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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 29 September 1986, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. CHOUDHURY (Bangladesh)
later: Mr. TURKMEN (Turkey)
(Vice-President)

- Address by Mr. Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, President of the Republic of Guatemala
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Yaqub Khan (Pakistan)
Mr. del Valle (Chile)
Mr. Mr. Al-Khalifa (Bahrain)
Mr. Barré (Somalia)
Mr. da Luz (Cape Verde)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. MARCO VINICIO CEREZO AREVALO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA

The PRESIDENT: This afternoon, the Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Guatemala.

Mr. Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, President of the Republic of Guatemala, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Guatemala, His Excellency Mr. Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President CEREZO AREVALO (interpretation from Spanish): As is the custom among my fellow Guatemalans, I should like to begin by introducing myself. I am Venicio Cerezo, the legitimate representative of the people of Guatemala, a politician, a simple Guatemalan, with all the characteristics found in our indigenous Ladino culture.

We are relatively quiet and observant as were our indigenous ancestors, a trait consistent with our varied and mountainous landscape. We are dreamers, reserved by nature - the result of a past of suffering and difficulties. We are patient and indefatigable workers as a result of our magical confidence in a better future. We are stoical in the face of criticism and are always ready to overcome difficulties.

But we are firm, convinced of final success, thanks to our love for our land and our historical convictions. We have worked many years to find a non-violent path, a broadening of the political base that would allow the people of Guatemala to elect freely a Government that would be at its service - one chosen by it, which would begin a serious effort to establish a united and participatory democratic society.

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From the start, we behaved with absolute sincerity and honesty and with total objectivity. Here the surprises began, some of which seemed incomprehensible and others most surprising. An attempt was made to assassinate me for behaving in the way I have just outlined. Several such attempts were made, and I must recognize that even now, I am not sure why none of these was successful - possibly because of a bit of foresight, some luck and much protection from God.

But perhaps what surprised me most was the lack of confidence on the part of some democratic countries as to our eventual success, and this naturally had another consequence, which from a political view made things more difficult - that is, we found virtually no concrete support for our search for democracy.

This attitude was such that when we managed to succeed, many people were astonished. Eight months later, some still insist that this is all a farce, at the bottom of which lies an agreement between this politician speaking to you and those who were accused of oppressing the people of Guatemala. I understand this feeling of surprise. Those not familiar with the inner strength of Guatemalans do not realize what we are capable of. Even within Guatemala, there are still small elite sectors that refuse to recognize the deep changes taking place.

By the grace of God, all that is happening is true. We are living through a true process of democratization. For the first time in 42 years, the President is a politician - a lawyer by profession, a liberal - who reached the presidency with the support of the people and of a party made up of the urban middle class, farm workers and the indigenous people, with the help of neither traditional private entrepreneurs nor the army nor the United States.

Of course, this is surprising and almost exceptional in light of our recent history, particularly because the path was peaceful rather than violent. It was not an armed revolution, but rather a popular mobilization at the national level,

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giving the current President a mandate unprecedented in the political history of the country.

But who is the hero of this Guatemalan story that I am now recounting? The true heroes of this story are the people of Guatemala, who knew - as always - how to surpass the expectations of those who would judge them in the light of other realities.

Among all the choices available, the various sectors of our society - a society separated by brutal economic differences, divided for cultural and racial reasons, polarized by war and the policy of confrontation and oppressed by electoral fraud and repression, corruption and the inefficiency of elite groups - opted, decided, chose the electoral process, non-violence and participation as a means of deciding its destiny. And, in contrast to similar communities within the region, each sector contributed to the birth of this mere intent to establish a democracy.

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The people won the right to exercise their sovereignty; the inevitable pundits misjudged the people's capabilities and strength, and scorned their ability to make decisions, but none the less the people decided and voted upon, and now support, not a party or a man, but a democratic process.

That is why, when he chose dialogue among Guatemalans as a method of government, the President was aligning himself with the poor and the middle class; but he is aware that ultimately the army and the traditional business sectors were able to accept the will of the people.

The admission that the people, not the governing élite, is the leading actor in our attempt to implement democracy is a surprising but fundamental premise of any analysis of our situation. Despite all predictions, it was the indigenous people, the illiterate, the farmers, the workers and the middle class that became involved en masse in the election. Contrary to the predictions of the analysts, people were conscientious; they opted for change; they committed themselves to democracy; they put aside their frustrations; they overcame their pain at the death of their dear ones; and they embarked upon the building of their own destiny.

Among the middle- and lower-income sectors, there was more participation, while in the higher economic groups there was more non-participation and disillusionment. But in general it was established beyond question that we want democracy: a democracy for the illiterate and the peasants; for the middle and professional classes; for the rich and the military; a democracy of our own choosing, and one we hope that all will respect, accept and support.

We Guatemalans are tired of suffering; we now live in hope. We consider that we have made our share of sacrifices and that we have the right to continue on our road with serenity, prudence, minimal sacrifice and minimal hatred. But the task is enormous, and that is the story I wish to tell.

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We found Guatemala in a disastrous state; all the numerical indices, relating to areas such as hunger, illiteracy and unemployment, were negative. I shall not rehearse the statistics, for I do not wish here to stress our ills or to feel sorry for ourselves in a display of a sort of collective masochism. We know the figures; they are in our files, and they show us what it is we must resolve. But the most complicated and difficult thing to face is that we found a society bereft of institutions, all sectors having lost faith in processes and institutions as a means of settling disputes and making decisions. The middle- and lower-income groups were compelled therefore to repress their most fervent hopes, and the leading élite in all sectors of society had fallen into anarchy or corruption and had become opportunistic.

This could have led Guatemala into open war, with unpredictable consequences, but that did not happen. We found the way to peace through democratic participation. It is only fitting that I should acknowledge, first, the people of Guatemala in the middle- and lower-income groups who, despite repression and attempts to cause disillusionment, persisted in their hard, lengthy search for democracy and succeeded in creating conditions for broadening the political base, which was the beginning of this process. I acknowledge also the political leaders of various parties who interpreted correctly the aspirations of the people, rejecting the opportunism of the ruling élite and rejecting the hopelessness caused by repression. I acknowledge, in particular, my party, the Guatemalan Christian Democratic Party, which, even during the worst moments, remained hopeful and kept the way open for a successful conclusion. More than 300 of our democratic comrades gave their lives for democratic change and set an example for the preservation of faith.

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I acknowledge the new breed of army officers who, in 1982 and 1983, determined to break out of the existing order and contribute to creating the conditions for a political process, avoiding the mistakes of other autocratic Governments of our region which, in their intransigence, led their peoples into constant confrontation.

By opting for the poor, for peace and for democracy, the Catholic Church helped maintain hope; it acted wisely in helping the lower-income groups, where it has great influence, in making its choices.

In economic sectors known to be traditionalist and conservative, there were leaders who were able to arouse interest in the desirability of a democratic outcome and to initiate a discussion of an option that had been thought to have been rejected.

I must, of course, acknowledge the organized popular groups, co-operatives and trade unions. Despite having been among the principal victims, in the main they opted for peaceful participation, interested only in the establishment of a new pluralistic society.

Now we must rebuild Guatemala. The facts I have just outlined show why we Guatemalans can say that the decision to rebuild Guatemala through democracy was a collective decision by an entire people, not the work of a successful group of revolutionaries or of a single political party. The task goes beyond the short term. It goes beyond the elections. The basic objective is to replace the repressed and anarchistic society we found with a free, pluralistic, institutionally orderly society, with a view to the welfare of all.

In the early period of my administration I am faced with the task of leading the national reconstruction effort; the first problem confronting the nation is the natural impatience of some leading sectors of the country. We have many questions to answer. What should the pace of change be? Whom should change affect? In

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whose favour should it work? In order to answer those and other questions we have decided to use our imagination; we must find our own answers, because today traditional models are in crisis.

We have decided on a long-term plan not limited to my presidential term: I am temporarily the leader of the process, but I have decided to co-operate as just another citizen with whoever might be elected by the people later in this great national effort for the benefit of future generations.

We want a well organized, participatory society that will serve national interests, not just those of one sector, group or union. We want a society operating and structured to serve the human being - man or woman, indigenous or meztizo - creating appropriate conditions for their fulfilment as individuals.

We are serious in our aspirations to such a wonderful society. We are determined to build it; thus far we have overcome all obstacles, and I see no reason why we should not continue to do so. We want a society in which our past will not be the basis for complaints and weeping - we are tired of that - or for shame - for it is, after all, our past - but will rather help us build our own identity and our own future.

We want a society in which right and the law prevail; where dissent is possible; where peace will result from awareness of the ability to use institutional machinery rather than force to settle disputes; where natural and human resources will serve the needs of all, not of the few. In essence, we want a democratic society: one not conceived of as a mere instrument for meeting petty interests but one which will provide a way of seeking perfection in human relations.

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We must redefine democracy. In so doing, we can clearly see that the President of Guatemala has not been elected to preside over a tragedy; rather, he has been elected to be a leader of a people that wants to be the master of its own destiny.

I am here to tell the General Assembly that we have started on the long road that will take us to change. For we believe that changes are a consequence and not the beginning of a process. Therefore, we are undertaking these changes vigorously, step by step, but prudently and patiently.

We do not want to take a step backwards; we do not want regression. In rejecting the urgent demands of those who are impatient, those who are opportunists, those who cannot transcend their pain, we are asking our people and the peoples of the world to help us carry our cross - not in order to crucify us but, rather, to bring glory to our efforts, to contribute to the surge of a humanity of light that projects and does not destroy.

I ask everyone here to give us credit for our hopes and not to judge us by what we have suffered - because, I repeat, we Guatemalans have already paid the price of suffering.

Aware of the decision taken by the Guatemalans, I proposed the method of reaching agreement to determine the strategies and processes of change. This means, as Professor Aristides Calvani said, "achieving the greatest degree of agreement within disagreement". It means working to find agreements, points that bring us together, not those that emphasize our differences. It means rejecting traditional dichotomies and learning to live together and to accept each other as we are. It means promoting multiple and diverse ways of thinking.

From the outset I saw the difficulty of implementing that method when some intellectuals insisted that agreement through dialogue was impossible - as though the world had once and for all rejected the possibilities of reaching agreement.

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It is true that coming to an agreement requires an act of humanity on the part of leaders; they must admit that they do not possess absolute truth. It requires that the opportunism of the moment be abandoned and replaced by permanent and historical values. It takes courage not to expect immediate recognition but to wait for history to speak. In short, what is required is a sense of strength and the conviction of one's own ideas, so that one is not afraid of confronting the ideas of others. History has consistently shown that reason is not on one side alone, and that human beings do not often want to learn the lessons of history.

Personally, I am convinced that our national leaders will be capable of solving this dilemma in favour of long-term interests and not short-term opportunities; of placing the interests of the nation over personal interests, of history over the immediate. And I am absolutely sure that the people will know how to choose - that is, those committed to the interests of all the people and not to their own personal interests.

But, in the final analysis, the effort to which we must devote our imagination is towards the promotion of some ideas that are new to our country. In practice, we are trying to combine strategies and techniques that will be useful to the attainment of our objectives. These objectives were laid down in the "National Plan" approved by the people in December 1985, when we were elected to govern, in exercise of their legitimate sovereignty. They have already been described in my statement. The strategies to achieve the objectives have been synthesized in three main short-term and medium-term policies. In the spirit of agreement through dialogue and of the democracy we wish to build, these policies reject traditional dichotomies, because we do not want to fall into polarization and confrontation; they reject definitions in the framework of an economic model because no such model can be adapted to our reality.

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Our premise is that technology is only an instrument at the service of political decisions. We believe that man does not live for the economy but, rather, that the economy should be used for the benefit of man. We refuse to reduce the conflicts of the world and of modern society to a mere dilemma of good versus bad men, or to East-West confrontation. We prefer to opt for values and not for positions, and therefore for pluralistic democracies and not for authoritarian régimes, whatever the type. That is the basis of our three policies.

First, there is the social policy, in order to institutionalize democracy. In this field, the action of the Government is basically aimed at creating the institutional mechanisms to resolve conflicts and at promoting conditions in which Guatemalans can exercise their constitutional rights with no limitations other than those established by law. It is in this field that we have been most severely criticized internationally, but it is certainly the field in which we have had the greatest success nationally.

Constant activity by trade unions and farm workers, constant claims by some organized sectors, and constant criticism - sometimes even harsh criticism - from those in the opposition: all this is the best proof of the fact that participation is open to and safe for all in Guatemala, a nation where not long ago the mere fact of not conforming was a sufficient cause for repression.

Also in this field, things that up to now would have been hard to believe are becoming a constant practice in the exercise of rights: recourse to habeas corpus for cases that have occurred during the period of this Government, with positive results; the existence of organizations that engage in constant militant action demanding that persons allegedly kidnapped in the past be produced. (Actually, they have not been any more successful than those alleging threats by Government officials.) All this has taken place without any political party or peoples'

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organization being able to claim the commission of any repressive acts or the physical disappearance, torture or kidnapping of any of their members.

