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Held at Headquarters, New York,  
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President: Mr. CHOUDHURY (Bangladesh)  
  
later: Mr. KNIPPING-VICTORIA (Dominican Republic)  
(Vice-President)

- Address by His Majesty Don Juan Carlos I, King of Spain
- Address by His Excellency Mr. Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America
- Opening of the general debate [9]

Statements were made by:

Mr. de Abreu Sodre (Brazil)  
Mr. Siddiky (Bangladesh)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY DON JUAN CARLOS I, KING OF SPAIN

The PRESIDENT: This morning the Assembly will hear an address by His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain.

His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain 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 His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

King JUAN CARLOS (interpretation from Spanish): Sir, allow me first to express my satisfaction and that of the Government of Spain at seeing you preside over this session of the General Assembly. Your proven professional abilities and your outstanding personal qualities will contribute decisively towards ensuring that the work of the General Assembly will yield the benefits that we all await from it.

I should also like to underline the skill and efficiency shown by your predecessor, Ambassador Jaime de Piniés, throughout the previous session, and to express my admiration for the quiet but indefatigable work of the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar.

It was the wish of the Government of Spain that the titular bearer of the crown, in the exercise of his constitutional function of representing the State, should make heard within this forum the voice of his country; a country that proudly holds as its highest historical credentials its respect for the law of nations and its confirmed effort to make international coexistence more secure, more pacific, and more solid. Spain is glad to address this universal forum, which stirs the hope that the ideals of peace, justice and solidarity may firmly prevail within the international order.

(King Juan Carlos)

Spain was one of the first communities to constitute itself as a nation State in renaissance Europe, thus taking, together with other communities, a decisive step in the process of rationalizing political coexistence. In that same period of history, several Spanish jurists and theologians, when examining the title for Spain's presence in America, were already arguing that there were limits to national power. In order for the exercise of this power to be legitimate, it must be inspired by an ethical conscience and must respect the rights and aspirations of other peoples. Or, to put it in the language of the period, the legitimate exercise of national power must strive to secure the "common weal of the earth".

We owe to Francisco de Vitoria, one of the founders of the jus gentium, international law, the following phrase:

"If in the fulfilment of a just cause some damage is done to the universe, then the cause turns out to be an unjust one."

In the very roots of our Constitution as a State we therefore find the awareness of an international society whose common good limits the action of the State. Also present is a pledge of solidarity among all members of the human race. Both of these factors provide a basis for the legal structuring of the international community which we find today enshrined as an institution in the United Nations.

It is against the background of this old tradition that I am addressing the Assembly today. I do so also as the representative of a nation, young because of the age of its citizens and because it has recovered, along with its freedom and democracy, a vital attitude characteristic of youth - that is, the capacity to look to the future with boldness and hope.

When a people recovers its vital impulse, integrating its traditions into a design for the future, it cannot forget that this revitalization should be inspired equally by the ideals of its own society and by the requirement of harmonious, peaceful and just international coexistence.

(King Juan Carlos)

Today, for the first time, the world is one, yet at the same time it is culturally diverse.

In the past, the alleged superiority of a given culture or civilization was used to justify the domination of some nations over others. Cultural diversity was challenged by an impulse that thrived on seeking economic advantage or strategic predominance.

Today, the commonly accepted rule is that each culture should be understood and judged exclusively in relation to its own values and not by whether it can adapt itself, through mimesis or through force, to some allegedly superior culture. It is from this conception of the universality and cultural diversity of mankind that the great impetus towards political decolonization derived.

The United Nations bears witness to this powerful reality, which opens a new phase in history. The United Nations has been the standard and the basic instrument of this step towards a true society of nations.

It is true that certain well known vestiges of colonial conditions still persist. And one of these anachronistic situations concerns my country. Spain maintains, vigorously and with the weight of the reason inherent in its cause, the will to find a rapid solution to the problem of Gibraltar, so that the Rock can be reintegrated into Spanish national territory. A new chapter has opened up since the Brussels Declaration of 27 November 1984 and since the Governments of the United Kingdom and of Spain decided, in February 1985 in Geneva, to resolve the problem in all its aspects, including that of sovereignty, through negotiation. This new phase is dominated by the hope of putting an end to an unjust situation without harming the interests of the local population.

(King Juan Carlos)

We find ourselves not only before a politically and culturally diverse world but also before an economic order in which differences continue to exist and become wider. The past decade has been marked by economic crisis, the indebtedness of important developing areas and the reappearance of new protectionist tendencies. Not only justice and solidarity, but peace and security themselves, require the bridging of these differences and the correction of these tendencies.

A few months ago, when dealing with the critical economic situation in Africa, the Assembly was the forum where, on the one hand, the African nations were convinced of their need to carry out a great effort of self-appraisal, of adjustment and action; and where, on the other hand, the remaining nations became fully aware of the fact that it is impossible to accept passively the stagnation and deterioration of a part of the world which is essential to the whole. This expression of political far-sightedness and solidarity is a hopeful development. Spain, within the limits of its resources and possibilities, has pledged its co-operation and today reiterates that pledge.

The foreign indebtedness of certain nations, and among them some particularly close to Spain, is a serious problem that affects us all. There is no easy solution. No doubt many factors and paths of action have contributed to bringing about this situation. The responsibilities are manifold and have to be shared. Let historians pass a final judgement on them. What matters today is to encourage those policies of adjustment necessary to correct domestic situations, not only by applauding them but also through generosity and specific support. These policies have certain limits which, if exceeded, can put at risk domestic peace and solidarity, thus hindering delicate processes of political and social change.

In the process of political reconstruction that has been going on for the past decade, my country has set the framework of its international position.

(King Juan Carlos)

Since the previous session of the General Assembly Spain has defined its position on two important options. In 1986 it became a member of the European Community and, after consulting the Spanish people, it defined the terms of its continued membership in the Atlantic Alliance.

By joining the organizations and institutions of Western European integration, Spain only confirms what history and culture have made of it since the beginning of modern times. Spain has always been an integral and essential part of Europe for geographical and historical reasons and by vocation. Through its participation in the decision-making processes of the Twelve, Spain can make its voice heard on European matters and can bring to the activities of communitarian Europe new dimensions which stem from its historical past. Europe certainly cannot give way to any temptation to be inward-looking. On the contrary, we strive to increase the contacts and exchanges of the European Community with other parts of the world, and especially with the countries of the American continent. Europe cannot confine itself to the cultivation of its own garden, nor can it content itself with the preservation of an enviable quality of life, when other regions of the world find themselves strangled by stagnation, by the diminution of international trade and by the negative interplay of commercial and financial factors.

From our position as Western allies, we contribute to common security and, as a fundamental part of this, we strive to help make the dialogue between the super-Powers come to fruition and the negotiating forums intensify their work. We nourish the hope that the consolidation of a climate of dialogue and of greater confidence in international relations will lead, in a relatively brief period, to drastic cuts, for the first time, in nuclear arsenals; to the halting of the arms race; to a world-wide ban on chemical weapons; and to significant advances in the field of conventional disarmament.

(King Juan Carlos)

On a regional level, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which was born in Helsinki and gained new impetus in Belgrade and Madrid, is being followed up in various forums. In Stockholm today an important consensus has been achieved which will certainly strengthen European security and harmony in international relations in a broad geographical framework. It is to be hoped that this success will have a positive impact on the new phase of the Conference, which will soon resume in Vienna.

This dual definition of Spain, as European and as Western, complements and enriches our relations with the countries and peoples of Latin America. We are bound to them through special cultural and historical ties, which give us a sense of solidarity with them in the search for just solutions to the political, economic and social problems they are facing today.

To the existing elements of concern, a new one of unsuspected scope has been added in recent years: terrorism, which preys on innocent lives, stimulates catastrophic visions and deprives citizens of their peace.

Terrorism, the supreme assault upon the most primary and, at the same time, most profound of human rights - the right to live in peace - has international dimensions. Support for, and even tolerance of, terrorism disqualifies any State as a member in good faith of the international community.

The Spanish Government has repeatedly declared itself in favour of intensifying international co-operation against this universal scourge. The unanimous and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism, in whatever form, by this Assembly last December doubtless constitutes a hopeful step which should be followed by concrete and effective measures of international co-operation.

(King Juan Carlos)

Unfortunately, this Assembly must once again focus its attention on a series of conflictive situations in various regions of the world. Some are recent, others almost chronic, but all together produce the gravest rupture in the principles of the Charter of our Organization. Meanwhile we watch helplessly as some peoples, which should be forging their future in peace and harmony, are instead bleeding themselves amidst incredible destruction and suffering.

