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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 30 September 1988, at 3 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. CAPUTO	(Argentina)
later:	Mr. BRANCO	(Sao Tome and Principe)
later:	Mr. CAPUTO	(Argentina)
later:	Mr. TREIKI	(Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Farah (Djibouti)  
Mr. Totu (Romania)  
Prince Saud Al-Faisal (Saudi Arabia)  
Mr. Mock (Austria)  
Mr. van den Broek (Netherlands)  
Mr. Adodo (Togo)  
Mr. Cabrera Hidalgo (Guatemala)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. FARAH (Djibouti) (interpretation from French): Since our last session the international situation has clearly changed. Our goal of peace and development seems closer. Conflicts and tensions that have aroused our concern in recent years are being resolved, and we hope very sincerely that the dialogue that has started between the various belligerents will produce the necessary solutions.

Before continuing, Sir, I am pleased to take this opportunity to pay tribute to your eminent qualities and attributes, which made a big contribution to your election as President of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. I congratulate you most warmly.

I also pay tribute to the outgoing President of the forty-second session, Ambassador Florin of the German Democratic Republic. We are grateful to him for the outstanding way in which he conducted the General Assembly's work.

I also wish to express my Government's gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his ceaseless, praiseworthy efforts for world peace. I wish him well as he continues to persevere in his noble mission. We are gratified by the recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces.

As I have just emphasized, this session is of special interest. It is being held at a time when major events are being witnessed, such as the cease-fire in the Iraq-Iran conflict and positive developments in the question of Afghanistan.

In recent times East-West relations have been marked by the combined efforts of the two great Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, to promote international détente. The most striking event was the signing of a Treaty to bring about a 50 per cent reduction in strategic nuclear weapons. We hope that that positive event will not only lead the parties to respect their commitments as

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

scrupulously as possible, but will also provide a new point of departure to conclude new agreements leading to comprehensive and complete disarmament. It is time to envisage building a non-violent world, free of nuclear weapons.

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti welcomes the desire for peace shown by the two neighbouring Muslim countries, the Republic of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, by their acceptance of the cease-fire and Security Council resolution 598 (1987). We urge the two countries to abide by their commitments to peace and to start direct negotiations, a necessary pre-condition for the establishment of a just and lasting settlement in the region.

Furthermore, we hope that this peace will not be limited to the borders of the two neighbours, but that it will be extended throughout the region, because other neighbouring areas have experienced dangerous tensions. For that to be achieved, it is important that all States fully enjoy freedom of navigation.

With its hundreds of thousands of victims, the Iraq-Iran war has been one of the longest and most deadly conflicts since the end of the Second World War. The Republic of Djibouti expresses its full support for the process under way and hopes that it will fully succeed, so that the peoples of Iraq and Iran may finally live in peace.

For almost 10 years the situation in Afghanistan has caused deep concern. However, after the repeated appeals of the international community, a partial withdrawal of foreign troops recently occurred. We believe that the fraternal people of Afghanistan should recover its independence and freedom by freely choosing the political system that it considers appropriate, without any constraints.

The question of Palestine remains at the core of the Middle East problem. We support the legitimate popular uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories and condemn the policy of oppression and aggression

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

practised by Israel in those territories. Faced with a defenceless population, the army of occupation does not hesitate to fire on children, women and old people. It uses all kinds of weapons, in violation of international law. The massacre of the civilian population continues and the number of victims increases daily. Faced with the repressive Israeli machine, the resistance is increasing, at the cost of hundreds of martyrs.

The Palestinian people must recover its territory and fully exercise its legitimate rights, under the guidance of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole and legitimate representative. Another requirement for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East is Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem and southern Lebanon.

With regard to Lebanon, we urge all components of the Lebanese people to take part in a frank and sincere dialogue to bring about mutual trust, for the establishment of peace and national unity.

Djibouti supports the efforts to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East, in conformity with the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, a conference in which the PLO would participate as an independent party and on an equal footing with the other parties.

In South Africa the racist régime is perpetuating its hateful, inhuman system of apartheid, and the situation gets worse every day, with new restrictions imposed on the South African people, with, in particular, continued detention, torture and assassination. My country supports the just struggle of the people of South Africa, and appeals to the international community to take appropriate steps to dismantle apartheid.

The serious internal situation is coupled with acts of aggression and destabilization perpetrated by the racist régime against neighbouring States.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

A just settlement of the question, in conformity with various United Nations resolutions, can be brought about only by imposing comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the Pretoria régime. Such sanctions remain the most effective way to dismantle apartheid.

The international community must also put pressure on the South African régime to obtain the immediate, unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners.

The racist régime of South Africa continues its illegal occupation of Namibia, in contravention of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). We hope that the quadripartite talks now under way will make it possible to give the Namibian people power on the basis of their own wishes, freely and democratically expressed. Finally, we pay tribute to the South West Africa People's Organization, the sole representative of the Namibian people, for the heroic struggle it is waging.

On the Korean peninsula the beginning of dialogue between the two fraternal countries is an encouraging sign and will permit the development of a climate of mutual trust.

In Kampuchea we desire the total withdrawal of foreign forces so that Democratic Kampuchea may regain its independence and enjoy full sovereignty and integrity.

With regard to the question of Western Sahara, we welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to resolve the conflict, and support the holding of a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara, organized by the United Nations.

There can be no world peace and security without prospects of economic prosperity for all mankind. Peace, security and well-being are closely linked, like members of a single body.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

The world is a single entity. Everything that happens in one region has direct repercussions in other regions. All nations need each other, without exception. Unfortunately international economic relations are structured nowadays in such a way that it is the developing countries that suffer from the damaging effects of an obviously unjust international economic order. In order to remedy this profound economic and financial crisis, we must find meaningful solutions and proceed to the elaboration of principles and instruments to establish a new order in international economic relations.

Thus the United Nations, in 1986, adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for the Economic Recovery and Development of Africa, and the Organization of African Unity, in July 1985 adopted the Priority Programme for the Economic Recovery of Africa for the years 1986 to 1990. While it is not necessary to speak at length here about the crisis affecting Africa, or to mention the price paid by the African countries, we cannot fail to stress the meagre results achieved, particularly after these two years of effort and sacrifice by our continent.

To create the basis for self-sustained economic development, the African countries decided to take a number of steps to attain that goal. More than half of them, in fact, have instituted economic reforms, as devised in the Priority Programme for the Economic Recovery of Africa, and they are already at the stage of implementing their structural adjustment programmes, with the support of financial groups such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, these structural adjustment programmes do not provide an answer to economic conditions, particularly at the present stage of development of the majority of the developing countries.

With regard to the African debt, the international community has acknowledged that it is a major obstacle to development. Accordingly, the Toronto summit in June proposed, some debt relief. Certainly, this can be viewed as an encouraging

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

sign, but unfortunately it is limited in scope, involving only a certain number of African countries. But fairly satisfactory results can be obtained if the industrialized countries implement the resolutions of the General Assembly and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on debt relief, and if they provide specific effective support for the recovery efforts of Africa, as included in the United Nations Programme of Action. Furthermore, we salute the honourable initiative taken by certain donor countries which wiped out the debt as ODA - official development assistance - or which took similar steps in keeping with resolution 165 (S-IX) of the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD and we hope that that initiative will be followed by other donors.

Given the critical economic situation in Africa and the specific nature of the crisis, the responsibility that falls on the international community is basic. The international community has pledged assistance to these countries by taking supplementary steps and providing the necessary resources. However, we hope that the quality and modalities of this assistance and co-operation will be improved upon and strengthened.

Africa refuses to rely entirely on external action to resolve its problems, and is committed to making the necessary efforts for its own development. Several initiatives bear witness to this - inter alia, the fact that economic regional and subregional groups have been established or are now being established. Without a doubt this type of group will provide a basis for the true African community and will thereby help to resolve a certain number of problems.

It is within the intergovernmental authority on drought and development that sincere dialogue is now under way in Djibouti between our two neighbours, Ethiopia and Somalia - dialogue which, as representatives know, has led to the cessation of hostilities and to the restoration of diplomatic relations and an exchange of prisoners.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

Over the last decade major progress has been made in Djibouti in achieving our development goals - achievements that have helped to build an independent, sovereign, neutral State. These assets have been enhanced by a climate of political stability. Indeed, faithful to its traditions, the Republic of Djibouti has made constant efforts to ensure the full mobilization of its domestic resources to achieve our fundamental goals of socio-economic development and the promotion of human rights.

Despite efforts made by the Government of Djibouti, the economic situation remains precarious. The prolonged drought we have experienced in recent years has seriously disrupted the lives of much of our nomad population, causing major losses of livestock and imposing on the Djiboutian authorities the additional costs of implementing resettlement programmes and providing services. The Government of my country launched an appeal for international assistance.

The problem of refugees has been such a heavy burden on our State that it deserves special attention. The Government of Djibouti has steadily stepped up its efforts to provide an adequate solution, and in 1986 launched a programme, in co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for voluntary repatriation. However, voluntary repatriation is the only authentic solution and, therefore, it is urgent to increase assistance to continue this programme.

Bearing in mind all the serious problems that hamper to a large extent the process of economic development in Djibouti, members of the group of least developed countries look forward to support and assistance from the international community - from countries and from international organizations. The challenges of poverty, ignorance and hunger are enormous. Greater solidarity from the international community is necessary to overcome these scourges. Therefore we must combine our efforts because, together, we can build a better world.

Mr. TOTU (Romania): It gives me particular pleasure, on behalf of the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, to convey to you, Mr. President, as well as to the Secretary-General, cordial greetings and best wishes for success in your highly responsible function: strengthening the role of the United Nations in, and its contribution to, the solution of crucial issues of our world.

