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President:

Mr. FLORIN

(German Democratic Republic)

- Address by Mr. Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, President of the Republic of Guatemala
- Address by Hojjat-ul-Islam Seyed Ali Khamenei, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- General debate [9]: (continued)

Statement made by:

Mr. Ellemann-Jensen (Denmark)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

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

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Guatemala.

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

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

President CEREZO-AREVALO (interpretation from Spanish): I come before the Assembly representing the Guatemalan nation and its desire to contribute to peace in the world by helping build peace in Central America.

The Guatemalan people, as I pointed out in my statement in this Assembly in 1986, have taken over the conduct of their own history and are determined to travel, step by step, the road leading to the attainment of our own utopia: to make Guatemalan society a profoundly humane society, based on participation and pluralism, in which all inhabitants, without distinction as to race, ideology, social sector or economic status, can contribute actively to the taking of decisions essential to our nation. In order to travel that road, the people have chosen the criteria that we have proposed, and in order to attain our objectives we are making rational use of the available human and material resources.

It is important to emphasize this latter point, because when one seeks to understand the nature of the proposals we have made to our nation and to Central America one finds in all of them a conscious choice of absolute respect for the life of men and the preservation of the natural resources available to us, so that they may serve all Guatemalan families rather than the interests of a single sector.

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

The attainment of objectives at the lowest possible cost without compromising our principles is the common denominator of each of the measures we have adopted. We reject the concept that appears to have become widespread in recent decades, that the attainment of objectives justifies loss of human life or the destruction of the infrastructure and of natural resources, which do not belong to any ideology, faction or economic group but rather to the nation.

On the basis of that principle, we have made it our practice in all circumstances to work towards agreement and avoid confrontation. We define consensus as the maximum degree of agreement possible within disagreement and, even though we exercise legitimate power in taking final decisions, we always make the greatest effort to ensure that those decisions will be the fruit of an extended process of consultation, discussion and the contribution of ideas even by those social, economic or political groups that do not share with us the ideological underpinnings that define the democratic society that we espouse. If at any time we have had to confront any sector, group or faction of our society, it has been because of its intransigence or negative attitude in the search for a common solution for the benefit of the community.

We call this process of seeking a consensus concerted effort. It is a method that some would describe as naive and others as slow or inefficient. But, since we pride ourselves on being familiar with our own history and do not wish to relive it, we well know that all other methods - violence or the exercise of absolute power - have, in the course of our independent life and particularly in the past 20 years, produced only destruction and death without achieving positive results for the benefit of our peoples, which still await a solution to many of their most elementary problems.

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

A decision of this nature requires historic courage because it involves a definitive change in many of the traditional attitudes of certain of the leaders of our countries: the temptation to seek absolute power; the rejection of ideological pluralism; party or sectoral fanaticism; the selfishness of the economic interests of families or individuals; and, especially, the impatience that often leads to erroneous decisions to accelerate processes that should develop throughout the life of an entire generation, in the hope that they can be completed successfully within a presidential term of office. Our peoples are tired of being sacrificed to experiment and expect of us, the current leaders of the Central American and American nations and of the nations of the world, a serious, prudent and realistic attitude, so that the path towards the construction of a more humane society will become a one-way street.

Today, democracy and human rights are inseparable concepts. If the restoration of democracy in a nation that has lost it is a difficult task, it is no less difficult to establish respect for human rights in a society that has suffered from a climate of violence.

The constitution of Guatemala, which governs our democracy, accords a primary place to human rights, and my Government has successfully undertaken to guarantee and protect those rights.

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

Those concepts, which guide Guatemala's political conduct, are also fundamental to the policies we advocate at the international level, namely, active neutrality and a Central American parliament.

In defining the concept of active neutrality, particular account should be taken of its political, ideological and methodological aspects, and a due relationship to the legal sphere should be established as appropriate. Some who have commented on this concept have indicated that there can be no active neutrality, because when viewing the concept they take the two words separately; naturally, the word "neutrality," taken in its international context, has its basis in legal language. Our proposal is an integrated concept that would correspond to our international policy and would mean rejecting involvement in armed conflicts and working actively to achieve peace through diplomacy or political action involving concerted effort.

That policy is based on the belief that those efforts should be aimed at achieving agreements and establishing consensus to reduce any chance of confrontation so as to achieve the final objectives at the lowest possible cost. Of course, although we reject armed confrontation, we must recognize that there are problems in our region that could lead to such confrontation. In our history, many of the internal conflicts of our country have been instigated, supported, fomented or, at the very least, tolerated by some neighbouring countries that have sought to impose their own ideology or to prevent the implantation of a neighbour's political system in their own country. That gravely erroneous course must not be repeated. We must attempt to establish in each country of Central America the conditions necessary for tolerance, pluralism and the free participation of all sectors in the political life of the nation.

If we act within the framework of established norms and in consultation with the people, using the most appropriate machinery to secure their effective and free

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

participation, that will reduce domestic tensions and the chance of conflicts among our countries and inevitably lead to mutual respect, which we are entitled to expect.

Instead of accepting confrontation, we must act to establish methods that allow dialogue to lead to an understanding of our problems and to their solution. That is the meaning of "active neutrality": the rejection of armed conflict and active efforts to secure peace through concerted effort.

An international policy such as the one we have defined, the backbone of which is recognition of the realities peculiar to each country and the search for accords designed to establish regional consensus, requires a permanent instrument for implementation of the proposed method of concerted effort to establish the bases for Central American political unity, which would be the historical consequence, in the medium or longer term, of such a process.

Thus the proposed Central American parliament would be a forum for discussions and the taking of decisions relating to the solution of problems common to all of us or that affect one or more of the region's countries, problems that could threaten generalized conflict and impede the economic and social development of our peoples.

Such a parliament, inspired by the model of the European Parliament, would also seek to make our peoples and the various political and economic social sectors parts of the process of regional integration. It is vitally important that its members be elected directly. That would resolve the problem presented by broad political spread and pluralism and would open the way to proportional representation. At the same time, the proposed system would guarantee respect for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each country. The parliament could even eventually establish a higher-level political body in the

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

form of a presidential commission to give executive validity to agreements reached at the parliamentary level.

A Central American parliament could also complement and strengthen those negotiating formulas that may lead to peace in the region through concerted effort and the setting aside of traditional attitudes of polarity and confrontation.

Concerted effort, active neutrality and a Central American parliament - those are the political instruments that embody our country's position in the context of the present-day reality of Central America and the need to achieve political stability, security and peace in the region.

With those instruments, we seek to inspire a positive and optimistic attitude towards the future without forgetting our geopolitical context and our economic and social problems, and to bring about specific and imaginative solutions to those problems that take both national and regional interests into account. With those concepts, we hope to give the countries of Central America an opportunity to work with all nations interested in our region. We hope to enable them to act together so that with each agreement and each year a further step will be taken towards making the peoples of Central America true protagonists in the historic events we are experiencing.

From the foregoing, it is easy to deduce the short- and medium-term objectives of Guatemala's international policy. The first objective is the initiation of a peace process. Peace in Central America is more than a utopian goal; it is a fundamental necessity in the process of the economic and social development of each country.

Armed groups that use violence in their attempts to wrest political power from constituted Governments provoke armed clashes that are no longer merely modes of political struggle but serious obstacles to the solution of political, economic and social problems.

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

Those struggles, which entail a constant waste of resources, destroy the scant infrastructures of regions that have barely begun the process of modernization, and they compel Governments to allocate vast resources to armed confrontation instead of to the building of broader and more efficient infrastructures that can meet the basic needs of the populations. In such small-scale conflicts the final outcome is less significant than the fact that they prevent the countries involved from consolidating the democracy to which all aspire.

It is obvious that in the situation in Central America, at least in certain countries, violence is a major obstacle to the solution of economic and social problems. We are concerned that such violence may increase and become more widespread.

The prevention of such a disaster was the goal of the Central American Presidents at the two meetings held in Guatemala, Esquipulas I and II, in which we sought formulas to eliminate the causes of confrontation and lay the foundations for harmonious and fraternal coexistence.

At the last meeting we not only worked to avoid the eventuality to which I have referred; when discussing the proposal contained in the document submitted by the President of Costa Rica, we also lay the foundations for processes to eradicate the causes of problems created by armed conflict that were leading to difficult situations, particularly in some countries.

Thus, in Central America it is not necessary merely to stop war; it is also necessary to begin to construct an infrastructure that would help to institutionalize democracy in the area and guarantee lasting peace and economic and social development.

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

The essential corollary of peace is political stability, which is possible in a pluralistic environment in which all the sectors of society can organize and take part in the major decisions of the nation. My personal idea - and I am sure it is shared by the Guatemalan nation - is that that process can occur only in a democratic society, because that kind of society makes it possible to lower the tensions that lead to polarization and confrontation. In fact, our current experience in Guatemala - like the experience of other Latin American nations - shows that it is possible to solve economic and social problems through political pluralism and the organized participation of the people. If that process is consolidated in the Central American region over an extended period, we shall guarantee the wise use of our resources and their equitable distribution among all the sectors of the population.

But, while stability is necessary for the development of a nation, it is even more necessary for the development of a given region. Therefore, we state that institutionalizing the political processes and learning to work together and develop our autonomy of action are factors that will help to make the Central American region stable.

No efforts to achieve peace and political stability can be sustained long enough unless the process of what I have referred to as "concerted effort" becomes institutionalized. That is why the proposal for a Central American parliament has been made - a political institution which would appropriately complement the various economic and cultural organizations that have been developed over recent years in the region, and which would help to create new institutions to strengthen and update the functioning of those earlier institutions.