In the face of these painful conflicts, the reasons behind our well-known positions not only remain valid but in some cases have been reinforced. From this podium, I appeal for negotiation and dialogue to overcome intolerance and intransigence once and for all, so that the force of reason and law may prevail over the reason of force.

Peace is tranquillity and harmony within order. There can be no harmony if clearly unjust situations continue to exist in the world. Still less can it be present if the voices that denounce injustice are drowned out. Respect for human rights will be a yardstick by which our civilization and our specific conduct will be judged. Not only the conduct of those who violate human rights but also that of those who do not condemn violations or adopt towards them an attitude of passive resignation.

The total contempt for the human being that is entailed by racial discrimination and the policy of apartheid constitutes the most flagrant attack on the concept of the unity of the human race. Against it we must take all the necessary steps to secure its dismantlement and abolition. We must bring to their senses those who, blinded by their prejudices and fears, condemn the vast majority of their compatriots to intolerable domination and oppression and in so doing seal the future of their own country.



(King Juan Carlos)

In recent years, international co-operation through multilateral channels has been progressively undermined. Nevertheless, it is certain that in our increasingly interdependent world, numerous problems make it imperative that we search for solutions in a multilateral framework. Serious institutional and financial problems were added last year to the difficulties that traditionally confront the United Nations.

The Secretary-General, whose activities deserve our recognition and support, has brought to completion courageous initiatives. For its part, the Assembly must examine and adopt the necessary measures to improve the efficiency and administration of the Organization. The United Nations is the best overall instrument for the maintenance of peace and security. It does invaluable co-operative work in many fields. It is the repository of the ideal of an international order ruled by law. The international community cannot allow its activities to be impaired and its prestige diminished because of an inadequate use of existing resources.

The session now beginning will undoubtedly be important in the search for solutions to the many problems inherent in the present international situation. That situation, while gravely disquieting in certain ways, also encompasses possibilities for progress towards the goals set out in the Charter.

I am sure that the Assembly will continue to advance along the road - however difficult that might sometimes be - towards peace, security and co-operation.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain for the important statement he has just made.

I would request representatives to remain seated while the Secretary-General and I escort His Majesty King Juan Carlos.

His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The meeting was suspended at 10.25 a.m. and resumed at 11 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. RONALD REAGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States.

Mr. Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, 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 General Assembly the President of the United States of America, His Excellency Mr. Ronald Reagan, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President REAGAN: A short walk from this Hall is the delegates' Meditation Room, a refuge from a world deafened by the noise of strife and violence. "We want to bring back the idea of worship", Dag Hammarskjold once said about this room, "devotion to something which is greater and higher than we are ourselves".

It is just such devotion that gave birth to the United Nations: devotion to the dream of world peace and freedom, of human rights and democratic self-determination, of a time when, in those ancient words, "... they shall beat their swords into plowshares ... nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more".

The United States remains committed to the United Nations. For over 40 years, this Organization has provided an international forum for harmonizing conflicting national interests and has made a significant contribution in such fields as peace-keeping, humanitarian assistance, and eradicating disease. Yet, no one knows better than those in this Hall how the noble ideals embodied in the Charter have often remained unfulfilled. This Organization itself faces a critical hour - that

(President Reagan)

is usually stated as a fiscal crisis. But we can turn this "crisis" into an opportunity. The important reforms proposed by the Group of Experts can be a first step towards restoring this Organization's status and effectiveness. The issue, ultimately, is not one of cash but of credibility. If all the Members of this universal Organization decide to seize the moment and turn the rhetoric of reform into reality, the future of the United Nations will be secure. And members have my word for it: My country, which has always given the United Nations generous support, will continue to play a leading role in the effort to achieve its noble purposes.

When I came before the Assembly last year, an important moment in the pursuit of those purposes had not yet occurred. The leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States were to meet in Geneva. These discussions have now been held. For over 15 hours, the Soviet and American delegations met. For about five hours, General Secretary Gorbachev and I talked alone.

Our talks were frank. The talks were also productive - in a larger sense than even the documents that were agreed. Mr. Gorbachev was blunt; so was I. We came to realize again the truth of the statement: Nations do not mistrust each other because they are armed; they are armed because they mistrust each other. And I did not hesitate to tell Mr. Gorbachev our view of the source of that mistrust: the Soviet Union's record of seeking to impose its ideology and rule on others. So we acknowledged the deep and abiding differences between our systems of government, our views of history, and the future of mankind. But, despite these differences, we resolved to work together for real reductions in nuclear arms, as well as progress in other areas.

(President Reagan)

Delegates to the forty-first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, today I want to report to you on what has transpired since the summit, notably the important letter I sent on 25 July to Mr. Gorbachev. In that letter, I dealt with the important issues of reducing nuclear arms, agreeing on strategic defences, and limiting nuclear testing. In addition to those issues, which concern the military aspects of Soviet-American relations, I would also like to address other essential steps towards peace: the resolution of political conflicts, the strengthening of the international economy, and the protection of human rights.

Before I do this, however, let me, in the tradition of candour established at Geneva, tell you that a pall has been cast over our relations with the Soviet Union. I refer here to a particularly disturbing example of Soviet transgressions against human rights.

Recently - after the arrest of a Soviet national and United Nations employee accused of espionage in the United States - an American correspondent in Moscow was made the subject of fabricated accusations and trumped-up charges. He was arrested and jailed in a callous disregard of due process and numerous human rights conventions. In effect, he was taken as a hostage - even threatened with the death penalty.

Both individuals have now been remanded to their respective ambassadors. But this is only an interim step, agreed to by the United States for humanitarian reasons. It does not change the facts of the case: Gennadi Zakharov is an accused spy who should stand trial; Nicholas Daniloff is an innocent hostage who should be released. The Soviet Union bears the responsibility for the consequences of its action. Misusing the United Nations for the purposes of espionage does a grave disservice to this Organization.

(President Reagan)

The world expects better. It expects contributions to the cause of peace that only the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union can make.

It is for this reason that I wrote last summer to Mr. Gorbachev with new arms control proposals. Before discussing the proposals, let us be clear about which weapons are the most dangerous and threatening to peace. The threat does not come from defensive systems, which are a shield against attack, but from offensive weapons - ballistic missiles that hurtle through space and can wreak mass destruction on the surface of the Earth - especially the Soviet Union's heavy, accurate ICBMs, with multiple warheads, which have no counterparts in size or number in any other country.

That is why the United States has long urged radical, equitable, verifiable reductions in these offensive systems. Note that I said reduction; for this is the real purpose of arms control: not just to codify the levels of today's arsenals, not just to channel their further expansion, but to reduce them in ways that will reduce the danger of war. Indeed, the United States believes the prospect of a future without such weapons of mass destruction must be the ultimate goal of arms control.

I am pleased to say that the Soviet Union has now embraced our idea of radical reductions in offensive systems. At the Geneva summit last November, we agreed to intensify work in this area. Since then, the Soviets have made detailed proposals which, while not acceptable to us, appear to represent a serious effort. So we continue to seek a 50 per cent reduction of American and Soviet arsenals - with the central focus on the reduction of ballistic missile warheads. If the Soviet Union wants only a lesser reduction, however, we are prepared to consider it but as an interim measure. In other provisions as well, we have sought to take account of Soviet concerns. So there has been movement.

(President Reagan)

Similarly, in the area of intermediate-range nuclear forces, the United States seeks the total elimination of such missiles on a global basis. Again, if the Soviet Union insists on pursuing such a goal in stages, we are prepared to conclude an interim agreement without delay.

All this gives me hope. I can tell representatives that the exchanges between our two sides this summer could well have marked the beginning of serious, productive negotiation on arms reductions. The ice of the negotiating stalemate could break, if both sides intensify their effort in the new round of Geneva talks and if we keep the promises we made to each other last November.

For too long a time, however, the Soviet response has been to downplay the need for offensive reductions. When the United States began work on technology to make offensive nuclear weapons obsolete some day, the Soviets tried to make that the main issue - as if the main danger to strategic stability was a defence against missiles that is still on the drawing boards, rather than the menacing ballistic missiles themselves that already exist in excessive numbers.

Still, the United States recognizes that both the offensive and defensive sides of the strategic equation must be addressed. And we have gone far to meet Soviet concerns expressed about the potential offensive use of strategic defensive systems. I have offered firm and concrete assurances that our strategic defence initiative could never be used to deploy weapons in space that can cause mass destruction on earth. I have pointed out that the radical reduction we seek now in offensive arsenals would be additional insurance that strategic defence initiative cannot be used to support a first-strike strategy. Our preference from the beginning has been to move forward co-operatively with the Soviets on strategic defences, so that neither side will feel threatened and both can benefit from the strategic revolution that strategic defence initiative represents.

(President Reagan)

The United States continues to respect the anti-ballistic missile Treaty - in spite of clear evidence that the Soviets are violating it. We have told the Soviets that, if we can both agree on radical reductions in strategic offensive weapons, we are prepared right now to sign an agreement with them on research, development, testing and deployment of strategic defences based on the following.

First, both sides would agree to confine themselves, through 1991, to research, development and testing, which are permitted by the anti-ballistic missile Treaty, to determine whether advanced systems of strategic defence are technically feasible.

Secondly, a new treaty, signed now, would provide that, if after 1991 either side should decide to deploy such a system, that side would be obliged to offer a plan for sharing the benefits of strategic defence and eliminating offensive ballistic missiles. This plan would be negotiated over a two-year period.

Thirdly, if the two sides cannot agree after two years of negotiation, either side would be free to deploy an advanced strategic defensive system, after giving six months' notice to the other.

As the United States has repeatedly made clear, we are moving towards a future of greater reliance upon strategic defence. The United States remains prepared to talk about how - under what ground rules and process - we and the Soviet Union can do this co-operatively. Such strategic defences, coupled with radical reductions in offensive forces, would represent a safer balance and give future statesmen the opportunity to move beyond it - to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth.

In addition to our proposals on offensive reductions and strategic defence, we have suggested new steps in another area - nuclear testing. Just as eliminating all nuclear weapons is our long-term goal, so too is a total ban on nuclear

(President Reagan)

testing; but both must be approached with practical steps. For the reality is that for now we still must rely on these weapons for the deterrence of war; thus the safety and reliability of our deterrent are themselves critical to peace.

The United States is proud of its record of nuclear safety and intends to maintain it. Nevertheless, we are, as I said, ready now to take two important steps towards limiting nuclear testing: first, we are ready to move forward on ratification of the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the Treaty on Peaceful Nuclear Explosions, once agreement is reached on improved verification procedures. We have proposed new ideas to make this possible; secondly, upon ratification of those treaties - and in association with a programme to reduce and ultimately eliminate all nuclear weapons - we are prepared to discuss ways to implement a step-by-step parallel programme of limiting and ultimately ending nuclear testing.

Those are steps that we could take in the near future to show the world that we are moving forward. I therefore call upon the Soviet Union to join us in practical, attainable progress in limiting nuclear testing.

Just a few days ago I received a reply from General Secretary Gorbachev to my letter of 25 July - and, for the moment, let me say simply that we are giving it serious and careful consideration.

As we move towards our goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, it is vital that we also address important imbalances in other kinds of weapons. This is why the United States has proposed a comprehensive global ban on all chemical weapons and why we and our allies have tried hard to break the stalemate in the conventional force negotiations in Vienna. In the Stockholm Conference a major advance has been achieved: a concrete new set of military confidence-building measures which includes inspections.



(President Reagan)

But we must remember from the experience of the 1970s that progress in arms control cannot be divorced from regional political developments. As I said at the beginning, political tensions cause military competition, not the other way around.

However, while the United States and the Soviet Union disagree over the root causes of political tension, we agree that regional conflicts could escalate into global confrontation. Last year, from this rostrum, I presented a formula for peace which would apply to five critical regional conflicts that are potential flashpoints for wider conflicts. I pointed out how difficult it is for the United States to accept Soviet assurances of peaceful intent when 126,000 Soviet troops prosecute a vicious war against the Afghan people; when 140,000 Soviet-backed Vietnamese soldiers wage war on the people of Cambodia; when 1,700 Soviet advisers and 2,500 Cuban combat troops are involved in military planning and operations in Ethiopia; when 1,300 Soviet military advisers and 36,000 Cuban troops direct and participate in combat operations to prop up an unpopular, repressive régime in Angola; when hundreds of millions of dollars in Soviet arms and Soviet-bloc advisers help a dictatorial régime in Nicaragua try to subvert and betray a popular revolution.

The danger inherent in these conflicts must be recognized. Marxist-Leninist régimes tend to wage war as readily against their neighbours as they routinely do against their own people. In fact, the internal and external wars often become indistinguishable. In Afghanistan, for example, the puppet régime has announced its intention to relocate tens of thousands of people from border areas. Can anyone doubt this will be done in classic communist style - by force? Many will die, to make it easier for the Soviets and their satellite troops to intimidate Pakistan.

(President Reagan)

It is just such transgressions that make the risk of confrontation with democratic nations so acute.

So, once again, I propose a three-point peace process for the resolution of regional conflicts: first, talks between the warring parties themselves, without which an end to violence and national reconciliation are impossible; secondly, discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union - not to impose solutions but to support peace talks and eventually eliminate the supply of arms and the proxy troops from abroad; thirdly, if the talks are successful, joint efforts to welcome each country back into the world economy and the community of nations that respect human rights.

(President Reagan)

In addition to regional disputes, the grave threat of terrorism also jeopardizes the hopes for peace. No cause, no grievance can justify it. Terrorism is heinous and intolerable. It is the crime of cowards - cowards who prey on the innocent, the defenceless, and the helpless.

With its allies and other nations, the United States has taken steps to counter terrorism directly - particularly State-sponsored terrorism. Last April, the United States demonstrated that it will defend its interests and act against terrorist aggression. Let me assure all of you today, especially let me assure any potential sponsors of terrorism, that the American people are of one mind on this issue. Like other civilized peoples of the world, we have reached our limit. Attacks against our citizens or our interests will not go unanswered.

We will also do all in our power to help other law-abiding nations threatened by terrorist attacks. To that end, the United States believes that the understandings reached by the seven industrial democracies at the Tokyo summit last May made a good start towards international accord in the war on terrorism. We recommend to the General Assembly consideration of the Tokyo resolutions.

Moving to the economic realm, how ironic it is that some continue to espouse such ideas as a "new international economic order" based on State control when the world is learning, as never before, that the freedom of the individual, not the power of the State, is the key to economic dynamism and growth. Nations have turned away from centralized management and government controls and towards the incentives and rewards of the free market. They have invited their citizens to develop their talents and abilities to the fullest and, in the process, to provide jobs, to create wealth, to build social stability and foster faith in the future for all. The economic summits of the industrial democracies have paid a tribute to these principles - as has the historic United Nations special session on Africa in

(President Reagan)

May. We applaud the African nations' call for reform leading to greater reliance on their private sectors for economic growth. We believe that overcoming hunger and economic stagnation requires policies that encourage Africa's own productivity and initiative; such a policy framework will make it easier for the rest of the world, including the United States, to help. The laws of economic incentives do not discriminate between developed and developing countries. They apply to all equally.

Much of the recent recovery in the world economy can be directly attributed to this growth of economic freedom. And it is this trend that offers such hope for the future. And yet this new hope faces a grave threat: the menace of trade barriers. History shows that the imposition of such barriers invites retaliation, which in turn sparks the very sort of trade wars that plunged the world in the 1930s deeper into depression and economic misery. Truly, protectionism is destructionism.

That is why the United States seeks the assistance of all countries represented here in the General Assembly in protecting the practice of free and fair trade. We applaud the success of the meeting of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) trade ministers last week in Uruguay, where agreement was reached to launch a new round of multilateral trade negotiations covering a wide range of topics important to economic growth. With over 90 other countries members of GATT, the United States is working to maintain the free flow of international trade.

In addition to resistance to protectionism, the United States is also seeking to stimulate world economic growth in other ways. Our Treasury bill interest rate is now just over 5 per cent, the lowest it has been in nine years - which provides enormous relief to debtor countries. America's new tax structure will open the way for greater prosperity at home, which will contribute to greater prosperity abroad.

(President Reagan)

Finally, the United States is working with other countries to minimize currency swings, to promote stability in the monetary markets, to establish predictability as a basis for prosperity.

But, the United States believes the greatest contribution we can make to world prosperity is the continued advocacy of the magic of the market-place - the truth, the simple and proven truth, that economic development is an outgrowth of economic freedom just as economic freedom is the inseparable twin of political freedom and democratic government.

And it is here that we come to our final category - human rights - the indispensable element for peace, freedom, and prosperity. I note that Mr. Gorbachev has used in recent speeches the same categories I have used here today: the military, the political, and the economic; except that he titled his fourth category: humanitarian.