It is my great privilege, on the instructions of the President of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu, to present his thoughts and proposals on the main issues of international life, which are to be found on the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

Romania considers that, although in the year which has elapsed since the preceding session some steps have been taken in the direction of nuclear disarmament and the solution through negotiations of international disputes, the situation in the world continues to be particularly grave and complex. No radical turn has been achieved towards peace, security and co-operation, the increase of mutual confidence, respect for equality between States, non-interference in their internal affairs, and respect for the independence and sovereignty of each State.

The quantitative and qualitative arms race has continued unabated, stimulated by research and the development of new nuclear weapons. Grave conflicts are continuing in some parts of the world, constituting potential threats to world peace and security. The world economic crisis, which has particularly aggravated the condition of the developing countries, has resulted in deepening the gap between the rich and the poor countries and has become a real obstacle to the progress of all States.

In view of the danger that the arms race presents for the present and the future of mankind, Romania submitted to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament its considerations and proposals on disarmament issues and on the course of action that States should take for their solution.

As members know, the special session concluded with no decision, thereby disregarding the wishes and expectations of the great majority of the peoples of the world. Nevertheless, it strongly demonstrated the almost unanimous decision of all States and peoples to put an end to the harmful policy of armaments and to proceed resolutely, before it is too late, with concrete disarmament measures.

The interests of world peace and security require the United Nations to make full use of the many proposals and ideas put forward by all States at the special session, in order further to increase its role in multilateral negotiations.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

In view of present international conditions and proceeding from the reality that the intensification of the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, constitutes a grave danger for international peace and security, Romania submits to the attention of this world forum the following measures which it believes should be taken: the adoption by the United Nations of a comprehensive programme for nuclear and general disarmament, which would take into account the proposals submitted by all States at the recent special session; the adoption by the General Assembly of a call on the Soviet Union and the United States of America to conclude the treaty on the 50 per cent reduction of their strategic weapons at the earliest possible time; the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and the curbing of the development of all such weapons, as well as of new military technologies and weapons of mass destruction; the prevention of the extension of the arms race into outer space and the adoption of measures conducive to the renunciation of the militarization of outer space, which should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes; the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons, along with actions aimed at reducing and eliminating nuclear armaments; the reduction of military budgets, including the adoption of unilateral measures and the basis setting of mutual examples; the undertaking of measures conducive to a sizeable reduction in the number of troops and conventional armaments and military expenditures - in this respect, negotiations on conventional disarmament in Europe should start later this year; encouragement by the United Nations of the creation of zones free of nuclear and chemical weapons in the Balkans and in other regions of the world; the strengthening of the role and the capacity of the United Nations to act in the field of peace and disarmament, as well as the role of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

Among the actions to be taken in order to proceed with the implementation of concrete disarmament measures, are the finalization and adoption by the United Nations of the principles to govern the negotiation and conclusion of agreements on the reduction of military expenditures. Likewise, we propose the adoption of the report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures, prepared by the Secretary-General with the assistance of a group of experts. The report should be brought to the attention of States, negotiating bodies and public opinion.

We also believe that, in order to promote peaceful solutions to disputes and conflicts, the General Assembly should prepare a mandate that would enable it to bring to a successful outcome the initiative submitted by Romania at previous sessions on a procedure to establish a commission of good offices, mediation or conciliation for the peaceful settlement of disputes. At the same time, we believe that work should be continued to identify and clarify the elements which are to constitute the background for an international document on the development and strengthening of good-neighbourly relations among States.

The creation of a climate of durable peace and security requires resolute action by all States to educate peoples, including the young generation, in the spirit of mutual confidence and respect, and of the need for co-operation among peoples. It also requires repudiation of any action that would contribute to discord between nations.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

With this in mind, Romania requested the inclusion of a new item on the agenda, entitled "Responsibility of States to ban in their territory, and to refrain from instigating or supporting in the territory of other States, chauvinistic, racist and other manifestations that may cause discord between peoples and involvement of Governments and the mass media in combating such manifestations and in educating peoples and youth in the spirit of peaceful co-operation and international entente; and evaluation of the implementation of the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples".

To this end, Romania submits the following

United Nations programmes should provide that Governments will not permit such manifestations and activities and will not instigate or support such acts on the territory of other States. At the same time, United Nations programmes should emphasize the need to promote measures to educate peoples and the young generation in the spirit of the noble ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding among peoples.

The United Nations should address a call to all States for the adoption of concrete measures against those political circles and groupings which promote chauvinism, racism and apartheid and which foster an atmosphere of mistrust between States, discord between peoples and misinformation vis-à-vis international public opinion.

We believe that the Commission for Social Development should be entrusted with the task of reviewing the implementation of such measures and submitting a report thereon to the General Assembly at its next session.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

Taking into account the fact that the year 1990 will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption, at the initiative of Romania, of the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, it would be useful to evaluate the practical results of this international document.

A dramatic reality of our days, which deeply affects the health and the environment of our planet and of its peoples, is the continuous proliferation of all sources of pollution of the atmosphere, soil, marine environment and outer space. At the same time, in some countries large quantities of toxic radioactive and polluting substances and wastes continue to accumulate. Lately there has been an increase in attempts to transfer such wastes abroad and deposit them on the territories of other States, usually in less developed countries, or dump them in international waters.

In order to eradicate this phenomenon, Romania requested the inclusion on the agenda of a special item entitled: "Responsibility of States for the protection of the environment and prevention of environmental pollution as a result of the accumulation of toxic and radioactive wastes, and strengthening of international co-operation for the purpose of resolving the problem." To this end, we submit the following.

A system of universal norms should be established aimed at preventing, by all possible means, such practices and at prosecuting those responsible for such offences. Specific rules should be adopted which would establish the concrete responsibility of States under whose jurisdiction activities resulting in radioactive and toxic wastes are taking place, as well as the responsibility of the producing firms, for the damage caused by fraudulent transboundary movements and the dumping of wastes on the territories of other States or in international waters.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

A group of experts should be established, within the framework of the United Nations Environment Programme, which would consider the question of adopting certain guidelines and mandatory norms to be observed by all States.

Preparatory work should be started with a view to convening, in 1992, a Second United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which would lay the groundwork for broad international co-operation in the field of environmental protection, taking account of the concerns and proposals of all States.

Romania is deeply concerned about the world economic situation, which continues to deteriorate, and the worsening condition of the developing countries, whose external debt exceeds one trillion dollars. The problems of the world economy cannot be resolved by a few countries alone, however developed they may be. It requires the active participation of all States. In this light, we submit the following.

The United Nations should make a thorough assessment of the way in which the principles and the essential provisions of the Declaration and of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, as well as of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, have been implemented. Such an assessment could be done next year, in view of the fact that, in 1989, 15 years will have elapsed since their adoption. It should result in the preparation of some guidelines for United Nations action in the field of the world economy until the year 2000.

In this regard, particular attention should be paid to finding ways and means for resolving the external debt crisis of the developing countries; to revitalizing the world economy and ensuring conditions for reviving the active role of the developing countries in the general process of economic growth; to restructuring the monetary and financial system and to democratizing international financial

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

organizations; to eliminating discriminatory practices and barriers from world trade; to refraining from the imposition of trade embargoes and other measures of economic coercion on political grounds; and to ensuring unrestricted access by all States to science and technology.

The General Assembly should call upon all States to assume a greater responsibility for the present state of the world economy and to engage fully in genuine negotiations on those issues within the framework of the United Nations. Such negotiations should be attended by all States, both developed and developing, and pursue the objective of reactivating the international economic dialogue. They should be aimed at solving the serious problems of the world economy, eliminating underdevelopment and restructuring international economic relations on a new, more just and more equitable basis.

A special body should be established within the United Nations to deal with the problem of external debt, and a corresponding organizational structure should be set up within the United Nations Secretariat, through redistribution of existing personnel. Such a body would consider the various aspects of the external debt problem and elaborate specific proposals for solving it, in the multilateral framework offered by the United Nations system.

In line with its general policy of peace and broad co-operation with all countries, Romania advocates elimination of the use or threat of force in international relations. It upholds the solution of conflicts and disputes in all parts of the world solely by political means, through negotiations, and strict observance of the right of each people to independence and free development, without any interference in its internal affairs and with full respect for its vital interests.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

Along these lines, with regard to the situation in the Middle East, it would be of particular importance to convene as soon as possible a conference under the auspices of the United Nations, in which all interested countries should participate, including the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel, as well as the permanent members of the Security Council.

We welcome the cessation of the war between Iran and Iraq and we hope that, in the framework of the negotiations which started under the auspices of the United Nations, all necessary efforts will be deployed - by each of the two sides - to find mutually acceptable solutions leading to a final settlement of the Gulf conflict. Thus a dangerous hotbed and a threat to peace and security in that region and in the world as a whole would be eliminated.

Romania has been actively supporting the national liberation struggle of peoples and is firmly in favour of the elimination of any neo-colonial policies and strict observance of the right of every nation to assert itself according to its own aspirations. In this spirit, we support the efforts made, in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978), for the accession of Namibia to independence, which would eliminate one more remnant of colonialism. Likewise we support all initiatives for the peaceful settlement of other problems in the south and west of Africa, as well as in other regions of the world.

We also reiterate our solidarity with and active support for the initiatives of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and its political and diplomatic efforts and actions aimed at the peaceful, democratic and independent reunification of Korea.

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

The evolution of international events makes it necessary, today more than ever, that the United Nations act with all resolve to strengthen its role and its contribution, as well as to increase the efficiency of its decisions, in solving the crucial problems of our world. That would fully respond to the aspirations of all peoples for peace, co-operation, independence and social progress.

To attain that goal we support the need to improve and simplify the machinery of the United Nations Secretariat and to reduce budgetary expenses. This should be done, however, in such way that the basic political and economic activities of the United Nations are not diminished and its democratic structures not affected.

To that end we should consider whether a larger part of the United Nations activities could not be organized on a voluntary basis, without financial implications for the budget of the Organization. We believe that the General Assembly's decisions to cut the staff from 15 to 25 per cent could be implemented at a more speedy pace and that expenses for existing staff be given a more rational basis.

In our view, consideration should also be given to the possibility that a State whose nationals in the Secretariat exceed the quota allotted to it be requested to cover the expenses incurred for that part of its personnel above the quota.

The final result of the implementation of such measures would be to cut administrative expenses in half. A part of the resources thus saved could be allotted to setting up funds intended for specific activities of the United Nations, mainly for the support of the developing countries, or for other fundamental objectives incumbent upon the United Nations in solving the major issues of international life.

While submitting these considerations and proposals, the Romanian delegation is ready to act in close constructive co-operation with all other delegations, in a

(Mr. Totu, Romania)

spirit of mutual receptivity, so that the decisions adopted fully respond to the trust placed in the United Nations by peoples all over the world. Our actions should respond to their aspirations for the cessation of the arms race and the elimination of under-development, for a better world.

As President Nicolae Ceausescu recently emphasized:

"Although the world situation, as a whole, is complex and serious, we share the confidence that the peoples and the progressive political forces, have the necessary strength to change for the better the course of events, to ensure and impose disarmament, peace and a new economic world order."

From this rostrum I would like to reaffirm the unflinching resolve of the Socialist Republic of Romania to act along with the rest of the international community, within the framework of the United Nations, for peace, co-operation, disarmament and security in the world.

Prince SAUD AL-FAISAL (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure to convey to you, Mr. President, and to the Heads of delegations participating in this forty-third session of the General Assembly, the greetings of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdul-Aziz, and his wishes that God grant you success to accomplish the expectations we all have of this Organization as the appropriate framework for co-operation among nations and peoples, an important forum for dialogue and understanding and an effective tool for the settlement of disputes and handling crises.

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques was keen to participate in this session, which coincides with an important juncture in the course of international relations and in the crucial role of the United Nations, and would have done so had it not been for the present circumstances which required continuous follow-up of the

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal,  
Saudi Arabia)

issues of peace and security in our region. I therefore have the honour to present the following statement on his behalf:

"Mr. President, I have the pleasure to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of this session, which reflects the personal esteem you enjoy and is an expression of the important role your friendly country, Argentina, plays in the international arena. We are confident that your competence in conducting the affairs of the General Assembly will provide new possibilities for dealing with international problems, and we are certain that your objectivity and far-sightedness will be reflected in the work of this session.

"I wish also to express our thanks to your predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, President at the forty-second session of the General Assembly, for the objectivity and wisdom with which he conducted the work of the last session, which has appropriately earned him the appreciation of all.

"I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his continuous endeavours to enhance the opportunities for establishing peace and to lessen the sources of tension that prevail in various parts of the world. His personal qualities are without doubt of great influence in this regard.

"It gives me pleasure, on the occasion of the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize for this year to the United Nations peace-keeping forces, to congratulate the United Nations, the Secretary-General and the members of these forces and to express our thanks to the countries participating in them. This appreciation reflects the increasing importance of the role of the

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal,  
Saudi Arabia)

United Nations in keeping the peace and maintaining it in different parts of the world.

"Our belief in the principles and objectives of the United Nations as an international forum where all the peoples and the Governments of the world gather is firm and has been reinforced over time, despite the complicated problems and entangled crises from which the world suffers. Therefore, we return every year to the Organization to consider problems and crises and to co-operate in finding solutions to them in order to establish an international community that enjoys stability and progress and in which justice, security and peace prevail. We hope that our Organization can work for the consolidation of the basic objectives for which it was created and for which the Charter was established, objectives to which we are all committed for the establishment and preservation of world peace, namely, laying the foundations of equity in relations among States in the political, economic and social fields.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

"The ability of the United Nations to continue to serve as a safety valve, trusted and respected as regards the preservation and affirmation of these goals, is dependent, to a large degree, upon its ability to find appropriate solutions for the problems that threaten international peace and security.

"At past sessions of the United Nations General Assembly we used to review the problems and enumerate the dangers and crises they posed. It seemed to us each time that the world was living under a cloud of ceaseless conflicts and wars with no peaceful end, and that the trend towards evil and its destructive effects would prevail. But today we are seeing a noticeable breakthrough in many problems and crises and we are seeing the distinctive and important role the United Nations can play in this regard. On a number of different occasions in the past, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expressed the view that the role of this Organization should not be confined to identifying international conflicts and crises, but should also include the formulation of realistic concepts that would enable the international community to face up to the dangers confronting it, and consequently to work out solutions based on justice and objectivity. Today, as we are witnessing many breakthroughs in which the United Nations has played an effective role, we cannot but mention the great importance of the work this Organization can do in this respect. We stress that the continuation and consecration of this role cannot be realized and accomplished unless the Organization can find ways and means to institutionalize this role through the organs of the United Nations system and at the core of its political activities, and not simply confine itself to the improvements in circumstances that take place in super-Power relations periodically. While we appreciate the importance of the role played by the members of the Security Council in making it possible to achieve such positive

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

developments, we wish to mention also the special responsibility that the permanent members bear in this regard, which should complement the responsibility of the United Nations, and not, in any event, be an obstacle to it.

"The breakthroughs on the international scene which we are witnessing enhances the scope of hope for the accomplishment of increased peace, security and stability for the benefit of all.

"Lately, relations between the two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, have experienced a noticeable rapprochement, one outcome of which has been the realization of significant steps in the limitation of nuclear arms. However, there ought to be a positive and tangible relationship between the degree of the evolution of relations between the two super-Powers and the role of the United Nations in this regard. Since the rapprochement in relations between these two Powers has a definitive bearing upon the opportunities and possibilities for the realization of other positive developments in the international arena, such a rapprochement should constitute a safety valve exercising its important influence whenever relations between the two super-Powers deteriorate so that a direct confrontation or a change in either of their positions can be avoided. On the occasion of their meeting in Washington last year, I addressed a message in this regard to the leaders of these two States in which we expressed our hope for the establishment of a new world order, supported by them, based on the principles of solidarity and co-operation between all nations and peoples, in order to provide security, stability and prosperity to the world.\*

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\* Mr. Branco, (Sao Tome and Principe), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

"On the other hand, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia considered the breakthrough witnessed in the Iran-Iraq war as a good beginning for putting an end to a painful tragedy that had lasted eight years. As soon as it learned of the decision of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to fix a definite date for a cease-fire, with the consent of the two neighbouring States of Iraq and Iran, it immediately expressed its deep satisfaction and its great hope that this agreement would be an effective beginning for the establishment of a permanent and comprehensive peace in which all the States and peoples of the region would enjoy security, stability and constructive co-operation.

"While welcoming the decision for a cease-fire and the initiation of direct negotiations, we express our hope that the negotiators will reach solutions that will help overcome the obstacles by dealing with the points contained in Security Council resolution 598 (1987), stressing the stability of the cease-fire and the strengthening of the foundations of peace. We also hope that the cessation of the fighting between the two parties is a true and sincere beginning towards the accomplishment of the greater aim, which is the achievement of the desired permanent peace on the basis of good-neighbourly and constructive fraternal co-operation. While we appreciate the readiness Iraq has shown from the beginning to accept Security Council resolution 598 (1987) after it was adopted, and its consequent readiness for an immediate cease-fire, which demonstrates to the world the credibility of the Iraqi Government in its quest for peace and its earnestness to achieve it, we hope that the acceptance by Iran of a cease-fire and its participation in direct negotiations indicates a systematic change in its policy in the region, so that it will return to being a source of civilization and a pillar of peace,

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stability and security, which are the responsibilities of all States in the region, thus sharing in the message of goodness, brotherhood and friendship, which are the goals that constitute the essence and the core of the true message of Islam.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

"We hope to abide by all this. As the Almighty says:

'Help ye one another in righteousness and piety  
But help ye not one another in sin and rancour'.

(The Holy Koran, V:3)

"We also welcomed the Soviet decision to withdraw from Afghanistan and to leave the destiny of the country in its own hands. We hope that this will take place according to plan, that all the obstacles in the way of the achievement of full political and economic stability in Afghanistan will disappear and that, after a glorious struggle of nine years during which it gave proof of its strong belief in God and of sacrifice in the defence of its religion and rights, a régime which reflects the wishes of its valiant Muslim people will be established.

"We express our hope for the co-operation of all the parties concerned in restoring stability and tranquillity to Afghanistan, because the emergence of a Government which represents the true Afghan will is the firmest guarantee that Afghanistan will be the source of peace and stability for all its neighbours capable of co-operation on a sound basis of mutual interest.

"The Geneva Accords have paved the way for the finding of a comprehensive solution to the situation in Afghanistan. They confer upon the United Nations a continued responsibility to work in this direction until final implementation of the Accords and until the establishment of the desired transitional Government that will permit the Afghan refugees to return to their country and give the Afghan people the freedom of self-determination.

"At the same time, we deplore the violations of Pakistan's air space by the Kabul régime and express once again our appreciation of the great humanitarian role which the Government and people of Pakistan continue to

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undertake in hosting 4 million Afghans, who can now look forward to returning to their homes after Pakistan has borne their burdens for all these years. In this critical period, Pakistan has lost its President, the late General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, who worked hard in the service of his country, in supporting the rights of the Afghans and in bolstering the causes of the Islamic world. With the passing of the President, the Islamic world lost one of its most zealous and sincere Muslim leaders, one of the most experienced and well versed in the affairs of the Islamic world, as evidenced by his stands in international arenas and at the Islamic summit conferences.

"We are, moreover, following with deep interest and appreciation the breakthrough taking place on the problem of Western Sahara, where the wisdom and farsightedness of the leaders of the region have enabled the United Nations to accomplish its constructive role in ending this problem. I had the pleasure of personally conveying my thanks to both His Majesty King Hassan II and His Excellency President Chadli bin Jedid for their co-operation and their successful efforts in settling the situation and narrowing the differences in the points of view concerning this problem, in the hope of reaching a final formula and of the coming together of the two States and peoples on the basis of trust, amity and common effort, for the welfare of the States of the Great Arab Maghreb.

"With regard to the problem of Cyprus, we have always expressed our support for the ongoing negotiations, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, to find a solution to this problem which would protect the basic interests of the Turkish Cypriot brothers. We are encouraged by the fact that some positive signs have emerged, which will, we hope, result in the desired just solution. One of those signs is the growing understanding which

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has emerged in Greek-Turkish relations and the meetings which have recently taken place in Cyprus between the representatives of the two communities.

"We are also observing with interest the efforts currently being undertaken to solve the problem of Namibia and to restore its rights. It is a problem that threatens stability and peace in Africa and causes great concern. We hope that the indications of the breakthrough taking place are genuine and will reach their natural conclusion. We also support every effort approved by the Organization in support of the people of South Africa and in deterring aggression against its neighbouring States. We stand with the African States in resisting the oppression inflicted upon the people of South Africa. We are with them in isolating the apartheid régime and condemning its evil alliance with the Zionist entity in Palestine. It is a régime based on the worst in the human soul of selfish traits, grudge and the abandonment of human values. Its oppressive and tyrannical measures against its black citizens and its aggression against the peace and security of neighbouring States should be halted.

"It is regrettable that, in this atmosphere of breakthrough on different problems confronting the world, the question of Palestine and the Middle East, the question that was created in the arena of the United Nations itself, remains the most dangerous of problems, undermining the progress of this breakthrough, and the most dangerous of the threats to regional security and world peace. It is unfortunate that this problem has not come closer to hope of a solution one way or another.

"Peace is an indivisible whole. It is a right that should not be the preserve of one group or be applied to one cause at the expense of another.

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Peace does not stand and does not endure unless it is based upon justice.

Peace is not the acceptance of the status quo, nor is it a surrender to force and oppression, which do not create a right or establish peace. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has always believed that no real peace can prevail in the Middle East unless a just and permanent solution to the Palestinian problem, which is the core of the struggle taking place in the region, is found. Those who imagine that the passing of time is a guarantee that the status quo will become an accepted fact seem to forget that the rights of peoples in their countries do not fade with the lapse of time and are never forfeited by forgetfulness. The Palestinians, after waiting for over 40 years without any glimmer of hope for a just peace, found only the stones of their land with which to express their rights and their rejection of the Israeli oppression.

"Israel thought that by its continuous oppressive actions it could separate the Palestinians from their roots while they were on their own land and erase their history from the memory of their new generations, as well as from the annals of history. Then the Intifadah came, a revolution against oppression, a reminder that right never dies, and a daily and unanimous action for their just demands. Through its determination and sacrifices the uprising has been able to create a new reality, proclaiming its identity and vitality on both the local and the international level. With over nine months having passed since its beginning, it is clear that the Israeli violence has only reinforced its determination and that the logical result of the impossibility of things remaining as they are is the need for a movement towards a change.

The Intifadah has put an end to the false belief in the permanence of the status quo and killed the illusion that Israel worked to create in regard to the question of Palestinian representation, it has at the same time paved the

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way for concerted action aimed at attaining a just and permanent solution to the Palestinian problem. The blood of the martyrs and the sufferings of the victims are too dear to be squandered or uselessly lost; therefore there should be a conscious movement for the uprising of the Palestinian people to realize its desired objectives. The Palestinians have given all they can for peace and nothing demonstrates this better than the speech delivered recently by Mr. Yassir Arafat, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in Strasbourg.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has frequently expressed its full support and continued backing for whatever the Palestine Liberation Organization, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, considers for the realization of its legitimate rights and the establishment of an independent State on its land and the right to self-determination. The Kingdom will continue its efforts in this direction according to what the Palestine Liberation Organization will decide and consider to be a realization of those goals.

"As Chairman of the Arab Gulf Co-operation Council during its current session I sent messages to the leaders of the States permanent members of the Security Council to draw it to their attention that these developments do require of all parties a more realistic re-evaluation of the situation and a better perception of the dimensions of what is taking place in the occupied Arab territories, so that an end may be put to this tragedy in all its dimensions and all it entails in dangers, concerns and threats to security, peace and stability. A result will not be found except through a comprehensive and just solution to the Palestinian problem through the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East as the

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ideal means for realizing such a solution. It is worthy of mention that the two Arab Summit Conferences which took place in Amman and Algiers adopted a clear position towards supporting the convening of an international conference without pre-conditions.

"If the question of Palestine is our primary concern, the problem of Holy Jerusalem constitutes, in our view, the core of the Palestinian problem. In this regard the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia renews its support for the necessity to preserve the Islamic and Arab character of Jerusalem and to restore the Holy City to Arab sovereignty, so that it will return to being, as it always used to be, the gathering place for the faithful of all the divine religions and a sanctuary for forgiveness and creative coexistence between the different religions.

"As for Lebanon, we hope that God will guide its people to be able to provide a suitable climate for free and fair elections, emanating from the will of the Lebanese people and based on the present constitutional formula, so that a president may be elected who will endeavour to unify and to preserve the independence of the Lebanese territory and people and so that the shadow of the division which threatens Lebanon will fade away, denying continuous Israeli attempts to exploit these circumstances and to persist in perpetrating its aggression and occupying Lebanese territory.

"While in international relations we are witnessing the beginning of different regional breakthroughs, we notice the continued deterioration of the economic situations of the developing countries, in spite of some positive signs witnessed recently in international economic relations. The industrialized States have been able to realize a greater amount of co-ordination between their economic policies, a fact which has allowed a

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relative stability in the exchange rate of the major currencies as well as the achievement of healthy rates in economic growth, while the economic circumstances in many developing countries have continued to deteriorate as a result of a continuous decrease in the prices of their primary commodities and an increase in the price of their imports of manufactured goods, as well as an increase in their debt burdens in a way which seriously threatens the course of their development.

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"It was hoped, at the commencement of the Uruguay round of multilateral trade negotiations, that the terms of international trade would be corrected, that the protectionist tendencies would be reversed and that the trend towards freeing world trade in a meaningful way would be reaffirmed. But so far no tangible action on the part of the industrialized States has been forthcoming to eliminate the barriers which they have established on their imports from developing States. It is clear that some industrialized States are seeking to deprive the developing countries of many of the trade preferences required by their development circumstances.

"It was hoped also that the initiatives aimed at easing the international debt burden of many of the poor developing countries would take a positive direction at the meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank currently taking place in Berlin. But in this regard, there have not so far been any tangible results on the part of the industrialized countries, and this leads to a loss of hope among the developing countries participating in the Berlin meeting.

"While we welcome the progress achieved by the industrialized States in co-ordinating their economic policies, we express our apprehension at the continued deterioration of the economic situation in developing countries, many of which are facing heavy indebtedness on the one hand and a weak economic-growth rate on the other. That is a result of the failure to achieve practical measures to reduce the debt burden as well as of the continued custom and administrative barriers imposed on their exports to the industrialized States - which makes it very difficult to attain a reasonable level of growth in the developing countries. Therefore, while we emphasize

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the importance of expediting debt-relief measures for the developing countries, we also stress the importance of eliminating custom and administrative barriers and of giving developing countries the opportunity of promoting their exports to the industrialized States. We believe that that is the exemplary way to help the developing countries to correct their economic development, and at the same time would benefit the industrialized countries themselves, because this means a real contribution to the expansion of world trade.

"The deterioration in the situations of many of the developing countries has increased as a result of a number of natural disasters which have taken the lives of thousands of persons and left millions of them homeless in many regions of the world - and the majority of them were women, children and the elderly. We expressed our deep sorrow at the devastation suffered by Sudan and Bangladesh as a result of the destructive floods. We declared our full solidarity with the two fraternal peoples, and we have put at their disposal all that we can offer in emergency humanitarian assistance. The citizens of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia immediately made - and have continued to make - generous contributions to the relief committees in the different parts of the Kingdom, which have enabled them to carry out their humanitarian duties towards the two fraternal peoples.

"Even a cursory glance at the extent of the suffering endured by many developing countries as a result of natural disasters clearly shows the important need for solidarity with them and for helping them to overcome their predicament. At the same time, it demonstrates that the ability to face such catastrophes is linked to the economic strength of these States; and yet we realize that most of the States susceptible to such catastrophes are the

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weakest economically and the poorest. That truth leads us to an increased awareness of the problems of development and not to neglect of its humanitarian dimension. It also requires us to acknowledge that our solidarity with the afflicted States cannot be confined to alleviating the suffering of the affected peoples, but, rather, should continue so that these States may overcome their predicament and stand on their feet, so that they may prevail on their path to development.

"The breakthrough witnessed in international relations clearly demonstrates the importance of the role of the United Nations in the development of international relations. We are confident that the success achieved by the Organization through that breakthrough entitles it, at the same time, to expect our trust as it deals with the problems of development in a comprehensive and integrated manner, without neglecting the humanitarian side of international economic co-operation.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whose principles derive from its compassionate Islamic Shariah and its Hanif faith, which call for peace, justice, equality and brotherhood, has forged for itself the path of peace that originates from these precepts and sublime values and from its belief in the principles and purposes for which the United Nations was created. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is continuing to play its role and to shoulder its responsibilities in every endeavour to achieve a just peace and to take a charitable course. It will continue to work side by side with all the peace-loving States to eliminate the shadows of war and develop friendly relations and fruitful co-operation between peoples, as well as to establish an international society where justice and peace prevail.

(Prince Saūd Al-Faisal,  
Saudi Arabia)

"From that standpoint, the decision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as a contribution on its part to the consolidation of this peaceful objective, reflects its intention to work within the framework of the efforts being undertaken by the United Nations in this regard. While the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia urges other States to sign the Treaty, it hopes that this action will not be merely voluntary but a basic requirement of international dealings. It also wishes to stress in this regard that the possession of nuclear weapons by States which do not respect the rules of international behaviour and international agreements and refuse to sign and adhere to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, such as Israel, constitutes in fact a dangerous threat to international peace and security, especially in light of the development of the Israeli nuclear and military capabilities in a manner that is considered to be a source of direct threat to the peace and security of the region.

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"Terrorism is one of the problems posing the greatest danger to the safety, peace and stability of societies. The spread of this phenomenon throughout the international community has led to the disturbance of international relations and to increased anxiety, tension and trouble. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has contributed, with all the means at its disposal, to efforts aimed at combating it and preventing its destructive effects. In this regard the decree issued by the Council of the High Ulema of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia imposing the death penalty upon terrorists, saboteurs and subversives - a decree supported by the Ulema itself and by jurists, Imams and Great Muftis in the Islamic world - is a sign of the Kingdom's determination and underscores our well-known firm stand against a phenomenon that has begun to spread through the world and to pose a threat to the foundations of a stable society.

"The position of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with respect to the phenomenon of terrorism accords with the positions adopted in this regard by the summits of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States. Moreover, while joining in the call for an international conference under United Nations auspices to define terrorism, we stress the need to draw a distinction between terrorism which aims to destroy society by striking at its roots, and the right of peoples to defend their existence and struggle for freedom and sovereignty when they have been subjected to occupation, domination, oppression and persecution in disregard of all international principles and norms.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is presiding over the current session of the Arab Gulf Co-operation Council; we are proud to belong to that Council, which

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was established in conformity with the charters and resolutions of the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference as well as in accordance with the principles of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Charter of the United Nations. The Council has played an effective and constructive role in promoting political, economic, security, social and cultural co-operation among its member States. While the Gulf Co-operation Council expresses the free will of those States and reflects co-operation among them in the context of a common perception of their national interests, it is not in fact a bloc against anyone, but rather a positive factor for stability in the region.

"At the beginning of my statement I referred to the great potential of the United Nations in the context of the breakthroughs we have witnessed in many current international problems, breakthroughs in which the Secretary-General personally has had a significant role in bringing about. The success of the United Nations in achieving further breakthroughs in the international arena will unquestionably be linked to its capacity to consolidate and structure this trend and make it an integral part of the political work of the Organization.

"If in the early part of my statement I concentrated on the subject of conflicts and what has been accomplished by way of breakthroughs in the international arena it is because the main concern in our region is the achievement of peace and because we are aware, as others ought to be, that instability anywhere is a threat to security everywhere.

"The time has come for all of us to bring our thinking into line with contemporary reality and to recognize that all our efforts for the betterment of the life of mankind will be in vain if just and lasting peace remains beyond our grasp.

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Saudi Arabia)

"The interests of States have become common and intertwined to such a degree that there are no longer any limited conflicts whose effects can be confined to the parties directly involved. We are all partners in the ebb and flow, in good and evil, in war and peace, in prosperity and adversity and in development and underdevelopment. Let us all work together for peace.

"May peace and the blessings of God be bestowed upon you."

Mr. MOCK (Austria): It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mr. Caputo on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. That election is a recognition of his own personal status, and also honours his country, Argentina.

Let me also convey our sincere thanks to his predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, who presided so ably over the General Assembly at its forty-second session.

A special tribute must also go to the Secretary-General. His untiring efforts to promote peace and international co-operation have been instrumental in the achievement of impressive breakthroughs in a number of regional conflicts. The Secretary-General's unflinching commitment to the principles and purposes of the Organization he has been called upon to lead ought to inspire all of us assembled here. Austria welcomes the turning-point in the perception of the United Nations, as it has always favoured the strengthening of the Organization and of the position of the Secretary-General as an essential factor not only in securing international peace but also in advancing the progress of mankind.

Rarely before have we seen a more lively demonstration of what the United Nations can in fact achieve, as it pursues at an accelerated pace its major goal, namely the establishment and preservation of peace. The merits of this world Organization and, in particular, its Secretary-General, have again been universally

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recognized. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces fills us, as a major troop contributor, with joy, satisfaction and pride. That award is a tangible manifestation of current developments. Member States now expect the United Nations not only to continue but also to expand its peace-keeping and peace-making role.

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It is therefore of paramount importance that the United Nations rests on a sound financial basis which in turn is an indispensable pre-condition for successful operations. A prolongation of the present financial crisis would cripple the prospects for new and more significant steps on the long and winding road towards reform and improvement of the Organization's procedures and practices. Reform is an ongoing and continuous process for which the Member States and the managers of the various programmes of the United Nations system are equally responsible. I am pleased to note that various measures taken by the Secretary-General have already perceptibly increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations.

In past years we heard a lot about the United Nations crisis. Some voices even went so far as to predict the end of multilateralism. Certainly, we have to admit that United Nations activities still lack the essential financial underpinning. But the political crisis seems to be over. We see today a resurgence of multilateral diplomacy under the auspices of the United Nations. The Secretary-General has skilfully taken advantage of the prevailing new international climate.

Within the time-span of a few months agreements on Afghanistan were signed; a truce in the Gulf war was achieved; direct talks and negotiations between Iraq and Iran are under way; agreement was reached between the leaders of the two communities of Cyprus to reopening their dialogue; a solution of the question of Western Sahara was agreed upon in principle by those concerned; and, finally, the United Nations may well be about to play a vital part in the release of Namibia to independence.

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Let me state this unambiguously: Austria has always believed in the United Nations and its potential for the solution of international crises. My country is proud of the role the United Nations is playing today in peace-making and peace-keeping and will continue fully to support these activities in an international scenario marked primarily by a new East-West relationship.

Peace-keeping operations are among the success stories of the United Nations. I am deeply convinced that Austria's participation in, and commitment to, peace-keeping operations is one of the most effective ways in which a neutral country can make its contribution to the preservation of peace. More than 25,000 Austrians have worn the blue helmet. At present close to a thousand Austrian soldiers are serving in Cyprus, on the Golan Heights, at various locations in the Middle East and - since a few months ago - also in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as in Iran and Iraq.

Austria did not hesitate to participate in peace-keeping activities when it was asked to do so. It is our experience, however, that in some cases troop contributors have to shoulder a disproportionately heavy financial burden. This is the case notably with the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The participation in a peace-keeping operation always entails considerable cost for the troop contributors, as the compensation offered by the United Nations never covers all the cost the troop contributor incurs. It is simply unfair to continue to discriminate against the Cyprus operation merely for historical reasons and one has to accept, in that case, that the reimbursement is chronically insufficient. It is high time for a solution to be found to rectify this anomaly. We therefore

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hope that the Secretary-General's endeavours to have the financing of UNFICYP based on assessed contributions by the membership at large will be successful in the year to come.\*

Despite continued outrageous violations of human rights in many parts of the world, progress was achieved in the promotion and protection of human rights. Often we restrain ourselves from pinpointing specific situations in order not to jeopardize the maintenance of a dialogue which is a prerequisite for further positive developments in this area.

The tenth of December will mark the fortieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The completion of the time-span of four decades since the adoption of that Magna Carta of all mankind is an appropriate moment for reflection on the remarkable achievements that have been made in the human rights field, the serious shortcomings that still persist in many areas and the challenges that lie ahead.

Looking back to the origins of the Universal Declaration one must pay tribute to the courage and vision of its drafters, who were motivated by the ardent desire that the appalling disrespect for human life and dignity they had witnessed during their lifetime should never be repeated. Most regrettably, those rights are still violated to a large extent throughout the world.

In Austria's view the aim of the protection of human rights is to ensure the dignity of the human person, to safeguard his social and economic well-being and to allow for the free development of his entire personality. We hold the opinion that all human rights are indivisible and interrelated. The dignity of the human being cannot be guaranteed, if the necessary economic, social and cultural pre-conditions

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\*The President returned to the Chair.

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do not exist. However, adverse economic and social conditions can never justify the denial of civil and political rights.

The Declaration led to the adoption of a new approach concerning human rights whereby the community of nations recognized that respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual was no longer within the exclusive domain of national governments, but was a matter of concern for the international community at large. This conviction is shared by Austria: expressions of concern that human rights are not observed in a certain State cannot be considered as interference in the domestic affairs of that particular State. On the other hand issues of human rights ought not to be brought before United Nations organs to be used exclusively for political purposes.

Let us now assess some of the major achievements of the United Nations in the human rights field: first, the "common standard" laid down by the Universal Declaration has been refined and elaborated in an impressive array of international instruments, for which the Declaration provided an inexhaustible source of inspiration. Important mechanisms have been developed within the Organization, or within special treaty bodies, in order to monitor the implementation of international human rights law.

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Suffice it to mention the International Covenants on human rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which have introduced sophisticated international control mechanisms.

I wish to pay a special tribute to the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary organs - in particular, its special rapporteurs, who relentlessly endeavour to identify various violations of human rights and propose ways to improve particular situations. It is not the fault of the United Nations if the implementation of human rights norms remains imperfect.

Let me highlight only a few of the problems confronting us. The question of the human rights of all persons subjected to any form of detention or imprisonment is still of the greatest concern. It is precisely when a person is totally in the power of others that the worst human rights abuses occur: flagrant denial of all human values, ranging from disrespect for the individual's personal dignity through different stages of degrading, inhuman and cruel treatment to the most atrocious and sophisticated means of physical and mental abuse, and finally to the deliberate extinction of human life. The entry into force of the Convention against torture, to which Austria has become a party, is certainly a major step forward in combating that particularly serious and, regrettably, widespread violation of human dignity. A convention against torture has been elaborated within the Council of Europe providing for a system of periodic visits by independent experts to places of detention or imprisonment. Since we believe in the universality of human rights, I should like to suggest that such a system of preventive visits be created on a global basis.

Regrettably, intolerance, discrimination and even persecution on the grounds of religion or belief, continue in today's world on a large scale. Freedom of religion and belief is, however, a central element in the freedom of the human

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being. Where this freedom is denied all other fundamental freedoms are in danger. In this context, we place a high value on and consider important the inter-confessional dialogue, based as it is on recognition of the inherent dignity of the human person, as a means further to strengthen human rights.

In order to facilitate concerted action by the international community in this field, the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief should be supplemented by a binding international instrument.

The freedom of minorities of all kinds - ethnic, religious or linguistic - to preserve their specific heritage is another important human rights issue. Such minorities should be regarded not as elements for friction within a State or between States, but, on the contrary, as an enrichment of the States in which they live, as bridges between nations.

To our most sincere regret there are cases - unfortunately, in Europe, too - where policies are put into effect which are designed to stifle the economic, social and, in particular, cultural development of persons belonging to minorities, leaving many of them no other choice than to seek refuge in foreign countries. Austria deplores such developments, which in fact are leading to the destruction of centuries-old cultures. Uprooting minorities, apart from the human suffering it entails, will further diminish our common cultural heritage. I wish to express the sincere hope of the Austrian Government that such policies will be reconsidered by those responsible for them, in the spirit of good-neighbourliness. We believe that the Third Committee ought to address this issue.

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Related to the issue of human rights is the struggle against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. In June of last year a World Conference on the issue was convened in Vienna. The participating States decided upon a comprehensive strategy document and issued a declaration. Work is at present under way on drafting a new convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The convention will be finalized at a conference of plenipotentiaries to be held in Vienna in December. Thus, important signals are being given that the international community considers the fight against drugs a priority area of international co-operation.

At the same time, however, we must take care that the United Nations bodies dealing with drug abuse control which have to take on additional responsibilities are adequately staffed. Similar considerations are valid in respect of the crime prevention and social research areas of the Secretariat.

We witness a growing awareness of global social dimensions, especially with regard to the interrelationship of economic and social progress. Social policies and social development must be at the heart of our concerns in the years to come. The capacity of the United Nations to respond to the increasingly important challenges of social concerns, the advancement of women, youth-related questions and questions of the elderly or disabled, must be further consolidated and strengthened.

A further important topic at each session of the General Assembly is disarmament and arms control, issues which I addressed quite recently in my statement on 2 June this year at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I shall therefore, restrict myself to one particularly urgent question: the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention. The

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co-operation of the chemical industries in all countries and the readiness of all States possessing chemical weapons to destroy their stocks under appropriate international verification, and renounce their future production or acquisition, are essential elements in that endeavour.

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Austria attaches the highest priority to the comprehensive and verifiable elimination of chemical weapons. With a view to contributing to the realization of that aim, I recall that Austria is ready and would be pleased to be the host to a new mechanism to be established by the chemical weapons convention. Vienna already hosts the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has at its disposal highly qualified experts in the field of monitoring and verification. We should take advantage of that.

In this context, I wish to refer to the statement I made on 14 April at the Conference on Disarmament. I referred to the need for all States to provide, at the earliest possible date, detailed information on their actual arsenals, their chemical-weapons production facilities, and all other chemical-industry facilities that might fall under the future chemical weapons convention. The Austrian delegation, in consultation with other delegations, intends to pursue an initiative in that respect.

The Conference on Disarmament, in Geneva, has done essential work in drafting such a convention. Austria is actively following those efforts and is co-operating in the work of the Conference. I remind the Assembly that Austria is a candidate for membership of that important body, which, in disarmament matters, acts as the trustee of the international community. Finally, as a signatory to the Geneva Protocol of 1925, my country notes with interest the United States' proposal to convene a meeting of all the signatories to that document.

The third follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, currently taking place in Vienna, has entered its final phase. By now, there is a realistic chance of consensus, in the coming weeks, among the 35 participating States on a substantial concluding document - consensus based on the important proposals offered by the neutral and non-aligned countries.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

We hope that this opportunity will be seized. It would reinforce the credibility and dynamism of the Conference by contributing to fuller implementation of past commitments and by providing for a programme of new reforms and areas of co-operation. Concrete new provisions should make possible the removal of more of the barriers between the peoples of East and West. The enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the ability to meet and communicate freely with one another, continue to be vital to the attainment of the Europe we are aiming for.

Negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures, as well as on conventional forces, are to be part of the outcome of the Vienna meeting. We are conscious of an increasing awareness of the urgent need to address the existing imbalances in conventional forces in Europe. In this respect a rapid conclusion of the Vienna meeting would also be of great importance.

Given its specific geopolitical position and its deeply rooted commitment to democracy and to the observance of human rights, Austria's European policy is guided by two priorities. On the one hand we pursue our traditional policy of good-neighbourliness towards our Eastern European friends, with whom we maintain close and friendly relations. On the other hand, Austria is traditionally deeply involved in the ongoing European integration process. Therefore we are striving for full participation in the emerging unified internal market of the European Communities. Moreover, we do not exclude the option of future membership, while maintaining our status of permanent neutrality.

Now I would like to say some words on our relations with Italy. Our bilateral relations also have been deepening continuously during the last year, and their present state can be described as excellent.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Following the tradition of past years, I would like, however, to state that the political importance of the South-Tyrol question in Austro-Italian relations remains unchanged. On the basis of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly adopted in 1960 and 1961, Austria and Italy agreed, in 1969, on a new arrangement for South Tyrol's autonomy. Whereas, in past years, Austria was compelled to express its concern about the delays in the realization of the so-called "package" of 1969, I am now in a position to report important and substantial progress, which brings this long-lasting dispute closer to solution.

On 13 May 1988 the Italian Government approved certain measures to implement the package, including the granting of equal status for the use of the German language before court and police authorities, which is of fundamental importance for the protection of the German-speaking minority. Austria assumes that the relevant decree, and two other regulations that still require the approval of the Italian Parliament, will soon come into force.

If we succeed in solving the outstanding questions, with a view to completing and safeguarding the autonomy of South Tyrol, we will also further enhance the ability of all ethnic groups to live together in a small but sensitive part of Europe, which has suffered many conflicts throughout its history. The fact that the respective measures are being carried out in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1497 (XV) and 1661 (XVI) underlines the importance of the United Nations as a peace-generating force.

This is a year of hope. We have witnessed a number of major and quite unexpected breakthroughs as regards the resolution of regional conflicts. I have already mentioned them. The United Nations has thus shown the world that it is not altogether unrealistic to hope for peaceful solutions to international conflicts.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

While there is promising progress in certain areas, the situation in the Middle East has unfortunately not improved since the last session of the General Assembly. On the contrary, the events in the occupied territories in recent months and the deplorable behaviour of the occupying Power have once again focused world attention on the urgent need to achieve a just and lasting settlement. The situation remains volatile. Stability in the region is further threatened by the continuous build-up and increasing sophistication of armaments. In order to decrease mutual fear and suspicion, all States in the area should accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and should submit all their nuclear facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards régime.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

In the view of my Government, the only way to arrive at a just and lasting solution is by convening an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, taking into account the necessity of withdrawal from occupied territories and the respect for the right of all States to exist within secure and internationally recognized boundaries. The recent developments in the area should bring new momentum into the search for peace and allow the Palestinian people, as represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, finally to play its legitimate role in this endeavour. Forty years after the establishment of the State of Israel provided for in resolution 181 (II), we might finally witness the Palestinian Arab people create their own State.

Ten years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the people of Namibia may well enter a new phase of their history, joining the community of sovereign nations. The independence of Namibia, for which the United Nations has accepted special responsibility, would be a prime achievement.

As far as the United Nations Transition Assistance Group is concerned, Austria is prepared to participate with a police contingent and would consider making additional personnel available for other tasks related to the transition of Namibia to independence.

In this connection, it is not necessary to reiterate that Austria remains fully committed to the cause of freedom and dignity for the people of southern Africa. Austria strongly rejects and firmly condemns apartheid. We are convinced that only the eradication of apartheid can lead to a peaceful solution.

As far as the situation in Kampuchea is concerned, 1988 brought some progress in the search for a political solution. The Jakarta informal meeting provided for the first time a framework for informal discussions among the parties directly involved and other concerned countries. There seems to be a sincere willingness on

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

all sides to identify areas of common ground, and agreement to solve the Kampuchean problem through negotiations. Notwithstanding the progress made, there is however still a long way to go. Therefore, the International Conference on Kampuchea, chaired by Leopold Gratz, President of the Austrian Parliament, could be a useful forum for activities designed to assist the parties involved.

The situation in Central America has been on our agenda for a number of years. The problems of the area are still far from any agreed comprehensive solution. We all know that only pluralistic democratic societies closely co-operating in the spirit of good-neighbourliness can successfully address the underlying social and economic problems of the region.

The United Nations remains the only comprehensive international forum for co-operation on economic and interrelated matters. The effective potential of international economic co-operation has clearly been demonstrated by the success of the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, where a comprehensive and far-reaching political consensus on guiding economic principles has been achieved. Although much of the work of implementing the principles still remains to be done, the common acceptance of these principles in itself constitutes important progress.

A tangible expression of economic interdependence is international trade. A large part of world trade has been liberalized in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The changing realities and the impressive gain of importance of new trade flows and sectors, however, continue to pose considerable challenges. The ambitious goal of the Uruguay Round of opening up markets in a series of new fields and of effectively combating all forms of protectionism is highly valued by Austria. Protectionism is nothing less than the unjustifiable refusal to make necessary adjustments in current changes in the world economy, such as technical

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

development, structural imbalances of demand and supply and, last but not least, the appearance of new competitors. The mid-term review of the Uruguay-Round will, we hope, enable ministers to spur on negotiations in this spirit.

As concerns the continuing debt problem of a large number of countries, Austria commends and further encourages measures such as: improved debt rescheduling with official creditors, innovative debt arrangements with private creditors, and national policies vigorously mobilizing national and international resources by enhancing confidence, creditworthiness, market access and new investment. The recommendations of the Toronto summit meeting in favour of the poorest debtor countries constitute an important act of solidarity. Austria will fully support them.

The necessary adjustment in a changing world economy aggravated by the debt burden requires adequate financing. The international financial institutions are to be given credit for their pace-making role in this context. The capital increase of the World Bank and the African Development Bank, the establishment of the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility and, most recently, the Compensatory and Contingency Financing Facility of the International Monetary Fund, provide the needed financial basis for the most urgent remedies. In addition, they are of utmost importance as a signal to private capital markets, encouraging them to join the common efforts.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Austria attaches great importance to the success of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990, which is based on a new and realistic policy consensus. However, as the Secretary-General pointed out in his valuable report for the recent session of the Ad Hoc Committee which undertook a mid-term review of the Programme, the continuing gravity of the economic situation in Africa requires further urgent measures. The successful outcome of that session should provide an important impetus for the future. Its assessment and recommendations reflect the urgent need as well as the willingness of its participants to undertake further efforts to implement the Programme and to assist African States, many of which have instituted commendable and courageous reform measures.

The environment has been a top-ranking issue on our agenda for many years. The rapid deterioration of our environment has created a new sense of responsibility for the environmental consequences of our activities. In the past year the report of the Brundtland Commission has been instrumental in raising the level of global consciousness of the interrelation of environment and development and the imperative need for making the transition towards sustainable development. Austria strongly supports an effective follow-up of this report within the global and regional framework of the United Nations system. We welcome in this context the initiative of the Norwegian Government concerning the holding in 1990, in co-operation with the Economic Commission for Europe, of a regional conference at the ministerial level to review the process of the ongoing work in this field.

Dramatic changes in our environment - such as the depletion of the ozone layer and the greenhouse effect, to mention only two of the most serious environmental problems of global dimension - may seriously threaten mankind's very existence. Concerted action is called for if we want to maintain or restore the ecological balance of our globe.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

I am pleased to recall at this point Austria's active contribution to the elaboration of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, which we have ratified, and of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer, which we have signed recently. Austria has also hosted several high-ranking scientific meetings under the auspices of the United Nations Environmental Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and the International Council for Scientific Unions on carbon dioxide emissions, which reflects our grave concern about the climatic changes. We hope that the elaboration of a protocol on the control and reduction of nitrogen oxide emissions will take us another important step forward in the implementation of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

It is our primary task to perform pragmatic and efficient day-to-day work. This should not, however, preclude our having a vision of the future. We must combine our forces in order jointly to master the challenges of the future. Therefore I should like to end my statement with some appropriate lines by Alfred Lord Tennyson:

"We dip into the future, far as human eyes can see,  
See the vision of the world and all the wonder that shall be,  
Hear the war-drum throb no longer, see the battle flags all furled  
In the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

Mr. van den BROEK (Netherlands): Sir, it gives me particular pleasure to see you in the Chair as President of the forty-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. We know that under your guidance this gathering is in good hands. My delegation looks forward to co-operating with you in the months ahead.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

At the beginning of this week my friend and colleague, Mr. Papoulias, the Foreign Minister of Greece, set out before the Assembly the views of the 12 member States of the European Community - including the Netherlands - on a wide range of international issues. This enables me to concentrate on two major issues that deserve our common attention: the role of the United Nations in the promotion of peace, justice and international law and its significance in the field of human rights. On both subjects I should like to make a few suggestions.

Earlier this month, in the presence of the Secretary-General, a ceremony in commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Peace Palace, the seat of the International Court of Justice, was held in The Hague. I was intrigued by a Latin phrase on the wall of the large courtroom: "Arma togae cedant", this is, "May weapons yield to law". One could hardly think of a more appropriate motto for the present Assembly session than Cicero's dictum. The Assembly convenes at a crucial juncture. In different parts of the world, force is giving way to negotiations, and more and more voices are calling for the supremacy of the rule of law. The United Nations may well be about to assume the role its founders envisaged.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

The United Nations Charter embodies the bold vision of a world-wide system of collective security, with the Security Council as its pivot. As Dag Hammarskjöld once pointed out, the United Nations reflects at the same time an aspiration and a falling short of that aspiration. But, he added, the persistent struggle to close the gap between aspiration and actual accomplishment makes the difference between civilization and chaos.

During these weeks representatives of nations from East and West, North and South, are paying tribute to the Secretary-General and his staff who, quietly but with perseverance, are serving the cause of peace. Like others, we applaud recent achievements in Afghanistan and the Gulf and the new impetuses being given elsewhere. Those developments have added much to the prestige of the Organization and of the Secretary-General. In those developments we recognize vital elements of the recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the Security Council that the Secretary-General advanced in his reports to the General Assembly in 1983 and 1986. At the time, those ideas did not receive the hearing they deserved. Now, the mood of frustration and impotence is giving way to renewed optimism. There seems to be a new confidence in the effectiveness of the multilateral approach in international relations.

We must seize the opportunities to promote peace. United Nations peace-keeping is one of them. It is therefore most befitting that the United Nations peace-keeping forces were collectively awarded the Nobel Peace Prize yesterday. On behalf of the Netherlands Government I most warmly congratulate them on that well-deserved award. The Prize honours all those soldiers who over the years have served in United Nations forces all over the world.

The Netherlands has always supported the efforts of the United Nations in the field of peace-keeping. We are now actively considering with our partners in the Twelve how we can contribute more effectively. In this context the valuable

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comments on the growing role of peace-keeping operations in the Secretary-General's annual report to the Assembly certainly deserve careful attention. Of course, one should not overlook the fact that here, as elsewhere, there is an obvious need to make the best possible use of scarce resources. This is the more true in the light of the magnitude of some of the peace-keeping operations that are envisaged, for instance in Namibia and in Western Sahara.

For many years the world community has been demanding independence for Namibia. We are encouraged by the progress recently made. I trust that the momentum can be maintained.

The process of dialogue and negotiations we see in many parts of the world is also needed in South Africa itself. Apartheid is totally and fundamentally wrong. It has no future. Although change is long overdue, it is not too late to bring it about peacefully. But every new delay will make the task of national reconciliation even more difficult. The artificial separations apartheid has created between the various segments of the South African population have bred deep resentment and fear of the unknown. In our opinion it is high time to replace this by a broad dialogue across all lines of colour. The Kingdom of the Netherlands urges the South African Government to release Nelson Mandela and all those others detained for their political beliefs. That could open the way to negotiations with the genuine representatives of the population.

We look not only to the early abolition of apartheid; we look also to its replacement by a just political order in which all South Africans can live in peace and harmony. It is, of course, up to the South African peoples themselves to join hands in order to shape a new constitutional framework. But let me say this on the subject: the ideals of human rights, democracy and the rule of law to which my country, like so many others, is deeply attached, would seem all the more essential in a society as diverse as South Africa's. May I submit that a bill of rights, to

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be negotiated and agreed upon between the authentic representatives of the entire population and safeguarded by an independent judiciary, would do much to guarantee equal rights and allay the fears that some have. Would not a pluralistic democracy providing adequate participation by both majority and minority offer the best prospects for lasting reconciliation? And, may I add, would not a South Africa at peace with itself be a tremendous asset for the region as a whole?\*

The cease-fire in the 8-year-old war between Iraq and Iran was greeted with great relief. Untold suffering is coming to an end. But there was more to this war. In flagrant violation of international law we saw chemical weapons being used on a scale not witnessed since the First World War. The war endangered yet another principle of international law, namely freedom of navigation, on one of the busiest sea-lanes of the world. It was to uphold that principle that my country, together with a number of other Western European countries, contributed to mine-clearing in the Gulf. We have noted with interest that the Secretary-General has suggested looking into the possibilities of extending peace-keeping to the maritime environment. We are prepared to study the implications of such a new dimension in United Nations peace-keeping tasks.

Negotiations between the two belligerents have now started under the auspices of the Secretary-General. The intransigence that has prolonged the war for so many years should not be transferred to the negotiating table. Together with others, we call upon both parties to co-operate intensively with the Secretary-General in order to achieve a comprehensive peace settlement in compliance with Security Council resolution 598 (1987).

Turning to Cambodia, we welcome the intensified diplomatic efforts to reach a settlement and the constructive role played by the countries of the Association

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\*Mr. Treiki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Cambodia has had more than its share of suffering. Our goal must be an independent Cambodia, free from foreign occupation and invested with democratic institutions strong enough to withstand internal and external threats. Clearly, neither a continuation of the current foreign occupation nor a return to the universally condemned policies and practices of the late 1970s is acceptable.

In a number of other regional conflicts also, we see how the improved international climate, the activities of States in the region and the support given by the United Nations complement each other in working towards peaceful settlements. The common basis that was found for direct talks between the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus is another example of progress to that end.

But in another hotbed of tension an unjust and painful stalemate continues to exist. We are looking forward to the day when the United Nations can also play an enhanced role in the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The status quo there is not sustainable. The tensions in the occupied territories demonstrate the need for a renewed impetus to the peace process. My country fully understands the Israeli concerns about security. Israel, indeed, is entitled to existence in security. But the Palestinian people too have their legitimate rights. Their right to self-determination will have to be accommodated in the context of a comprehensive and lasting settlement. In recent meetings with the Israeli Government and with Palestinian representatives in East Jerusalem, the Netherlands Government joined those who urged moderation and a constructive approach by all concerned.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

The road to a settlement will no doubt be long. It might have to be covered in stages, but then with a clear final perspective. Success will only be achieved if parties are willing to compromise, if parties do not confront each other with conditions they know beforehand to be unacceptable to the other side. Peace involves mutual concessions. Delaying the inevitable will diminish the opportunities of reaching a solution and will only increase the tensions. The role of the international community is, as we see it, not merely to mete out reprimands. It is to help the peace process along and eventually, once the negotiations have led to results, to guarantee their outcome.

We are concerned about developments in Lebanon and saddened by the continuing suffering of its people. We urge all parties concerned to abstain from any action that would deepen the rifts that have kept Lebanon divided for so long already. It is imperative that the constitutional framework of Lebanon be allowed to function so that a new President, elected freely and without interference from outside, can take up the pressing task of restoring the unity of the Lebanese people.

Much is changing in Eastern Europe. We follow the processes of reform with great interest and commend the spirit of greater openness. My country has, together with its allies, consistently pursued a policy aimed at better East-West relations and arms control. We will not be remiss in seizing opportunities to further these aims. Important progress in arms control has already been achieved, and this to an extent that seemed inconceivable only a few years ago.

The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty was indeed a major breakthrough. And the 50-per-cent cut in strategic weapons, which is now being negotiated, would be an even more significant disarmament measure.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

But however much we hope for further results in the field of nuclear disarmament, it is essential that progress should also encompass conventional arms control. The serious conventional imbalance we face in Europe is at the core of our security problem; and our aim is to bring about a stable conventional balance at lower levels and with more transparency.

It is also essential to press ahead with a total ban on chemical weapons. The imminent danger of proliferation of chemical weapons underlines once again the need for such a ban, and that on a world-wide basis. Indeed, the verification problems are daunting, but I refuse to believe that they cannot be solved. In the meantime, while a total ban has not yet been concluded, it is tragic to see that the 1925 Geneva Protocol has not prevented the use of these abhorrent weapons. We support President Reagan's proposal, made last Monday, to convene a conference to see how together we can remedy the erosion of the Protocol.

When addressing the third special session on disarmament I emphasized how important it was that the Secretary-General be able to conduct investigations, whenever there were allegations of the use of chemical weapons. The Security Council confirmed this necessity and encouraged him to carry out promptly investigations in response to allegations concerning the possible use of chemical weapons. It is therefore disappointing and disturbing to note that recently the Secretary-General was not permitted to ascertain the facts when there were strong reasons to do so.

It is indeed a worrisome development that "proliferation", which used to refer exclusively to the danger of nuclear proliferation nowadays is acquiring new connotations, as we see proliferation, not only in the chemical field but also in that of missiles and missile technology. It would be a bitter irony if at a time

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when arms control negotiations are at last beginning to yield long-sought results, we failed to stem the danger of proliferation.

A key element of any arms control agreement is verification, and I am happy to note the growing international consensus on this point. In my statement at the third special session on disarmament last June I suggested strengthening the general role of the United Nations with regard to verification in a practical manner. Our proposal is that a group of qualified governmental experts would study ways to improve the assistance United Nations bodies could render in the verification of arms control agreements. This would apply in the first place to multilateral agreements and, furthermore, to regional, or even bilateral agreements, if parties so desired. Together with Canada and France, we intend to submit our ideas to the Assembly in greater detail.

Maintaining peace and security is a primary task of the United Nations, but by no means the only one. All of us should seriously consider how we can increase the relevance of the role of the Organization in the light of constantly changing conditions, how we can enhance its efficiency and flexibility, and how we can counteract bureaucratic tendencies and duplication.

The Netherlands has participated actively in the special committee on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations. I must admit that we are rather disappointed with the outcome of these deliberations so far. None the less, we must continue this reform process in order to enable the United Nations to increase its relevance also in the economic and social fields.

One does not have to be a prophet to foresee a major transformation of the international system in the decades ahead. The spectacular emergence of new economic centres in various parts of the third world is only one indication that we are witnessing a development towards greater multipolarity. This in itself could

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enrich the interaction amongst us, and, it is to be hoped, will increase the effectiveness of the United Nations when new actors assume larger responsibilities for the common good.

The recent economic recovery in the industrialized countries has not yet led to an improvement of the economic situation in many parts of the developing world. I believe that it is high time to remind ourselves of the target for official development assistance of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product that has been adopted. In order to assist the economic and social advancement of developing countries, the Netherlands will continue to disburse 1 per cent of its gross domestic product for development purposes.

The review of the Programme of Action for Africa has made clear that it is Africa in particular that is facing economic problems of staggering magnitude. I am convinced, however, that the review has provided important impetus to both the African countries and the international community to redouble our common efforts to reach the goals of the action plan in time.

(Mr. van den Broek,  
Netherlands)

The debate on the strategy for the fourth development decade offers a good opportunity to discuss the interrelationships and mutual dependence of specific development topics such as debts, investments, the environment, natural resources, commodities and trade and their implications for sustainable development. As a contribution to solving some of the most pressing environmental problems, my Government will host high-level consultations on the ozone layer next month and a conference on the protection of the atmosphere next year in the Netherlands.

Regional co-operation has much to offer to people on all continents, both as a way to promote peace and as an instrument for increasing prosperity. Integration amongst European nations has allowed us not only to overcome a bitter legacy of division but also to achieve a considerable degree of prosperity for our peoples. Our endeavours have not led to Eurocentrism but stimulated even an outward orientation of Western Europe. One large single market instead of 12 separate smaller markets should offer new opportunities, not only for the Community, but for third-world countries as well.

We do not see regional co-operation as a substitute for global co-operation. The two complement each other. Interdependence and co-operation are at the heart of the new global reality and the United Nations should be an energetic reflection of that reality.

The Olympic games provide us, right at this moment, with a powerful symbol of brotherhood and friendly competition. Against this background I may say that we hope that the Republic of Korea, now hosting the games, can soon take up its rightful place in this universal Organization.

In order to strengthen the basis for global co-operation we must reflect upon the values that bind us together.

(Mr. van den Broek,  
Netherlands)

Article I of the United Nations Charter lists the promotion of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms among the three main purposes of the United Nations. Forty years ago, the General Assembly, building on this foundation, proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then, the universal applicability of the Declaration has been firmly established.

Human rights transcend national borders. Violations of these rights - and they are only too frequent - are a common concern of the family of nations. They are not simply an internal matter within the exclusive domain of national sovereignty. The past 40 years have clearly refuted this argument.

The 1948 Declaration was the starting-point of an impressive effort at international law-making. The two United Nations Covenants on human rights, of 1966, were milestones in this effort and it is to be hoped that in this year, in which we are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, those Member States that have not yet acceded to some of the United Nations instruments on human rights will be able to decide to do so in the near future. Let us be clear - the concept of human rights was not an invention to be used to attack those with whom we find ourselves in disagreement. No, we refer to fundamental standards on which we should all be prepared to be judged. Moreover, we feel that respect for human rights is essential for confidence-building between States.

Formal accession by countries to the various conventions is important, but it is only a first step. Implementation must follow - and as we all know, that is where the real problems begin. This underlines the importance of the various monitoring procedures and mechanisms designed to hold States to their obligations. Signs of erosion of the supervisory system are a cause of concern. We would hope that the meeting of chairpersons of the various United Nations supervisory bodies,

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scheduled for this autumn, will be able to propose practical remedies to remove the strain on the reporting system. At the same time it is essential that adequate levels of funding for human rights monitoring mechanisms be secured. The Netherlands has circulated some ideas on monitoring procedures and mechanisms amongst these chairpersons. These suggestions will also be circulated in a document in the course of this session of the General Assembly.

As I have said, efforts at the regional level can supplement and reinforce those at the global level. In the Helsinki Final Act 35 countries pledged themselves to a broad programme designed to improve mutual relations. This programme includes respect for a comprehensive range of clearly defined human rights. Here, too, we have been faced too long with a gap between the standards we set and the degree to which they are being complied with. That is why the Netherlands insisted so strongly on the incorporation, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), of a mechanism to review compliance in the field of human rights and human contacts. I hope that this concept will be reflected in the final document of the CSCE which, as we all hope, the current meeting in Vienna will be able to agree upon soon.

There is much to celebrate during the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration. But celebrations or commemorations should not divert our attention from the more sobering task of stock-taking. We should ask ourselves to what degree the rights proclaimed are actually promoted and enjoyed. Torture, summary executions and unlawful detention are an everyday reality for all too many of our fellow human beings. And yet, there is probably no government that does not profess respect for human rights. