to enjoy the fruits and benefits of peace, which is to be understood as a condition for the attainment and affirmation of the rights of the individual. Without the guarantee of those rights, efforts to improve standards of living would be incomplete and limited. We therefore believe that commitment to an ethical system free from strategic concepts

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

should be the source of concerted political action. The better world to which we all aspire depends, internally, upon the building of democratic societies, the rule of law and tolerance. Hence, we should like to see a just and stable international order without the distortions of power politics and without the imbalances generated by a purely financial view of economic interaction.

(Mr. Caputo, Argentina)

The better world we see is based on three fundamental principles of civilized coexistence: juridical equality of States, non-intervention in internal affairs and the self-determination of peoples.

The better world we all hope for requires a new consensus for development which would make possible mutual benefit from trade and promote the well-being of the peoples.

The ways and means of achieving this better world remain today, as they were 40 years ago, the elimination of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race; recognition of the right to independence of peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation and the right to territorial integrity and social and economic development; and the peaceful solution of disputes between States by means of dialogue and negotiation.

These are the principles of the Charter, whose fortieth anniversary we are celebrating.

We understand the difficulties in achieving the objectives of the Charter and we are not unaware of the fact that we have not been able to succeed in this over the last 40 years, but we are mindful of the invaluable contribution of the United Nations to the cause of peace, decolonization and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The political determination of the Argentine Government to help ensure that this contribution is greater and more profound, to the benefit of all, constitutes one of the reasons for our firm commitment to the United Nations. The other, even more important reason is our commitment to the value system based on the Charter, without which it would not be possible to ensure a future of dignity for all the peoples of the international community.

Mr. GAMA (Portugal) (spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation): Mr. President, as the United Nations celebrates the fortieth anniversary of its creation, I should like to convey to you the great satisfaction and the feeling of deep confidence it gives the Portuguese Government that the work of this General Assembly will be conducted by an experienced diplomat, whose brilliant career my country has witnessed through close, friendly and fruitful co-operation. Moreover, by your election the international community is paying a tribute to your country. The geographical, historical and cultural ties that closely link Portugal and Spain have now been given new expression in the accession of both countries to the European Communities, which will entail renewed co-operation and understanding between the two countries.

Thus, Mr. President, you can be assured of the full and sincere co-operation of the Portuguese delegation in the fulfilment of your high mission.

I should also like to express here our appreciation of the endeavours of your eminent predecessor, Ambassador Paul Lusaka, who represents a country with which we have close ties of friendship and whose commitment to the achievement of international peace and security, especially in such hotbeds of tension as the region of southern Africa, we deeply appreciate.

My country would also like to pay a tribute to our Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, whose constant dedication in difficult circumstances to the high office that has been entrusted to him deserves the full confidence and deep appreciation of all of us here today.

I wish to assure the Mexican Government and the Mexican people at this painful time of the full solidarity of the Portuguese nation. Given the close ties of friendship that link our two countries, the Portuguese people have been particularly affected and saddened by the suffering and the mourning now being

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

endured by the Mexican people. I should like to express here the sincere wish and the willingness of my country to participate, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in helping to meet the needs and promote the reconstruction of the affected areas.

It is a real honour for me to lead for the third time the Portuguese delegation to a session of the General Assembly, especially this year, when we are celebrating not only the creation of the United Nations 40 years ago but also the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly of a series of resolutions and declarations, including resolution 1514 (XV), which have made a decisive contribution to the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination. My country attaches special importance to those decisions and in the last decade has felt partially responsible for them.

Allow me to point out that this year Portugal celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of its admission as a Member of this Organization. This is not the right place or the right time for a full analysis and assessment of the participation of my country in the activities of the United Nations during this period. It was only in 1974, with the establishment of democracy in Portugal, that we set aside the backward custom of taking refuge in concepts and principles that were clearly contradictory to those enshrined in the Charter. Only then did we put an end to our diplomatic isolation and begin to demonstrate by our actions a constant concern for respect for the basic principles set forth in the Charter, which are the moral and legal foundations of this Organization. We attach particular importance to recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination, respect for human rights and, lastly, respect for and promotion of the application of the principle of the prevention of the use or the threat of use of force in the settlement of international conflicts.\*

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\* Mr. Guissou (Burkina Faso), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

We are fully convinced that these actions and motivations, which, furthermore, reflect the principles established in the constitutional law of my country, will be expanded and strengthened with Portugal's accession to the European Economic Community on 1 January next.

European integration is a primary national project which has progressively won the firm and sustained support of the immense majority of all Portuguese political sectors. Underlying this consensus has always been the premise that Portugal, open to contact with other civilizations, is a country whose geography, history and culture remain basically European. Through its membership in the European Economic Community, Portugal is incorporating itself into a region that has often been a pioneer and is still a major stronghold of the basic principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of this Organization. Thus we shall contribute to the enlargement of the Community, as a regional and especially dynamic body, carrying out a thorough search for new forms of development and adaptation to the constantly evolving international scene. Portugal will be fully open to promoting, identifying and strengthening dialogue with other regions of the world, namely, with African and Latin American countries. In the light of this pledge, within the framework of the Communities, my country will become in the short term an increasingly important link in the relationships with those regions of the world. May I just mention, for example, the advantages which can accrue from the right use of the provisions of the Lomé III Convention in the field of co-operation with African countries.

With a special role to play in the North-South dialogue, Portugal will certainly help to bring about greater sensitivity on the part of other Member States in the interest of the promotion and fostering of co-operation with Africa and Latin America. We may perhaps help to pave the way for a new breakthrough,

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while participating in the achievement of the long-desired new balance, especially in the more sensitive hotbeds of international tension, thus establishing the necessary conditions for peace and development.

Concerned as it is about the North-South dialogue, my country cannot but call the attention of its European partners to the meaning and importance of the concepts that have inspired the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

A few days ago I had the opportunity of participating, as a "guest", in a meeting of Ministers of the Movement held in Luanda, a meeting that was a clear example of what I have just described.

The conflicts and tensions that have beset the international community in our day, particularly the striking lack of progress in the achievement of harmonious relationships between the northern and southern hemispheres, have seriously impaired the socio-economic situation of the developing countries.

At present, in spite of the slight improvement in a few industrialized economies, the impact of the world recession of the early 1980s still afflicts many of the third-world countries. We can see with great concern and distress that, in spite of its endeavours, the world still has a very long way to go before winning the battle against poverty.

The most serious consequences of this situation can be found in Africa, where the great majority of countries, particularly south of the Sahara, are facing extremely acute economic problems, which have been exacerbated by continuing drought and desertification that have been worsening every year. The situation prevailing in Africa has brought about a greater awareness of the international community; that has been reflected in initiatives taken in all parts of the world, aimed at alleviating the more dramatic aspects of that suffering. My Government stresses on this occasion our appreciation of the efforts carried out by the Secretary-General within the framework of the United Nations to mobilize the Member States and to make the best use of the help that has been provided. We also pay a tribute to the Governments of the African countries, which have spared no effort in their struggle for the achievement of decisive, strong and long-lasting forms of development.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

In the past few years we have learned that the world interdependence in which we all live requires the existence of solidarity among nations. And all the members of the international community, with no exception whatsoever, have to participate in such solidarity, assuming their respective responsibilities in the pursuit of a sustained and vigorous economic growth, and in the promotion of an international economic community in which realistic multilateral co-operation, geared towards action, should play a fundamental role. Portugal, as a European country at an intermediate stage of development, has spared no effort to shoulder its own responsibilities in this context.