Those three objectives are absolutely complementary, and we can state that we are on the way to achieving them, having signed the agreement of 7 August this

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

year. The five Central American Presidents, overcoming the regional tradition, resolved their differences and, taking realistic account of the factors and circumstances that have a bearing on the Central American region, reached an agreement which, by its political scope and its potential effects, is in itself an example of concerted effort for the other nations of the world to see: the highest level of agreement possible within disagreement.

The document signed by the Presidents in the quest for a procedure for firm and lasting peace in Central America is truly a logical step towards the achievement of the objectives that I have described. That agreement would not have been possible without the contribution and the efforts of the Latin American countries of the Contadora Group and the unreserved solidarity of the nations of the Support Group. There can be no doubt that those efforts helped to promote an appropriate environment for a thorough discussion, in the various political and economic forums throughout America, of the problems of Central America. That led to the serious and strong endorsement of the expectations opened up by the signing of the "Esquipulas II" agreement.

It is my duty to acknowledge the role played by each of my Central American colleagues in the drawing up of this agreement. I laud the political courage and the historic commitment demonstrated by each of the nations in subscribing to that agreement, notwithstanding all the difficulties that each one of us could face as a result of internal and external opposition. Of course, we could not have taken any decision without the untiring efforts of the Foreign Ministers and their working teams, which made the necessary opening that enabled us to take the decisions at the right time.

The "Esquipulas II" agreement is only a first step on a long road. We cannot proclaim to the world that the mere fact of having signed it has solved all the

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

problems, that peace and stability have been achieved. Far from it: now comes the hard part of this task, because if it was difficult to achieve agreements that seemed quite improbable, it is even more difficult to put them into effect.

We Guatemalans, at any rate, are optimistic, because we believe that we can go a very long way if there is the political will to move ahead. Our peoples back us up. We look forward ardently to peace. We are tired of suffering. That is why this agreement has encouraged a regional movement for peace, which young people and women have joined. That was the case at the first meeting of Central American First Ladies, held recently in Guatemala. And there will be other cultural and social events during the remainder of the year at which young people will manifest their feelings in this respect.

Today, I appeal to the international community to help us to convert the "Esquipulas II" agreement into concrete reality, so that that process will truly lead to a firm and lasting peace in Central America which will make it possible for us to change, once and for all, the sad destiny that had seemed inevitable for our peoples. There have been certain major achievements in this process already. For example, the interest of many countries in various continents has been aroused in the need to co-operate for the economic and social development of the region. It has repeatedly been pointed out that it would be most important for this co-operation to be provided to the five Central American countries at the same time as a process of democratization was being developed. This is the time for the international community to show its solidarity at all levels. I have no doubt that the response to this appeal will be enthusiastic and will enable us to feel that we are not alone in our struggle for a new regional society.

In that sense, we regard the interest of North American public opinion in the problems of Central America as very positive. We know that the people of the

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

United States have a commitment to the cause of democracy and freedom in the world. That is why I wish to repeat here the appeal of the Central Americans for a quest for a bipartisan agreement in the United States in regard to our region.

In order to achieve these objective, it is essential to accept the idea that in the quest for peace and democracy in Central America the agreement by the Presidents is not a point of reference that one can take or leave, but, rather, a point of departure for finding solutions. For the agreement represents what we want, and it is within the framework of that agreement - if it is respected - that the discussion for the achievement of a firm and lasting peace in Central America should be placed.

We Central American Presidents have said what we should do to start, at long last, on the road leading to the realization of our aspirations: real and true democracy, in which all the sectors of the country will contribute and will participate in the taking of those decisions that will enable the political leaders to set up a government that will truly be of, for and by the people.

The alternative is to let the process collapse, or to force us to choose some other path. I do not wish to discuss that here, or even to comment on it, because it is what has always occurred in the countries that do not have the monopoly of force. That is the sad part of the history of the world.

Fortunately, a discussion has now been opened, in which we can talk about the method to change this traditional attitude and can abandon confrontation and move towards concerted political effort.

We Central Americans are aware that our problems are embodied in a world-wide set of problems, and that our imaginative efforts can contribute to the quest for solutions in that context. The subjects of peace in the world deserve our special attention. That is why we look forward with great hope to the attainment by the

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

great Powers of agreements leading to gradual disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons and all the risks of the destruction of mankind.

Disarmament and development are two of the problems that weigh most heavily on the contemporary world; they must be understood as two distinct processes that are closely related. Each has a separate development and distinct goals. One complements the other. Disarmament complements development by means of the reallocation of financial resources, which can be put to better use in development programmes, particularly the struggle against illiteracy, disease and malnutrition and the eradication of the poverty that afflicts more than two thirds of mankind.

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

We sincerely believe in the need for a new international economic order and will therefore energetically support any effort to restore North-South dialogue; and we are, of course, working to find new ways for South-South co-operation. I believe this is an area where much remains to be explored. Our role in the Group of 77 will always be to increase awareness of the need for greater and deeper links among developing countries.

The situation of the world economy weighs heavily on the developing countries. What is even more serious, the prospects for their future development are gloomy. This state of affairs obtains despite the internal effort most of our countries have made through adjustment programmes. We are facing an alarming decline in the standard of living of large sectors of our societies, and we meet with a lack of understanding and with selfishness on the part of some of the most privileged sectors.

It is clear that to escape the present deadlock we must make exhaustive efforts and accept sacrifices. Thus, we also need resolute and appropriate co-operation from the developed world. This must be a joint effort by all of us who make up the international community. The debt burden, limited financing and the sharp deterioration in terms of trade are problems we must face together, taking into account principles such as joint responsibility and solidarity. Subjects such as the establishment of machinery to facilitate the renegotiation of external debt payments and the promotion of agreements among developed countries enabling us to recycle capital in order to modernize our service infrastructure should be the subject of prompt, careful analysis.

I am convinced that we are at the dawn of a new age in the history of mankind, when an awareness of the repercussions of war is making us try to build peace. The greatest responsibility here belongs to those who hold a monopoly of power, for

(President Cerezo-Arevalo)

they must let us exercise the sole power we have in good measure: the power of our own convictions.

May God help our international society move in that direction. For then our efforts in Central America could enable us to set a good example, so that other regions, now suffering the consequences of violence and confrontation, might look with hope upon the power of appropriate political agreements to build peace and stability and respond to the call of our peoples for the fulfilment of their own basic needs.

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

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

ADDRESS BY HOJJAT-UL-ISLAM SEYED ALI KHAMENEI, PRESIDENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Hojjat-ul-Islam Seyed Ali Khamenei, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Hojjat-ul-Islam Seyed Ali Khamenei, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President KHAMENEI (spoke in Persian; English text furnished by the delegation): O Lord, with Thy holy name I begin and from Thee I seek guidance and support. My life and death, my petition, prayer and praise belong to Thee. I beseech Thee to grant the clarity and magnetism of the word of truth to my utterances and make them a message for the millions of people who passionately thirst after truth and for those who shall, in the future, seek the truth. O God Almighty, my nation and I offer our thankful salutations to the souls of Thy great prophets, in particular, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammad - Thy peace be upon them - who did their utmost and gave their lives in order to spread and immortalize the message of awareness and salvation of man, and our humble salutations to the pure and enlightened hearts who obeyed Thy message, especially to those among them who sacrificed their lives because of it.

My country has been a centre of man's civilization and culture at some important, elevated stages of history and at present is the setting for a political system based on the same cultural background and traditions, which are now further enriched by an Islamic awakening. I come here from a land which is the birthplace of a more famed but less understood revolution in contemporary history, a revolution founded on the religion of God, marching along the path of the prophets and great spiritual reformers, a path as long as the history of mankind.

Islam's unitarian weltanschauung is the unshakable foundation and the fundamental thinking of this revolution. The meaning of man, the interpretation of history, the analysis of past, present and future events, the concept of the material world, the explanation of elements that bind man to the world outside him, the earth, human beings and objects, man's understanding of his own existence - in short, everything that goes into the formation of human society's value system to attain an orderly human administration - are rooted in and emanate from this divine outlook.

(President Khamenei)

In Islamic thought all existence is the creation of God and an image of His knowledge and power; the whole universe is attracted to Him and man is His creature superior to others and His heir on earth.

Exploiting his intrinsic talents man can build the world created for him in the most beautiful ways and, flying on the two wings of faith and knowledge, rise to the highest spiritual and material peaks. Conversely, man can create a hell of oppression and corruption by going astray and wasting and perverting his God-given potential. The only light illuminating his path is belief in God and submission to His commands. The temporal world is a cultivating ground for the next world and death is not the end of life but only a passage to immortality and the beginning of a new existence.

In Islam's divine thought all mankind are brothers and sisters and creatures of the Almighty. There is no discrimination because of colour, race, sex or geographical location of people and these distinctions do not make one man or a nation superior to others. When racial and geographical characteristics are disregarded, an act of aggression against a person is aggression against humanity.

The feeling of superiority and monopoly has set brother against brother, and the blood that has flowed has never dried. The same motives and the same actions created streams of blood and, finally, seas of blood have appeared between those seeking superiority and domination and the victims of such arrogance. In this way peace has been taken out of man's life.

The prophets invited people to submit to God, because this crushes the feeling of egocentrism and superiority in man and offers him the purity and tranquillity of a paradise on earth before the eternal one in heaven. They persuaded man to control his instinct of domination and superiority. They also warned against wasting human potential and slipping into the mire of moral corruption. They opened fountains of virtuousness, honesty, love, work, initiative, knowledge and

(President Khamenei)

consciousness and they stressed the love of God and His blessing of people, which are man's only insurance against perversions and are a guarantee of the sublimation of his soul.

They taught man to use his power to safeguard these values, to block the path of the intruding satans of corruption and perversion, to fight ignorance and the cruelty of slavery, to safeguard knowledge, justice and freedom. They taught him neither to oppress nor to let others oppress him; they taught him to rise in defence of equity and justice and not to give evil a chance. They also taught him that surrendering to enemies of justice, virtuosness and charity only results in the destruction of these values and amounts to acquiescence in evil, oppression and corruption.

(President Khamenei)

In Islam's divine thought the religion of God is not only the crowning of man's virtuousness, but the very form of life itself. Religion offers man a complete social system, not merely some forms of worship and certain traditions, even though services of worship and traditions are full of the spirit of life and serve the same system. The social system is based on the same religious outlook. Freedom and liberty, the equality of people, social justice, awareness of society's individuals, the combating of corruption and perversion, the superiority of human ideals over individual desires, the rejection of satanic domination, personal behaviour and ethics, and occupational and political scrupulousness are all born of and inspired by the same universal interpretation of the world and man. Islam rejects as immoral all systems founded on force, oppression, ignorance, suppression, tyranny and humiliation of man through discrimination on grounds of race, nation, blood or language. It commands the faithful to approach with love, affection and support all mankind, co-religionist or not, except those determined to fight the Islamic order, who must be faced uncompromisingly.

It was on such basic principles and with such objectives that an Islamic revolution emerged in Iran and laid the foundations of an Islamic republic. Many analysts have searched for the roots of the Islamic revolution in February 1979, and many of them have failed to understand it correctly. In our opinion, this great event was partly a consequence of the inefficiency of the existing systems in the world and the emptiness and falsehood of the slogans of democracy and equality in those systems. Islam was able once again to shine in this dark atmosphere through the dust of distortions and misconceptions thrown in its way for many centuries. The sun of Islam shone on Iran and brought about a revolutionary storm. It is expected to shine on many other parts of the world. We must wait and see. But, despite earfuls of adverse propaganda, the awakening of Muslims in many

(President Khamenei)

Islamic countries is not an offspring of Iran's Islamic revolution; it is its brother-in-Islam.

Iran is located at one of the most sensitive sites of strategic importance. It has a background of science and culture and abounds in material resources. The Islamic revolution in Iran was meant to be against a régime that had put all this at the service of the interests of the imperial-minded Powers of the world, particularly those of the United States of America, for almost a quarter of a century. Nobody needed the spiritual and material wealth of Iran more than the Iranian people, but they were denied it. The ancient régime's claims of progress and modernization were all false, but the West's propaganda machine, especially its Zionist component, keep publicizing them. It was such a régime that the Islamic revolution toppled, proposing its own significant goals. Nine years have passed, yet it is still felt that the answers to many questions are not quite clear. The fact is that in the case of our revolution and our views and principles much more uninformed opinion and evil talk has been heard than in other cases.

I shall now try, for the benefit of those interested in truth, to shed light on certain exceptional aspects which give different characteristics to this revolution. I shall end my statement with a brief message.

First, the revolution was from its beginnings a people's revolution - totally, 100 per cent. None of the familiar forms that have been instrumental in certain other revolutions were active or even present in our revolution: no armed guerrilla groups, no active military-political party, no groups of revolutionary, free officers and the like. There were only people, and unarmed people at that, who filled Tehran and other cities and towns in Iran with their presence. They crowded the streets and filled the air in the cities with their revolutionary presence and revolutionary slogans, in such a way that there was no room to breathe

(President Khamenei)

for the ruling clique and its government; they simply had to leave their castles and centres of power and, one by one or in groups, to leave the country hastily. The Shah, the Prime Minister, generals of the army, ministers and other important criminals fled the country when they could to avoid the wrath of the people.

This, of course, happened after a long year during which the régime had exploited all the political, military and police resources at its service to disperse people and force them back to work or to their houses, and in order to achieve this had shot and killed thousands of them in the streets, in the mosques, in the universities and in their workplaces, openly and indiscriminately. Despite all these measures, however, the people's presence had increased. In the very last months, when the régime became more violent, the people came out in millions. The régime, cracking under the pressure of people who no longer had any regard for their lives, could not withstand the onslaught of the masses and was forced to make its greatest concession: it sacrificed the Shah. He fled the country, never to return, and after this the régime's retreat accelerated.

The great leader of the revolution, whose every word to every individual Iranian was a lesson in awareness, resolve and purpose, was able to announce the formation of a revolutionary administration with trust in God Almighty, Who encompasses all other powers, and with reliance on the people's indomitable will. The Shah's tyrannical rule, which was left with no option, collapsed automatically and melted away. The last bastions of the régime were barracks with no soldiers or officers. In the last hours a few garrisons showed some resistance, but all was in vain, because people were everywhere and overcame them. The miracle of this revolution was the victory of the people. It was only after the collapse of the military garrisons that arms fell into the hands of the people; but then the kingdom had already collapsed and these weapons were used for the protection of the

(President Khamenei)

new revolutionary order. People, young and old, men and women, were the agents who defeated the Shah's régime, which was armed to the teeth and enjoyed the support of the biggest Powers. It was the people who established the order of an Islamic republic, and their weapons were their faith, their determination and their blood - and blood overcame the sword.

(President Khamenei)

The doctrine of blood overcoming the sword is the old policy of the oppressed resisting and fighting the oppressor that was declared by the leader of our revolution long before it took place. Thus the first victory of our revolution was against the armed régime of the Shah, who was strongly backed by the West and the United States. It has since gained us other victories, some of which may even be rated as more important than defeating the Shah. This unique experience - unique at least in the last century - deserves to be carefully studied by both the oppressed nations and those oppressive Powers which underestimate the power of the people.

Secondly, this revolution had its roots in religion, in Islam. There have been many revolutionary movements in history the combative spirit of which was fuelled by a religious faith, but little or no account has been taken of this factor by many analysts. In our revolution, however, everything was taken from Islam: its aims, its principles and its methods of struggle, as well as the formation of the new order and the particular form of its administration.

This fact gives certain surprising dimensions to the definition of revolution and new meanings to its victory. As we know, Islam has been a target of assaults for the last century and a half by colonial Powers and their subservient, reactionary agents exactly because of its inexhaustible capacity for revolution and reconstruction. Furthermore, Islam is a sacred faith and a divine religion in more than 50 countries and among some 1,000 million Muslims and, therefore, a revolutionary victory the spirit and substance of which is derived from Islam is in fact the victory of those billion people over all historic invaders against Islam. It is for this reason that hundreds of millions of Muslims in dozens of Islamic countries have welcomed the victory of our revolution.

(President Khamenei)

This religious characteristic also stops the people, the leader of the revolution and its administrators from any retreat, defeat, fear or weakness. When you fight for God there is no defeat, let alone fear, weakness or retreat.

Thirdly, non-reliance on either East or West was another exceptional characteristic of this revolution and is now the fundamental policy of our revolutionary system.

This in itself is one of the manifestations of the belief and trust in God in all spheres of our individual and social life. The dominant thinking in the political world today believes that without reliance on one of the power blocs no movement may survive in the contemporary political world. There may be a difference of emphasis about this but there seems to be no argument on the sacred principle. There are also people who, ideologically speaking, endorse non-reliance or non-alignment but do not suppose, pragmatically speaking, that it could work. Our revolution has, in such an atmosphere, offered a new philosophy and followed it most sincerely. Our revolution proved that the imperial-minded Powers may be ignored, that their bullying tactics may be resisted and that blackmailing may not be effective provided that there is belief in a power much more powerful than all material powers: belief in God Almighty.

We know quite well that for this belief and in this struggle we have to pay a heavy price and we are prepared for it.

Let this experience illuminate the path of nations to true independence and the total rejection of the hegemony of the big powers; the present division of power threatens humanity with a very bitter future.

Fourthly, there is another peculiarity to our revolution - very active to the present; it had to suffer an incredible amount of hostility and receive many exceptional blows. Certainly no revolution is safe from the counter-strikes of the

(President Khamenei)

power system dominating our world but the variety, the depth and the enormity of the enmities and the wild anger unleashed against us for the last nine years is an exceptionally interesting story to hear.

The revolution had not yet reached its climax when hostile behaviour mostly by the United States of America started to challenge it. Certain officials, who reveal secrets through the passage of time, now confess that in the last months of the Shah's tyrannical régime the United States Administration, the President and his national security adviser tried to hearten the Shah by encouraging him to be "more decisive". The meaning of "decisiveness" was later explained in the statements of a fellow called General Huyser who had come to Tehran as the special representative of the President of the United States of America. In his opinion and according to advice given to him, the Shah's régime had to be safeguarded even if this resulted in the slaughtering of tens of thousands of people. And his incredible justification was: "It would be preferable to the killing of many more thousands later". In the honourable opinion of the United States authorities it was not valid that if the United States did not interfere in the internal affairs of Iran, neither the blood of tens of thousands then nor the blood of "many more thousands later" had to be shed!

Certainly there was no other reason for the abortiveness of Huyser's mission and his flight from Tehran as well as for the arrest or flight of all those elements whom the United States needed for the carrying out of its evil plans except the crushing ferocity of revolutionary waves and the great might of a nation who had risen to fight for God and feared nothing but God. It was not the enemies of revolution who simply walked off; it was the revolution that forced them to flee. They had already exerted all their pressure at the hands of the treacherous Shah.

(President Khamenei)

After the victory of the revolution, hostile plots were hatched in a variety of forms. The very first clever measure was the infiltration of revolutionary posts and positions by enemy agents and the second was the organizing of all sorts of "opposition" parties and groupings in a free, political atmosphere after decades of dictatorship and suppression. In the former case it is interesting to note that a loyal agent who, a few weeks after the revolution, was tried in a revolutionary court and executed for treason had, by hook or by crook, got himself appointed as the commander of the Air Force in the first days of the revolution! And in the latter it would suffice to say that in the very first months after our victory some 400 political parties and groups surfaced in Iran that included anything from Loyalist to Communist to Separatist to Pan-Iranist. And it should not, of course, be forgotten that certain foreign embassies in Tehran, especially the embassy of the Arch-Satan, were the centres that organized some of these groups and helped them financially and ideologically!

A bloody, merciless kind of terrorism was another avengeful hostility towards our revolution. Terrorist groups who lacked any form of popular base, by stealing arms and ammunition and explosive material, not a difficult job in those chaotic days of revolution, and through the assistance of certain foreign governments, established a vast, terrorist network in Iran.

(President Khamenei)

Individual and group assassinations, colossal bomb explosions, the hijacking of aircraft, kidnapping, horrible incidents of torture, indiscriminate shootings and the deliberate slaughtering of people were among the measures carried out in Iran by some terrorist groups supported and encouraged by the infamous enemies of our revolution. The victims of this barbarous violence represented all strata of Iranian society: they included important leaders and authorities of the revolution, as well as ordinary people such as the oppressed workers and toilers, men and women and, of course, innocent children and passers-by.

Today, the leaders of these terrorist groups, who have often claimed responsibility for their criminal actions, are given security and protection and are provided with a comfortable life in the United States, France and some other Western countries and go by the euphemism of "opposition to the Revolution": and the countries that patronize these terrorists accuse the Islamic Republic of Iran of "terrorism". An astonishing paradox of politics is that the innocent victims of a blind, barbarous terrorism are themselves accused of "terrorism" by those who helped establish these terrorist groups and are at present looking after them well.

As the President and servant of my country, and as a victim of a savage terrorist attack, which was aborted by the will of the Almighty, I have the honour to declare here that none of these brutalities, none of this shedding of blood, could shake the will of our people despite the fact that the extent of the terrorism was unprecedented: in one act alone, some 72 leading members and administrators of the revolution, including several cabinet ministers, a score of deputies of Parliament, and some irreplaceable personalities of our revolution, such as Martyr Ayatollah Beheshti, died inhuman deaths; and in another incident the President and the Prime Minister were blown to death together. But these brutal atrocities have served only to strengthen the people's faith and trust in God and to increase their revolutionary wrath.

(President Khamenei)

Military coups d'état are the traditional, sanguinary experiment in all revolutions organized by the great Powers. In the case of the Iranian revolution they were organized many times and in one case reached a very dangerous state. Had it not been for our people's support and for the vigilance of our officials, the predictions of the American General that there would be several blood-baths and the massacre of millions of people would have materialized.

But the greatest, the most painful and the most catastrophic act of hostility by our enemies was the imposition of war on our revolution, that is, the stirring of the ambitious instincts of a neighbour, persuading it to invade and assuring it of all sorts of assistance and support.

Today, after some seven years of war, it is quite clear to all that the invasion of Iran by the Iraqi army on 22 September 1980, that is, 19 months after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, was in fact aimed at defeating the revolution and at the overthrow of the Islamic Republic. The invasion was carried out with some 10 divisions and hundreds of fighter-bombers; they attacked from the ground, from the air and from the sea. There were also such expansionist aims as the annexing of a province of Iran, a fact that has frequently been confessed to in the Iraqi press and publications as well as in articles by non-Iraqi paid pens. The Iraqis have, more often than expected, declared both these goals openly and in a revealing way.

What Iraq anticipated as a reward for this invasion, apart from the stabilizing of its internal situation, was to emerge as the dominant Power in the region or at least in the Arab sphere. This would have been a lot for the nonentities ruling Iraq. Access to a considerable coastal border in the very important Persian Gulf region was certainly another motive.

(President Khamenei)

By an Iraqi victory which would accompany Iran's defeat, its disintegration and the collapse of the Islamic Republic, the imperial-minded Powers would also reach an important goal: the removal of a new system which had disturbed the existing political-economic balance and put an end to the influence of big Powers, especially that of the United States. In the event of our defeat, the circumstances would be back to "normal" for the United States and some others, and the same old story of political and economic influence would be repeated.

We were at first taken by surprise, we should admit. Our preoccupation with innumerable internal problems relating to the revolution and our lack of sufficient experience made the invasion possible; but the particular characteristics of this revolution came to our rescue: within a few months the heroic, miraculous efforts and sacrifices of our people and their armed forces had resulted in the liberation of a large part of the occupied territories. Nevertheless, the catastrophic effects of this invasion are beyond description: prosperous cities such as Abadan, Khorramshahr, Hovaizeh and Qasre-Shirin were razed to the ground; even the small city of Dezful was hit by some 250 ground-to-ground missiles; numerous happy villages of which not even a half-smashed wall is left; factories that were turned into piles of metal rubble; numerous farms that were wiped out; invaluable cultural monuments that have been seriously damaged; and, most important of all, the innocent people who lost their precious lives.

The committing of war crimes, such as savage attacks against civilian, residential areas; the massacre of thousands of defenceless women and children; the imprisonment of passengers and passers-by on the occupied roads - all in the first weeks of the war - violations of international commitments and regulations, such as the use of chemical weapons on a large scale, air attacks on commercial ships, civilian aircraft and passenger aeroplanes and trains, are some examples of acts on

(President Khamenei)

the part of the Iraqi régime in the course of this war that have been identified but are continuing.

After the initial war efforts, when the people of Iran had time to think over and sum up the events, they realized a very bitter fact, namely that security based on the promises and commitments of a warmongering aggressor has no validity and that trusting in such security is illogical and very naive.

The Head of the Iraqi régime had publicly announced that its Agreement with the Iranian Government in 1975, otherwise known as the Algiers Agreement, was signed at a time when Iraq was weak, and therefore it was not binding or valid any more. He tore a copy of the Agreement to pieces and a few days later invaded Iran.

This was a bitter but enlightening lesson for the Iranian nation. From that moment on, our people, awakened and revolutionary, took a decision and set a clear objective for their efforts. They decided not only to liberate the occupied territories and seek war compensation - to both of which they are unambiguously entitled, despite the fact that they could not be compensated for a great part of the damages - but also, as a more important goal, to punish and remove the aggressor.

(President Khamenei)

By proposing the punishment of the aggressor we have sought not only a secure base for our national security but also security and stability throughout the region. If an aggressor is once punished by the international family of nations for its aggression, we can rest assured that the aggressor instinct, which is often found in evil and opportunistic elements, will be suppressed for many years to come, and our region, and perhaps the whole world, will not have to suffer the catastrophic consequences of unprovoked aggressive wars.

The Nuremberg Trials have guaranteed some 40 years of peace and security for the war-addicted European States. Why should we discard the experience of Nuremberg?

When thousands of square kilometres of our country were under occupation, the big Powers, exploiting their powerful weapons of publicity, put us under very heavy pressure to accept a cease-fire in return for the formation of a committee that would arrange for the invader to return to international borders. This would have meant our leaving part of our existence, our honour and our dignity under the feet of the enemy and soliciting the attention of this or that international committee in the hope of regaining our integrity. There could have been no bigger insult to the intelligence of an honourable revolutionary nation. Even the least informed people in the world have the sanguinary tragedy of the Palestinian people before their eyes and would reject such tyrannical proposals. If imposed cease-fires and deceitful, empty promises had restored the legitimate and obvious rights of the Palestinian nation, they might also help others to regain theirs.

In our case, even today, when we have liberated the largest part of the occupied lands through the heroic efforts of our people and at the cost of their precious blood, with some parts such as Naft-Shahr still under occupation, we believe that our most important task is to punish the aggressor. And today, when we look back at the irrecoverable cost of this imposed war, we consider this more

(President Khamenei)

important than ever and believe that without punishment of the aggressor any other achievement would be a loss for our people. As a nation which has borne the burden of a seven-year war, we long more than anybody else for peace, but we believe that that peace, a lasting peace, can be established only with punishment of an aggressor who has added many other sins to the original sin of aggression since it started the war.

Today, as in 1975, Iraq is again in a weak position and everyone knows this. The kind of peace approved by the Iraqi régime today would, after a few years or whenever it suspected itself to be in a strong position, evaporate in a moment, and another war would engulf the region. The only guarantee for the future is punishment of the aggressor.

Peace is, without a doubt, a beautiful and attractive word. This is so true that even the biggest international warmongers and the producers of weapons for global destruction flirt with it and love it hypocritically. But, in our opinion, justice, a word that the powerful and the oppressors regard with fearful caution, is even more important and more beautiful.

The number of those who have given up their well-being, their peace and their life to secure justice is not small. These people are always recognized as great heroes. European cities still take pride in their resistance against Hitler's aggression; Moscow still prides itself on a self-burning that astonished and disappointed Napoleon's army and Leningrad on its four-year-long resistance when besieged by the Nazi invaders.

The United Nations in particular has an obligation, according to the very first Article of its Charter, to secure justice through the special process of taking measures against acts of aggression. And this is all that we expect from the world and from the United Nations.

(President Khamenei)

The big Powers have hypocritically called the war imposed on us a meaningless war, but at the same time they have consistently supported the initiator of and aggressor in this war politically, militarily and economically.

There is no doubt that starting such wars is always meaningless, but as long as the aggressor was still hoping to achieve its evil end it was never called that.

Today, however, this war is very meaningful for our people: it means selfless, heroic efforts to eradicate aggression and prove that nations have the power, in the face of the will of the big Powers, to defend their revolution, their stability and their integrity. Our nation, through a great deal of sacrifice, is engaged in rejecting a concept that has always resulted in aggression and war: the concept that reliance on advanced weapons and the support of the big Powers is a guarantee of success.

In the last seven years the Iranian people have searched for the answer to an important question. Today I want to raise this question here from this rostrum. Why have all those Governments that know very clearly that it was the Iraqi régime that started the war and initiated aggression - and there is no scarcity of those that know this - chosen to remain silent vis-à-vis this great international crime? And why have the world mass media tended to ignore their great responsibility to the conscience of mankind and the interpretation of history in this case?

Perhaps the key to the solution of this problem lies in the particular political relationships in our world today and the defective geometry created by the domination of the big Powers in international relations. However, our people seem to have discovered the facts.

But the question to which no convincing answer may be found is this: why has the Security Council of the United Nations, as an organ that was created primarily to safeguard international security and oppose aggression, totally ignored its obligations and even acted in defiance of its duty?

(President Khamenei)

I think everyone knows that the Security Council did not show any reaction when Iraq invaded Iran on 1,000-kilometre front. The Iraqi army overran international borders in only a week and established itself at points ranging from 70 to 90 kilometres inside Iran. Some Iraqi authorities announced that their army intended to stay there for ever.

(President Khamenei)

It was only after the establishment of this invasion that the Security Council issued its first resolution, on 28 September 1980. This resolution neither mentioned any aggression or occupation nor made a request for a return to international borders, but, astonishingly enough, called on both parties not to resort to any further use of force. What this really meant was total connivance in the occupation of the affected areas and a request to the Iraqi army not to advance further. And as far as Iran was concerned, it called on our people to stop fighting against the aggressor.

This was the very first measure by the Security Council, in which it trampled upon all its principal obligations concerning the safeguarding of international peace and security in an ugly, tragic manner.

After that, a deadly silence fell upon the Security Council for a long time - that is, up to the liberation of Khorramshahr through a military operation that broke the back of the occupation army and resulted in the humiliating capture of thousands of enemy soldiers and officers. Yet, up to that time, the Security Council had completely forgotten about the bloody, continuing war that headed the international news bulletins every day.

Thus the Security Council suddenly remembered the Iran-Iraq war again. A few weeks after the liberation of Khorramshahr the Security Council's second resolution, dated 12 July 1982, was adopted. Now the Council called for a return to international borders. What it requested had already been achieved because our heroic people and their selfless and valiant combatants had by then liberated the greater part of the occupied lands. This resolution, too, was conspicuous for its many omissions: no reference to aggression; no mention of the aggressor; nothing about destruction, damages or any compensation; no guarantee of real security and

(President Khamenei)

stability and not a word about punishing the agent of insecurity. The Council had chosen to be silent in its resolution about all those vital points.

Therefore, once again, we found ourselves quite alone in restoring our legitimate rights, and I must inform the Assembly that the Security Council's stance in relation to the war that was imposed upon us has not changed up to this moment.

Of course, the Secretary-General's independent initiatives went some way towards helping the United Nations in the realization of its objectives, but his good offices were not appreciated. I ought, however, to register a thankful note here for his efforts and his good offices. It would also be appropriate to remember the good name of the late Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Olaf Palme, who, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, sympathetically tried to help.

The Secretary-General's trip to Tehran and the useful talks regarding Security Council resolution 598 (1987) were another step in that direction. We consider those talks objective and instructive, as is the report of the Secretary-General. Regrettably, it seems that some influential members of the Security Council wish to ignore that fact. They are the same members as have from the outset attempted to exploit that resolution as a means of exerting pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran. We have conveyed our unequivocal views to the Secretary-General and expect the Council to use correctly the possibilities open to it.

Has the Security Council anything to say regarding the infringement of its very first obligation, to take measures against acts of aggression, which is stated in the first Chapter of the Charter to be the most important objective? What pressures has the Security Council brought to bear on Iraq in relation to threatening peace, breach of the peace and resort to force as mentioned in Chapter VII?

(President Khamenei)

Impartiality is the least that the Islamic Republic of Iran - a victim of a bloody, devastating aggression - can expect from the Security Council, because we all know that the Council's obligation is to take measures against acts of aggression and to support the victim of aggression, rather than remain neutral between the aggressor and the victim. But can the Security Council even claim that it has behaved impartially in this case?

Our feeling is that the Security Council has been pushed into this indecent, condemnable position by the will of some big Powers, particularly the United States. Therefore, one may say that the foundations of the security supported by such a Security Council is nothing but a nice-looking house of cards. The nations of the world, especially the peoples of the third world, who wish to remain independent of the super-Powers, may never have the security guaranteed by such a Security Council.

The fact that Iraq was never condemned for aggression has not only helped keep the imposed war going but also fanned its flames.

And now, with the United States presence in the region and the presence of other countries that have followed as a result of the arch-satan's insistence and pressure, the Persian Gulf has turned into a dangerous powder-keg.

At this juncture I must draw the attention of the General Assembly and the people of the United States urgently to the very grave and immediate danger provoked by the United States Administration through its latest action in the Persian Gulf, which is threatening not only the region but the whole world. Yesterday United States battleships attacked Iran Ajr, an Iranian merchant ship. They murdered four people and wounded three. The ship was seized and its crew detained. American television stations announced yesterday that United States battleships fired at this ship while it was laying mines in the waters, and

(President Khamenei)

thereby, as usual, told a pack of lies to the American people. But I declare here that the ship was a merchant vessel called Iran Ajr, not a military speedboat.

This is the beginning of a series of events the bitter consequences of which will not be restricted to the Persian Gulf, and the United States, as the initiator of the trouble, will bear responsibility for all ensuing events. Should we now believe the passionate United States claims of a desire for peace and tranquillity in the Persian Gulf or this open, flagrant and concrete measure to fan the flames of war? I declare, very unambiguously, that the United States will receive a proper response to this abominable act.

(President Khamenei)

This is only one of the evil consequences of the imposed war and a direct result of the Security Council's inability to take proper measures against the Iraqi aggression. If the Security Council had condemned Iraq for starting the war, and later, for starting the so-called war of the cities, and later, for attacking ships, today the United States would not dare threaten international peace and security so openly in spite of world public opinion, despite pressures from inside, and immediately after the adoption of resolution 598 (1987) for the preparation and adoption of which the United States had played a key role. Was resolution 598 (1987) only adopted to put pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran?

I must here announce to the world and especially to the great people of the United States that the threatening, military presence of the United States in the Persian Gulf is yet another clear manifestation of the American régime's hostility towards the Iranian people.

A big chapter of our history, a very bitter, bloody and evil chapter, is saturated with American enmities and grudging hostilities towards our nation: some 25 years of support for the Pahlavi butcher and dictator, complicity with the Shah in all his crimes against our people, participation in plundering the wealth of the nation, serious confrontation with our revolution in the last months of the Shah's régime, persuading the dictator to suppress the millions-strong demonstrations of our people, employing all sorts of means and devices to obstruct the path of revolution in the first years of our victory, the constant, provocative contacts of the United States embassy in Tehran with counter-revolutionary elements, continuous help and assistance to terrorists and counter-revolutionaries outside Iran, freezing of the people's assets and property, non-deliverance of commodities that had been already paid for, non-payment of assets taken from the public treasury by

(President Khamenei)

the Shah and deposited in his own name in American banks, efforts for an economic blockade of Iran and the formation of a united Western front against our people, flagrant and effective support of Iraq in its war against us and now the bullying and illogical tactic of throwing an American armada into the Persian Gulf and seriously endangering peace and tranquillity of the region.

These are parts of our nation's indictment against the United States administration, an indictment that will bring under question all American claims for peace-loving and all statements by American leaders declaring their good intentions towards the Islamic Republic, which are apparently meant for internal consumption.

The latest in the long list of American hostilities towards our nation was the bloody massacre of innocent, defenceless pilgrims at Mecca in the holy sanctuary of God at the hands of the Saudi régime where some 400 Iranian and non-Iranian pilgrims, mostly women, were martyred and a greater number were beaten, injured or maimed. There are certain indications that the United States played an influential part in this unprecedented, historical monstrosity.

Do the United States administration and its Saudi stooges have any convincing explanation for the slaughtering of so many innocent men and women?

Undoubtedly the culprits will try to justify their evil actions with some excuses and allegations but the nature of the incident with some 400 dead visitors mostly women on the one side and the local police armed with machine-guns, clubs and poison gas on the other is very revealing.

Although blood that is shed wrongly at the hands of cruel, merciless tyrants will carry its clear message with it, not only for today but for all times, and will reveal the evil nature of the butchers, the Mecca incident also demonstrates the co-ordinated behaviour of the United States and the Arab reactionaries and

(President Khamenei)

unveils the secret co-operation of the two sides in the Persian Gulf region. This gives the incident an international dimension that must be carefully looked at by international forums.

I must emphasize here that this indictment is directed against the leaders of the United States régime and not against the American people who, had they been aware of what their governments have done against another nation, would certainly endorse our indictment.

Our people have shown that they have faith in their goals and are ready to defend them at the cost of their lives.

Such a nation has no fear of the United States or any other Power and with the help of God it will prove that victory belongs to truth and the believers in truth.

This was the story of our revolution. This revolution brought great hopes for nations which suffered from the oppression of the imperial-minded Powers; equally it provoked the violent hostility of the big Powers which seek to dominate the world. This storm of opposition, however, could not break off the young tree of this revolution because of its very deep roots. The tree was growing fast but it did withstand some very strong, damaging storms. And now the revolution is still alive despite the opposition of the big Powers and it shall certainly survive; that is the dictate of divine traditions in history and it shall not be altered. And that is our most vivid and emphatic message.

The system of domination had relentlessly tried to prove the contrary in order to make the nations of the third world believe that their fate is decided by the will of the big Powers. We have rejected and repudiated it. There is no doubt that the system of world domination did not wish the Islamic Republic to survive but our will overcame.

(President Khamenei)

Our message to all nations and Governments which wish to remain independent and ignore the wishes of the big Powers is to rely on their own people without any fear.

The message of our revolution remains as it was: the rejection of the doctrine of domination. Today our world is in fact divided among the big, imperial-minded Powers. They believe that they are the masters and owners of the world. In other words the world is divided into dominator and dominated parts and the dominators decide on the fate of the dominated. The system of world domination feeds on the existence of unequal relations between the two parts. The system of world domination arbitrarily rejects revolution and creates problems for revolutionary régimes. Nicaragua and the countries of southern Africa are a few living examples.

The system of world domination decides for peoples against their will. The innocent Palestinian nation is a perfect case and Afghanistan is another. The system of world domination fiddles with human ideas and concepts, changes and distorts them at will and tries to inject the distorted meanings into people's minds; terrorism and human rights are two such manipulated concepts.

(President Khamenei)

The system of world domination is bold enough openly and directly to invade such countries as have aroused its anger. The United States invasion of Libya and Grenada are two recent examples.

The system of world domination makes decisions for the whole world and all nations. Yesterday it was Hiroshima and today the President of the United States is proud of the horrendous behaviour of his predecessors and even argues that if they did not kill those several thousands, more people would have been killed throughout the world! The President of the United States does have a soft spot in his heart for all mankind - is he not the godfather of mankind?

The system of world domination supports fascist and racist régimes such as the ones in Israel and South Africa and employs them as bloodthirsty, armed agents to bully the oppressed nations. Muslim Lebanon, patiently resisting the criminal aggressions of Zionists, and the African front-line States are good examples.

The system of world domination considers that it has the right to put pressure on international organizations; the Security Council and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are living examples.

The system of world domination believes that its own interests are absolute and the interests of others are non-existent. A good example of this is the dangerous, peace-threatening presence of American battleships in the Persian Gulf that have come to "defend America's interests" while completely disregarding the interests of the countries of the region.

The system of world domination has, above all, the propaganda machine and the mass media of the world in its hands, distorts all the facts and gives a humane image to its satanic behaviour and in this way escapes confrontation with world public opinion.

(President Khamenei)

We believe that the nations and Governments of the third world as well as the peoples of the dominator countries should not tolerate this evil order of things. The big Powers must be told to go back home and leave the affairs of the world to its peoples. We must tell them: you are not anybody's legal guardians!

In the United Nations there are two unjustified distinctions - the right of veto and permanent membership in the Security Council. These must be removed. And their removal would indeed turn the United Nations into a truly popular organization in which all problems may be solved. Otherwise the Security Council will remain, as it is today, a paper factory for issuing worthless and ineffective orders. And the peoples of the world will continue to think that there is no place for settling international problems and that the only option left is to use violence.

Under these circumstances our message to the Governments of the third world, as long as the system of domination remains, is to unite with each other. This is the only way to become stronger. The Powers dominating our world do not value anything but power and we must speak with them in the only language they understand, the language of strength.

The awakening of peoples and their awareness of the nature and function of the system of domination is the strongest support for the third world Governments and a source of real strength to resist the dominating Powers. The leaders of these Governments will have nobody to help them except the will, the power and the ideas of their own peoples.

The union we propose to the third world countries is not a pact for fighting the big Powers; it will be a union for our own defence and the prevention of the usurpation of our legitimate rights.

(President Khamenei)

The dominating Powers are also the big agents for dissemination and justification of corruption: moral corruption, sexual corruption and ideological corruption. The political, economic and espionage motives of the big Powers are the true perpetrators of these moral perversions. And the fact is that in our world today, which includes the nations of the big Powers too, moral values have been discarded, the foundation of the family has been weakened, alcoholism and addiction to drugs have become rampant and spirituality and morality have become least appealing.

We must start a tough campaign against corruption in our own countries. We must strengthen the foundation of the family and make this original school of man a home of affection, sincerity, love and spirituality. We must safeguard the rights and values of women. On this last issue, we must revise all the standards that were created by the system of domination and in order to liberate women from the humility of being "sex objects" that the dominant, Western culture has in practice imposed on them. Women as scientists, politicians, directors and managers, partners and mothers must be welcome but their exploitation as objects for pleasure, lechery and commercials should be rejected. This will help restore the dignity and personality of half of humanity and re-establish the lasting and holy foundation of the family.

These are some of the messages of our revolution, not only for those eager to listen but also for those who can decide to listen to the truth and to welcome fairness and justice.

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

Hojjat-ul-Islam Seyed Ali Khamenei, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ELLEMANN-JENSEN (Denmark): Sir, on behalf of the European Community and its member States I take pleasure in congratulating you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this forty-second session.

I should like also to express the Community's appreciation to your predecessor for the leadership shown by him on so many occasions during the past year.

The 12 States members of the European Community wish also to pay a tribute to our Secretary-General and to express our deep appreciation of his patient and tireless efforts to solve the problems facing us, including those within this very Organization.

I last had the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the European Community and its member States in 1982. At that time, I began with words that vividly reflected the difficulties we then faced:

"The world today presents a bleak picture. It is becoming increasingly difficult to remain optimistic about the future." (A/37/PV.8, pp.18-20)

How does the situation look today, five years later? I am happy to say that in the period since I last addressed the General Assembly, there have been a number of encouraging developments. Fortunately, the worst fears expressed at that time have not been realized, and there are grounds for looking to the future with guarded optimism. Difficulties remain in many parts of the world, but it should be noted that international tension has to some extent been reduced as a result of improving relations between East and West.

Numerous challenges remain, however. And the United Nations continues to have a central role to play in meeting them. It is striking how the United Nations is now seen as having a major role in finding acceptable solutions to so many of the

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

serious international conflicts that face us - Afghanistan, the Iraq-Iran war, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Lebanon, Cyprus, Kampuchea and southern Africa. After a period in which the United Nations was too often seen as marginal to the great issues of the day, the Twelve welcome the Organization's increasingly central and active role.

The 12 States members of the European Community are willing to contribute fully and constructively to the efforts being made by the Secretary-General, the Security Council and this Assembly. It is important that all the nations of the world should work together as truly united nations. The French philosopher Pascal once wrote:

"Plurality which is not reduced to unity is confusion, unity which does not depend on plurality is tyranny."

Let us all try in the coming months, here in New York, to work together and to settle our differences in a constructive and far-sighted atmosphere. This is what the many millions of people whom we represent expect of us.

We live in a world of interdependence - a world in which few, if any, major problems can be resolved by one nation alone. The very existence of the European Community reflects the Twelve's acknowledgement of this fact. Our collective efforts to meet the challenges facing Western Europe in the past 30 years highlight our fundamental commitment to international co-operation and collaboration. Since the Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957, the Community has faced difficulties and disagreements. It has taken time to develop the habits of instinctive partnership among the European Community's member States. But we are in no doubt about the benefits that our peoples have enjoyed as a result of the creation of the European Community.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

With the entry into force of the Single European Act this year the European Community has entered into a new phase of close collaboration. Our own experiences have made us all the more convinced that such regional co-operation within the wide global framework is essential if lasting solutions are to be found to the world's problems.

The Twelve naturally attach particular importance to the development of East-West relations. As Europeans, we cannot ignore the artificial barriers that divide our continent, and have for over 40 years. The Helsinki Final Act laid a solid foundation for overcoming those barriers. Unfortunately, much still remains to be done adequately to translate the provisions of the Final Act into reality. The Twelve have played a central role in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process since its inception, and we are determined to press for continuing progress. The commitments freely entered into in Helsinki and elsewhere must be fully implemented by all States participating in the CSCE. Their peoples must be able to enjoy the real benefits, including, in particular, respect for human rights, which they were promised in 1975.

At the current follow-up meeting in Vienna the Twelve have therefore submitted major proposals within the main areas of the CSCE process, especially concerning its human dimension. We wish, in particular, to increase the impact of the CSCE for individual Europeans by facilitating contacts between East and West, by creating and strengthening guarantees of individual rights and freedoms and by ensuring the free flow of information, ideas and people. Our ideals and proposals must be adequately reflected in any concluding document of the Vienna meeting. That document would thus promote full compliance with existing commitments and represent substantial and balanced progress across the full range of CSCE subjects.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

The CSCE process cannot stand still. It must be dynamic and responsive to the needs and wishes of our citizens.

We are following carefully recent developments in the Soviet Union. We note with interest that new words have been used by the Soviet Union that could point towards a more open society. Improved mutual awareness and understanding between States are both desirable in themselves and have a crucial role to play in reducing mistrust and fear.

However, we look to the Soviet Union for deeds that will match its words. Afghanistan is a case in point. Soviet policy in Afghanistan is a concrete test of the Soviet Union's goodwill and intentions. More than 110,000 Soviet troops remain in Afghanistan against the will of the Afghan people. Seven years of indiscriminate warfare have brought immense suffering upon the civilian population, created the world's biggest refugee problem and imposed considerable burdens on neighbouring countries, in particular Pakistan.

As expressed in the annual resolutions overwhelmingly endorsed by the Assembly, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan continues to be as unacceptable to the international community as was the case in 1979. The rapid and unconditional withdrawal of all Soviet troops according to an irrevocable timetable and respect for the legitimate right of the Afghan people to decide freely their own future and system of government are the key elements in a lasting peaceful solution. The Twelve support the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General to bring about an early negotiated settlement based on the principles contained in United Nations resolutions.

The Twelve welcome improved relations between the super-Powers and, in particular, indications that agreement is near on the global elimination of land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles with a range of between 500 and

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

5,500 kilometres. This would be a major achievement. The Twelve hope that such an agreement would help to reduce tensions and enhance international security. The Twelve also hope that success in negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces will give a new impetus to United States-Soviet negotiations on other nuclear-missile and space systems. Priority should next be given to reaching early progress towards limitations and substantial reductions of the strategic nuclear arsenals of the two super-Powers. We call for further intensification of efforts aimed at reaching agreements which are fair, balanced and effectively verifiable.

Urgent progress must also be made in other fields of arms control and disarmament. A global ban on chemical weapons should enhance international security and lead to the removal from countries' arsenals of a particularly horrifying and inhuman instrument of war. We cannot forget that it is conventional weapons that have caused millions of deaths around the world since 1945 and continue to do so. The Twelve want to use this opportunity to underline the importance of the process started in Stockholm towards building greater military confidence in Europe, the first result of which constitutes a success recognized by all. We hope to see further progress in this field at the CSCE follow-up meeting in Vienna. The Twelve underline their strong interest in the discussions in this connection on further steps to promote the establishment in Europe of a secure and stable balance of conventional forces at a lower level and an increase in military transparency. We also strongly support efforts within the United Nations to tackle the problem of conventional disarmament. In this field, as in many others, the third special session on disarmament presents an opportunity to make a further contribution to progress in the arms-control and disarmament process, including effective steps towards the establishment of the necessary transparency of military budgets according to objective standards.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

One area that carries deep scars of regional tension and armed conflict is the Middle East. The conflict between Iraq and Iran has now lasted for seven terrible years and continues to cause widespread death, destruction and suffering. This conflict represents an increasingly serious threat to security and to freedom of navigation in the Gulf. As expressed in their declaration of 3 September this year, the Twelve are seriously concerned by the continuation of the Iraq-Iran conflict and the resulting increase in tension in the Gulf. The Twelve whole-heartedly support Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and call for its early implementation in full. Noting the positions of the two parties as expressed to date, we call urgently for speedy implementation of the resolution and the immediate observance of a cease-fire on land, on the sea and in the air.

We fully support the Secretary-General in his efforts to achieve this end and appeal to both Iraq and Iran to co-operate fully with him. We reiterate our firm support for the fundamental principle of freedom of navigation, which is of the utmost importance to the whole international community.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

The Arab-Israeli conflict remains an issue of concern to us all. It lies at the heart of continuing tension in the Near East, and further efforts are urgently needed to achieve progress towards a just, global and lasting settlement of this conflict. The Twelve's views on the key elements which must make up a solution to this conflict are well known. In accordance with the Venice Declaration and other declarations, two principles are fundamental: the right of all States in the area, including Israel, to exist within secure frontiers; and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, with all that this implies. We call upon the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict to open the doors to peace by recognizing each other's rights. Against the background of their long-standing contacts with the region, the Twelve are following closely current diplomatic efforts to revitalize the peace process. In our declarations of 23 February and 13 July this year, we have stated that we are in favour of an international conference, held under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of interested parties as well as any other party able to make a direct and positive contribution to the restoration and maintenance of peace and to the region's economic and social development. Such a conference provides a suitable framework for the necessary negotiations between the parties directly concerned and seems to us at present to be the only formula to allow the peace process to move forward. We are in close contact with all the parties concerned and we shall do all in our power to encourage them to bring their positions sufficiently close together to allow such an international conference to be held - and to achieve worthwhile results.

The Twelve are increasingly concerned about the situation of human rights in the occupied territories. We renew our call on Israel to fulfil its obligations as the occupying Power, pending its withdrawal, to lift restrictions on political and economic activities and, as we have reiterated recently in our declaration of

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

14 September, to put an end to the illegal policy of settlements. In order to help improve the living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, the Community and its member States will continue to provide economic assistance directly to the Palestinians, assistance designed to allow the territories to enjoy the fruits of normal economic development. This assistance is in no sense an alternative to a lasting political settlement - but we hope, nevertheless, that it may help, in a small way, to bring such a settlement nearer.

As to the tragic fate of Lebanon, we remain firmly committed to Lebanon's sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity. We welcome the vital work being done by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and call on all involved to support the UNIFIL force and allow it to carry out its mandate fully and in the best possible security conditions.

Turning now to the question of Cyprus, a member of the European family, I cannot disregard the fact that the situation remains unchanged. The tragic division of the island continues. The Twelve attach great importance to a just and viable solution of this problem. To that effect, we reaffirm our strong backing for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. We stand fully by our previous statements and reject any action which purports to establish an independent State within Cyprus. We also express our support to the Secretary-General in his mission of good offices and ask those concerned to co-operate with him in the search for a solution to this problem of international concern and to refrain from words or actions that might adversely affect the prospects of a solution by peaceful means.

Turning to South Africa, we face a situation which none of us can view with equanimity. The Twelve have always made clear their unequivocal condemnation of apartheid, an immoral and unacceptable system which breeds hatred and violence.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

We remain convinced that what is needed in South Africa is a genuine national dialogue. Only broad-based negotiations, involving the genuine representatives of the various components of the South African population, can bring about a lasting settlement. The aim of the negotiations should be the emergence of a free, democratic, non-racial and united South Africa which takes into account the diversity of its society. The longer the Government delays, the more difficult this exercise will become. The longer the Government relies on repression as its main response to demands for change, the stronger will become the position of those in the majority who argue that only force can end apartheid. An increasing majority of South Africans will conclude that there is no way in which apartheid can reform itself through the parody of democracy practised in their country.

On the face of it, the outcome of the white elections in May was a victory for those in the minority community opposed to fundamental change. But in reality it was a defeat for everybody. The white minority community voted for the continued exclusion of the majority of the South Africans from having any say. For the time being, the South African Government may be able to suppress opposition by force. But it cannot stop the clock of history. Apartheid is doomed; the sooner the Government in South Africa comes to terms with that fact, the better. President Botha has the necessary majority in Parliament to abolish apartheid, thus paving the way for peaceful development in South Africa.

The meeting in Dakar earlier this summer between a courageous group of individual South Africans and leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) leaders illustrated the fact that common ground can still be found between the two communities.

We have frequently made clear the sort of steps which we believe the South African Government should take in order to allow a process of peaceful change to begin. We do not believe that a dialogue can take place while leaders of the

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

majority are imprisoned or in exile, their political organizations are proscribed, and the state of emergency continues. Yet Nelson Mandela, probably the most respected political leader in South Africa, has now been in prison for more than 25 years.

At the same time, we shall continue to provide assistance to the victims of apartheid, inside South Africa as well as in the neighbouring States. The latter continue to suffer from South Africa's destabilization and armed incursions. We shall continue to monitor every aspect of the effects of apartheid, including human-rights violations and other abuses committed under cover of the state of emergency. The Twelve will continue to use pressure to bring about peaceful change. In the absence of significant progress in the abolition of apartheid, the attitude of the Twelve to South Africa remains under constant review.

We call once again on South Africa to allow Namibia to become independent without delay on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). There is no justification for any other conduct.

The Twelve are concerned by the resumption of the conflict between Chad and Libya. They believe that Chad has the right to decide its own destiny free from interference from neighbouring countries. They note that there is a territorial dispute between the two countries. Conscious of the dangers inherent in the present situation, they hope that this dispute can be resolved peacefully, in accordance with international law and as rapidly as possible. They therefore wish to see either a direct agreement between the two parties or recourse to a process of international arbitration. The ad hoc committee created by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in order to deal with the dispute and the International Court of Justice seem the most appropriate bodies.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

In Western Sahara, we appeal to the parties to respond positively to the Secretary-General's efforts to find a peaceful solution.

We note with concern the continued tension in the Horn of Africa and look forward to peaceful negotiated settlements among the countries concerned. We urge them also to take further steps to achieve the peaceful settlement of internal conflicts and to ensure respect for human rights in their countries. We are seriously concerned at the likely extent of food shortages, especially in Ethiopia. We attach particular importance to appropriate policies to help prevent further famine and to promote food security. We recognize the immediate need for humanitarian relief in the region, and are playing our part.

As to the division of the Korean peninsula and the continuing tension there, we see a resumption of the suspended direct dialogue between North and South as the only way to reach a solution by peaceful means. It is our hope that, on the basis of the principle of universality, the people of Korea may soon gain full membership of this Organization. We have been encouraged by the progress made towards democratic reforms in the Republic of Korea. We extend our best wishes for the success of the forthcoming Olympic games.

The continued Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea, in violation of the fundamental principles of the United Nations and international law, remains an issue of the greatest concern to the international community. Kampuchea must be free both of foreign troops and of any prospect of a return to the appalling activities of the Khmer Rouge. The Twelve call upon the new leadership in Hanoi to end the Vietnamese military intervention in Kampuchea in order to contribute to a rapid peaceful solution placing the fate of the hard-pressed Kampuchean people in its own hands. To that end, we support a settlement of this tragic conflict in

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

accordance with repeated United Nations resolutions, while expressing our firm support for the constructive efforts made by the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

We have seen this year in Sri Lanka encouraging proof that, where opportunities are grasped with courage and determination, conflict can be resolved. The Twelve warmly welcomed the agreement signed on 29 July between Sri Lanka and India for a peaceful solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, a solution which we have long advocated. But such agreements can work only with the good will of all concerned; we urge them to continue to comply with the provisions of the agreement.

The Twelve reaffirm the particular importance they attach to the strengthening and development of relations with Latin America, for historical, political, economic and cultural reasons. Recent developments in Central America give cause for optimism. We warmly welcome the agreement signed at the Central American summit at Guatemala City on 7 August and supported by the Contadora Group and its Support Group. That agreement offers a historic opportunity to end armed conflict and bring peace and genuine democracy to the region. We have always believed that any lasting solution to Central America's problems had to emerge from within the region itself, and we urge the five countries, as well as all countries with links and interest in the region, to co-operate constructively in implementing the Guatemala agreement within the time-frame prescribed. The Twelve remain committed to helping them, both by intensifying our political dialogue with the region, which is due to be carried forward by ministers at a meeting in the Federal Republic of Germany early next year, and by using our economic assistance to encourage and strengthen regional co-operation and integration.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

I should like now to turn to a problem from which none of us can be confident of remaining free: international terrorism. This is a scourge that can threaten any of our citizens at any time. The strength of the Twelve's commitment to combating terrorism whenever and wherever it appears is well known. We believe that effective international co-operation is indispensable in responding to the terrorist threat. In that connection, maintaining the consensus in this Assembly represented by resolution 40/61 is in the interest of all. All involved must be made to realize that acts of terrorism can only damage the causes they purport to help. For our part, the Twelve have left third countries in no doubt about our collective determination to take action in this field. No country which lends support to terrorism can expect to enjoy normal relations with the Twelve. Whenever we have clear indications of government support for terrorism we shall not hesitate to act. We are working hard in partnership with other like-minded countries to ensure that the perpetrators of such acts are brought to justice. We think that any Government supporting them should be strongly condemned by the international community.

In their approach to the rest of the world, the Twelve continue to attach the utmost importance to respect for human rights. For us, human rights are not a minor byway of international relations; they are of central importance in our dealings with all countries. The concept of human rights is not a convenient catchword to be used in attacking those with whom we disagree. It involves the acceptance of a set of fundamental standards of civilized behaviour by which we should all be ready to be judged. Over the years, the United Nations has played a key role in establishing such internationally accepted standards in this vitally important area. We naturally expect all Members of the United Nations to live up

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

to those standards. We welcome any efforts designed to strengthen existing mechanisms established to ensure that nations' words are matched by deeds. We feel free - indeed obliged - to raise these issues with others when human rights are ignored or abused. The entering into force in June this year of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was an important step in the right direction.

We feel obliged to alleviate the plight of those who suffer from abuse of human rights, not least those who have been forced to leave their country. We think efforts should be made, on the basis of the concept of international solidarity, to improve the protection of the world's refugees. The Twelve reaffirm the role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as the international focal point for the promotion of durable solutions for refugees in all parts of the world, such as voluntary repatriation, regional integration or resettlement in third countries.

The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held at Vienna in June this year, was of primary importance to the Twelve. The European Community and its member States participated actively in it.

The present overall economic situation is characterized by moderate growth, accelerated and profound changes in the world economy, shifting policy concerns and the persisting difficulties of many developing countries. Among the serious problems facing the world economy are the severe debt problem of many developing countries, continuing protectionist pressures and major changes in the relative weight of the commodities sector. Looming behind these problems is the deteriorating state in some areas of the global natural-resource base upon which economic development depends considerably.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

However, there is sometimes a tendency to focus on uncertainties and overlook positive developments, and despite the present uncertainties there is cause for some optimism.

Efforts are under way to foster vigorous national economies and a more stable and growth-oriented world economy. Most countries are endeavouring to combine effectively macro-economic and structural policies, to extend the role of the market and to develop their human potential.

Equally important is the recognition of the joint responsibility for the functioning of the world economy, with each country contributing to the fostering of an expanding world economy in accordance with its ability. Most recently, this was demonstrated through the adoption by consensus of the Final Act of the Seventh United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

It is indeed a major achievement that all 140 countries participating in the Conference agreed on a common assessment of the relevant economic trends and of their policy implications, as well as on policy approaches and measures to deal with debt problems and resources for development, commodities, international trade and the problems of the least developed countries.

In the true spirit of interdependence and partnership, all countries recognized their responsibility, collectively and individually, to contribute according to their capacities and weight in the world economy to attainment of the common objective of revitalizing development, growth and international trade.

Hopefully, the constructive and co-operative approach taken at the Conference will constitute not only a new beginning for UNCTAD itself but also a milestone in international co-operation.

The European Community and its member States worked actively towards this result. We fully support the Final Act of UNCTAD VII and will contribute

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

constructively to the fulfilment of these undertakings in all the relevant international forums. We expect all other countries, developed and developing alike, to do the same, and look forward to a continued co-operative effort.

The financing of the development efforts of the developing countries requires enhanced mobilization of domestic economic and human resources as well as increased external financial flows.

Official development assistance will continue to play a decisive role for a large number of developing countries, particularly on highly concessional terms for the poorer and least developed countries. The European Community and its member States are already large donors. We realize that further efforts are needed to increase the effectiveness of aid and to achieve as quickly as possible the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as adopted under the International Development Strategy and the official development assistance target of 1.5 per cent of gross national product for the least developed countries as adopted in the Substantial New Programme of Action.

The multilateral institutions should be enabled to play a greater part in promoting more satisfactory growth, effective adjustment and mobilization of resources by providing concessional and non-concessional finance and by catalyzing additional private capital flows.

Accordingly, we support a capital increase for the World Bank. We favour an early agreement on a substantial increase. We also welcome the proposal of the managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a significant increase in the resources of the IMF's Structural Adjustment Facility and are ready to work actively towards reaching a conclusion of discussions thereon this year.

Handling the problems of debt facing many developing countries is one of the most important tasks confronting the international community.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

There has been an evolving response by the international community to the debt problems. There is recognition of the need for enhanced co-operative action on a case-by-case basis by the parties involved and further progress was achieved at UNCTAD VII. In this respect, resolution 41/202, adopted last year, may also be recalled as a positive step. We are convinced that the agreement at UNCTAD VII constitutes an important contribution to discussions of the debt-servicing problem, which will continue in the coming months in the relevant international forums.

The debt-service burden of the poorest countries, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa, is particularly constraining. We fully accept measures adapted to the needs of these countries, which are undertaking adjustment efforts. Intensified deliberations in the Paris Club have already resulted in larger repayment and grace periods with respect to rescheduled official credit for certain countries in support of their far-reaching economic reforms. Proposals for lower interest rates have been put forward.

Turning to the field of international trade, the European Community worked hard for the launching of the new round of multilateral trade negotiations, and we intend to work vigorously towards its successful and balanced conclusion within the agreed time-frame.

In recognition of the importance of trade in tropical products to a large number of developing countries, we are preparing a proposal to be presented at an early stage of the negotiations in the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The Community remains firmly committed to the objectives and undertakings of the Punta del Este Declaration. As the developing countries progressively develop and improve their trade situation they should participate more fully in the

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

framework of rights and obligations under the General Agreement, thereby allowing positive measures to be taken to meet the needs of the least developed countries.

Liberalization and expansion of trade are in the interest of all countries and require concerted efforts. We take the agreement at UNCTAD VII as clear evidence that all Uruguay round participants are ready to shoulder their responsibilities. All parties concerned must undertake to adhere to the principles of multilateralism.

Agriculture remains a major political issue and this field has witnessed major progress in recent months.

Given the scope of the problems - for which all countries bear some responsibility - and their urgency, the Ministers of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development agreed in May this year on the principles for a concerted reform of the agricultural policies of their countries, to be implemented in a balanced manner. Reforms of agricultural policies in industrialized countries on the basis of these principles will also be of benefit to developing countries. The European Community reaffirms its commitment to this important agreement and stresses the decisive importance of the Uruguay round in this context.

The agreement reached at UNCTAD VII on international co-operation between producers and consumers in the field of commodities drew on past experience, on a recognition of the complex circumstances affecting individual commodities, and thereby laid down the basis for working in the future towards constructive results in this field.

A similarly realistic approach should be taken with regard to the Common Fund, which might now enter into force after the recent signing by several countries.

The need for intensified international co-operation was also highlighted in the recent report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. The report gives us a timely reminder of the fragile ecological balance on which economic development is based.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

The World Commission has presented a strategy for sustainable development, which includes valuable guidelines to be used by the international community. The Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond also constitutes a basis for further discussions.

The debate on the report of the Group of 18 High-Level Intergovernmental Experts and the adoption by consensus of resolution 41/213 clearly shows the determination of all Member States to reform and improve the Organization. The Twelve hope that the work prepared by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) will be successfully concluded during this session. The Secretary-General has demonstrated his determination to follow up seriously the reform process, and I can assure him of the full support of the Twelve in these efforts.

It now remains for the Special Commission undertaking the in-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields to show the same kind of determination. The Twelve will continue to work actively for a positive outcome. It must be in the interest of all Member States to ensure that the intergovernmental machinery functions as effectively as possible, in accordance with the Charter. Furthermore, we strongly believe that, together with progress in other parts of the reform process, progress in this respect will contribute significantly to restoring confidence in the ability of the United Nations to deal effectively with issues entrusted to it.

Reform is necessary to restore confidence in the merits of the Organization. But no reform can be completed if the Organization is deprived of the means to fulfil its mission. The Twelve emphasize again the need for all Member States to comply fully with their statutory financial obligations.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

There have been sufficient examples in the history of the United Nations to prove the value of multilateralism. The Twelve share the view expressed by the Secretary-General in his annual report that a pragmatic approach to the problems of an interdependent world provides a promising basis for broadened multilateral co-operation and for increased effectiveness of the United Nations.

The Twelve firmly support a strong and effective United Nations, and trust that this objective is shared by all Member States. However, if we are to reach our common goal deeds must follow words.

The forty-second session of the General Assembly started its work last week. The coming months will be characterized by a multitude of meetings in many committees. Let me finish by quoting Piet Hein, a Danish philosopher, who gives the following advice on the arithmetic of co-operation:

"When you're adding up committees

There's a useful rule of thumb:

That talents make a difference,

But follies make a sum".

Let us all add up our talents in order to settle our differences. The net result should be a better world.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.