Of course, in Guatemala, like anywhere else in the world, the Government cannot prevent or foresee criminal actions by common delinquents, terrorists or extreme-right organizations; but it has taken the decision to act vigorously against any group or organization of whatever kind that commits illegal acts. Nowadays, suspects are tried in court.

In this connection, we are trying to establish standards for social action: first, the Government guarantees the exercise of constitutional rights, providing security to those who exercise them within the law. Secondly, in the case of acts that might violate a constitutional right, citizens may have recourse to the Supreme Court or to the Constitutional Court to request redress from acts of the Government. Thirdly, all political, social, trade union or human rights organizations must abide by the law and the Constitution. Fourthly, the Government will exercise its full power to punish those who transgress legal and constitutional limits. So far, aware of the phase we are going through, we have exercised prudence and flexibility in that regard. It should be pointed out that to this day all the social or labour conflicts which have required the presence of the Government or of the President have been solved by means of agreement through dialogue, without any need to use force, and within the limits of the law.

I wish to say a few words about the guerilla activities.

In Guatemala, subversive acts still occur sporadically in certain isolated areas in the north and north-east of the country. At present, these are confined to terrorist acts, which claim victims for no purpose and do harm to remote villages of indigenous farm workers. It would seem as if an attempt is being made to inflict undeserved tribulations on these workers, adding violence to their traditional problems of economic, social and political neglect and making it even

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more difficult and costly for them to meet their most urgent needs. For our part, in confronting the guerilla activities we have adopted an attitude of legitimate defence of a process that belongs to the people. We have acted with comprehension and with caution, but also with firmness. Some guerilla leaders have been prosecuted, but we have also pardoned those who have voluntarily turned themselves in, coming down from the mountains as more and more of them in remote places learn about the process of opening a broad political base.

It is true that many people who in the past had been involved in subversion - mainly farm workers - had committed such acts because they had thought there was no other way for them to participate. But with the success in broadening the political base, and with their conviction that they had been deceived with false promises on all sides, they abandoned the theory that armed struggle was the only way to solve the national problems. It is indeed unfortunate that the orthodox, methodological rigidity of a defeated movement still causes suffering among some groups in small pockets of the rural population.

In practice, this fruitless struggle can only be an obstacle to the development of the regions that formerly were the objects of violence. The democratic Government will have to divert some resources, which, instead of being used to meet urgent needs, will have to be used to give protection and security to those who are forced to become involved in a lost cause, a meaningless cause.

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As was wisely said to me by a democratic farm-hand,

"... by what authority does a man who calls himself a revolutionary leader - simply because he is wearing an olive-green uniform - label as a mistake the popular decision and oppose it with weapons? People chose democracy and the guerrillas lost the battle. The least they can do is to accept the will of the people."

On behalf of the Government of the Republic, as a representative of the people I personally invite those groups still fighting against the Government to review their position, analyse the circumstances and take into account the will of the people and become integrated into the institutional, political process of the country - a country that is peacefully trying to establish a pluralistic and participatory democracy.

There is room for all in Guatemala, for we have gone from the search for national security in the past to the doctrine of stability at present. At the root of the problem of stability is the conceptual error that in practice insurgency is an objective in itself, forgetting that the ultimate objective is the well-being of the population. Dogmatic attitudes turn the method into the objective or become a way of life.

This same conceptual error had led our Army to consider national security as an objective in itself. This has now changed. As part of the doctrinal changes beginning in our country we have clearly established that national security is not in itself an objective to be pursued but, rather, an instrument in the service of stability which, together with development, will allow for a social state that will bring about the common good and well-being. Thus, security and development are instruments in the service of stability - and that is a prerequisite for well-being. The doctrine now underpinning the thinking of the Government of

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Guatemala is "national stability" for democracy and development - and we have set aside the doctrine of national security.

With regard to economic policy, we have had to face disorder, corruption, flight of capital, speculation, devaluation of our currency and unemployment and underemployment, hand in hand with the traditional burdens of extremely low salaries, concentration of production means, and tax evasion. Our incipient democracy must then deal with the economic problems while taking into account the firm decision of a people aware of its responsibility and contributing to the country, not with their own personal interests in mind, but in the full application of its democratic calling. The Government, as the representative of the people, launched a plan of economic reorganization whereby it seeks to stabilize our currency, provide the inputs necessary for production and open up new credit sources to bring about a balance among those financial decisions that impose certain economic conditions on the upper and middle-class sectors of the population, for the benefit of the neediest.

The effects of the reorganization plan have been positive, but acceptance by consensus through agreement by means of dialogue by which "the highest possible degree of agreement within disagreement" is reached is perhaps the most important accomplishment so far. The success of such a dialogue can be seen in the few socio-economic conflicts this Government has had to face. The economic reorganization programme has already produced some achievements and has laid the basis for restoring the people's confidence in their institutions, without there being any need to resort to violence in order to create a new model for social contracts. The obvious results of this new state of awareness are peace and the economic dynamics that have put national production at the service of all Guatemalans.

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But we must also go from international isolation to the policy of active neutrality. The polarization, confrontation and intolerance that resulted in a tragedy in Guatemala also led the country to isolation, which was viewed with indifference by some previous administrations and which in the long run caused very serious political, financial and commercial repercussions. Our country lost credibility in the international community. External sources of financing became severely restricted, and our trade, political and diplomatic relations were also affected.

Governments in the late 1970s and early 1980s adopted a defensive attitude. The negative image projected by those Governments resulted in a distorted view of our procedures, attitudes and values.

I do not deny the seriousness of that situation and the harshness of the confrontation; but exaggerated accounts reached such a point that the true state of affairs could no longer be ascertained, even by those of us who observed the tragedy at first hand. There was a compulsion to distort the facts by those who lived through them and those who passed judgement on them.

In any case, one thing is certain: violence became the common denominator. We lived in an atmosphere of violence, and it had a bearing on each and everyone. Nevertheless - and probably because of our Utopian culture, our ancestral humanism, and our religious upbringing - instead of violence becoming a generalized way of life, it led us systematically and permanently to reject authoritarian governments and violence itself as political instruments. This rejection of tragedy, of the imposition of force and confrontation, was the basis for the people's support for democracy, for non-violence in internal affairs and for our search for peace externally.

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The people of Guatemala long for peace; that is why they support the path of agreement through dialogue as the working method of the new democratic Government and of active neutrality in regional affairs. Underlying Guatemalan society is the determination to break with the past and optimistically seek a future that will temper the attitude of all Guatemalan political and social sectors for many years to come and convince the electorate. Hence the Government's decision not to dig up the past. Owing to the difficult fight, many groups involved in the confrontation would otherwise be affected and, instead of creating conditions for a harmonious and institutionalized democracy, we would be creating conditions for new confrontations.

But because history cannot be denied, something must be done to strengthen the judicial system, to make it a legal and peaceful instrument for ensuring the application of justice. The Government - the Executive - will face the historical truth: the Supreme Court, the tribunals, the desire for justice. In such a climate, there is very little chance for success for organized groups seeking revenge through the avenue of justice or pressing charges. They are the vestiges of the pain inflicted by the tragedy, but they belong to the past and cannot contribute anything to the future.

In the international sphere, particularly with reference to our Central American area, this rejection of violence, this desire for peace by the Guatemalan people, constitutes the basis for our rejection of confrontation among fraternal countries; it has led to our persisting in the search for negotiated, diplomatic solutions, as well as for a permanent instrument of dialogue to reach agreements and accords.

Hence we proclaim our active neutrality; we unwaveringly support Contadora's efforts; and at a meeting of Presidents that took place in Guatemala, in the

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village of Esquipulas we have proposed the creation of a Central American Parliament.

I am aware that it is necessary for me to be specific about our position on certain international issues and our activities on the international scene.

We wish to see international relations without ideological complexes. One of the basic principles of our political stand is ideological pluralism. We maintain that societies and peoples have a right to their own ideological convictions and to foster the social model they consider most appropriate. We believe that pluralism in a democratic society is the basis for peace. Hence our stand on active neutrality is not necessarily ideological neutrality.

We are in favour of democracy in the world and we affirm the right of peoples to participate openly in building their own future. We do not believe in authoritarian governments of any kind, because we do not recognize the right of any one group, party or ruling élite to put constraints on popular sovereignty. At the same time, we are not loath to maintain relations with any Government that legitimately represents its people, whatever its ideology. We require mutual respect in our relations and energetically reject any physical aggression against our territory; however, we also commit ourselves not to carry out any act of aggression against any other country, except in exercise of the right to legitimate defence.

We proclaim the need for mutual respect. In the interrelated world in which we live today, international organizations issue value judgements on the activities of member countries. On the other hand, on the modern international scene there is no President or Head of Government in the world who does not have to consider daily, to a greater or lesser extent, protests, criticisms, petitions or support from all sorts of groups.

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Nevertheless, the Democratic Government of Guatemala is not bothered by comments or even criticism which other Governments might voice about its actions as such. We only ask them to be willing to listen to us and discuss our objections; we ask that our realities be respected and that the facts be judged objectively. We have a country with doors open to visitors; we want our true situation to be looked at closely but dispassionately, and any suggestions or contributions aimed at improving our Government's activities will always be welcome. In other words, we ask to be treated with respect and not with contempt because of our past or our sufferings.

What we reject is direct aggression by one country against another; during its history, Central America has been the victim of overt or covert military aggressions. We reject that possibility. I should say that aggressions have come in the past from countries of different ideologies. In the face of aggression that could lead to conflict between nations, we propose the alternative of diplomacy and political methods.

Hence our active neutrality; we do not justify or explain regional wars which only produce destruction or death, nor do we accept the existence of any international or ideological right to provoke confrontations between sister States. We Guatemalans affirm that violence, even when labelled "revolutionary", is now at this historical moment an obstacle to Central American development because funds are allocated for weapons rather than to meet our needs.

We have asserted our neutrality with regard to the differences that might exist among the Central American countries and, at the same time, our energetic, diplomatic and political participation in the search for an understanding and in the mechanisms for integration and our firm support for democratic and pluralistic peace movements. Therefore, confronted with the Nicaraguan problem, we sympathize

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with the opposing parties which are involved in a peaceful struggle for a broadening of the political base, and, without taking sides in the existing armed conflict, we believe that the reasons for the struggle will diminish as the political atmosphere becomes more open, without ideological prejudices, with pluralistic attitudes and unconditional respect for the social and political sectors of the opposition.

In this effort, no doubt, the two super-Powers have played a very important role and bear a tremendous historic responsibility. The world has become affected by a constant rivalry between them, causing at times through their presence internal conflicts and international confrontations. Sometimes, it must be admitted, it has been on the initiative of both and sometimes at the request of national political groups, but in both cases the consequences have been the same.

In the case of Latin America and especially Central America, we shall always have to take the United States into consideration in one way or another, but the overt or covert influence of the Soviet Union has given some national political confrontations the characteristics of international conflicts, thus risking their becoming part of the so-called East-West confrontation. We wish to avoid this possibility, and we maintain that we reject war and armed confrontations because the strategic position of Central America makes it vulnerable to involvement in them. The regional Governments thus also must shoulder the tremendous responsibility for causing or preventing a holocaust which may occur if we do not act with caution in the face of the historical juncture in which we are living. The time has come for a break with orthodoxy, rejecting alignments which might lead to conflicts and establishing new priorities: the national interest first, followed by the regional interest and the international interest in that order.

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Therefore, on behalf of the men and women of our countries, who are tired of violence and despair, who are anxious to have political stability so as to achieve development, I dare to ask the super-Powers to end their competition over our territories and to discuss how best they can help us. We welcome all those who wish to contribute to the consolidation of democracy in our nations and thus to enable our people and not computers to determine our destiny.

I firmly believe that the developed countries of Europe and the Orient can play a very special role in this drama to achieve moderation in dealing with conflicts and to support human development on the basis of democracy and pluralism, because in the event of a world conflagration both the countries of those regions and ours would share the dubious honour of risking the destruction of our hopes for a better life.

Speaking as the President of Guatemala and on behalf of all my people, I am aware of the historic importance of the times in which we are living and I place myself at the disposal of all the nations of the world, so that, with the good will of a magical country full of history and hope, we may contribute to the birth of an enlightened humanity and to the achievement of that Utopia the search for which after the Second World War led to the creation of this wonderful Organization: the consolidation of peace.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Guatemala for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, President of the Republic of Guatemala, was escorted from the General Assembly hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. YAQUB KHAN (Pakistan): Sir, allow me, once again, to offer my felicitations on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly. Under your wise and able guidance, this forty-first session of the General Assembly will surely achieve important and far-reaching results.

May I also take this occasion to pay a special tribute to Mr. Perez de Cuellar for his unceasing efforts to promote international peace and harmony and to uphold the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The lucid presentation in the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization reflects the awesome challenges, as also the unprecedented opportunities, facing the United Nations and its Member States. The Pakistan delegation expresses the hope that, at this critical juncture, the Secretary-General will continue at the helm of the world Organization.

Even 41 years after the declaration of the purposes and principles which inspired the collective will of mankind to establish the United Nations to usher in an era of inter-State conduct governed by the rule of law, justice and equity, the world is still convulsed by strife and turmoil.

(Mr. Yagub Khan, Pakistan)

The problems confronting mankind still remain acute, polarization between the East and the West persists; the nuclear arms race threatens the very survival of humanity; the gap between the rich and the poor has widened; and resort to the use of force and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States have increased.

In our neighbourhood, the principles of the Charter have been most flagrantly violated by the military intervention in Afghanistan. For nearly seven years, undaunted by the presence of 120,000 Soviet troops, the Afghan people, true to their historic traditions and character, have waged a heroic national resistance against the might of a super-Power. They have proved indomitable in courage, steadfast in resolve and defiant in adversity. Inside Afghanistan a sinister design is being pursued through genocide and large-scale uprooting of the population. Such policies have served only to intensify the Afghan struggle. A million Afghans are estimated to have laid down their lives. Five million, a third of the country's population, have been obliged to seek shelter in Pakistan and Iran. The three million Afghans in Pakistan constitute the largest concentration of refugees anywhere in the world. We continue to provide them with basic sustenance as our Islamic and humanitarian duty. We are grateful to those friendly States and international agencies which have assisted us in discharging this humanitarian responsibility.

Apart from this immense burden, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan seriously threatens Pakistan's own security. There are almost daily violations of our border, which have caused serious loss of life and property. There has also been a sharp increase in acts of sabotage and subversion in our territory, accompanied by threats and pressures.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

Pakistan desires an early end to the conflict in Afghanistan, which does not admit of a military solution. We are committed to seeking a just and an equitable political settlement on the basis of the principles endorsed by the General Assembly. Pakistan has worked sincerely and constructively to evolve such a solution through the proximity talks in Geneva, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, to both of whom I wish to pay high tribute.

The fate of a political settlement now depends on the acceptance of a time-frame for the early withdrawal of Soviet troops. That time-frame must be of short duration, to conform to the repeated demands of this Assembly for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. Such a settlement would also be in conformity with the wishes of the Afghan people and would enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour. The token withdrawal of six Soviet battalions is a welcome first step, but what is required is not a token disengagement but the total and early withdrawal of all Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

Pakistan will continue to extend its fullest co-operation to the United Nations Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, in the search for an equitable political solution of the situation in Afghanistan. The Geneva negotiations have reached a critical juncture. We hope this General Assembly will once again take a decision to reflect the wishes of the international community and the conscience of the world at large for the early termination of the foreign military intervention in Afghanistan, the restoration of that country's independent, sovereign and non-aligned status and the return of the Afghan refugees to their homes in safety and honour.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

The same principles govern our policy on the question of foreign intervention in Kampuchea. Pakistan supports the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea under the leadership of Prince Norodom Sihanouk and its struggle for national independence. The imposition of a régime by force of foreign arms on the pretext of rectifying earlier violations of human rights in that country is totally unacceptable. We fully endorse the repeated calls of the General Assembly for the withdrawal of all foreign forces, thus enabling the Kampuchean people to choose their own system without coercion and outside interference.

The tragic conflict between Iran and Iraq has injected another dangerous element into an area already embattled and inflamed. The war remains a cause for profound anguish and dismay. Not only has it consumed precious human and material resources of the two countries but it also threatens our region with incalculable consequences for international peace and security. We have been unrelenting in our efforts to bring that conflict to a speedy end. In the forums of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference we have endeavoured to explore all possibilities for a just and equitable settlement. We earnestly hope for an early cessation of hostilities and a settlement that reconciles the demands of justice with the imperatives of peace.

The situation in southern Africa poses a serious threat to regional and international peace. The brazen attempts of the Pretoria régime to perpetuate the abhorrent system of apartheid, its savage and mounting repression of the majority of the South African people, its aggressive policies of intimidation and coercion, both military and economic, against the front-line States, are a challenge to the international conscience, an insult to mankind and a crime against humanity. There can be no peace, no stability, no security in southern Africa until this abhorrent system has been totally eradicated.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

Namibia's struggle for liberation from Pretoria's illegal colonial occupation is another front in southern Africa's relentless crusade for dignity and freedom. The heroic struggle of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), the sole and authentic voice of the Namibian people, must be supported morally and materially by the international community. The recently concluded special session of the General Assembly has reaffirmed the United Nations plan, as endorsed by Security Council resolution 435 (1978), as the only basis for Namibia's independence. It cannot be linked to any extraneous issue, such as the presence of Cuban troops in Angola. The members of the Western Contact Group carry a clear responsibility for ensuring the early implementation of the United Nations plan.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

In particular, we hope that all the permanent members of the Security Council will support the call for effective sanctions against South Africa. The argument that sanctions will hurt the majority population of South Africa and the front-line African States lacks validity, since the African population has declared its readiness to accept any hardship in preference to racist oppression.

The Middle East continues to be a source of grave danger to regional and world peace. Israel has repeatedly frustrated all peace initiatives. Its obduracy can only escalate violence and lead to another conflict, with grave consequences for world peace. Pakistan deplores Israel's intransigence, as also its policy of annexation of the occupied Arab territories and the establishment of Jewish settlements on usurped land. We are appalled by the repeated desecration of the Holy Places under Israel's occupation, especially the violation of the sanctity of the Holy Al Aqsa Mosque, one of Islam's most sacred shrines.

Pakistan supports the convening of an international conference to evolve a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. A just and comprehensive settlement must contain two fundamental elements: first, Israel's total withdrawal from all the occupied territories, including Holy Jerusalem, and, secondly, the fulfilment of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and nationhood in their homeland.

At present world peace and humanity's survival are balanced on the razor's edge of nuclear deterrence. The survival of human civilization depends on our ability to achieve general and complete disarmament.

The world was heartened when the two super-Powers agreed, in 1985, to negotiate the reduction of their nuclear arsenals and to prevent their spreading to

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

outer space. The agreement in Geneva between the leaders of the two countries that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" (A/40/1070, p. 3) is cause for hope that the use of nuclear weapons can ultimately be prohibited. We are pleased to see the positive outcome of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

It is equally essential to pursue multilateral disarmament negotiations. We hope that negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty will commence without further delay at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. Meanwhile, a moratorium should be observed on nuclear testing, as called for by the recent summit meeting of members of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Conference on Disarmament must also conclude as soon as possible a convention prohibiting chemical weapons, reinforce the existing restraints on an arms race in outer space, evolve agreed security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States and endeavour to finalize a comprehensive programme for disarmament.

The tragic incident at Chernobyl has highlighted the grave danger inherent in damage to or destruction of nuclear facilities by accident or by design. It is important to reach international agreements on nuclear safety and on the norms of proscribing attacks against nuclear facilities. The Chernobyl incident has also underlined the need for a rational and equitable régime for co-operation in this field. We hope that the forthcoming Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy will address itself to this issue, keeping in mind the particular needs of the developing countries, which face an acute shortage of conventional fuels and energy resources. The industrialized countries have a responsibility to assist the developing countries in the proper maintenance of the reactors they export and to refrain from prohibition of the supply of vital spare parts.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

Pakistan is committed to the goal of nuclear non-proliferation. In order to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in our region, Pakistan proposed in 1974, immediately after a nuclear explosion was conducted by India, the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. Since then, we have offered a number of other proposals to promote denuclearization in South Asia. We have repeatedly enumerated those proposals, which include simultaneous accession by India and Pakistan to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Pakistan desires to promote mutual confidence and beneficial co-operation in South Asia. We have joined six other countries of the region to establish the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC). SAARC offers hope for the acceleration of the development process and the promise of peace and progress to the 1 billion people of South Asia.

Pakistan has continued its endeavours to foster good-neighbourly relations with India. The understanding reached last December between the leaders of Pakistan and India not to attack each other's nuclear facilities was a welcome development in this context. We believe that, with mutual goodwill, a bilateral treaty on the non-use of force could also be speedily concluded. This process, we hope, will also lead to the achievement of a peaceful settlement of the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and in the spirit of the Simla Agreement.

Today, international peace and security are threatened not only by wars and disputes but also by poverty and deprivation. Living standards in many poor nations are declining, spreading hunger, disease and death. The economic gap between developed and developing countries is widening. The recent volatile shifts in economic trends confirm the structural imbalance in the world economy. Unless this is corrected, we may witness a global economic decline without precedent,

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spreading suffering and chaos and severely straining international order and stability.

An immediate revival of North-South dialogue is essential for orderly growth of the world economy. So far, the enormous problems created by the indebtedness of the developing countries have not been addressed in a comprehensive and integrated manner. The recent agreement on the launching of a new round of trade negotiations is a welcome development. It signals a standstill on protectionism and the initiation of the process of dismantling trade barriers imposed unjustly and indiscriminately against developing countries. It also demonstrates the flexibility and political will necessary for solving complex problems of the world economy.

We hope that a more flexible and global approach, which seeks to resolve the debt crisis through economic growth, will be possible in the context of a renewed dialogue between the developed and developing countries and in particular through the holding of the international conference on money, finance and trade for development. In the meantime, it is necessary substantially to increase financial flows to the developing countries.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms. The perpetration of acts of terrorism against the innocent can have no justification whatsoever and must merit the severest punishment. We have accepted all international measures to counter this scourge, including the three conventions relating to aerial hijacking. We share the view that special measures, including security measures, should be adopted to counter terrorism.

The curse of narcotics is becoming a global problem with grave portents for the well-being of peoples everywhere. It is a problem that transcends all national boundaries. The Government of Pakistan is committed to the eradication of drug abuse, not only within our own country, but indeed everywhere in the world. It is our earnest hope that the first global conference, to be held next year, to deal with all aspects of drug abuse and illicit trafficking will initiate and adopt measures which the international community could apply collectively to eliminate this evil.

It is ironic that so soon after our leaders renewed their dedication to the United Nations at its fortieth anniversary, and at a moment when global recognition of its achievements is growing, the world Organization has been plunged into the most serious financial crisis in its history. We shall give serious consideration to the report of the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts to examine the corrective measures the situation demands. It must be emphasized, however, that the payment of assessed contributions to the United Nations is an obligation under the Charter and must be met faithfully. This difficulty could perhaps have been averted if the persistent practice by some States of withholding part of their contributions, especially for the United Nations peace-keeping operations, had not been tolerated in the past. Pakistan will work constructively to promote a long-term solution to this financial crisis.

(Mr. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan)

If human civilization is to survive, the States represented here must strengthen, not erode, the concept of international partnership for peace and progress/to which they have pledged themselves under the United Nations Charter. In this age of nuclear weapons, the security of each individual State is the concern of all. At a time when the exploration of mankind's common heritage of space and oceans holds out such vast promise of progress and well-being, global partnership has become an imperative instead of an option. Such partnership, and the broad international co-operation which it entails, can be nurtured and promoted only within the United Nations. At this session, Member States must display the political will to transform the present crisis into a renewed and genuine commitment to this world Organization and to the hopes and aspirations of humanity which it embodies.

Mr. del VALLE (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): Please permit me to begin my remarks by expressing to you, on behalf of my Government and my delegation, our warmest congratulations, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly. This constitutes not only recognition of you as an individual, but also a demonstration of appreciation for your Government's prolific work in the United Nations.

I also wish to take advantage of this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude and felicitations to the outgoing President, Ambassador Jaime de Piniés, a person closely linked to Chile who brought a brilliant diplomatic career to a close as President of the world's most important forum.

I should also like to pay a tribute to Ambassador Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, who is completing five years at the head of this Organization, directing it during a particularly difficult period.

We have commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and have started on the fifth decade of the life of this Organization with

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growing uneasiness. The United Nations today is but a pale reflection of the Organization that emerged from the ashes of the Second World War, as an example of the international community's enlightened interest in giving concrete expression to mankind's hope for lasting peace. Today that institution, which gave rise to so many hopes, is experiencing not only a financial crisis but also one of confidence and destiny.

The responsibility for the financial crisis rests with the majority of Member States that do not make their contributions on time, with those that adopt the most extraordinary attitude of making selective payments, favouring the programmes that coincide with their political objectives, and with those that have assumed the illegal attitude of reducing their contributions unilaterally, in violation of the international obligations to which they had freely committed themselves.

In addition to this crisis, there is another, one which is far more serious. It arises from our peoples' loss of confidence in the system and in its ability to achieve the objectives for which it was created. Although it was created to be an instrument for assuring peace, the United Nations has instead become a forum of sterile confrontation. The Organization has thereby lost its ability to be a protagonist in international life and its ability to impose prudence in the conduct of States and to generate efficient initiatives for solving problems.

The lack of agreement to move forward in matters of great importance and the real stagnation into which we have been propelled by a lack of willingness to achieve consensus on vital matters have been accompanied by a tendency to indulge in resounding verbiage and rage signifying absolutely nothing. Thus we have a steady torrent of innocuous resolutions that have given rise to traditional stands that choke creativity and at the same time establish a doctrine under which the capacity for innovation, for acting on the international scene, simply does not exist.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

The successive efforts made to bring about change have not been sufficient to generate effective and necessary dialogue capable of pulling the Organization out of its state of immobility. Immobility cannot be concealed by an excessive increase in the number of meetings or by the proliferation of documents which the meetings produce. Through inertia and lack of courage to check a senseless process that seems to be leading nowhere, it has foundered into a voracious calendar that only consumes time, money and hopes.

The impossibility of facing up to this reality, which is becoming more and more complex and dynamic, has led the United Nations to a position so far removed from reality that the world it reflects today is a fictitious one.

Despite these problems which disturb us, Chile has faith in the ideal of the United Nations, for the Organization must not only be an instrument for resolving international problems, but it must also express mankind's ideal: the possibility of living, developing and progressing in peace; of living in a world where countries rich and poor can work together in harmony to achieve those objectives.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

Despite the failures, our faith is justified by the successes of the United Nations that represent concrete expressions of that ideal, for example the process of decolonization, which has peacefully brought almost 100 nations into the international community.

Then there is the priority treatment and definitive presence in today's world that the United Nations has brought to the search for development.

Throughout its existence the Organization and its specialized agencies have made substantial contributions to the economic development and political independence of nations.

While the world has become more independent, imposing a logic that no country can avoid, and while the need for multilateral co-operation appears more evident, we note that because the United Nations has become inoperative a tendency to seek solutions beyond the framework of the Organization by consolidating parallel mechanisms has become noticeable. This trend must be reversed in order to restore the United Nations to its original competence. This will require political determination.

In the course of this session the General Assembly must pronounce itself on the report on the administrative and financial situation of the Organization prepared by the Group of Eighteen Intergovernmental Experts from various nations. The report and the final treatment it is given by the General Assembly could constitute the first step towards restoration of the United Nations to the position it deserves as the principal protagonist on the worrisome international scene in the final years of this century.

There is no doubt that one of the most unstable situations in the world is that which persists in the Middle East. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) contain the fundamental elements for the achievement of a lasting and stable peace in the region. At the same time, there can be no solution of

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the problem without recognition of the right to free determination of the Palestinian people and its right to establish a sovereign State. It is necessary to reach just settlements that guarantee the peace and security of all States, including Israel's right to live within secure and internationally recognized borders. That is the only way in which the Middle East can cease to be a region in perpetual crisis.

The South African situation is cause for concern and uneasiness. At the root of the conflict is that Government's apartheid policy, which Chile has repeatedly rejected.

At the same time my Government supports the efforts of the international community, the Secretary-General and the Security Council to obtain Namibian independence by peaceful means. One milestone in that process is Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which guarantees a realistic solution that assures the Namibian people of the right to free determination as well as territorial integrity and national unity.

With regard to the Korean situation, we support the inter-Korean negotiations as a realistic and peaceful approach free from outside interference to achieving a harmonious solution of a situation that has dragged on for years. We recognize the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Korea in this respect. In line with its traditional defence of this Organization's principles of universality, my country maintains that the presence of both Koreas in the United Nations would contribute to bringing the parties closer together and achieving a negotiated settlement.

We have noted with satisfaction the attitude that President Victor Paz Estenssoro of Bolivia has adopted towards my country. The Chilean Government hopes that the process of rapprochement we have initiated with Bolivia will be successful and produce concrete results and begin a period of effective co-operation between our countries.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

We observe with indignation and sorrow the Soviet obstinacy in Afghanistan and in Kampuchea, causing death and desolation among nations eager for freedom and peace. The Soviet Union's invasion of those countries has been deservedly condemned by the international community because of its illegitimate and illegal violation of the principle of self-determination. The liberating impetus of their oppressed peoples is more powerful than any opposing armed force, as has been demonstrated by the fact that the resistance continues despite the brutal effort of the Kremlin to crush both countries.

The initiatives of the Secretary-General with regard to Afghanistan and of Prince Sihanouk with regard to Kampuchea deserve our determined support since they are the only realistic initiatives that have been undertaken to resolve those conflicts.

We are also horrified by the tragic circumstances affecting the Lebanese people, which has long been linked to Chile through close ties of friendship. The people of Chile are shocked by the continuous flow of reports of death, suffering and tragedy coming from Lebanon. Many Lebanese have made Chile their home, and therefore those reports affect us deeply. We voice our fervent hope that peace and tranquillity will soon be restored in Lebanon so that its people can once again devote themselves to the tasks of reconstruction and development.

My Government has always been keenly interested in initiatives that might lead to international peace and security and has noted with great interest and approval Brazil's proposal that the South Atlantic be declared a zone of peace and co-operation. That initiative pursues important objectives in the areas of economic development, social welfare and peace which ought to be endorsed by the General Assembly.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

It is necessary to maintain the priority of those general objectives and to shun external factors alien to general interests such as private interests or the positions of some countries that only serve to distort the objectives and generosity of the Brazilian proposal.

The acute world recession of recent years, which has had grave economic, political and social consequences for the developing world, has emphasized the effects of the crisis I mentioned earlier.

The developing countries have been obliged to adjust their economies, with painful political and social repercussions, and have had to bear the greater part of the cost of a situation for which the macroeconomic policies applied by the industrialized countries have been responsible. We have noted with consternation that while this heavy burden has been imposed upon us, the developed countries have limited adjustments in their own economies, thereby incurring the greatest imbalances in contemporary history. This has only served to further aggravate the crisis.

We are convinced that the final solution of the crisis will be obtained only through an integrated and consistent approach to the urgent problems of development, trade and finance, including the very grave debt problem.

To achieve that objective the industrialized nations must make a fundamental change in their economic policies, recognize that they share responsibility for the existing problems, bring about conditions which would allow truly free international trade to prevail without the obstacles that today arbitrarily disrupt the exports of the developing world, and reverse the decapitalization process favouring the developed nations, a process which seriously affects the Latin American region.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

The Chilean people have been among those adversely affected in the Latin American region. However it is fair to recognize that they have known how to face the crisis with courage and abnegation. Today we are firmly on the road to economic recovery; we are achieving significant growth and scrupulously complying with our financial commitments.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

Chile has noted with great concern the serious deterioration in the observance of the principle of non-intervention, a legal principle essential to coexistence and the harmonious development of relations between States.

Chile has had to reject many instances of intervention in its affairs in recent years. Under the pretext of being concerned about human rights, attempts have been from outside to manage our political affairs, to establish procedures and plans that are not our own, and objections have been made to the path chosen and the rules laid down in our political constitution, adopted by the Chilean people themselves. Those who criticize the human rights situation in Chile ignore the obvious progress we have made in that regard; the decisions of the courts of justice have been objected to and challenged, and I believe that the only reason terrorist activities have not been applauded is that many other countries are suffering from the same scourge.

What is worse, and bitterly ironic, is that many of our critics and accusers do not know what true democracy is and what human rights are. They do not respect the right of other nations to govern and decide their own destiny, and it is their declared policy not to give their own peoples freedom and democracy.

The international community is appalled to see that some States have committed themselves to training, financing, supplying and sheltering terrorists. In doing so those responsible are not only blatantly violating the principle of non-intervention, but are also committing a genuine act of aggression, and making themselves accomplices in crimes against humanity.

That is why one of the matters that urgently demand concerted action by the international community is the unprecedented escalation of terrorism, which is today striking brutally at a large part of the world community, violating the basic norms of human rights.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

We are fully aware that it is the inescapable responsibility of each Member State to combat this scourge, which is threatening both the internal peace of States and international peace. Therefore, we believe that all nations must share the international responsibility of co-ordinating efforts to pursue and punish, in accordance with their own laws, those who commit such criminal acts or lend their direct or indirect support.

Chile has been the victim of criminal acts of that kind for more than 15 years. They did not cease even when the Government of Popular Unity was in power, as the Communist Party, which formed part of it, proclaimed that its goal was to gain not only political power, but total power, and that to that end all means could be used.

Today my country is the victim of the same brazen aggression. Indeed, in early August, as we informed the Security Council at the time, our armed forces discovered in parts of northern and central Chile an enormous quantity of arms and military equipment that had been smuggled into the country, mainly by sea, in view of the long Chilean coastline.

That impressive arsenal - particularly impressive in relation to a small country such as Chile - includes, among the weapons found so far, 3,260 American-made M-16 automatic rifles; 214 Belgian-made light machine guns; 114 Russian-made Katyusha rocket launchers, of the same type as those now being used in Afghanistan; 170 TOW antitank rockets; almost 2 million rounds of ammunition for the weapons I have mentioned; 3,000 kilograms of high explosives; 2,000 hand grenades; 1,800 rocket-propelled bombs; and other weapons which it would take too long to list here. In summary, it amounts to more than 80 tons of armaments, worth more than \$10 million. Since the original discoveries, other arms deposits have been found even in Chile's capital city, confirming the magnitude of the terrorist challenge we face.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

We believe that a substantial portion of that arsenal has not yet been found and seized. That is the essential reason for the temporary emergency measures which we have had to take throughout our territory.

My Government has formally requested international co-operation to determine the origin and source of those weapons. It should be noted that their destructive power, and the information we have gathered on how they were smuggled into the country, show that we are facing not only a terrorist operation, but one of a truly military character, planned and financed from outside Chile, with the deliberate aim of promoting violence, destruction and death, and plunging the whole country into civil war. Calculation of the number of victims that the use of all those arms could have led to clearly demonstrates the scale of the tragedy that has been successfully averted. Moreover, such an assault would have represented a massive violation of human rights.

We know who are behind all these actions; they have not tried to conceal their involvement. We believe that the international community cannot remain indifferent or passive when faced with this new type of aggression, since what has been attempted against Chile today, if left unpunished, could lead to an irreversible disaster for the region as a whole.

Thus we must again accuse the Chilean Communist Party, which has time and again publicly declared its decision to conduct an armed struggle to definitively establish a totalitarian Government in Chile so that it could then assist other similar terrorist or guerrilla movements operating in our continent. The continuing campaign of calumny provided daily by Radio Moscow and other media for over 13 years is further proof of that statement.

In addition to these illegal and immoral actions, those responsible have had the audacity to claim that they have become the champions of international peace and freedom, while launching a campaign designed to sow doubts about the truth

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of the facts reported by Chile, in order to escape the onus of their actions or merely to hide the truth about the shocking discovery of that arsenal from the world.

This is the culmination of an infamous process, encouraged by the countries of the Soviet bloc, through which violence has been incited in Chile by a persistent campaign, both internal and external. The Western nations, and particularly those of Latin America, must note that those arms were not destined exclusively to weaken the present Government of Chile. The violence which is being attempted is part of the framework of a long-established criminal plot with the ultimate aim of undermining the essential values that inspire the Western nations.

As I have said, the illegal importation of a gigantic arsenal of Soviet arms into Chile was first noted in 1971, and at that time, too, the world was shocked. There is abundant reason for linking the process to which my country is being subjected with actions that have caused disruption or harm in other countries. It is part of the network of international terrorism, which is also affecting other nations in our continent. Its aim is very clear: to prevent the consolidation of democracy in Latin America.

Those who seek that goal do not know how mistaken they are. All the democratic sectors in Chile, including the opposition, have condemned the illegal import of arms. But the most serious aspect of the discoveries is the confirmation that the purpose of introducing those arms was to provoke a civil war in Chile. For on 7 September this year the President of the Republic was the target of terrorist groups employing arms from the arsenal I have mentioned, in a heinous attack aimed at taking his life and creating national chaos. The toll in that tragic episode, the only one in the history of Chile involving a Chief of State, was five dead and nine seriously wounded.

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Demonstrating criminal resolve and audacity, those concerned sought to assassinate the President and his escort, demonstrating that they knew no humanitarian or moral restraint. That is the belligerent terrorist logic, supported by international communism.

Despite those very grave events, the Chilean Government continues to dedicate itself to the process of democratic institutionalization, confident that the clandestine importation of arms, the attempt to assassinate a prominent person and the goal of revolution through subversion served only to unite all Chileans who are opposed to violence and are lovers of peace.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

In denouncing this aggression before the United Nations, we solemnly reiterate our unwavering intention to return Chile to full democracy and my Government's commitment to pursue the process of institutionalization in accordance with the modalities set out in the 1980 Constitution which binds the Government and the governed alike.

It is quite easy to confine one's self exclusively to a critical analysis of the United Nations. We do not wish to remain at that stage nor is it our style. Chile, at this time, wishes to share with the other delegations some projections for the future.

We are convinced that there are what may be called areas of consensus, which require an in-depth study and represent a useful field for harmonizing the efforts of the Organization. If we direct the dynamism of the United Nations to those areas and leave aside those which are at a standstill, we can create a climate of greater confidence in the Organization.

My country wishes formally to propose that the United Nations concentrate or dedicate its preferential action to the areas of consensus. We have identified some aspects as being susceptible of generating agreements or leading to productive negotiations.

The first is the utilization of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Such a valuable instrument of development requires the more active involvement of the General Assembly of the United Nations which, without disregarding the important contribution of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), provides the appropriate political and juridical framework so that all States may benefit increasingly from this technology.

The world cannot continue to merely observe in amazement the destructive effects and the distorted use of nuclear energy. On the contrary, we want to

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recover the positive elements and have that precious source of energy produce life instead of death.

Secondly, the structuring of regional disarmament mechanisms. In view of the standstill in the global disarmament negotiations, we feel that we should seek action in the field of regional disarmament. These mechanisms should contain instruments leading to the creation of a net protecting the countries, or, at least, reducing the dangers which the potential situations of conflict arising in various parts of the world today entail.

It is obvious that the generalization of a mechanism of this type would free resources for development. As far as my country is concerned, the proposal is not an abstract one. On the contrary, it constitutes an important goal of its foreign policy. That is why, we immediately voiced our support for the declaration of President Alan Garcia of Peru regarding regional disarmament.

In addition, as a consequence of these principles, we initiated, earlier this year, a series of meetings between the High Commands of the armed forces of Chile and Peru in an effort to find a concrete formula which would permit reductions in arms expenditures.

We believe there are other regions in the world in which agreements or similar initiatives could and should be undertaken, conducive to diminishing the scourge of force and to actively promoting conditions favourable to international peace, security and justice. In this, there is no doubt but that the United Nations can be catalyst and driving instrument for an initiative of this kind.

Thirdly, there is the use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes. The international community observes with growing interest the technological challenge stemming from the exploration and exploitation of outer space. Chile,

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like the other developing nations, aspires to the benefits which may be derived from a broad system of co-operation in the outer space area. Hence, it is extremely important to start out on a road leading to the adoption of an international agreement that legislates on permitting access by all peoples to the distribution of the benefits of space technology. Outer space, the common heritage of mankind, is regarded by nations as a promising area since it would provide them with the means for protecting and developing their natural resources and for employing the most effective tools in their plans for economic and social growth.

Access to the distribution of the benefits of such activity also undoubtedly implies acknowledgement of the right of the Powers exploiting outer space to a commensurate compensation for their efforts and their scientific and technical research.

Fourthly, there are the problems related to environment. Many problems today affect humanity as a result of the depredation of its natural resources and the contamination of air, sea and land. This has created a political imperative which the General Assembly of the United Nations cannot ignore. A physically rarefied environment is a crime against the elementary norms of human quality required for life in dignity. Hence the importance of emphasizing the study of these subjects and of evaluating, for example, the problem of cross-boundary contamination and the deposit of waste in third countries, thereby creating dangerous and noxious situations.

Fifthly, we have the world's food problem. The international community has been stunned by the food crisis affecting some African countries and, in general, the development tragedy in that continent. Thus the international community is emotionally prepared to undertake an in-depth action to resolve the world's food problem, with emphasis on the problems of Africa.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

This is a new subject for consensus which our efforts and our imagination should promote.

In short, Chile is firmly convinced that there are areas of consensus such as those we have referred to and briefly described, and that the time has come to begin a process of integrated and comprehensive negotiation, since there are common denominators amongst them. Essentially, they can be the sources of eventual international agreements and constitute a productive source for guiding the United Nations along a technical path, free of ideological considerations.

In making these proposals, which must necessarily be refined and attuned to the political moment and the respective forums, we are motivated only by a sense of international public service, free of narrow dogmas and contingent sectarianism. The United Nations cannot continue to be the setting of sterile confrontations and of quarrels and disputes that erode its very credibility. It is particularly important to plan for the future and take realistic and pragmatic advantage of subjects susceptible of bringing nations together in their own lasting interests.

When Western Europe still suffered the after-effects of the Second World War, allied nations and their rivals in that conflagration modestly conceived, in a determined and imaginative manner, a route that had certain points of consensus. That effort kept growing and gradually became transformed in what is today the European Community, a major process in the history of co-operative relations among nations.

Today, when we again face the need of starting out on the road to the ideal of the United Nations, let us consider the process of the European Community. The option of the present hour is co-operation and understanding, or disintegration and confrontation.

(Mr. del Valle, Chile)

My Government is convinced that the modest but resolute method of finding points of consensus will enable us to take firm and realistic steps towards a more integrated, unified and peaceful world.

Mr. AL-KHALIFA (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to offer you my sincere congratulations on your election as President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly and to wish you all success in presiding over its deliberations. I take this opportunity also to congratulate Bangladesh, a friendly country to which we are linked by the closest historical, social and political ties.

On behalf of my delegation, it gives me pleasure to thank your predecessor, Mr. Jaime de Piniés, for his valuable contribution to the work of the previous session. I also wish to express my deep appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his efforts to maintain co-operation and security in the world. We express our hope that he will continue in his noble task.

The proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly designating 1986 the International Year of Peace is indeed an occasion for the peoples of the world to pause and reflect on how to save the world from the dangers of destruction and annihilation posed by the nuclear terror overshadowing our lives.

The international community is today confronted by a crisis in which the arms race, and particularly nuclear rearmament, threatens the future and very existence of man and his very existence. One of the reasons for this crisis may be the inability of the international community to put behind it the accumulated bitterness and tragedy of modern history. The memory of wars, destruction and colonialism continues to sow in our breasts feelings of insecurity and of doubt about our ability to lay to rest the bitter experiences of the past. Fear and mutual distrust have led to an open-ended arms race, especially between the two super-Powers, whose combined military spending is approximately 70 per cent of total world expenditure. This is undoubtedly contrary to man's natural duty to develop the earth's resources and to preserve human civilization.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

Relations between nations are today characterized by excessive selfishness and acute conflict between various principles and ideologies on the one hand and political and economic self-interest on the other. Violence is often used as a means to satisfy such ambitions. It is no wonder that such a deterioration in international relations leads to failure and undermines man's confidence in a future of security, stability and peace.

The international community is aware of the extent of the current crisis in international relations. It is also aware of the horrors of any nuclear war, however limited. That awareness and realization have not, however, prompted the international community to seek effective solutions to the political and ideological differences existing in the current social and economic order so that an international order may be established for the maintenance of peace and the promotion of security and stability in the world.

The endemic crisis of confidence among major Powers is undoubtedly one of the main reasons for the failure of disarmament negotiations and of the attempt to establish an international order based on collective security.

That tendency in international relations has led to a frenzied race to impose policies of polarization and cold war in many parts of the world. It has engendered security fears in the third world, which has been subjected by some Powers to unlimited hegemony and influence and the control of all its energy resources and raw materials. Those Powers have deprived the peoples of the third world of their right to sovereignty over their national resources and the right to obtain a fair price for their goods. They have also incited regional strife and worsened conditions in hotbeds of tension in many parts of the third world, which have become open markets for the arms dealers.*

* Mr. Turkmen (Turkey), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

Such extremist policies have created a new situation with two contradictory features: whereas the advanced countries devote most of their resources to the development of land and the building of civilization, they are also using their potential and immense wealth for the manufacture of instruments of destruction and annihilation. Thus, construction and destruction have become the twin aspects of this conflict, which has diverted the course of international relations to such an extent that calls for international co-operation and collective security amount in most cases to little more than empty talk.

If the international community is to confront the challenge of the nuclear horror, it must mobilize all its capacity for joint collective co-operation and find solutions to pressing human problems instead of indulging in conflict and rivalry in international relations, which can lead only to collective destruction and complete annihilation.

Thus it can be said that the questions of security, peace and disarmament - particularly nuclear disarmament - concern not only the two super-Powers or the nuclear-weapon States, but closely affect the fate of all peoples. We hope that the accident that took place recently at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union, as well as similar incidents, will convince States possessing nuclear weapons and installations that collective action on joint security measures for all States and peoples are necessary and, indeed, inevitable.

In this context we should like to underline the point made in the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, chaired by Mr. Olof Palme, the late Prime Minister of Sweden, that international peace must rest on a commitment to joint survival rather than on the threat of mutual destruction. The international arena is crowded with international disputes and regional hotbeds of tension awaiting prompt solutions. Undoubtedly, most if not

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

all of such regional disputes are due to international interactions and to a network of interests that are competing on the political, economic and strategic levels.

It is indeed regrettable that the United Nations, which has accomplished so much in the humanitarian, economic and social fields, has not been able to satisfy the longings of the peoples of the world to be saved from the menace of war, or to ensure that present and future generations can live in security, comfort and peace.

The principles of the Charter would be sufficient to guarantee prosperity, progress, security and equality to all peoples of the world, if only relations among States were based on the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Thus as the Secretary-General says in his annual report, we should not only believe in such principles, but also apply them in our international dealings and relations.

In that connection, it is with great sadness and pain that we have been watching the bitter war between Iraq and Iran. That war has now entered its seventh year and has inflicted much grief and destruction on those two neighbouring countries. In spite of all initiatives and serious attempts to settle that dispute by the United Nations, the Gulf Co-operation Council, the Islamic Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement and individual and regional mediation efforts, Iran unfortunately has not yet responded to calls for peace.

We call for the cessation of hostilities, because we are concerned about the peace and security of those two neighbouring countries and peoples and wish to save them from the further losses and total destruction which will be the inevitable result of an unending war. As a country that feels some responsibility as a neighbour living in the region ravaged by the war, we make a sincere and unbiased, appeal to Iran to respond to those calls for peace. Iran can look for solid support from the States of the Gulf region in restoring peace and security in the area.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

From this rostrum, we once again call upon the United Nations to continue its efforts to create the right conditions for a dialogue that will end this destructive war. At the same time we call upon the influential Powers in the world community to shoulder their responsibilities and make a real effort to arrive at a definitive solution to the Iraq-Iran dispute that will safeguard the legitimate rights of both parties.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

Some believe that the Iraq-Iran war is of limited scope and thus does not warrant greater attention at the cost of other international questions, particularly since oil is flowing normally and meeting the needs of world markets. Some world Powers which hold this narrow view of the Iraq-Iran war and of security in the Gulf region concentrate their attention on oil, open markets and the arms trade, ignoring the political lessons and historical trends in the region.

The unalterable facts of history show that the many civilizations that had existed in the Gulf region and the Arabian peninsula since time immemorial were in a region separating the great civilizations of the East and the West. That central position led to economic prosperity, established markets and active trade. This left its clear impact on political and social trends, which were in fact distinguished by political moderation and by co-operation with all other States in all fields of mutual interest.

Those two distinctive features of the region were not always found together; they varied according to the changing historical situation. When the currents of extremism upset stability and coexistence in the region, the voice of moderation subsided and died, leading to political and economic effects and interaction and to the emergence of the interests of foreign Powers; this was harmful to some.

That political fact proves that stability, peace and security in the region were always the main source of well-being and happiness for all who spoke in the solemn voice of moderation. We hope that this lesson of wisdom will resound in the ears and thoughts of those who are wagering on the continuation of the Iraq-Iran war and of those who are waiting, in the hope of deriving personal gain from it. In this connection, we welcome the peace initiative put forward by Iraq on 2 August 1986 for the termination of the war, so that the people of the region might lead a normal life in security and stability.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

The question of Palestine and the problem of the Middle East provide the clearest example of the failure of international co-operation, whether within the United Nations or outside it. A number of States have made individual contacts with the parties to the dispute and have put forward various initiatives for the peaceful settlement of the dispute in that region. Earlier ineffectual attempts of this kind culminated in the conclusion of a treaty between Egypt and Israel. But the aggressive policies of Israel have not ceased. Israel attacked Iraq's peaceful nuclear installations in 1981, invaded Lebanon in 1982, and massacred Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila - a massacre whose painful memory haunts us again this month. Israel has also pursued a policy of forcible occupation of Arab lands and has established settlement on occupied lands. It has annexed the Syrian Golan Heights and has altered the historical landmarks of Holy Jerusalem. It has raided the Tunis offices of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and has pursued a daily policy of suppression, dispersion and terrorism in the occupied Arab lands. It regularly launches savage attacks on Lebanon and Palestinian refugee camps, the latest of which were last week's air raids against southern Lebanon.

Why have all these attempts and peace initiatives failed to bring peace to the Middle East?

We believe that most of these efforts and initiatives were based on unrealistic assumptions. They ignored the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the entire question of Palestine, which is at the core of the dispute in the Middle East. In short, efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli dispute were misdirected. All initiatives and efforts - whatever their source and irrespective of the good intentions of their sponsor - will inevitably fail if they are not based on a just and comprehensive solution of the question of Palestine and of the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

Although that fact is obvious, some States still lean towards the Israeli view of this cause, which is vital to the Arab nation. That view can provide nothing more than partial solutions guaranteeing neither stability nor peace and giving no momentum to the cause of genuine peace in the region. A comprehensive and lasting peace should be based on just principles, the main element of which is recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent State on their national soil, under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative. The PLO should be a principal participant in any peaceful effort towards the practical, fair solution of this question. The convening of an international conference with the participation of all the interested parties and the permanent members of the Security Council would be a practical step towards the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the region.

The awakening of the indigenous majority in South Africa has attracted the attention of world public opinion. It has become crystal clear to the international community that the black majority, which has been struggling for many years against injustice and oppression, has risen in a massive revolt aimed at dismantling the racist régime.

Bitter experience has now shown the black population that proposed reforms offered now and again by the racist régime are merely political sops intended to contain local and world discontent. It has become clear to all that the problem in South Africa is not merely political; it is also a question of immoral practices which are loathed by all the world's peoples as being inconsistent with the principles of human equality and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

Coexistence with such a régime is impossible; whatever other concessions may be made by the racist régime, the main principles of its detested system of apartheid will be retained. World attention should therefore be directed at formulating a clear plan of action that will compel the Pretoria régime to submit to the demands of justice and equality and dismantle its system of racial discrimination, which is a political and social régime incompatible with human dignity. The international community should take steps to reflect in practice its support for the legitimate struggle of the people of South Africa, for moral support has proven ineffective in compelling the Pretoria régime to abandon its system of racial discrimination.

The non-aligned summit Conference, held at Harare from 1 to 7 September this year, adopted unambiguous decisions on this subject. We call upon the international community to support the decisions of that Conference. We believe that the time has come for the Security Council - and particularly its permanent members - to shoulder its international responsibility and impose a comprehensive boycott and strict economic sanctions against South Africa in order to compel that racist régime to yield to the dictates of justice and equality.

The South African régime continues illegally to occupy the Territory of Namibia, in violation of General Assembly resolutions, in particular resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974. We regret that no progress has been made towards implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia, outlined in Security Council resolution 435 (1978). We reiterate our full support for the lawful struggle of the people of Namibia for freedom and independence, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), its genuine, legitimate representative.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

The Afghan people has languished under the yoke of foreign occupation since 1979, when it lost its freedom under an alien régime imposed by the force of arms. The people of Afghanistan have been compelled to live under an unacceptable system, which they have resisted by faith and by arms. We call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces in conformity with the will of the international community, as embodied in General Assembly resolutions. The Afghan people should be permitted to choose a political and social system compatible with its history and ancient heritage. We hope that the efforts of the Secretary-General will be successful, so that the Afghan people may regain its freedom and freely express its will, safe from policies of hegemony, polarization and threats.

As regards the question of Cyprus, we welcome the Secretary-General's attempts to narrow the differences between the two parties to the dispute, thus paving the way towards a just and lasting peaceful settlement.

With regard to the question of Korea, we sympathize with the wish of the Korean people in both parts of Korea for reunification, and we welcome all constructive dialogue to that effect.

The world economy is in acute crisis, which threatens the present and future of all the world's peoples. It might therefore be that economic matters should be placed high on the list of international priorities so that they may become a principal theme of contemporary international co-operation.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

It is strange indeed that this acute crisis in the world economy has not awakened the international community to its crushing burden, as international economic co-operation recedes in spite of the interdependence of the world economy and its increased universality. In other words, the universality and interdependence of economic affairs have not been accompanied by international co-operation to face up to the challenges of the current economic crisis. It is clear today that world economic relations have passed from the stage of problem to that of crisis. This threatens the existence of man, in exactly the same way as nuclear terror and strategic arms. This crisis makes it imperative to correct the course of current international relations, so that a new international economic order may be established.

This crisis has had a strong impact on the economies of the third world in the past three years. Rates of economic growth began to fall drastically, and the terms of trade deteriorated sharply; there was also a reduction in the prices of primary materials, commodities and oil. That, in turn, inflated the volume of external debts and the cost of servicing them. Confusion in the fields of currency, finance and exchange rates increased. The advanced, industrialized countries started to adopt protectionist economic policies and to impose strict barriers against the exports of the developing countries. That further undermined the economies of the third world.

These economic conditions have upset the economies of developing countries, because of the ominous consequences they will have unless the international community corrects the deviations in the course of economic relations by introducing drastic reforms in the current economic structure. The time has come for the advanced, industrialized countries to realize not only that the continued

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

deterioration of economic conditions will undermine the political and social systems of the third world, but also that the advanced countries will not be immune from their adverse effects and negative developments. We hope that these facts will prompt the advanced and industrialized countries to open a new chapter of concrete economic negotiations with the developing nations, and to go beyond formal differences and concentrate on issues of substance.

Peace is a human quest. Nations and States have longed for and aspired to peace from ancient times, so that they might enjoy stability and security, particularly in areas shattered by conflict and war. The United Nations was established after the Second World War to save succeeding generations from the scourge of a new war.

Now that the twentieth century is almost at an end, peace has become, with all its political and social implications, a necessity - indeed, a pressing world necessity, which will shape the fate of man and his present and future existence. We therefore look forward to the future with hope and expectation. We want to dispel pessimism and give future generations confidence in the viability of collective action for the good of humanity, so that mature human dialogue may bring happiness to man and save him from the threats of fear and instability and the unpredictability of the future.

I am pleased to state from this rostrum that the State of Bahrain, which believes in the noble goals of the United Nations Charter, is prepared to work hard and co-operate sincerely and constructively with all other States for the maintenance of peace and security in the world and the achievement of those noble goals of the Charter of our Organization.

Mr. BARRE (Somalia): On behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf I extend Ambassador Choudhury warm congratulations on his election as President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. Our deliberations will undoubtedly profit from the learning, wisdom and diplomatic skills which he brings to his high office. I take this opportunity to express my Government's gratification at the strong ties of friendship which link our two countries.

I also wish to express our deep appreciation for the skilful guidance provided by Ambassador de Piniés of Spain during the fortieth session. His well-known diplomatic experience and statesmanship made a valuable contribution to a historic occasion.

I must place on record our admiration of the persistent efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, in his relentless search for solutions to the urgent international problems of our times. We extend our best wishes for his return to full health and strength and express our continued confidence in his work as Secretary-General.

The consensus which emerged from the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations was that the world Organization, with all its faults, still represented mankind's best hope for peace and progress. That consensus, I believe, envisaged two lines of action: it called for the reform of those shortcomings typical of any 40-year-old bureaucracy, and it called for the strengthening of the central role of the United Nations in the system of collective security established by the Charter.

The first line of action has been set in motion as a result of the efforts of the Group of high-level intergovernmental experts set up to review the administrative and financial functioning of the world body. My Government welcomes the recommendations of the Group as a valuable starting point for the process of

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

reform, and we believe that they should receive careful consideration. Where sensitive financial and budgetary issues are concerned, I trust that these can be addressed in a spirit of goodwill and with a consistent application of the relevant principles of the Charter, bearing in mind also the specific responsibilities of the Secretary-General.

Unfortunately, the constructive response that has been made to the internal needs of the world Organization has not yet been matched by efforts to strengthen its authority as it seeks to resolve problems which endanger world peace and security.

Many of the political issues which trouble our times have their origin in the violation of two fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter - namely, the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, and respect for the human rights of individuals.

It is indeed tragic that many States are prepared to uphold Charter principles in situations where their countries are not directly involved, but ignore those same principles when they find it expedient to do so. There needs to be a renewed understanding of the fact that membership of the world Organization entails a sincere commitment to the rule of international law as established by the United Nations Charter and to the promotion of human dignity, on the basis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The United Nations has consistently promoted just and reasonable solutions, based on the principles of the Charter, in order to establish conditions of peace in numerous conflict areas of the world. Regrettably, these solutions remain unimplemented, and in consequence tension and conflict continue to take a heavy toll in human lives and constitute a setback to the search for stability and progress.

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

International attention is today rightly focused on the critical situation in southern Africa, but more than 20 years ago the General Assembly called for comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions in order to deter South Africa's white minority from imposing its criminal apartheid plan on the black majority. We are now witnessing the inevitable confrontation between the oppressed majority, determined to regain its basic human rights at any cost, and the racist minority, prepared to use its oppressive police and military forces with the utmost brutality in order to retain its privileged position.

Without doubt, violence and bloodshed will continue to escalate unless the Pretoria régime is pressured into abolishing apartheid, releasing imprisoned leaders such as Nelson Mandela and taking steps to establish a truly just and democratic society.

My Government joins in the call for the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa, including an oil embargo - a call which is supported by a rising tide of public opinion around the world. We heartily welcome the growing recognition that this measure is the only peaceful and effective means available to prevent a protracted and bloody racial conflict in southern Africa.

The demand for sanctions against South Africa is made even more urgent by the Pretoria régime's intransigence over Namibia's independence. In no other issue before the United Nations is the authority of the world body so clearly defined and at the same time so deeply compromised as in the case of Namibia. The importance of this question is attested to by the recently concluded special session of the General Assembly, the third on Namibia, which called once again for action under Chapter VII of the Charter. The special session could hardly have done otherwise in view of South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia, its obstructive tactics against the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

its policies of occupation, terrorist aggression, subversion and economic pressure directed against front-line States.

The Security Council has issued a great many ultimatums in the context of South Africa's gross violations of international law and its breaches of regional and international peace and security. I hope that the General Assembly will call upon the Council in a strong and unified voice to enforce those ultimatums.

Another problem of international concern is the situation in the Horn of Africa. It is unfortunate that protracted conflict in the area has given rise to large-scale human suffering, massive destruction of property and huge refugee influxes. It is essential that concerted action be taken to remove the sources of tension and conflict and to establish a solid foundation for peace and stability in the region. To this end, it is imperative that confidence-building measures first be undertaken to create a climate conducive to meaningful negotiations on fundamental issues, based on respect for the human rights of the peoples of the area.

The Middle East is among the world's most troubled areas, in spite of the fact that the principles which must govern a just and lasting settlement have been widely acknowledged. Peace in the area will continue to be elusive unless all those concerned exert the political will to bring about a comprehensive settlement.

My Government fully supports the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council which call for the total withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and the restoration of Palestinian rights, in particular the right to statehood in Palestine.

We believe that the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East would be a major step towards the achievement of a just and lasting

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

peace. To be effective the Conference would require the full participation on a basis of equality of the representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

It must be recognized that time is not on the side of peace in the Middle East. Every effort must be made to ensure that a new generation will not again be handed a legacy of hatred and despair.

The grave situation in Afghanistan and the attempt to suppress the freedom struggle of a courageous people continue to be a matter of major international concern. My Government strongly supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to bring about a political settlement based on the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan, respect for its sovereignty and non-aligned status and the return of the Afghan refugees in safety and with honour.

The proliferation of areas of conflict is clearly related to the low level of respect apparent on the international scene for principles of international law such as the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the affairs of States and the non-use of force in international relations. In this context, my Government deeply regrets the escalation of the war between Iran and Iraq, which has resulted in great loss of life and destruction of the resources of both countries and has also endangered world peace and security. We join in the universal call for a sincere response to all efforts at mediation to achieve an immediate cease-fire and to promote a peaceful settlement of this tragic conflict.

We also regret that the people of Kampuchea are still unable to determine their own future free from outside interference. The world community must continue to support regional and international efforts to establish independence, neutrality and peace for all the countries of South-East Asia.

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

The world can ill afford the development in Central America of a new area of tension and conflict. The peace initiatives of the Contadora Group provide a valuable opportunity for settling problems through dialogue and negotiation. That opportunity should not be lost.

In a similar vein, we also join other States in supporting the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General to find a peaceful solution to the long-standing question of Cyprus. If the mistakes and inequities of the past are to be avoided and a peaceful and harmonious future achieved for the two communities of Cyprus, there must be agreement on constitutional arrangements which would give equal rights to all the citizens of that State and provide the necessary protection and guarantees of those rights. It is our hope that the parties concerned will reach an understanding leading to an early and amicable settlement of the problem.

Another regional concern of my Government is the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We hope that the Indian Ocean and hinterland States, the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users will co-operate in efforts to convene the long-delayed Conference on the Indian Ocean before 1988. In our view, the convening of the Conference remains an essential step towards the attainment of the goals of the Indian Ocean Declaration.

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

The critical economic situation on our continent continues to be foremost among the concerns of African States, even though the worst aspects of the crisis have been relieved.

African Governments and peoples are deeply grateful for the generous response of the international community to the plight of millions made destitute by a combination of natural and man-made disasters. Innumerable lives have been saved and hundreds of thousands given hope for the future as a result of an extraordinary exercise of good will and co-operation by the United Nations and its agencies, governmental and charitable organizations and concerned groups and individuals.

However, the task of shoring up our infrastructures and economies against future onslaughts by natural and other disasters must now be undertaken. That task demands the strong resolve of African States to rectify past mistakes in development planning and to shoulder the major responsibility for their economic growth. It also demands sustained flows of development assistance to provide an essential boost to rehabilitation efforts.

Africa's priority programme for economic recovery gives a clear indication of the determination of African States to take the steps necessary for recovery and steady growth. I hope that the adoption, by the General Assembly at the thirteenth special session, of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, indicates a new and constructive spirit of partnership between developed and developing countries in the task of Africa's rehabilitation.

Each of Africa's most affected countries has its particular challenge in addition to the familiar constraints of underdevelopment. In Somalia we are doing all we can to combat drought and desertification both at the national and regional levels. It is for this reason that we contributed to the establishment of the Inter-governmental Authority for Drought and Development in East Africa.

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

Somalia is of course affected on a catastrophic scale by the problem of massive refugee flows. International assistance ensures the survival of the refugees, but their continued presence in our country for almost a decade, augmented of late by a new influx, has placed an intolerable burden on our overstretched resources and over-used environment.

We appeal to donor countries to give renewed attention to the commitments made at the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa with regard to emergency assistance, medium-term needs and the search for durable solutions.

Africa's plans for recovery and development, and indeed the development plans of all the developing countries, depend ultimately for their success on the reform of the imbalances in the world economic system and the creation of a world economic climate favourable to development.

The debt burdens imposed by imported inflation are without doubt the most crippling of the many constraints which impede the development process. The call of the Organization of African Unity for an international conference on Africa's external indebtedness underlines the disastrous proportions of this problem. Clearly the gains of the thirteenth special session will be nullified unless creative solutions to the debt problem can be formulated.

Narrowing the economic gap between developed and developing countries used to be an established goal of the United Nations but it is a goal that seems to be receding from sight. The abandonment of that goal would endanger the survival of millions of people in the developing world; it would have an adverse effect on world economic growth and it would be inimical to world peace and security. The resumption of vigorous efforts to narrow the gap between rich and poor countries would be in the best interests of all the members of the world community.

(Mr. Barre, Somalia)

Whatever the particular economic, political or social concerns of Member States may be, they all live under the threat of global disaster posed by the nuclear confrontation of the super-Powers. Unfortunately, the nuclear dilemma does not involve the security and status of the nuclear Powers alone: it involves the survival of civilization, of mankind and possibly of our planet. My Government hopes that the two super-Powers are at last prepared to talk to each other at the highest level and to make serious commitments to nuclear disarmament, to the prohibition of new weapons of mass destruction and to the preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm my Government's belief in the enduring validity of the principles and purposes of the United Nations. We share the concern of many States over the emergence of a tendency to downgrade the importance of the world body and even to undermine its authority and effectiveness.

Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated repeatedly, in both political and economic spheres, that even the critics of the United Nations are obliged to turn to it when other alternatives fail. If progress towards the resolution of political problems is often slow, the fault usually lies with a lack of political will to take advantage of United Nations peace-keeping and peace-making efforts. We would certainly have to consider the United Nations an indispensable instrument of progress and peace if we only took into account its remarkable achievements in the economic, social and humanitarian fields.

In our complex world, limitless possibilities for the betterment of mankind exist side by side with dangerous regional and international tensions and with the threat of nuclear catastrophe. My Government will continue to do all it can to support the United Nations as it responds appropriately to the challenging problems of our times.

Mr. da LUZ (Cape Verde) (spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation): Sir, it is with great satisfaction that we address to the President our congratulations on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at the forty-first session. His personal qualities as a leader and his diplomatic experience are a guarantee that the serious problems at present confronting our Organization will be properly dealt with so that we shall be enabled to find solutions and thereby to promote the establishment of international confidence.

We should like also to express our appreciation for the work carried out during the fortieth session, particularly during the celebrations of the anniversary of the United Nations, and to pay a tribute to the previous president, Mr. Jaime de Piniés. His presidency made a major contribution to the improvement of the Organization's image.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

We should like also particularly to congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the invaluable contribution and laudable efforts which he has made in the discharge of his duties. Through his wealth of experience, his personal devotion and his enlightened view of our collective problems, the five years of his term of office have been very enriching from the point of view of analysing and identifying the underlying causes of the difficulties which beset present international institutions and have also made a major contribution to cushioning the impact of the crisis which, as we know, is the fate of all at the present time. Cape Verde greatly appreciated his tenacity and calmness in the difficult hours which the international community has lived through during this time, as well as his resolute courage when the international situation required it.

Eleven years ago the Republic of Cape Verde became a member of the great family of the United Nations, its desire being to make a modest contribution to the building of a world of peace, progress and social justice. Since then the international situation has been steadily deteriorating. Reasons for optimism and confidence have rarely proved to be well founded. Conflicts and disputes continue in various parts of the world. Growing rivalries between the major Powers, particularly in the nuclear field, have led to an increased arms race at unprecedented levels. Imbalances and inequalities between rich and poor nations have become accentuated, whereas despair and poverty have been growing among developing countries, essentially because of the fact that an international economic system which is no longer in step with the realities of the present day world has been perpetuated. These negative phenomena, which seriously threaten international peace and security just when our Organization was last year celebrating its fortieth anniversary, have been mentioned repeatedly by Heads of State and Government.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

The leaders present on this occasion, conveying the aspirations and concerns of their respective peoples, have emphasized the risks and dangers that beset mankind and have appealed to us to concert our efforts in the urgent task of building peace and co-operation for development, and to work together for the democratization of international relations. We note with deep concern that tension and international crises continue to be constant features of our daily life, with serious implications for mankind.

Cape Verde reiterates its full support for the fundamental principles that should underlie international relations as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, as well as in the practice of the non-aligned countries. Furthermore, we reiterate the ethic underlying our foreign policy in seeking solutions which will lead to peace and development. We are certain that only confidence and mutual respect can create a sound and lasting basis for dialogue and international co-operation.

The negative trends that are today a feature of the relations between States, and which are to be seen in practically all conflicts and instances of tension and instability in the world, are reflected in the activities of this Organization, which came into being 41 years ago on the basis of the sovereign equality of States, an Organization dedicated to building peace and promoting co-operation and development among peoples.

Like many countries, the Republic of Cape Verde has in the general debate in the last two years voiced its concern over the enormous difficulties confronting this Organization and its specialized agencies in performing their duties and in pursuit of the noble objectives inscribed in their charters.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

Like the overwhelming majority of Member States we have always defended the view that there is no alternative to the United Nations. The interdependence of today's world and the multiplicity and complexity of international life at this time require global solutions which transcend frontiers and which can be envisaged only in a universal framework such as that provided by the United Nations, where the legitimate interests of all countries, great and small, rich and poor, are duly taken into account.

Any attempt to divert international public opinion, which is now focused on collective issues, from the institutionalized multilateral framework of the United Nations, would no doubt satisfy those interests that are prompted by the need to bring about a spirit of national affirmation and create and pave the way for the unilateral imposition of solutions on other countries, but it could also lead - and in fact has led - to a weakening of international institutions as a suitable framework for understanding the problems affecting most States.

The problems of world peace and security and of co-operation to further development and human rights are problems which, because of their global nature, affect all corners and peoples of the earth. That is why attempts to find solutions to them are part of a multilateral, stable and proper framework in which all peoples of the world are duly represented.

The need for the United Nations as the preferred, if not the sole, forum for finding solutions to our collective problems is becoming particularly acute in the present situation, where developing countries, including Cape Verde, are being confronted by gloomy prospects, particularly in the socio-economic field. If we were all desirous - as many speaking from this rostrum have affirmed themselves to be - of saving the world from catastrophe, of helping to raise the level of mankind and human dignity, thus creating a climate of peace and prosperity for one and all,

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

then all of us, and principally those countries that bear major international responsibility, should give practical effect to their commitment to fulfil the tasks of the United Nations, as well as their firm adherence to its purposes and principles. Hitherto, unfortunately, despite the constructive statements made during the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, very little has been done to eliminate the crisis and restore confidence in the United Nations system.

On the contrary, that confidence has been seriously shaken by the financial crisis of the Organization. The financial difficulties are above all, as we know, a reflection of political positions which work to deny the United Nations its role as an institutional framework for dialogue on the major international issues of the present day, on the basis of the sovereign equality of States. Thus, if the financial crisis were to be resolved, this would undoubtedly help to resolve the institutional crisis that now besets the United Nations. The institutional crisis, in its turn, cannot be resolved without the political will of all countries. Our common destiny requires us to make national sacrifices in this way.

There is no doubt that a great deal could be done towards streamlining the work of the United Nations in order to improve its administrative and financial effectiveness. The creation of the Group of 18 last year, pursuant to a unanimous decision of this Assembly, was dictated by the need to improve the financial and administrative activities of the Organization. We hope the work of the Group will help to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization. The Assembly must pay great attention to the recommendations of the Group and that should lead to decisions that will make for a stronger United Nations, one which is more confident and better equipped to pursue its objectives.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

We should like to believe that today we cannot combine the ideals of peace with obsessive preparation for war. One cannot invoke liberation, justice or progress simply in order to disguise hegemonic trends or claims. Respect for the principles and norms governing international relations should not be made subordinate to national interests or become lost in ambiguous interpretations.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

Yet, in flagrant violation of such norms and principles, tensions are mounting and threats to the world's security multiply because of the stockpiling of nuclear weapons and the extension of the arms race into new areas. One display of strength leads to another, in violation of the sovereignty, integrity and political independence of States, and creates a climate of instability and insecurity, particularly among the developing countries. Unprecedented acts of aggression, in total disregard of the norms of international law, are being undertaken under various pretexts against sovereign States Members of the Organization.

We cannot let pass this opportunity to express our rejection of the escalation of international terrorism in all its forms, including State terrorism, which, with its accompaniment of innocent victims, is affecting international relations as a whole. The causes of that phenomenon deserve greater attention from all Member States, since recourse to terrorism is all-too-often the result of the injustice, poverty and inequalities that prevail in today's world. It is essential that action be taken to eliminate that scourge by adopting measures and initiatives that take into account the need to eliminate its underlying causes.

On the other hand, we cannot tolerate the use or threat of force against sovereign countries, particularly small ones. The use of force in international relations contributes to lack of respect for and weakening of the United Nations. A world in which the law of the strongest prevails is contrary to the concept of a civilized world guided by humanitarian ideals.

This session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time when events in the southern part of Africa are once again drawing attention to the resistance that the forces of apartheid, racial discrimination and colonial tyranny are offering to those working for change in that part of the continent. The possibilities of an

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explosion of violence, with unpredictable consequences for the continent as a whole, and for the world, are increasing.

Once again, apartheid stands exposed before the international community as an abhorrent system of oppression that is historically and universally condemned, particularly in a world like our own, struggling for the ideals of peace, equality, social justice and progress, and particularly on a continent that stands to gain so much from peaceful coexistence and constructive co-operation among its peoples and States.

Owing to the complex interests involved, current events in that strategic region deserve the full attention of the whole of the international community, for nothing is more urgent than that all turn their efforts and their devotion towards preserving the region from a bloody conflagration.

The acts of aggression being carried out against neighbouring countries and the important aid being given to puppet units of armed bandits intended to destabilize the Governments of legally constituted sovereign countries, as well as the constant defiance of the norms and principles of international law that govern relations among States, all demonstrate the inability of the present Pretoria régime to enter onto the path of political realism and to accept the idea of the total dismantling of apartheid as the only way to defend the genuine interests of South African society as a whole.

Acts of military aggression, especially those aimed at disrupting socio-economic activities, carried out against the front-line countries, particularly against the People's Republic of Angola and the People's Republic of Mozambique, are designed not only to destabilize those sovereign countries but also to stifle the economy of the entire region.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

We should like to express here our serious concern at the increase in the military threats along the southern border of Angola, evidenced by the concentration of South African troops in that region, and following upon the substantial external aid given to the armed bandits of UNITA in the form of sophisticated weaponry.

We have also witnessed an intensification of the undeclared war being waged against Mozambique which, in conjunction with natural disasters, has increased the problems confronting that sister State.

We consider that the whole of the international community has a duty to help the Republic of Angola and the Republic of Mozambique in their struggle to resist aggression and the attempts at destabilization of which they are victims.

The critical situation in South Africa has quite rightly been the focus of the concerns of all countries Members of the Organization. Confronted with an imminent catastrophe that would have unforeseeable repercussions on international peace and security, it is the duty of the international community, and particularly of the States Members of the United Nations, in the performance of their collective responsibilities and taking into account the recommendations of the second International Conference on Sanctions against Racist South Africa recently held in Paris, to adopt appropriate measures to avoid the spread of destruction, suffering, anxiety, death and poverty in southern Africa and to safeguard the opportunities to achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict.

The first step towards such a negotiated solution must be the liberation of Nelson Mandela and the other political prisoners, recognition by those in power of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other militant democratic forces and the initiation of serious negotiation among the parties on the future of South Africa.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

This session of the General Assembly can be of major importance and of historic import if its deliberations can generate measures that can bring the South African régime to the negotiating table. In this connection, and mindful of the relevant resolutions and decisions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and of the recent summit meeting of countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, efforts must be made to moderate the adjustments and sacrifices being made by certain countries, either under duress or as a consequence of their application of recommended sanctions, particularly those countries whose territory and population are the targets of military aggression and economic reprisal by the South African régime.

In this connection we are pleased at the recent proposal made by the non-aligned countries for the creation of a fund to assist in resisting invasion, colonialism and apartheid, the main purpose of which would be to demonstrate solidarity with the front-line States and the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia.

The situation in Namibia demands our full attention because here, in the present-day international context, we are now witnessing a kind of relegation of the Namibian question to the background, as if the solution of that problem were dependent upon the overall solution of the conflict in southern Africa. We hope that the recent special session of the General Assembly on Namibia will not only breathe fresh life into the manner in which that question has been dealt with but, further, that it will demonstrate that the consistent implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) will prove to be an important contribution to reaching a speedy comprehensive solution in the region.

As for the Western Sahara, the recent negotiations held in New York between the parties concerned, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, have given us grounds for a certain optimism with regard to the possibility of a

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negotiated settlement of the conflict. We are convinced that continuing such contacts and negotiations is the only way the conflict can ultimately be resolved, and it is for that reason that we have always, in so far as possible, encouraged those involved in that conflict to seek reconciliation through dialogue and respect for the sacred rights of peoples to self-determination and independence, in keeping with the relevant resolutions of international bodies on the question.

Where Chad is concerned, we reiterate our full support for the actions and initiatives taken by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to bring about national reconciliation, and we continue to hope that the pressing need for peace of the martyred people of that country will be fulfilled. That is why we encourage every initiative in the African framework to bring about a lasting peace with respect for the country's independence and territorial integrity, free of outside interference.

With regard to the Middle East, the continuing deterioration of the situation as well as the complexities with which it is fraught deserve our Organization's particular attention so that adequate solutions to the conflict can be found. Increased support for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, would be an important step towards securing that people's inalienable rights.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

In the hope that a just and comprehensive solution will be found to the problem of the Middle East, whose acuteness is becoming more and more evident, we cannot but express our support for the urgent need to convene the International Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties to the Israeli-Arab conflict, pursuant to the Geneva Declaration and resolution 38/58 C, of 13 December 1983 of the General Assembly.

We profoundly regret the crisis in Lebanon attended with heavy loss of life. We pay a heartfelt tribute to the soldiers of peace who have lost their lives in performing the noble duty of preserving peace in the service of the United Nations. Their sacrifice has not been in vain. Their contribution to peace will not be forgotten.

In the Gulf area, the war between the fraternal peoples of Iran and Iraq continues to cause untold suffering. We once again urgently appeal to the belligerent parties to put an end to this fratricidal conflict, which has caused such irreparable losses in human life and material damages.

The situation in Central America continues to deteriorate and is a matter of grave concern to the international community, particularly the question of Nicaragua, a country which, in keeping with the principles of good-neighbourliness between nations, should be able to enjoy the right to choose freely its own political, economic and social system in the interest of its people, without any interference, subversion or threat from outside. The Republic of Cape Verde supports and encourages the efforts of the Contadora Group and the Support Group to bring about peace and stability to that part of the world.

In South-East Asia, efforts should be made to eliminate sources of tension and preserve the principles of respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the States in that area, including Kampuchea.

(Mr. da Luz, Cape Verde)

With regard to the situation in Korea, we are convinced that dialogue and co-operation between the parties concerned is one of the essential prerequisites for the peaceful reunification of the Korean people.

The initiatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to reach a solution to the conflict in Afghanistan should be encouraged and pursued in order to promote a political solution to the conflict that respects the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the right of the Afghan people to decide their own destiny without any foreign interference.

The people of East Timor, the victims of genocide waged against them by foreign forces illegally occupying their territory, have for more than a decade been waging a struggle of resistance the noble purpose of which is to recover their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. These aspirations of the Maubere people, against whom an attempt to reduce to silence has been made, deserve greater attention on the part of the Organization to find a just solution to the question, thus preserving its credibility.

We wish to appeal to the international community and, in particular, to Portugal, the administering Power of that Territory, as well as to the Secretary-General, to persist in their efforts in light of the fact that the most elementary rules of justice make it our bounden duty to continue to mobilize every possible resource in order to create the necessary conditions for the free exercise by the Maubere people of their fundamental rights.

Initiatives to bring about disarmament are of major importance in the present situation. Not only do they contribute to reducing international tension, mainly among the super-Powers, but they can at the same time pave the way to co-operation in the development of the underdeveloped countries by making use of the tremendous economic, human and technological resources that up to now have been devoted to

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the industry of war. For the developing countries in general and for Africa in particular, peace and disarmament is not merely a question of survival; their economic and social development depend on it.

The military presence of foreign countries has been confirmed in the Indian Ocean, despite General Assembly resolutions, in particular resolution 2832 (XXVI) of 16 December 1971, in which the Indian Ocean was declared as a zone of peace. Like other speakers we believe it is necessary to take the appropriate steps in order to demilitarize and denuclearize this part of the world and to turn it into an area of peace and co-operation.

At a time when there is a trend towards the geographical proliferation of nuclear weapons, we believe that the experience gained in the Indian Ocean bears eloquent testimony to the need to avoid similar situations in the future.

Here we wish to refer specifically to the South-Atlantic, a region with its own identity in which the African and Latin American countries comprising it have particular responsibilities and interests that must be safeguarded. We believe that the international community should make concerted efforts to preserve this region as an area of peace and co-operation, remote from international conflicts, thus making a valuable contribution to promoting universal peace. Poverty, famine, malnutrition and sickness threaten the peoples in the developing countries, thus creating an additional threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. While this situation can be attributed to negative internal factors, fundamentally it is the result of the injustice and the imbalance which have been created and furthered by the present international economic situation.

In addition to the negative effects of international economic relations on the economies of developing countries, there are the inequalities in financial flows. Liquid transfers from the developing countries to the developed countries

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have reached alarming levels - \$31 billion in 1985, according to a United Nations survey - whereas financial flows in the opposite direction, including public aid for development, have continued to fall off in absolute and real terms.

The reduction in public aid for development has increased difficulties in these countries. For many years now capital flows on favourable terms have diminished, and the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for public aid to development in the international development strategy for the third decade is far from having been achieved.

The solution of the economic problems of the developing countries is complementary to resolving the problems of the developed countries. Thus it is in the common interest to strengthen co-operation for development and to introduce a more just new international economic order. In this process, South-South co-operation can play an important part and contribute to creating collective autonomy for the developing countries.

Africa, which has the largest number of least developed countries, has been the continent most affected by the present international economic crisis. This situation has been further aggravated by the disastrous effects of endemic drought and progressive desert creep. In order to confront these tremendous difficulties the affected African countries have mobilized their resources in an effort whose success will depend essentially on the size and the promptness of international co-operation, mainly that which binds them to the developed countries.

Cape Verde is situated in one of the most arid and inhospitable parts of the earth - the Sahel - and as part of the group of least developed countries it has been undertaking an arduous struggle for its economic and social development. We still continue to wage the struggle we started 11 years ago when we gained independence. It is aimed at restoring balance in the eco-system to combat

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the effects of drought and desertification and to establish the foundations for the harmonious social and economic development of the country. Experience has indicated that, while the struggle for development requires popular participation and a national effort, this struggle is an important component in international solidarity. The Government of Cape Verde very much appreciates the assistance it continues to receive from its development partners. We have been able to make maximum use of this assistance, thus making a significant contribution to solving our economic problems.

The problems besetting mankind are numerous and varied. Successive crises and natural calamities recur; and conflicts persist and proliferate year after year. That is the conclusion reached by statesmen and leaders from all parts of the world who have spoken from this rostrum. In order to describe more accurately and to find a better solution to the various problems confronting us, new ideas have been put forward and suggestions and proposals have been made. However, we have not been able to observe any tangible results. In order to solve the problems related to development, peace, social justice, progress and human dignity, ideas and proposals are not enough. Political will, a vision of the future, a spirit of solidarity among peoples and decisive steps towards international co-operation for development are essential.

We have every hope that, as we approach the next century, bold decisions will be taken in order to achieve these objectives. We are certain that reason and human solidarity will prevail.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker for this afternoon. I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of their 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. VU QUANG DIEM (Viet Nam): Early this afternoon I inscribed my name to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I had intended to reply to the representative of Malaysia. However I have just received instructions from my Minister, the Head of the delegation of Viet Nam, that we need not reply.

The Head of the delegation of Viet Nam will explain his position in the statement to be delivered to the Assembly on 6 October 1986. I therefore have nothing further to say now.

Mr. GHAREKHAN (India): The Simla Agreement signed by the Governments of India and Pakistan in 1972 provides the basis for resolving all outstanding issues between the two countries through bilateral negotiations and peaceful means. We therefore fail to understand the reference that has been made to the so-called Jammu and Kashmir question by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

Our position is well known and needs no further clarification by my delegation.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): The delegation of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan wishes to exercise of its right of reply in connection with the statement that the leader of the Pakistan delegation delivered this afternoon.

There were several points and elements in that statement with which my delegation finds itself in full agreement.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

First, the Afghan people, true to their historic traditions and character have always waged heroic national resistance against any evil force that has intended to invade or to suppress our people.

Another part of his statement, in connection with the proven indomitable courage, steadfast resolve and defiance of adversity of our people, is also accurate. But many other things in his statement are not in conformity with reality.

Yes, there have been violations of the principles of the United Nations Charter in our region, affecting Afghanistan. But those violations, which are flagrant by their very nature, have not resulted from the presence of a limited contingent of Soviet forces in Afghanistan. The fact is that those violations have occurred as result of continuing armed interference perpetrated against our people, our country, our revolution and our Government from territories beyond our borders and by those forces who now speak loudly about the presence of the troops in my country.

It has been alleged that almost a million Afghans have laid down their lives. To be sure, some of our people have laid down their lives very courageously in defending their country against the evil designs of some quarters, but never as a result of the presence of the limited contingents of troops in the country.

The facts to which I have referred in connection with the continuing undeclared war perpetrated by the imperialist, hegemonist and other reactionary quarters against Afghanistan have affected us, resulting in the loss of a great many of our people and enormous damage to our economy that now amounts to more than 40 billion Afghanis. That amounts to almost three fourths of all development investment in Afghanistan 20 years prior to the revolution. That is an unfortunate reality we shall have to make known to the international community.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

It has also been alleged that 5 million, or one third of the country's population, have been obliged to seek shelter in Pakistan and Iran. That is a very false statement. The investigations conducted by impartial bodies including certain United Nations organizations have testified to the fact that the number of refugees has been exaggerated out of all proportion by those who benefit therefrom. There have been some double and triple registrations of Afghans living beyond our borders; there have been registrations of local population as refugees in order that they may avail themselves of the assistance provided to them as refugees. There have also been falsifications of those figures in order to obtain more assistance, not to benefit the so-called refugees, but to get that assistance for the benefit of the Pakistani Government.

There are other factors that have also resulted in the vast exaggeration of the refugee population. The most notable is that they have counted the number of nomads who seasonally migrate from Afghanistan to Pakistan during the winter and who return to Afghanistan in the summer. Those clarifications might help determine the exact number of those Afghans who have left for other territories.

It has been alleged that Pakistan is providing Islamic humanitarian assistance in conformity with its Islamic and humanitarian duties. The nature of the assistance provided to those harboured in Pakistan is clearly far from being of an Islamic or a humanitarian nature. For that reason, that assertion also is a false one.

The root cause of the problem in the situation around Afghanistan, which affects the whole area, including my country, lies in the interference of certain quarters against a country. The presence of more than 130 training camps for the counter-revolutionaries, the flow of vast quantities of weapons and armaments to those counter-revolutionaries, the provision to them of training and of all kinds of assistance - political, economic, diplomatic and otherwise - they are the main causes of the present unfortunate situation.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

It has been alleged that Pakistan is sincerely and constructively working towards a political solution. We do not wish to challenge that assertion at this stage because we have achieved a lot of advancement in the process of negotiations. We should like to see that assertion proved by facts and by deeds in the process of proximity negotiations.

The fact that the Assembly is being kept busy with the so-called question of Afghanistan leads us to believe that the degree of sincerity could be questioned. Futile debates in the Assembly could never help serious negotiations. Those who claim to be serious and sincere in their efforts aimed at negotiations should immediately abandon their abuse of the General Assembly and their waging of a propaganda campaign against their partner in the negotiations.

Those are the some of the points I wanted to mention. There are many others on which I could touch.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.