The difference is revealing. The United States believes that respect for the individual, for the dignity of the human person - those rights outlined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights - does not belong in the realm of charity or "humanitarian" causes. Respect for human rights is not social work; it is not merely an act of compassion. It is the first obligation of government and the source of its legitimacy.

It also is the foundation-stone in any structure of world peace. All through history, it has been the dictatorships and the tyrannies that have surrendered first to the cult of militarism and the pursuit of war. Countries based on the consent of the governed, countries that recognize the inalienable rights of the individual, do not make war on each other. Peace is more than just an absence of war. True peace is justice, true peace is freedom. And true peace dictates the recognition of human rights.

(President Reagan)

Commitments were made more than 10 years ago in Helsinki concerning those rights and their recognition. We need only look to the East today to see how sadly unfulfilled those commitments are. The persecution of scientists, religious leaders, peace activists, political dissenters, and other prisoners of conscience continues unabated behind the Iron Curtain. You know, one section of the Helsinki Accords even speaks to: "improvement of working conditions of journalists".

So, it is clear that progress in the human rights area must keep pace with progress in other areas. A failure on this score will hinder further movement in East-West relations.

These, then, are the areas of concern and of opportunity that the United States sees in the quest for peace and freedom - the twin objectives of the United Nations Charter.

Last year, I pointed out in my address to the General Assembly the differences between the United States and the Soviet Union are deep and abiding. But I also called for a fresh start in relations between our two nations, a fresh start that could benefit our own people and the people of every nation. Since that time, the United States has taken action and put forth new proposals that could lead our two countries and the entire world in a direction we all have long sought to go. Now more than ever, it is the responsibility of the Soviet Union to take action and demonstrate that they too are continuing the dialogue for peace.

As I have said, I believe that we can be hopeful about the world and the prospects for freedom. We only need look around us to see the new technologies that may some day spare future generations the nightmare of nuclear terror, or the growing ranks of democratic activists and freedom fighters, or the increasing movement towards free market economies, or the extent of world-wide concern about the rights of the individual in the face of brute, State power.

(President Reagan)

In the past, when I have noted such trends - when I have called for a "forward strategy for freedom" and predicted the ultimate triumph of democratic rule over totalitarianism - some have accused me of telling people what they want to hear, of urging them not to engage the day but to escape it.

Yet, to hope is to believe in humanity; and in its future. Hope remains the highest reality, the age-old power; hope is at the root of all the great ideas and causes that have bettered the lot of humankind across the centuries.

History teaches us to hope - for it teaches us about man, and about the irrepressible human spirit. A Nobel laureate in literature, a great figure of the American South, William Faulkner, once said that the last sound heard on earth would be that of the two remaining humans arguing over where to go in the spaceship they had built. In his speech to the Nobel Committee in 1950, Faulkner spoke of the nuclear age, of the general and universal physical fear it had engendered, a fear of destruction that had become almost unbearable. But, he said:

"I decline to accept the end of a man. I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal ... because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance."

(President Reagan)

Faulkner spoke of the old verities and truths of the heart, of the courage, honour, pride, compassion, pity, sacrifice and, yes, that hope which is the glory of our past. And all of these things we find today in our present; we must use them to build our future. It is why today we can lift up our spirits and our hearts; it is why we resolve that with God's help the cause of humanity will not merely endure but prevail; that some day all the world - every nation, every people, every person - will know the blessings of peace and see the light of freedom.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United States of America for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly hall.



## AGENDA ITEM 9

## GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to remind representatives that, in accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting, the list of speakers will be closed on Wednesday, 24 September, at 6 p.m. I request delegations to be good enough to provide the estimated speaking times as accurately as possible so that we can plan our meetings in an orderly way.

Mr. de ABREU SODRE (Brazil) (spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation): On behalf of the Brazilian Government it is my privilege to congratulate you, Sir, upon your election to the presidency of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. I am certain that I interpret the trust of all delegations present here in your wise and inspired leadership, on the basis of which our work will attain the desired success.

Let me also pay tribute to Ambassador Jaime de Piniés for the competent and skillful manner in which he presided over the last session of the General Assembly, the session which marked the fortieth anniversary of our Organization.

For 41 years Brazil has had the privilege of opening the general debate of the United Nations General Assembly.

At the fortieth session last September it was the President of my country, José Sarney, who gave the opening address. He began by paying homage to this tribune:

"This tribune instills respect and dignity. It is the loftiest in the community of nations. Here both the mighty and the weak are diminished".

(A/40/PV.4, p. 2)

In my capacity as Minister for External Relations of Brazil, I come to this podium of the United Nations with emotion and reverence. This is the highest forum

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

of mankind. As such it must be resolutely preserved. I spare no words, therefore, in praising it. Its occasional setbacks do not detract from its intrinsic value as an instrument for dialogue and peace. Its shortcomings, far from rendering it invalid, rather enhance the imperative need to strengthen it.

Brazil knows of no alternative to the United Nations. If the Organization did not exist, human talent and ingenuity would have to conceive it, create it - in short, reinvent it. It certainly does not lack adequate institutional means, a precise legal framework, or clearly defined and lucid objectives. Truly, what is most missing in the Organization, to translate all its immense potential into the most profitable co-operation between peoples for their common good, is a sincere political universal will to sustain it without faltering in the consistent and dedicated affirmation of the noble purposes consecrated in the San Francisco Charter.

Just when international society is becoming practically universal, it would be contradictory, as well as foolhardy, to condemn the United Nations to extinction or to inertia, thus depriving the world of its basic tools for democratic dialogue and fruitful understanding.

For Brazil, strengthening the United Nations is the best way to ensure peace, security and international co-operation.

During his recent State visit to the United States of America, President José Sarney referred to Brazil as a factor for stability and peace, for conciliation and equilibrium in all dimensions of world order. "We are a country that contributes", he said, "a country that does not disrupt - a country that brings not problems but solutions".

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

I have come to the United Nations to convey, with certainty and conviction, the responsible and constructive message of a new Brazil, a Brazil that is celebrating its return to democracy, and, with renewed vigour, with decisiveness and assurance, is undergoing significant changes.

The balance sheet of the 18 months of the new Brazilian Republic is impressive: we have consolidated our political institutions, removing the last traces of authoritarianism, and making room for a progressive and irreversible democracy, a full, open, modern and united society.

We have corrected inflationary distortions that for decades have afflicted our people - and did so without a recession, but on the contrary, with rapid and firm resumption of economic growth. We have begun to settle our chief debt - the social debt, the historical debt the country owes to its own people, by actively seeking to reduce disparities in income and to wipe out poverty.

Just like the nation we have set ourselves to build, we want to have a politically democratic international order, economically prosperous and sharing, socially just. We want liberty, development, equity.

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

It does not appear, however, that these aspirations are even close to being fulfilled. On the contrary, on the political level, the trend towards rebipolarization undermines the international machinery for collective and democratic understanding. Confrontation is replacing dialogue, power is prevailing over consensus. The threat of force, and even the use of force, are replacing the tools for negotiation in dealing with disputes - as if power, per se, were efficient in settling conflicts. Where force is present today impasse is more frequent than victory or defeat. Force, besides being illegal, has proved itself to be non-functional.

The historian who in the last century foretold that the twentieth century would be the century of terrible simplification was right. The vast complexity of international relations is imprisoned in trivial schematizations that divide countries according to the easy logic of dichotomies, separating them into different and necessarily opposed camps, seeking to obliterate the spontaneous multipolarity of the world of today.

Reality itself is richer and more contradictory, and has resisted the authoritarianism of binary concepts. But Manichean dualism can be perverse and end up imposing itself upon reality. To deal with a local dispute, brought about by local causes, on the basis of preconceptions and interests embodied in the confrontation between exogenous Powers, can unleash forces that will end up transposing a minor dispute into the major conflict. Although fallacious in their premises, these concepts can be catastrophic in their consequences. What was false as a principle in application becomes painfully true - and all the more serious.

The international economic system is conducted by anachronistic automatisms which are in conflict with the interests of a good portion of the international community - primarily the developing countries. In the field of trade, rules

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prevail which first and foremost reflect the interests of the most powerful industrial nations - and even these rules are frequently violated. In the financial and monetary fields, the world economy is subject to the impact of measures taken unilaterally that can decisively affect the developing countries without their having any rights - neither the right to speak, nor the right to argue, nor the right to compensation.