Furthermore, my country has also contributed to the search for solutions to the problems that beset the world economy, participating in different forums in an effort to close the gap that separates the third world from the developed countries and contributing to the creation of the necessary consensus on money and finance, trade, debt problems and transfer of financial resources.

The world should spare no effort in the search for just and long-lasting solutions to the problems I have mentioned, problems that deeply concern the entire international community. The urgency of such solutions is clearly demonstrated by the negative effects that practically all these problems have in the field of human rights.

The world is increasingly aware of the fact that the consequences of the violation of human rights and human freedoms have led in several regions of our world to social and political instability, often resulting in armed conflicts. The recent events in South Africa are a clear example of the violation of human rights in its ultimate consequences. But the same type of dangerous situation can be found in other parts of the world, where the violation of human rights is caused not by internal pressures such as apartheid but by external interference. The case

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of Afghanistan, with such great international political implications, can be clearly placed within such a context: its people are still suffering from the presence of foreign troops with powerful and cruel means of repression and destruction.

We are firmly convinced that only by applying uniform criteria can we make an analysis and assessment of the different types of violations of human rights which would make it possible to denounce and eliminate more or less covert cases of violations of such rights. We firmly believe also that this an imperative for overcoming the misleading concept that State sovereignty can be invoked to prevent international protection of human rights.

Similarly, we are firmly convinced that in the final analysis international peace and security can be fully preserved only if they are based on social justice and on respect for individual rights. Furthermore, they should rest on the premise that the development of different societies and their adaptation to the requirements of progress and development should take place in accordance with the free will of those directly concerned. In this framework, full respect for the right to self-determination of the individual and of peoples is a key element of international life. Equally important is respect for the integrity of the human being, for his right to be granted civil and political freedoms and to enjoy economic, social and cultural living conditions which allow for self-fulfilment, without discrimination. Any disregard for these principles of international law, which underlie the United Nations, places the people whose dignity and integrity have been violated in inhuman environments and sometimes even makes them exiles in their own country, or often gives them no other choice than to renounce living in their motherland, thus forcing them to take refuge in foreign lands.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

We should also pay special attention to all the different regions of the world where the human being is a prisoner of poverty. In an environment shadowed by hunger, illiteracy and the lack of minimum economic, social and cultural standards, civil and political rights can hardly be exercised in adequate conditions. The human being is entitled to development, and even though development must involve the entire international community, it is essential to bear in mind that man himself is the reason for such development and that States have the primary responsibility to ensure the full participation of their respective populations in such a process, without any kind of discrimination against the more vulnerable sectors of society. In view of this, Portugal refuses to accept the lack of existence of a new international economic order as a pretext for the constant and systematic derogation of civil and political rights.

"Participation, development and peace" was precisely the theme of the world Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Nairobi. With its important document "Strategies for the Future", the Conference made a valuable contribution to the search for the effective and equal integration of women in the entire gamut of activities both at the national and the international level. Portugal will constantly take into account the recommendations of the Conference in its endeavours to promote the full participation of women in national life.

Full participation and equality are also the theme of the Youth Year that we are celebrating this year and that will give the United Nations and the Member States one more opportunity to reaffirm the importance of the dignity and self-esteem of all human beings, regardless of race, sex or ethnic origin.

Portugal, as a country with a high rate of emigration, also intends to

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continue to participate actively in the activities of the working group of this General Assembly entrusted with drafting a convention on the human rights of all migrant workers and their families - a programme which deserves our full appreciation.

Before turning to another subject, and bearing in mind that the rights of peoples are a part of human rights, I should like to draw attention to the question of East Timor.

In pursuance of resolution 37/30, adopted in 1982, the General Assembly entrusted the Secretary-General with the mandate of trying to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the problem of East Timor. Since then we have given all our support to the efforts of the Secretary-General. The results of those efforts can be seen in his most recent progress report, which has just been published, in which he describes in detail the substantive talks that have taken place since November 1984 and during this year in New York between the Secretary-General and his representatives and the representatives of Indonesia and of Portugal. In these talks humanitarian, religious and cultural questions have been discussed and there have been accomplishments in the solution of individual problems such as the repatriation of former Portuguese civil servants. The religious freedom of the populations, the preservation of the cultural heritage of the people of East Timor and the social and economic living conditions have been given special attention. For our part, we have insisted and continue to insist on the importance of respect for human rights in the Territory since we believe that all our expectations in this respect are still far from met.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

We celebrate this year the fortieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations and we have already celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on decolonization. The Territory of East Timor is on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. We firmly believe in respect for the fundamental principle of the self-determination of peoples, which is the core of the question of East Timor. Thus far, the right to self-determination has not been granted to the people of East Timor. And in this process of self-determination, in which the main beneficiary is precisely the people of the Territory in question, that people cannot be ignored when decisions are being made about its own destiny. We can say that the results already achieved in these talks are important, since such a wide range of problems has been dealt with, and we can only reaffirm here once more our support for the actions of the Secretary General in the fulfilment of his mandate.

We have already made clear on several occasions what our goals are: that is, the search for a dignified solution that will allow for full respect for the religious and cultural identity of the people of East Timor; for the full satisfaction of their legitimate aspirations; for the improvement of humanitarian conditions and for total respect for their right to self-determination. We are open to concerted action, an essential element in the settlement of international conflicts. We sincerely hope that some of the results already achieved, and the settlement of further difficulties, will lead us on the only path that we consider viable, and that, as stated by the Secretary-General in his report, the present constructive spirit that prevails in the talks will allow us to move on to the next stage, where other questions should be discussed, keeping in mind the achievement of a "just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement".

When referring to human rights, I cannot but recall that ten years ago these rights were clearly recognized and enshrined in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, to which my country was a party and which convened together 33 States

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of different political positions which pledged themselves to the implementation of specific measures that would eliminate misunderstandings and violations of the obligation of States to respect certain inalienable rights. An assessment of these developments has now been made in Helsinki, just as it had been before in Belgrade and in Madrid, to find out exactly how far apart are the theoretical commitments undertaken by States, the actual implementation of measures, and the achievement of practical results. Much to our distress, the conclusion was that the stage of implementation of the measures established in the Final Act was far from being reached. The same situation was noted again at the recent expert meeting held in Ottawa on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Nevertheless, Portugal, which has fully endorsed the spirit of Helsinki, sincerely hopes that the next Conference in Vienna will make a decisive contribution to this process begun ten years ago.

I should now like to refer to some of the problems affecting today's political world scene, that are matters of special interest and deep concern for my country.