As regards equity, the hoped-for reduction of the deep gap between rich and poor countries, we are witnessing the almost total paralysation of international economic co-operation. The initiatives taken by the developing countries run into the inertia and even the hostility of the developed countries. On the other hand, there is an accentuation of trade protectionism on the part of these countries, an iniquitous practice made even more so by being incorrectly compared with the legitimate measures that developing countries need to adopt in order to protect their infant national production. There is an unmistakable difference between one kind of behaviour and the other: one preserves the concentration of wealth, sustaining non-competitive activities; the other seeks to guarantee the survival of the poorest countries in an unjust and unbalanced international system that even obliges them to accumulate ever larger surpluses for the payment of their foreign financial commitments.

And worse, a new model of protectionism is emerging. The action of barring inconvenient imports is now being complemented by the strategy of creating obstacles to the very installation of production processes in the developing countries, even when primarily intended to meet the demand of the internal market. This "preventive" protectionism is particularly evident in sectors which involve the use of more advanced technologies.

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

The climate of international relations does not, therefore, look very favourable for developing countries such as Brazil. However, this does not discourage us from persevering in our quest for the objectives we set for ourselves at home, nor does it lessen our willingness to participate in any endeavour leading to a truly more free, prosperous and just international society - such as the society we firmly propose to establish in our own country.

I cannot fail to mention here the Ministerial Meeting of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in Punta del Este, in which I have just participated. At that meeting I stressed the firmness of positions and the constructive attitude of the developing countries.

Brazil trusts that the consensus eventually reached may serve as a starting-point for fruitful and profitable negotiations for the international community as a whole, leading to a more just and effective economic order.

Latin America is heroically struggling to extricate itself from an economic crisis at the precise moment at which its democratic vocation is solidly reasserting itself.

Despite the progress that some Latin American countries, such as Brazil, have succeeded in making at the economic and social levels, the general picture of our continent still presents serious difficulties - recession, unemployment and heavy foreign indebtedness. I am reminded of the famous words of Simon Bolivar, to whom our continent owes so much:

"Slavery is the daughter of darkness; an ignorant population is the blind tool of its own destruction."

The Liberator would agree today that the blind population in the deep night of poverty can just as easily become the tool of revolt and destabilization.

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

The present juncture calls for statesmanlike vision. Just as was the case after the Second World War, it is now necessary and of the utmost urgency to take concrete action to launch an authentic new international economic order.

We also stand in need of short-term measures. Latin America cannot continue being a net exporter of capital; it cannot continue paying high interest rates and spreads in renegotiating its foreign debts; it can no longer have access to international markets blocked for its products; nor can it continue to suffer from restrictions on the transfer of technology.\*

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\*Mr. Knipping-Victoria (Dominican Republic), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

The keen awareness of the economic problems of Latin America led to the establishment of the Cartagena consensus, through which we issued an invitation to the creditor nations for dialogue and understanding.

It is essential that the crisis of Latin American indebtedness be analysed and understood from its political aspect. It is essential that the Governments of the creditor countries understand that an exceptional situation exists, a situation that cannot be automatically corrected by the simple play of the market forces. It is essential to understand that there is a need to contain and correct patent distortions and inequalities in the international economic system.

President Sarney has declared again and again that Brazil will not pay its foreign debt with the hunger and poverty of its people, nor at the cost of democracy or economic growth. In reaffirming this resolute stand of the Government of Brazil, I do so in the name of a country determined to fulfil its international financial commitments but equally determined to secure a better quality of life for its people, who have already made so many sacrifices.

It was with this superior objective in mind that in February of this year Brazil adopted a broad programme for economic reform, to crush inflation, stimulate investments, reward production and labour and penalize speculation. The new programme, the highly successful Plano Cruzado, or Cruzado Plan, is today the symbol of new hope for Brazilians, embodying a new mentality, a new force to give impetus to our growth.

There is no longer any terra incognita on this planet; but new frontiers are being opened up in areas that are crucial for humanity: those of technology.

The developing world cannot be kept as an outsider in this new revolution, lest the already enormous chasm that separates our world from the developed world be consolidated and broadened. The technological revolution must be channelled



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towards the bridging of these two worlds, so that it will benefit both. The effects of this revolution are exponential and qualitative in character. If they are misdirected, they can not only cause an irreversible rift between rich and poor but also inevitably lead to an abyss separating those who possess and control knowledge from those to whom no access to knowledge is permitted.

We do not wish, nor can we accept, the technological revolution's following the same road as the Industrial Revolution, relegating the majority of countries to the role of mere providers of inputs of limited aggregate value. Nor do we wish to be reduced to the role of mere buyers of the surplus and the obsolete.

We will not resign ourselves to being the passive spectators of a new international division of labour, bisecting the world into distinct universes, one containing the post-industrial societies, where activities of information and service predominate, true nerve centres that would govern the planet, and the other for backward, subservient societies.

Neither do we fail to see the implications of the accelerated development of new technologies for military purposes in the rich countries. We are aware of the impact of the civilian applications of these new technologies, whose research and development are endlessly financed by defence budgets. We are not blind to the repercussions that these subsidies to technology have on the entire economic structure of the developed countries, nor do we fail to perceive their negative effect on the competitive capacity of the economies of the developing countries.

In Latin America, in particular, the economic and technological lag is spurring the conscience of our peoples. In Brazil we are firmly, irreversibly committed to the cause of the economic integration of Latin America. For a long time this integration has been called for, but only now do we have adequate conditions for the emergence of an authentic political will to further it.

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Integration opens up horizons for the formation of a common Latin American space, conducive to the development of the countries of the region and capable of invigorating them as they confront the adversities of the international economic situation. Brazil, together with Argentina and Uruguay, recently took meaningful steps towards this integration, in agreements that set forth, unequivocally, the mature and intelligent decision of peoples thoroughly convinced of the advantages of their uniting. An ambitious decision, but realistic as well, in which renewed faith in the convergence of our destinies is coupled with complete awareness of the difficulties integration can bring. We, however, do not flinch from taking up this historic challenge, which we know is daunting, but its very magnitude is the measure of our common willingness to co-operate and to progress - our fraternal aspiration to grow, and to do so together.

The continuing existence of regional crises that threaten peace and security is another important aspect on the international scene.

A notable instance is what is happening in southern Africa. I am reminded of the words of President Sarney, in Praia, when he paid a gratifying visit to Cape Verde last May:

"The complex problems of South Africa can never be solved from the perspective of East-West tensions nor from any other strategic viewpoint of the great Powers. ... The solution to the crisis in that region lies first of all in the disappearance of apartheid and, subsequently, in the solid implantation of a structure of peaceful interaction between the States of the region, enabling all of them to dedicate themselves to the struggle for the implementation of their national development plans."

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

The inconceivable recalcitrance of the Pretoria Government in maintaining the régime of apartheid intact and in blocking the process of the independence of Namibia in persistent violation of the Security Council's decision continues to provoke serious tensions and conflicts in southern Africa.

An illustrious Brazilian statesman of the past century, Joaquim Nabuco, fighting against the slavery that stigmatized us at that time, said all those years ago:

"the laws of every country are subject to certain fundamental principles, which are the basis of civilized societies, and the violation of which in any one of those societies amounts to an offence against all the others".

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"No State can thus place itself outside the civilized community of the world", asserted that famous abolitionist. This is exactly the case of the abominable régime of discrimination still in effect in South Africa as we approach the third millenium.

The international community is on the threshold of decisions that can no longer be postponed if Pretoria's attempt to perpetuate its nefarious régime is to be rendered unfeasible. Brazil will continue to strive to create conditions for the settlement of that question - an undeniable priority in the light of the explosive situation in South Africa and the critical situation of the front-line countries, which are subjected to every kind of illegal and unjustifiable aggression. Those valiant and long-suffering nations have our steadfast support.

In the Middle East, the cycle of violence continues unabated. Brazil reiterates its consternation at the attacks being carried out in Lebanon, a country with which we have traditional ties and whose full right to self-determination we would wish to see respected.

The bases for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East must of necessity include the return of the Arab territories occupied since 1967, respect for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence in their own territory, and the need for all the States of the region, including Israel, to live in peace within internationally recognized borders.

Brazil is also following with concern the development of the conflict between Iran and Iraq. We deeply regret that those two countries have not as yet resolved their differences peacefully and we renew our appeal for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

Chronic crises and conflicts are also to be found in other parts of the world. Such is the case in Afghanistan and Kampuchea, where the right to

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self-determination and the principle of non-intervention are being violated.

Violence in those regions will not cease so long as foreign occupation continues and the free expression of the will of the people is curbed.

Another issue which preoccupies Brazil and the other Latin American countries is that of the Malvinas Islands. Since 1833, we have clearly and unswervingly supported the sovereign rights of the Argentine Republic to that territory and have insisted on the need for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the dispute. It is essential that a dialogue be re-established between the parties involved.