Portugal, as a European country which has close geographical, historical and cultural links to Africa, cannot but express its great concern at the recent events taking place in South Africa. These events, that have acquired increasingly worrying proportions, have justly aroused the indignation and condemnation of the entire international community.

The position adopted by Portugal towards the problems that beset the populations of that country is well known to all, both within the United Nations and in the framework of its relationships with other countries, particularly our future partners in the European Economic Community (EEC). We clearly and decisively denounce and condemn the total lack of moral principles that characterizes all apartheid and bantustan systems, which sow the seeds of the serious internal strife with which we are all familiar. Portugal's staunch

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

opposition to any form of racism or racial discrimination is a key element in our behaviour and our understanding of the world. We thus consider inevitable, and it extremely urgent, that the South African Authorities should embark, without fear or hesitation, on a sincere effort to open dialogue with all the different communities of their country, thus creating the necessary conditions for all its inhabitants to have equal access to political life, to freedom, to work and to social justice. Only after having achieved these conditions will the South Africans of any community be able to consider themselves free and full-fledged citizens of the South African nation.

Thus, from this international rostrum, my Government urges the Government of South Africa to begin as soon as possible, with decisiveness and flexibility, an open dialogue with the leaders of all the communities that are part of the country so as to strike a fruitful agreement.

Similarly, I should also like to express to this Assembly the concern of my country at the delay in the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Namibia, as a result of the non-implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, in particular Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Portugal has paid special attention, and has always given full support, to the efforts carried out by the front-line States aimed at persuading South Africa to set aside its deplorable stance of confrontation - such as the recent invasion of Angola - and to take a constructive and flexible stand that would allow for a faster and more satisfactory solution of the problem. Thus, we not only hope that the South African authorities will decide promptly to work towards internal appeasement, but will also do everything in their power to put an end to the illegal occupation of Namibia, in full pursuance and endorsement of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

The tense situation in the Middle East, a region to which Portugal is particularly sensitive, given its special historical and cultural links to the Arabnation, has not improved. On the contrary, it has not only persisted, but has even deteriorated.

Let us consider the development of the situation in Lebanon alone, where the confrontation of rival factions has persisted with increasing violence, and where acts of terrorism are perpetrated at a dramatically growing pace against both national and foreign targets. Portugal has since the beginning supported with material means the efforts undertaken by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and we trust that the re-establishment of the necessary balance will lead to national reconciliation through dialogue among the different Lebanese communities. For this to be possible, it also seems essential to us that all foreign military troops withdraw from the Territory unless the Lebanese Government explicitly requests their presence.

We also believe that the solution to the crisis in Lebanon lies mainly in the achievement of peace in the entire region, and this in turn will depend not only upon the recognition of the legitimate rights of the people of Palestine, including the right to self-determination and to a homeland, but also upon the recognition of the right of the State of Israel to its own existence and security.

In this framework, the creation of a platform for negotiation between Jordan and Palestine is an encouraging sign. We believe it can make a positive contribution to a dialogue among all the parties involved in the conflict.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

Another source of concern for my country is the prolongation of the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq, where the praiseworthy efforts of the Secretary-General and the repeated appeals of the United Nations have been unsuccessful in reaching practical results. In fact, the use of inhumane weapons has been escalating dramatically. Freedom of navigation in the Gulf is still seriously threatened, as are the economies of the two countries. The international community should therefore redouble its efforts to persuade the leaders of both countries to launch negotiations aimed at putting an end to the serious conflict.

Portugal also views with great concern the development of the situation in Central America. My country firmly believes that the solution to the conflicts in that region must be found in an essentially regional settlement, through dialogue among the various factions involved. That dialogue should draw an equitable balance among the different interests in question that could lead to respect for the integrity of boundaries, to a decrease in the level of armaments and to the establishment of free and pluralistic societies.

In this context I would like to recall that last September in San Jose, Costa Rica, my country participated in a meeting of the Governments of Central America, the countries of the Contadora Group, the countries members of the European Economic Community (EEC) and Spain. At that meeting the participating Governments studied means to reinforce not only political dialogue among the countries of the region but also co-operation between those countries and the EEC at the economic and social levels.

Portugal sincerely hopes that the nations of Central America will pull together all their efforts of negotiation within the framework defined by the Contadora Group, which has been joined by four additional democratic nations of Latin America, in order to reach a global solution that will at last put an end to the conflicts that harm them internally and that have been a source of division.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

In addition to the questions I have mentioned, I would also like to refer to the urgent need for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Kampuchea and for the re-establishment of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of that country. I would also like to refer to another situation that affects the stability of the Asian continent and that can be solved only through a dialogue that will prove conducive to a peaceful reunification of Korea. The entire Korean people legitimately aspires to be represented in the United Nations.

This enumeration of some of the hotbeds of international tension and the observations I have just made seem to have a logical corollary, namely, that now, more than ever before, the international community should find ways to achieve a more peaceful and a more secure world. For this reason, in the context of East-West relations, my country considers of utmost interest the decision by the United States and the Soviet Union to resume and proceed with the Geneva talks that have been placed on hold since 1983. Although we are aware of the difficulties such negotiations entail, we believe that the fact that they are being resumed is in itself extremely encouraging.

Furthermore, Portugal, an essentially peaceful country, cannot help but be very interested in problems relating to nuclear and conventional disarmament and in the reinforcement of international peace and security.

As we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of our Organization, I should like to reaffirm here my country's renewed confidence in the greatest international institution and in all its subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies. This pledge of renewed confidence is no more than the reflection of our belief that the Charter of the United Nations is the document that today best enshrines the highest principles of international law and that it will in the future be the instrument that will most faithfully reflect the ideals of universality shared by all mankind.

(Mr. Gama, Portugal)

Although the achievements and objectives of the United Nations have not matched the ideals of the founders of the Organization, it is nonetheless true that as the main, if not the only, representative of universality our Organization will, in the end, find the means to adjust to the diplomatic, political and spiritual requirements of our day. Portugal reaffirms and renews here at this time its confidence in the United Nations.

Mr. NZEYIMANA (Burundi) (interpretation from French): I believe that the natural disaster of such terrible extent that has just afflicted Mexico has moved each and everyone of us here. I would therefore like to join my voice with those of other heads of delegation in expressing the deep sympathy of Burundi to the Government and the people of Mexico, particularly in view of the friendly relations that link our two countries. I extend to them our greatest sympathy.

The United Nations is about to commemorate its fortieth year of existence with an exceptionally high level of participation by its Members. It is not merely a question of drawing up the balance-sheet of the successes achieved here and there and of the shortcomings of the Organization since its founding, but it is, above all, a question of taking advantage of what we have learned in order better to ensure its future, which is bound up with that of mankind itself.

The Head of State of my country, His Excellency Colonel Jean Baptiste Bagaza, his Government and the people of Burundi attach particular importance to this session, which should be the session at which all States Members come together to ensure the survival and progress of mankind. It is for that reason that Burundi was one of the first this year to organize, at the domestic level, a series of activities to heighten the awareness of public opinion with regard to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

It is undoubtedly fortunate that this session of the General Assembly, which will, I trust, have an effective and historic role to play, should be presided over

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

by a man such as the Permanent Representative of Spain, a man with the irreplaceable qualities of ability and broad experience. My delegation welcomes the fact that a son of Spain - a country rich in age-old traditions and a founding Member of our Organization, a country with which my own enjoys excellent relations - is guiding our work.

I should also like to pay a well-deserved tribute to the President of the thirty-ninth session, His Excellency Ambassador Paul Firmino Lusaka, the Permanent Representative of Zambia to our Organization, for the outstanding work he carried out during his term of office. In the exercise of his duties he performed difficult tasks and lived up to the trust the international community had unanimously placed in him by electing him President last September. That distinguished diplomat is indeed the pride of Africa and of the sister Republic of Zambia.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

Lastly, I should like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the many positive, untiring efforts he has made throughout this past year to encourage the international community to maintain or restore a climate of international peace and co-operation. His devotion, his availability and his eclectic spirit, demonstrated at critical moments some of which saw the future of humanity endangered, deserve to be highlighted here.

Even a superficial analysis of the present international situation reveals a world in disarray, marked by various tensions and conflicts, a universe being crushed beneath the burden of innumerable economic difficulties, a hostile environment characterized by the arms race, the persistence of the policy of blocs and, as a corollary, the gradually dwindling hope of maintaining permanent détente and the inexorable growth of the spectre of war. These are the three main concerns of my delegation at this time: conflict and tension throughout the world, the critical economic situation and the threat which the arms race poses to development. Since the thirty-ninth session, there has been no real improvement in these three areas.

This sombre picture is the complete antithesis of the goals and aspirations laid down for the United Nations by its founders 40 years ago.

Arising out of the ashes of a devastating war which had sown hatred and desolation throughout the world, the survivors of the Second World War hoped only to make peace and collective security last for ever, to do away with dependence, exploitation and the denial of right and justice in order to rebuild a more viable world in which interdependence and respect among nations would establish new relationships of co-operation and mutual assistance.

Forty years of experience - some good, some not so good - has led to a United Nations which is very different from the vision that the founders entertained in 1945.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

From the viewpoint of history, it is certainly significant that the establishment of the United Nations was the logical outcome of close co-operation between the major Powers and many other countries in a period of armed conflict. The differences in their political systems and the disparity in their levels of social organization were major constraints, but they did not interfere with the hopes of achieving victory during that temporary coalition born in a time of trouble. This proves that the international community was able and still is able today to establish beneficial co-operation to save future generations from the threat of war.

It was this noble idea that inspired the signers of the San Francisco Charter, who committed themselves on behalf of all the peoples of the earth. All the principles and plans adopted at that time retain their full importance today, as some of us have already stressed.

If we glance back over the past 40 years of our Organization we have to say that in a world torn and divided the United Nations has not been able to prevent a whole series of armed conflicts in various parts of the world. It has, however, been able to help to avert a world-wide cataclysm by repeatedly acting as a buffer between the various protagonists, offering them an adequate forum in which to discuss differences between nations and machinery that has at times been useful in mediating between belligerents.

There is increasing agreement that the United Nations is still the ideal framework for the peaceful settlement of differences and conflicts between Members. The major problems that arise are the result of the main weakness of the system: the structures and machinery in place would be largely operational if the political

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will exist among States, particularly the most powerful States, to find a peaceful settlement to disputes.

The Security Council has the primary role in the maintenance of peace. Severe criticism has often been voiced regarding its effectiveness in putting an end to conflict situations and some have advocated a review of the Charter to bring it up to date. Many nations could play a more important role than they do at present and equality between the different nations could be achieved - a sacred tenet of the Charter of our Organization.

It has become clear as time has passed that this vision of the world will unfortunately remain confined to the realm of pious wishes as long as certain members of the international community remain self-centred, thus weakening the multilateral role of international relations.

Dissatisfaction with regard to multilateralism is mainly due to States that are basically concerned with their own interests, relegating to second place the ideals that were unanimously accepted in 1945. This is a matter of serious concern to my delegation, because that attitude is aggravating the crucial problems of today's world, particularly those of international peace and security, justice and dignity among peoples and nations, international co-operation and the progress of the human race.

Forty years after the United Nations was founded we have come to understand that we shall never attain these objectives without the combined efforts of all Member States, particularly in guaranteeing the socio-economic development of the States of Africa, Asia and Latin America, the preservation of the ecological equilibrium of the planet, the exploration and peaceful use of the seas and of

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outer space, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinctions as to race, sex, language or religion.

Turning to current concerns at the international level, we should first of all highlight the fact that wherever one looks the international political situation, even viewed through a distorting viewpoint of optimism, still contains many areas of deep concern, the most important of which are in the continent of Africa. I refer to the denial of human rights in South Africa and the incomplete decolonization of Namibia and Western Sahara. Having long defied the numerous appeals of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Non-Aligned Movement to end the abhorrent practices of apartheid, South Africa systematically defies the universal consensus and steps up its system of racial oppression, which is almost as old as our Organization.

Strengthened by the almost overt support of certain powerful allies which enable it to act with impunity, the Republic of South Africa continues to wage armed aggression against independent neighbouring States, in flagrant and deliberate violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the elementary norms of international law that govern the conduct of all States. The intention has been to destabilize those States and to set up puppet régimes in its service. In this context, we condemn the recent attacks on Angola and Botswana, which have shocked the conscience of mankind.

The establishment of a state of emergency and the statement made last August by President Botha on the future of the blacks have further complicated the already complex problem of South Africa. Despite many pertinent statements from all sides calling on the Security Council finally to exercise its authority and impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, strategic interests and the prospect of losing the enormous benefits that the allies enjoy as

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a result of the maintenance of the apartheid régime seem unfortunately to have prevailed. This can be seen in the placatory provisions of Security Council resolution 556 (1985) and the fate that awaited the recent French initiative, which had aroused a great deal of hope.

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The international community should take the opportunity presented by this session to require Pretoria to put an end to repression, to bantustanization, to the system of banning people and harassing the black leaders who are struggling for their independence. They should halt the harassing and killing of freedom fighters, and they should immediately start a constructive dialogue with the oppressed black population, so that their rights will finally be recognized.

The active and broad-based support of the international community and the tireless struggle of the South African people themselves will inevitably lead to the abolition of apartheid. Now is the right time to act and to positively influence events. The territory of Namibia, which is under the responsibility of the United Nations, will soon be marking the twentieth anniversary of its illegal occupation by South Africa. During this period the Pretoria régime has developed colonialism, apartheid, aggression, State terrorism, the system of having mercenaries, all of these practices that have been condemned by the international community as a serious threat to international peace and security.

At the same time foreign economic activities and interests have been obstructing the path toward complete independence of the valiant Namibian people, under the enlightened leadership of their sole representative, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), and these activities have been accelerating the systematic plundering of the natural wealth of the Territory in flagrant violation of the provisions of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and Decree No. 1 on protecting the natural resources of Namibia.

My country trusts that the legal proceedings now underway in the courts of States of origin against the multinational corporations that are involved in this plundering, will be speeded up and will include all registered companies.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

The United Nations Council for Namibia has initiated these actions and they enjoy the full support of my country.

Last June, the Republic of Burundi strongly condemned the establishment by the racist régime of South Africa of a puppet government in Windhoek. My country will never recognize such a government, whose appointment is just an additional obstacle set up by Pretoria on the path to the independence of the Namibian people. We believe that no viable solution can be found outside of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which outlined a coherent plan for the immediate independence of Namibia. We would deplore and condemn once again the persistent attempt to link that independence to considerations which are alien to the real issue of Namibia.

Since that memorable date of 14 December 1960, which saw the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV), the right to self-determination has become a cardinal principle of contemporary international law. Many countries have taken up their seat in the concert of nations thanks to the wide implementation of that resolution.

For more than a decade our Organization has been strongly reaffirming the right of the Sahraoui people to independence and sovereignty. It is still to be hoped that the recent contacts entered into by the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the Moroccan authorities, and other initiatives, will make it possible to give practical effect to resolution AHG/104 which was adopted at the twentieth conference of Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and we hope that it will be possible swiftly to implement the provisions in General Assembly resolution 39/40.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

The outbreaks of violence and escalation of aggression by Israel against the Arab and Palestinian peoples in the Middle East, Israel's denial of the universally recognized right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, have been plunging the peoples of that region into indescribable suffering. Israel's intransigence and stubbornness in flaunting the injunctions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council compel us today to express our strong condemnation.

The Palestinian people cannot live indefinitely as refugees in their own land. They wish to live in peace with other peoples in the region. They wish to establish their own State under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), their sole and authentic representative. Moreover, occupying a territory belonging to another country by force is illegal and contrary to the spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations. Withdrawal from all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, must be the firm demand of our Organization and a condition for the restoration of peace and stability in that region.

Not far from that area, the fratricidal war between Iran and Iraq, along with the Lebanese crisis which has lasted too long now, impose on the peoples of that region of the world unjust and cruel suffering. These are matters of serious concern to the international community. All efforts must be made to ensure a return to peace.

Only respect for the norms of law governing international relations, including the non-use of force in relations with one's neighbours, can put an end to this tragedy, which so agonizingly jeopardizes the socio-economic development of peoples in the Middle East.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

On the other end of the planet, we cannot endorse the invasion of any country by foreign troops. The crisis in Afghanistan and Kampuchea derive from a failure to respect the principles that I have just mentioned. We should take this opportunity to put an end to these anachronistic situations and leave it up to the countries involved to determine the best means of government that would be in keeping with the aspirations of their own peoples, free from untimely interference in their internal affairs.

As for the Korean peninsula, my country deplores the fact that the presence of foreign troops in the southern part, hampers the peaceful and independent reunification of that people, which share the same culture of an age-old historical past, and it artificially shatters family ties. Burundi has always maintained and will continue tirelessly to support any proposal which would restore to the Korean people their dignity which has been trampled on and their unity that has been destroyed.

As for Latin America and the Caribbean, another area that is subject to instability, we would support the independent path of peoples in the region and we would condemn all forms of foreign domination and interference in the internal affairs of those States.

While the conditions of peace and security throughout these parts of the world still remain precarious, the critical economic situation of many countries is the second major concern of the world today.

First of all, I would just deplore the disenchantment felt towards all the multilateral institutions at a time when we should in fact be strengthening international economic co-operation for the benefit of all. The provisions of Chapters IX and X of the Charter of the United Nations gave this Organization a

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paramount role in promoting progress in the economic and social development of peoples. After all, is there any other place that is more appropriate than the United Nations for discussing supranational matters concerning the means of co-ordinating national and international measures in a world where we no longer have to demonstrate that economic interdependence is a reality.

Taking account of the extent and complexity of the problems facing countries in the area of international trade, monetary instability, financial questions, indebtedness, we must show imagination, we must make use of the Charter and strengthen the spirit of dialogue and harmonization, which is indeed sadly lacking today.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

How can we understand that resolution 34/138, dealing with global negotiations for the establishment of a new International Economic Order, which was adopted unanimously seven years ago, has remained a dead letter? In the meantime there has been a dangerous deterioration in the economic situation of many developing countries.

The least favoured nations, whose fragile economies are further worsened by the present international economic situation, are to be found in Africa. There we find intolerable poverty and devastating famine. There, agriculture, industry, transport and communications do not benefit from the technological advances of this age. It is this continent that has had the most unjust and humiliating fate in history.

The international community recognized this reality when at its last session the General Assembly adopted resolution 39/29 on the critical economic situation in Africa. The annex to that resolution specifically called for a commitment by the international community to support the Governments and peoples of Africa in their struggle for survival. There were three stages in that difficult task: emergency aid for peoples suffering from famine and malnutrition, medium-term assistance for the rehabilitation of agriculture and livestock rearing, and long-term aid to make African economies growth-oriented. Africa has tremendous economic potential, which only needs to be exploited for the well being of its people. But the financial, technological means and human resources are lacking. At the present time the African countries are unable on an individual level to take up the challenge.

That is why the Heads of State and Government, at the twenty-first Conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa last July dealt primarily with the economic situation in Africa, and reaffirmed their faith in the Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos which for us is a basic reference document for

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the economic and social development of our continent. They adopted a five-year emergency programme for the recovery of African economies. This programme, entitled the Joint Action-Oriented Platform, is an effort to vitalize sub-regional and regional co-operation and to mobilize outside inputs to support our own efforts. The priority areas are agriculture and food, transport and communications, industry, trade and finance, science and technology, and lastly, as the main point, human resources.

The African countries have collectively committed themselves to strengthening their unity and solidarity in implementing this programme. They count on the active support of the international community, particularly that of the United Nations system. Taking account of the technological backwardness of Africa, the specialized agencies should provide us with special treatment, particularly in the areas of technical co-operation, training and research. Other major handicaps have to be taken into consideration also: 26 of the 36 least developed countries are African, some of them are also land-locked and stricken by drought and desertification, and most of the other African countries have extremely low incomes.

To deal with all these dangers, the support of the international agencies should be directed towards the following priorities: in the field of agriculture and food, increasing the capacity for agricultural output. The financing bodies for development should provide liquidity at levels compatible with the needs of the developing countries, particularly the African ones. Those that have resources should take action in accordance with the established priorities and should provide flexible loan conditions. In this connection, the reconstitution of the International Development Association (IDA) at a level equal at least to \$12 billion, and the provision of Africa's share in allocating the resources of

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that institution, should be a major priority. The reconstitution of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) at a level consonant with the agricultural development needs of third world countries is also very necessary. Easing the external indebtedness of Africa and respecting the commitments entered into by the developed countries towards the least developed countries are also essential measures for the economic growth of Africa.

However, as long as the terms of trade and the prices of commodities maintain their present trend, the major problem of the African countries will remain untouched. We must establish fair remunerative and stable prices for commodities so as to increase export earnings and limit the deterioration in the terms of trade. This is obviously the key issue of development and stability for our economies.

And lastly, I must emphasize that some specific actions undertaken within the context of international co-operation, for example, the vaccination campaign to immunize all children of the world by the year 1990, are indeed commendable and should enjoy the support of our States.

Naturally, Africa also counts a great deal on South-South co-operation. It will participate actively in the joint projects in this co-operation, particularly in the global system of trade preferences among developing countries, the multi-sector information network, the South-Bank Project, the exchange of appropriate technology, and so forth. But here, what is needed more than the programme is the political will of the States.

Against this background, we feel that the request of the twenty-first summit of Heads of State and Government of Africa to convene a special session of the General Assembly to take up questions relating to the critical economic situation in Africa should be given the support of this Assembly.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

Apart from problems of peace and security, and the major concerns arising out of the economic situation, the third major concern of our Organization is the arms race, and more specifically the nuclear arms race which continues to loom over us.

Because of the threat to the survival of mankind presented by nuclear and chemical weapons, which are now being extended to outer space, the question of negotiating arms limitations and disarmament is a matter that is of concern not only to the major Powers that are directly involved, although it is their primary responsibility. The entire world, including the populations of the nuclear Powers themselves, must exercise constant pressure for a freeze in the development, production, storage and deployment of nuclear and chemical weapons, the first stage in a process aimed at the reduction and total destruction of stockpiles of these weapons. This is a question not only of the survival of mankind, but also of the welfare of mankind, since the human and material resources that would be freed because a freeze could then be developed to ensure the well-being of mankind. This is a dream which this Organization and each one of our countries must try to transform into a reality over the years to come.

In Burundi this is a dream for us also because we believe in the common future of mankind, and because it is increasingly clear that the world, despite its diversity, despite the conflict in the ideas, beliefs and interests of our various States, constitutes a single whole as far as many problems are concerned.

(Mr. Nzeyimana, Burundi)

On the eve of the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, we must make a decision: either States consider it as an instrument to ensure that their views prevail to the detriment of others, and thus it would be a forum for confrontation and antagonism; or else States make of it a political system for harmonization, solidarity and interdependence, and thus a forum for the search for peace and collective security, justice and balance, economic and social well-being. It is the latter option that we must take; that is the option which my country will pursue within the United Nations.

Let us therefore strengthen the machinery provided in the Charter of this Organization, as proposed by the Secretary-General, particularly the collective system for the maintenance of international peace and security. Let us here enter into the commitment to try to reduce tension, to use our Organization as a forum for multilateral disarmament, taking note of the link between disarmament and development. Let us resolve and be sufficiently politically responsible to recognize that this Organization has the mandate to promote the economic and social well-being of all its Members by establishing fairness and balance in international economic relations.

That is the only way for this session to make the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations a historic milestone.

Mr. HAMEED (Sri Lanka): At the outset, let me congratulate Ambassador de Piniés on his well-deserved election as President of this historic fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. His long and varied association with the United Nations and its system, as well as his reputation as one of Spain's most experienced diplomats, is well known. Sri Lanka has excellent relations with Spain and, on behalf of my delegation, I assure him of our fullest support and co-operation in the tasks ahead.

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

Our appreciation is due in large measure to Ambassador Paul Lusaka of Zambia, who during the thirty-ninth session demonstrated rare diplomatic skills and capabilities in preparing the way for this fortieth session.

On behalf of the people and the Government of Sri Lanka, let me express our profound grief at the heavy toll in human and material terms claimed by the earthquakes which tragically struck Mexico last week. Our hearts reach out to the Government and the people of Mexico at this hour in their heroic endeavours towards rescue, recovery and rehabilitation.

The session on which we have embarked is important, not only because it marks 40 years in the life of the United Nations, but also because the current international situation holds prospects for a decisive breakthrough in questions which had seemed intractable in the past. It is our view that no situation is completely bereft of hope; no issue is so bleak to be incapable of solution. We can render this fortieth session more than symbolic if we seize the potential for peace and build on those areas where results appear possible. History, as Arnold Toynbee often saw it, is a succession of challenges and responses, and it is the solemn duty of the international community to respond to these challenges to enable the construction and maintenance of a fair and just society.

The promise of economic co-operation on a global scale has been turned down by those who have the economic muscle. Unilateralism and myopic economic competition seem to be the order of the day. The negotiating tables for the restructuring of international economic relations stand bare and unattended. The microphones of dialogue have been abruptly stilled. The prospects of an international economic order based on equity, justice and co-operation seem to be far off.

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

As we gather at the United Nations for this annual collective survey of the world situation, tumultuous events are unfolding in South Africa. That country's turmoil has rarely been so intense and widespread as it has been in the last few months. The repressive acts of the white minority régime have been extended to affect even little children. But the resistance and determination of the people of Africa to be free has not been shaken by the severity of the measures that have been imposed. Day by day international opinion is being awakened into a realization of the moral and physical atrocities of apartheid. More and more countries are moving to take measures and sanctions to express in practical terms their repugnance of the present régime and the system it maintains. The non-aligned States and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) have maintained a consistent opposition to apartheid. This growing international trend will continue to gather momentum until eventually the entire structure of apartheid is brought down. The dismantling of apartheid would be expedited if those possessing the powers of persuasion and pressure over the South African régime intervened without any further delay and halted the further haemorrhage of the African nation. Action under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter could bring an end to apartheid and the injustice and human suffering it causes in South Africa.

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

The same forces which animate and sustain the South African régime hold Namibia in captivity. Namibia is clearly a colonial issue. It is twisted and needlessly complicated and linked to extraneous issues. Independence for Namibia has nothing to do with East-West rivalry. It has nothing to do with the dispute between conflicting ideologies nor with the question of Cuban troops in Angola. Resolution 435 (1978) remains the charter for Namibia's independence. This is a comprehensive blueprint for Namibian independence. It has been accepted by all parties concerned, including the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). To prolong the agony of Namibia is to court more bloodshed and suffering and to devalue the credibility and standing of this very Organization.

Similarly the essential prerequisites for a settlement of the cluster of issues in the Middle East are not difficult to identify. The States of the region cannot expect to live in peace and security until the central factor of regional instability, the core of the Middle East problem, the question of Palestine, is faced squarely and solved justly. The inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people must be restored, including the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland in safety, their right to self-determination and their right to establish an independent sovereign State without external interference or coercion. Sri Lanka expresses support for the Arab Peace Plan adopted at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference held in Fez in 1982. This Peace Plan has been reaffirmed at the Extraordinary Summit Meeting held in Casablanca in August this year. Sri Lanka has consistently taken the position that Israel must withdraw from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. Israel must dismantle the illegal settlements it has set up in the occupied territories. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must be a party to any negotiation that would lead to a settlement of the Middle East question.

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

The agony of Lebanon is not an isolated phenomenon, but a part of the Middle East question. Sri Lanka declares its solidarity with the Government and people of Lebanon. We call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon and reaffirm our full support for the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon.

Sri Lanka is gravely concerned over the tragic continuation of the conflict between Iran and Iraq, two fellow non-aligned States with whom we enjoy excellent relations. It is our fervent hope that bilateral and multilateral efforts at a settlement of this wasteful war will bear fruit and that a solution acceptable to both parties will be found soon.

In South-East Asia the presence of foreign troops in Kampuchea has hampered the development of mutual confidence and good relations among the States of the region. Sri Lanka supports all efforts aimed at a comprehensive political solution which would lead to the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea. This step is vital to the restoration of normalcy and the creation of a climate of confidence and understanding in South-East Asia.

Tension looms large in South-West Asia because of the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan. We have carefully watched the constructive efforts made by the Secretary-General to find a political solution. We hope that an early solution will be found that will enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour. Sri Lanka has always expressed its support for a political settlement that would include the withdrawal of foreign troops and guarantee full respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan and ensure scrupulous observance by all States of the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in its internal affairs.

Sri Lanka supports the desire of the Korean people to reunify their homeland peacefully, through direct dialogue, without foreign interference and in conformity

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

with the principles of the North-South statement of 4 July 1972. In the meantime, it may be prudent to examine whether the process of reunification would be expedited if the principle of the universality of membership of the United Nations were extended to the Korean people.

In Cyprus a communal issue has been tragically exploited to justify the invasion of the Republic by foreign forces and this has led to the de facto partition of that country. External intervention cannot be justified nor can it be condoned on any grounds, even on the grounds of concern for kindred communities in other States. Sri Lanka has consistently called for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Cyprus, and pledged respect for the country's unity, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned personality. The unilateral declaration of independence in 1983 by representatives of one of the two communities was illegal and should be rejected by the international community. Those unilateral measures have only rendered an eventual settlement in Cyprus more complicated and difficult. Sri Lanka calls on all parties to co-operate with the Secretary-General in his latest initiative so that a just and lasting settlement can be achieved in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

In Central America, too, independent States face external intervention and destabilization attempts which threaten their very survival as sovereign States. Sri Lanka fully supports the noble endeavours of the Contadora Group to restore peace and stability, as well as mutual confidence, among the States in the region, irrespective of their social or political systems.

Every year we deliberate and make pronouncements on the urgent need to achieve our common security through a well-charted process of disarmament. We are agreed that there is no alternative to disarmament. We earnestly hope that the forthcoming talks between the leaders of the two major Powers will provide an impetus to building confidence between them and contribute to the over-all goals of disarmament and to the security of all nations.

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

The need to facilitate the complementarity of bilateral and multilateral efforts towards disarmament need not be over-emphasized. We have acknowledged that in this nuclear age security through disarmament cannot be the preserve of a few. It is our view that it is the concern of the many.

The report of the Conference on Disarmament to this session contains preliminary formulations of provisions of a future convention on chemical weapons signifying the fruits of multilateral efforts at Geneva. We are also happy to note that the Conference on Disarmament has for the first time set up an Ad Hoc Committee to commence work on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, an initiative in which Sri Lanka took an active part both in this Assembly and at the Conference. We are encouraged by the agreements embodied in the Final Document of the Third Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which concluded last week. We hope for their early implementation, and in particular for a positive response to the call on the three depositary States and the other nuclear Powers to commence early negotiations for a comprehensive test ban.

We should therefore rededicate ourselves to multilateralism in disarmament negotiations. We support the non-aligned initiative for the convening at an appropriate time of the third special session on disarmament as the challenging means of reaching a consensus on concrete and practical measures on disarmament and of revitalizing the multilateral process.

In our own region of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka, with other non-aligned countries, has striven for a vital measure of disarmament - the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The Indian Ocean States have already, in 1979, accepted seven principles of agreement for the implementation of the Declaration. The United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean has worked towards the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean to take place in Colombo, Sri Lanka,

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

next year. It is our hope that all preparatory work for the Conference can be completed to enable the convening of the Conference with the participation of all permanent members of the Security Council, the major maritime users and the regional States.

We convened the First Conference on Co-operation in Marine Affairs in Colombo in July of this year. That Conference was born of the conviction that regional co-operation was the best means of realizing the potential of the rich resources of the Indian Ocean for the development of the region. It is expected that a policy-level conference will take place in Colombo next year further to develop the achievements of the meetings held this year.

The General Assembly will this year continue its consideration of the Antarctic Treaty System. Sri Lanka's own position on that exercise has been conveyed to the Secretary-General. We strongly favour the establishment of an ad hoc committee at the United Nations to help clarify the issues involved without dismantling the present Treaty System.

Permit me in conclusion to volunteer a few remarks on developments in Sri Lanka, about which so much has been written. Sri Lanka is an integrated multi-communal, multi-linguistic and multi-religious nation with a unitary Constitution. Certain strains have developed between one ethnic minority and other communities. As a practising democracy, the Government of Sri Lanka is totally dedicated to a negotiated political settlement. But a small group of terrorists have launched a gruesome campaign of death and destruction and have rejected the democratic process.

That group carries out its operations through the concealed land-mine, the sudden bomb and the hidden assassin's gun. With the assistance and co-operation of friendly countries, the President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency J.R. Jayewardene, is continuing his efforts to achieve a political settlement. It is our earnest hope that these initiatives will lead to the resolution of the problem.

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

Terrorism is not confined to Sri Lanka alone. International terrorism presents a challenge to all civilized life and values. International terrorism has established an unholy alliance with the illicit international trade in narcotics and with other criminal activities. This year the General Assembly will have before it for consideration and action the report of the Secretary-General on measures to prevent international terrorism. Sri Lanka's own views have been conveyed to the Secretary-General, including our views on the need for increased regional co-operation in dealing with this menace. Only a concerted international effort could control, let alone eliminate, international terrorism. Unless the international community takes urgent practical action, the very values that this Organization holds dear will be in grave peril.

During the 40 years of the United Nations existence, the world has witnessed 140-odd conflicts, with an estimated human toll of 20 million lives. It is nevertheless a tribute to our political leaders that a major global confrontation has been avoided. Scientific and technological developments have advanced far beyond what was considered possible 40 years ago. Man has delved into the depths of the ocean and stretched human horizons to the far reaches of outer space. Man has walked on the moon. Distance and space have been conquered. The concept of the global village is practically a reality. But if science and communications have shrunk distances and provided the physical means of bringing people to one another at speeds unthinkable four decades ago, it is a sad commentary on our times that nations and peoples must nevertheless feel so apart from each other in political and economic terms. Nations and peoples seem to get further from one another, even as science has brought them closer in physical terms.

The United Nations is no world government: we are all independent States. But the United Nations remains mankind's best hope as we seek to bridge the distance in understanding between the nations and peoples of the world.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We have heard the last speaker at this afternoon's meeting, but I shall now call on representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by representatives from their seats.

Mr. CHAMORRO MORA (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish simply to make a few points in clarification of what the United States Secretary of State said this morning, when he referred to the situation in Central America. My Government, which is devoted to peace, dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes, would have preferred a more thorough analysis of the problem, one which referred objectively to the causes and origins of the crisis and the only viable way of resolving it, which is not, and will not be, the cruel, merciless aggression of a super-Power against a small but worthy country. Unfortunately, in order to satisfy United States imperialist interests, and perhaps thinking that the international community was ignorant, passive and not well informed, the United States Secretary of State presented an incorrect, false version of the facts, accusing my country of being the aggressor and threatening its neighbours.

All of a sudden, as if by a magic wand, with a magic similar to that to which President Reagan has accustomed us, the United States is innocent and Nicaragua is the black sheep, guilty of everything that happens in Central America. There is an attempt to make people forget the dirty, undeclared war waged since 1981 against my country by the United States which makes it the only aggressor and destabilizing factor in Central America, in disregard of the international legal order.

(Mr. Chamorro Mora, Nicaragua)

We would have wished to hear this morning something new from Mr. Shultz about a situation that has gone on for almost five years, as a result of which thousands of Nicaraguans have died and continue to die fighting to defend the independence and achievements of our country and our revolution. We would have wished to hear something new from the representative of the United States, because that is what our people demand, as do the other Central American peoples, tired of so much death, destruction and suffering, tired of enslavement and intervention.

Unfortunately, we hear repeated over and over again the same chorus, the same false arguments in defence of an aggressive, interventionist policy, a policy of dirty war and State terrorism, an immoral policy that violates the norms that govern relations between States, a policy that is now before the International Court of Justice, where the United States has been declared in contempt. The United States is violating the provisional order of 10 May of that supreme body, which we are sure will hand down a decision against the illegal actions of the United States and the dirty war waged by it against us.

We would have wished the remarks made by Mr. Shultz about the Contadora process had been in keeping with reality. It has been very clear to the international community since 7 September last year, when the Contadora Group submitted the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America and Nicaragua publicly announced its acceptance without reservations, who has blocked that Latin American negotiating process. At that time a document of the United States National Security Council, labelled "Secret", had been discovered, in which that country declared the need to block such a peace agreement.

Today, when we again see important progress made by the Contadora Group, another secret document has been given to the Press. It is a memorandum by Mr. Elliot Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, which contains the major guidelines of United States policy towards Central America,

(Mr. Chamorro Mora, Nicaragua)

to be sent to all American ambassadors in the countries of the Contadora Group and Central America. One of the most important guidelines states that Contadora's collapse is preferable to a bad agreement. Of course, a "bad agreement" should be understood to mean one that does not respond to the hegemonistic interests of the United States in the area. That is the reality, and if, as Mr. Shultz stated, my country supports the implementation of the document of 21 objectives signed by the Central Americans, he should remember some of the commitments in that document, which have to do with non-interference in matters within the internal jurisdiction of each country and a ban on encouraging or supporting armed bands whose aim is the overthrow of legitimately constituted Governments.

Everyone knows that since the United States has been unable to submit sufficient evidence on the alleged arms trafficking between Nicaragua and El Salvador, the United States Government has spent nearly \$100 million to arm, train and give logistic and intelligence support to the bands of mercenaries which, from the territory of neighbouring countries, attack our territory and murder our people.

Mr. Shultz said this morning:

"The people of the region are waiting for a positive answer from the rulers of Nicaragua." (A/40/PV.4, p. 37)

I could state precisely the opposite - that the peoples of Central America continue to hope for a change of attitude by the United States, that they continue to hope that that great Power, which is mainly responsible for the crisis that affects us today, will face up to the situation with responsibility and commit itself to respect the sovereignty and independence of the countries of the region and the sacred right of our peoples to free self-determination.

(Mr. Chamorro Mora, Nicaragua)

However, I do not wish to continue in a vicious circle of mutual accusations. I shall reiterate one aspect which has become the basic tenet of our foreign policy, namely, that we stand fully ready to discuss all mutual concerns directly at the negotiating table. In that manner, breaking through the vicious circle of mutual recriminations, both the United States and Nicaragua would be responding to the hopes, aspirations and wishes for peace of the peoples of the United States, of Nicaragua and of Central America. We would be acting in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, the anniversary of which we are commemorating at this session. Manzanillo is waiting for the United States, from which it withdrew unilaterally without explanation.

Mr. WALTERS (United States of America) (interpretation from Spanish): I am sorry that I must honour the remarks made by the representative of Nicaragua in his reply, but it is essential that I do so. I shall not require 10 minutes to recall that it is Nicaragua that has killed a number of its own people, that has proclaimed a revolution without borders, that has actually been in a state of war with its neighbours for several years. That is the Government which had promised freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom of religion. That Government has placed itself in a position to be attacked and to become a victim - but the true victims are the neighbours of Nicaragua. Nicaragua now has an armed force greater than that of practically all its neighbours combined. Speaking of a dirty war, who is it that is taking war outside Nicaragua to other countries? The representative of Nicaragua speaks of a legitimate Government. Is a Government legitimate when the opposition has no access to the press, to the radio or to elections?

I do not understand all the accusations he has levelled against my country. My country has waged two major wars in this century on behalf of human freedom.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

It has not annexed any territory; it has not forced anyone against his wishes to be an American.

Frankly speaking, when the Government of Nicaragua first came to power we were its major suppliers of aid, and we continued to supply that aid until it lowered its mask and showed itself for what it was, namely, a Government that did not intend to share power with anyone.

It is not part of Marxist-Leninist theory to share power with another political group. We now see that taking place - shamelessly. Mr. Ortega has said that Sandinism cannot exist without Marxism and Leninism, and we know what that means. But those were not the promises that they made before the American States, promises which led us to sponsor a resolution in the Organization of American States that called for the overthrow of the Somoza Government. Frankly speaking, there is no democracy when the people cannot freely express its will - lessons to be learned from a dictatorship of that kind.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The representative of Nicaragua has asked once again to speak in exercise of the right of reply, and I now call on him, with the reminder that it should not exceed five minutes.

Mr. CHAMORRO MORA (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): Following in the footsteps of my United States colleague, I shall not make use of the full five minutes allotted me. I do not think I need to reiterate what I said very clearly in my previous statement, which is well known and fully understood by the international community. I simply wish to make a few very brief references.

The representative of the United States mentioned alleged commitments made by Nicaragua. I should like to remind him that we have never made nor will we ever make any promises, commitment or agreement with the United States that would be

(Mr. Chamorro Mora, Nicaragua)

detrimental to the sovereignty of our country. The only commitment we hold is one towards the Nicaraguan people, which overwhelmingly supports our revolution and our Government. We are not going to fall prey to the policy followed by various United States representatives in their attempt to defend themselves in the General Assembly and the Security Council. We are not going to refer to the internal problems of Nicaragua or to the internal problems of the United States. We are not going to speak about what they have done and continue to do to the American Indians, to the American blacks and other matters relating to domestic United States policy.

The representative of the United States mentioned that his country waged two major wars in this century on behalf of freedom. The history of Latin America is full of instances of United States intervention which did not take place on behalf of the freedom of Latin American peoples but in order to subject us to domination and to the imperialist interests of the United States of America. In order to refresh the memory of the representative of the United States, I shall offer to send him a book by Gregorio Seltser, an Argentine author who writes about many United States interventions during this century in this continent.

The meeting rose at 7.40 p.m.