In Central America, exacerbated economic and social problems of a structural nature continue to add to the persistent climate of tension heightened by ideological confrontation. Brazil remains firmly convinced that a lasting solution to the conflict can be achieved only by respecting the principles of non-intervention and of the self-determination of peoples in an atmosphere of dialogue and mutual understanding. As a result of that conviction, my country has sought to co-operate in reaching an understanding through its participation in the Contadora peace process Support Group.

When we met in San Francisco to draw up the Charter of the United Nations, we were concerned chiefly with finding a definition for the kind of world we would be bequeathing to future generations. Shortly thereafter, an apocalyptic event radically changed the very premises on which the negotiations for a new international order were based.

The explosion of the first atomic bomb at Hiroshima revealed mankind to be in possession of a weapon capable of destroying the human species as well as the whole world in which we live. Since then, the problem of nuclear weapons has only worsened. Each day, the risk of a global - global and final - conflict increases.

The process of action and reaction that has taken the lethal and spiralling

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arms race to ever higher levels is indeed frightening. The prospect that an arms race is to be unleashed in space also causes us deep apprehension.

Brazil maintains a firm and determined policy of opposition to the proliferation of nuclear arms, whether vertical or horizontal. We have actively participated in all efforts towards disarmament carried out by United Nations forums.

My country signed and ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the purpose of which is to make Latin America the first militarily denuclearized zone in territory inhabited by man.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco has not as yet achieved its objective, for it is not adhered to by all the States of the region, nor by one of the extra-continental Powers which has territories under its administration within the area of the Treaty. Furthermore, recent events indicate that for the Treaty to become a truly effective instrument to guarantee the security of the Latin American nations, an efficient verification system to monitor the introduction of nuclear arms is required.

Despite these limitations, Brazil has repeatedly affirmed its unwavering policy of abiding strictly by the terms of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, eschewing any activity involving the acquisition of nuclear arms.

That policy, followed continuously and without vacillation, has had the broad support of the Brazilian people. The complete military denuclearization of Latin America is among the priority goals of the foreign policy of my Government, which is firmly committed, as are the Governments of other countries of the region, to avoiding the development and introduction of nuclear arms on the continent.

The nuclear arms race is not merely a threat to our future; it arouses terror and has already killed, causing death through insecurity, fear, poverty and hunger. In the words of the great Brazilian poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade:

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"By the thought alone that it is coming to kill

The bomb will kill;

The bomb is indigence unifying millions of indigences."

Despite numerous protests and numerous warnings, in numerous forums - "The bomb attends all conferences and sits alongside all" - we must ask whether mankind will overcome the threat to its own destruction. A comforting message of optimism may perhaps be found in the final verses of the same expressive poem by the poet Drummond:

"The bomb, confused beast, allows man

Time to save himself.

The bomb will not destroy life

Man (I dearly trust) will extinguish the bomb."

Let us be confident. In the polished words of Thomas Jefferson, we are, after all, moved by

"the conscientious desire to direct the energies of our nations to the multiplication of the human race, and not to its destruction."

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

Three other subjects merit special consideration.

First, I wish to reiterate the importance that the Brazilian democracy attributes to the rights of the human person - to the absolute and full, unimpeded exercise of those rights. Significant international instruments, such as the international Covenants on human rights and the United Nations Convention against torture, are being incorporated into the Brazilian legal order, adding new guarantees for the perfect protection of those fundamental rights in our country.

I cannot fail to refer also to a momentous theme, the subject of drugs, to express the deep concern with which Brazil regards it. In our view, the problem has three essential aspects: the prevention of the improper use of drugs, the suppression of illicit drug traffic and the rehabilitation of chronic users. The problem will not be definitively resolved if those three facets are not taken equally into account. We also consider international co-operation to be essential in combating drug abuse, provided, naturally, that the sovereign rights of nations are safeguarded. Brazil participated actively in the Special Inter-American Conference on Traffic in Narcotic Drugs, held in Rio de Janeiro in April of this year under the auspices of the Organization of American States. We shall likewise give our most dedicated co-operation in the work of the international conference on drugs to be held in Vienna in 1987.

The third theme is terrorism. From this rostrum I wish to express our most vehement, energetic and indignant rejection at its proliferation. The international community cannot continue to tolerate the practice of acts of terrorism and must unite without delay to eradicate their causes and eliminate their effects.

I repeat, with emphasis, what I affirmed at the beginning of my address: strengthening the United Nations is the best way to guarantee international peace



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and security. In keeping with this view, my country has actively contributed to stimulating the implementation of measures to revitalize the United Nations. In the opinion of the Brazilian Government, the recommendations of the so-called Group of 18 are a first and promising step in that direction.

We support an increasingly active role for the Secretary-General in the search for solutions to controversies. We support the Organization's examining all disputes and conflicts. We advocate flexibility in working methods, particularly in the Security Council, so that the major issues relating to peace and security can be treated substantively and constructively. We believe that it is necessary to counteract the tendency to bypass this forum in dealing with fundamental problems of peace which are of interest to the entire international community. These problems affect all and to all falls the responsibility for their solution.

It was precisely on the basis of this conception of the United Nations that on 29 May I proposed, through the Secretary-General, on behalf of the Brazilian Government, the inclusion of the item "Zone of peace and co-operation of the south Atlantic" in the agenda for this session. This initiative results from the statement of President José Sarney before this General Assembly in September of 1985, when he said:

"Brazil will make every effort within its power to ensure that the south Atlantic is preserved as an area of peace, shielded from the arms race, the presence of nuclear arms and any form of confrontation originating in other regions." (A/40/PV.4, p. 14-15)

We are appreciative of the acknowledgment by the General Assembly of the pertinence of this item by including it in its current agenda. The initiative on the zone of peace and co-operation of the south Atlantic projects the need for an important collective effort, on behalf of which Brazil seeks to be merely a spokesman.

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

What is involved is the guaranteeing of peace, security and development in a vast area of the globe, comprising countries of two continents united in their common determination to overcome obstacles standing in the way of the attainment of the progress and well-being of their peoples.

On the one hand, the objective is to avert the serious threats to regional and world security whether represented by the situation in southern Africa or by the transfer to the south Atlantic of East-West tensions and confrontations, accompanied by the geographic proliferation of nuclear arms and the resulting intensification of the nuclear arms race. On the other hand, there is the aim to promote broad possibilities of co-operation to benefit the economic and social development of the peoples of the region.

The declaration of the south Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation would be a concrete measure in a vast programme which the community of nations has itself defined as being of the highest priority in this forum: the conversion of irrational impulses towards confrontation into constructive work of international peaceful co-operation. It would constitute, moreover, the logical, complementary sequence of previous efforts of the Latin American and African countries, embodied in the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa and the Lomé Declaration and Programme of Action relating to security, disarmament and development in Africa. Such a declaration would be a meaningful contribution to the promotion of universal peace based on equal rights and justice for all, which are supreme objectives of the United Nations.

Brazilian foreign policy is not based on illusions, nor does it engage in rhetorical effusions. On the contrary, it translates permanent and legitimate concepts, aspirations and interests.

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

We are a new country but not an immature country. We are a country with its own identity, which we value and respect, as we respect and value the identities of other nations. Our statements are clear, frank and direct expressions of the deeply rooted values of Brazilian society. When we speak of peace we do not consider that we are talking for talking's sake. We do not hesitate to be insistent, even repetitious. I shall therefore allow myself to reaffirm here words spoken in this very forum by an illustrious predecessor of mine in the post of Foreign Minister, Joao Augusto de Araujo Castro:

"We live within a system made up of reciprocal causes and effects. Just as peace is indivisible - because peace involves an element of independence and its consolidation requires the co-operation of sovereign unities - so the economic and social development of mankind, which is the condition and expression of peace, should be indivisible."

From this rostrum, at the last regular session of the General Assembly, President Sarney said:

"The instrument that worked our transition from authoritarianism to democracy was our capacity to reconcile and understand, without violence or traumas." (A/40/PV.4, p. 4-5)\*

To explain that peaceful transition, certain authors who are not Brazilian assert that Brazilians are a "cordial" people, averse to violent solutions as though by historical predestination. This is an inaccurate over-simplification the merits of which I do not wish to discuss.

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\*The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. de Abreu Sodre, Brazil)

It is true that we are naturally inclined towards conciliation, based on tolerance and a staunch respect for differences. But if in moments of crisis there arises amongst us a favourable consensus towards understanding and negotiation, it is simply because we are keenly aware that the paths of violence, in addition to being ethically condemnable, are irrational and of short duration.

It is sad for the human species that at times it is "more difficult to make peace than to make war", as Clemenceau said. This is the challenge which both sustains and stimulates the arduous work of the United Nations. In the course of its 41 years of existence, this Organization has striven, despite all obstacles, to carry out the essential task of building and preserving world peace, promoting dialogue, understanding and harmony among peoples.

On behalf of the Brazilian people and Government, I reiterate my country's commitment to this noble cause from which we cannot turn away.

Mr. SIDDIKY (Bangladesh): Mr. President, this is a most gratifying moment for my delegation and personally for me to see you preside over this Assembly. May I express in this connection our profound satisfaction and pride. I have not the slightest doubt that your wisdom and skill and your long and varied experience in diplomacy would enable you to guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion. I offer my sincere thanks to all our friends who have reposed their confidence in you by unanimously electing you to this high office.

It is an honour and privilege for me and my delegation to participate in the forty-first regular session of the United Nations General Assembly. I bring you the warm greetings of the people and the Government of Bangladesh. I join my other colleagues, in conveying our gratitude to your illustrious predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Jaime de Piniés for his skillful and efficient conduct of our work during the last Assembly. We were impressed by his vast knowledge, prudent counsel, and informed guidance.

(Mr. Siddiky, Bangladesh)

We commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his untiring efforts in upholding the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. His report, which we have studied with great interest, will make an important contribution to our work.

The United Nations, as a unique edifice of peace and justice, symbolizes our collective wisdom. Born out of the ashes and ruins of the Second World War, its Charter impels us to speak against hunger, malnutrition and disease, to speak for human rights and freedom, and, above all, to speak of peace and security. It seeks to order international relations based on a set of principles and to establish a new concept of international morality which prevents force from dictating the issues in a conflict between nations. Most of all, it makes for a single global village composed of a multitude of nations, enclosed in blissful interdependence, which is shared both by the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor. It has stood the test of time, as we recall our celebration last year of the fortieth anniversary, in recognition, perhaps, of our 40 years of freedom from a cataclysmic global conflict. It has also stood the test of acceptance with its membership being virtually universal. Whatever doubt that one may have about the efficacy of the United Nations it has far less to do with its role per se in international relations, than to do with the attitude of those in doubt. It is not so much a crisis of confidence in the United Nations; rather it is a crisis of political will.

To us, the United Nations remains the conscience-keeper of humanity. We have a constitutional commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter. Our record so far in the United Nations bears witness to this commitment. Our policy speaks for balance, moderation and strict adherence to this principle. It is self-evident that conflict is dysfunctional, while co-operation among nations leads to mutual enrichment. Our interaction on the international plane is reflective of this perception of ours.

(Mr. Siddiky, Bangladesh)

In a regional context, we have been making relentless efforts to promote peace and stability in South Asia through the creation of a climate of goodwill, trust and understanding. We had initiated in 1980 a proposal to create a framework for co-operation in our region. Sincerity and earnestness of approach of the countries of the region have led to a fruition of this initiative. The first ever summit-level meeting of the seven South Asian countries, namely, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, was held in our capital, Dhaka, last December. The Summit formally launched the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which is an institution geared to the promotion of functional co-operation in a number of specific areas identified for the purpose. SAARC represents the region's testimony to the principle of good-neighbourliness. It is our earnest hope that the present level of co-operation will continue to be strengthened and diversified for our common benefit.

A paramount purpose of the United Nations is the maintenance of peace and security. Continued accumulation of sophisticated weaponry threatens to render this goal unattainable. We are convinced that disarmament is a moral imperative in the nuclear age. We have consistently advocated meaningful negotiations between those States that have acquired the capability to procure weapons of mass destruction. It is our hope that such negotiations would continue so as to advance the cause of disarmament in an effective manner in the greater interest of global peace.

We have consistently advocated that the financial and other resources of extraordinary magnitude that are being devoted to the acquisition of armaments should be redirected towards the elimination of global poverty. It is with deep regret that we note that the international conference on disarmament and development, which could have made advances possible in this direction, will not be held this year.

(Mr. Siddiky, Bangladesh)

The oldest and perhaps one of the most important questions before the United Nations has been the crisis in the Middle East. As of today, there has hardly been any breakthrough in the form of an initiation of a genuine peace process, despite there being a number of significant endeavours to this end. It is self-evident that the Palestinian question is at the core of the problem. The land which has always been the homeland of the Palestinians is now occupied by a people alien to them. Israel was implanted in the heart of the Arab world, uprooting the Palestinians from their native land. Therefore, so long as the inalienable rights of this people are not restored, no lasting peace can possibly be achieved in the region. Acceptance of this simple truth is a sine qua non for any peace that is meant to endure.

It is our firm conviction that the problem in the Middle East can only be solved on the basis of a comprehensive plan which must be contingent upon total and unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli forces from all Palestinian and Arab territories, including the holy city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and the Palestinian people exercising their right to national self-determination.

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Such a peace plan was embodied in the set of principles agreed to by Arab leaders at the twelfth Arab summit held at Fez in 1982. These principles complement the resolutions of the United Nations concerning the question of Palestine. The Palestine Liberation Organization being the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, initiation of any peace process has to take place with their full participation on an equal footing with all other parties. Our support for the Palestinian cause has always been unwavering and unequivocal. We have always condemned the continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories. We shall always stand by our Palestinian brethren in their just struggle.

South Africa is up in flames and we continue to witness the most flagrant disregard of civilized human norms and values. This reprehensible policy of apartheid pursued by the racist Pretoria régime must totally be eliminated. At a time when heroic protest of the South African people is being met with an unprecedented degree of harassment, intimidation and persecution, the world cannot afford to sin by inaction. The plaintive cry for freedom that emanates from that unfortunate land can no longer go unheeded. The evil that is apartheid must be dismantled, and now.

I reiterate the firm commitment of my country to the cause of the oppressed people of South Africa. We strongly endorse that comprehensive mandatory sanctions, as provided in Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, must be applied to South Africa without any further delay.

It is over 20 years since the Mandate of South Africa over Namibia was terminated by the United Nations. Yet the Pretoria régime continues to maintain its stranglehold over the Territory and its people in blatant defiance of numerous resolutions and decisions of the United Nations. It is for us to consider how this



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barbarous régime could spurn the international opinion and pursue unchallenged its evil policies. It is essentially a moral issue, that is, whether to resist such an evil force or to sustain or even tolerate it, directly or by proxy.

We pay tribute to the heroic people of Namibia for their courage and determination. Theirs is a struggle which remains and will remain, ever forceful, undaunted, and relentless. We also salute the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people, for providing unwavering leadership to the people of Namibia. Let me record once more our unswerving solidarity with the struggling people of Namibia in their just struggle for freedom, liberty and human dignity. Bangladesh, through its membership of the Council for Namibia, will continue, as always, to play an active role in the promotion of Namibian independence.

We firmly believe that the only acceptable basis of a lasting settlement of the question is the United Nations plan, as contained in Security Council resolutions 385 (1976) and 435 (1978). The International Conference for the Immediate Independence of Namibia, held in Vienna last July, had also expressed, in the most categorical terms possible, the conviction that the United Nations plan constitutes the only internationally accepted basis for the settlement of the question. The fourteenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the question of Namibia has endorsed the Programme of Action on Namibia formulated by the Conference. It is, therefore, imperative that efforts should be redoubled to implement the Programme of Action so that the independence of Namibia could be ushered in within a definite time-frame.

We are concerned over the continuation of a fratricidal war between Iraq and Iran causing death, destruction and untold sufferings. It has threatened the unity of the Islamic world which Muslims everywhere hold dear to their hearts. We take

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this opportunity, as a member of the Islamic Peace Committee, to issue yet another appeal to these two brotherly Islamic countries to respond positively to the various peace initiatives. For our part, we shall continue our endeavours to put an end to this tragic conflict. The ongoing efforts, both within the framework of the United Nations and without, need to be intensified and a co-ordinated action be undertaken. The efforts of the Secretary-General in this respect are laudable. We would like to assure him of our continued co-operation.

Our principled position on the Afghanistan and Kampuchean issues are based on our unfailing commitment to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and those of the Non-Aligned Movement. These principles categorically reject use of force, or the threat of its use, and armed intervention or interference by one State in the internal affairs of another. Peace and confidence in these regions can only be restored if all parties to the conflict adhere to the International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation Among States, particularly the principle of the right of peoples to freely choose their own form of political, social and economic systems. It is in this context that we have consistently urged the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan and Kampuchea so that the peoples of those countries are free to determine their own destinies.

We are dismayed and concerned at the lack of progress in the inter-communal talks between the Turkish and the Greek-Cypriot communities in Cyprus. Bangladesh supports the independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty and the non-aligned status of Cyprus. Any lasting solution to the problem must take into account the legitimate aspirations of both the communities. We have called upon them, therefore, to engage in meaningful discussions in order to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution that would enable them to live in honour and dignity within the framework of a federated Cyprus. In this connection, my delegation will continue

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to extend its fullest support and co-operation to the Secretary-General in his mission of good offices in reaching a negotiated solution to the problem.

The situation in Central America continues to be tense and volatile. We are concerned over the apparent lack of progress in diffusing tension in the region. A process of constructive dialogue amongst the parties had indeed been set in motion about four years ago by the Contadora Group of countries with a view to creating an atmosphere of trust, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. The Contadora process provides the much-needed framework for peace and co-operation among the countries of the region so as to avert further deepening of tension and recourse to military solution to problems. It laid emphasis on the spirit of negotiation in a regional context in a bid to isolate the issues from extraneous political influence. The draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, being based on shared perception and mutual accommodation in a regional context, has been the fruit of a series of intensive negotiations among all the parties concerned. It has been acclaimed as the single most important initiative aimed at bringing in peace in the region. It should, therefore, be allowed to take a decisive course with the full support of this Assembly.

Bangladesh is of the view that the creation of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world will contribute to global and regional security and stability. As a littoral State, therefore, we attach great importance to the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region. We support the early convening of the United Nations Conference on the Indian Ocean in Colombo and, to this end, we participate actively in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean.

On the economic front, global developments over the past year have been serious enough to give rise to widespread concern, both with regard to its management and future. The growth in world output fell by one third last year as

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compared to the previous year and the growth of world trade was a meagre one third of 1984. The sharp rebound in 1983-84 of the largest economy entered a critical phase by last year. Its performance slowed down significantly and its record budget deficit continued to grow. So did the performance of a number of other important economies. By the middle of 1985, sustainability of the growth process itself became a matter of deep concern. While the largest economy lagged in performance, no new growth poles emerged. Rather, the opposite happened. Deflationary policies pursued by a number of important developed countries constrained the overall development climate.

The slow-down in the growth has been costly and came at a particularly difficult time for the developing countries, most of which never really recovered from the recession of the early 1980s. The 1986 trade and development report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) observed:

"Large parts of the developing countries are still registering regression rather than advance, with falling levels of per capita output and consumption as well as depressed levels of investment. In many of these countries unemployment is high, living standards are declining and social services are being cut, often at the expense of health and education."

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The combined per capita income of the developing countries, excluding two major countries among them, declined for the fifth consecutive year in 1985 and fewer than 49 countries, with a population of 700 million, most of which are among the least developed, experienced zero or negative growth rate of their real gross national product (G.N.P) per capita in 1985. If the present trend continues the per capita GDP of the developing countries in 1990 will be barely above the 1980 level.

A critical concern in this situation faced by the developing countries has been the ever-weakening price for their primary commodities, on which the vast majority of them, particularly in the least developed ones, are overwhelmingly dependent. The low commodity prices have been extremely damaging to their export earnings and to their growth. At the same time, the deflationary environment has brought about a resurgence of protectionism, on the one hand, and progressive erosion of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) principles and of the arrangements preferential to the developing countries, on the other. The impulses of growth in 1984 had encouraged many of us last year to hope that this would develop into a momentum. Unfortunately, such expectations were nullified by the negative features as manifested in persistently depressed commodity prices, historically high real rates of interest, and crippling debt service payments. To compound it all, there has been reverse transfer of resources, from the developing to the developed countries, since 1983. At the same time, private foreign direct investment in developing countries fell significantly. This reverse flow of resources threaten to cripple not only the development, but the future prospect of the developing countries as well. Unfortunately, there has not been any significant attempt to relieve the decline in private flows by official flows of resources. The International Development Association (IDA), on which the low-income and the least developed countries depend heavily, saw a sharp reduction

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in its seventh replenishment, even in nominal terms. The level of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) replenishment also offered no consolation.

Have we ever considered the magnitude and the depth of human sufferings, or of the lost potentials, as a result of these unwelcome developments? Have we ever given a thought to the fact that the adjustment measures which more and more developing countries are being forced to undertake are also undermining their growth and development? The situation in the least developed countries, two thirds of which are in Africa, remains particularly desperate as they continue to be afflicted by stagnation or decline in income and growth. They are the hardest hit by weak commodity prices, and their vulnerability to external factors remains overwhelming. Their socio-economic and basic infrastructure remain virtually rudimentary or non-existent. Under severe difficulties, they had to incur more debts. The total outstanding external debt of all the least developed countries increased from \$3.3 billion in 1974 to some \$30 billion a decade later. The impact of this debt is far more severe than its absolute size indicates. Their difficulties are further compounded by their inability to attract investment from private sources. The serious inadequacy of resource flows to those countries is illustrated from the fact that their average per capita resource inflow was only \$26.3 as compared to \$30.2 for all developing countries. Given the vulnerability of these countries, concessional and grant elements in resource flows to these countries remain highly important. I regret to observe in this context that in some cases, for instance in my country, Bangladesh, concessional and grant elements of external assistance have recently shown a decreasing trend.

This is an untenable situation. For the sake of global peace and progress, concerted efforts must be undertaken to redress the difficulties and to promote development. It is in this context that my delegation fully supports the Committee

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for Development Planning's recommendations for doubling the flow of development finance to the developing countries. We believe that it is an imperative pre-condition for reactivating those countries. It is also vital to secure the eighth replenishment of IDA at a significantly higher level. The donor commitments made in the context of both the mid-term global review of the Substantial New Programme of Action and the recently concluded United Nations special session on the critical economic situation in Africa must be fully implemented within the agreed time-frame. The World Bank lending should be increased to the range of \$45 billion to \$50 billion in 1986-1988 and the negotiations for a general capital increase of the World Bank should be effectively pursued without delay. At the same time, the lending capacity of the regional development banks should be enhanced.

It is no less important that a favourable situation must be created for increased trade from the developing to the developed countries. In this regard, immediate action should be taken for stand-still and roll-back of protectionist barriers to trade. My delegation welcomes the agreement reached in Punta del Este and hopes that further liberalization and gradual elimination of all trade barriers by developed countries will be the over-riding objective of the new round of multilateral trade negotiations. The Seventh United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VII) should be approached constructively, particularly for finding effective and fair solutions to the commodity problems.

My delegation believes that in the complex and difficult economic situation that confronts our global community today, nothing is more important than to establish an international consensus for global development. This calls for seriousness of intent to pursue consensus agreements established by this body and in other multilateral forums. My delegation recalls with regret that the consensus

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resolution 34/138 on the launching of the global negotiations still awaits an effective follow-up. We must also be able to discuss seriously substantive proposals from all sides. My delegation continues to hope that the proposal of the developing countries for an international conference on money and finance for development will elicit a serious response from our partners in the developed world. We are encouraged by the greater awareness now that without the necessary reforms and readjustments in the international monetary, financial and trade fields, the foundations for global development during the remaining years of this decade and in the next decade will not be laid. Above all, multilateralism must be strengthened. For only in multilateral forums, through constructive and meaningful dialogue, can we establish a global consensus for peace, prosperity and development.

All of us gathered here are aware that the United Nations is confronted today with a financial crisis of a proportion hitherto unseen. To my mind, the crisis that the United Nations faces today is symptomatic of a deeper malaise emanating from an erosion of faith in the concept of multilateralism. As regards the disagreement among some Member States with regard to the budgetary process, I believe this can be resolved with a modicum of political will and commitment. The Secretary-General has already taken some helpful initiatives to meet the immediate liquidity problem. As to the medium and long-term aspects of the problem, the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts have made a number of substantive proposals. These proposals deserve our serious consideration, in the light of the principles and objectives of the Charter. We all look upon you, Mr. President, to guide us in resolving this crisis.

The concept of the global village is no more a cliché. Rather it is a reality in this increasingly interdependent world. Peace and co-operation among nations



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are no longer mere aspirations; these are dire necessities fundamental to our future. What we seek is an atmosphere of global amity and understanding which can ensure equality and freedom, peace and prosperity for us all. It is, therefore, imperative that the spirit of multilateral co-operation be regenerated. The United Nations provides us with a forum and framework to do so. Let us now display our capacity to work together without subordinating ourselves to the dictates of our national interests and compulsions.

Long live the United Nations!

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.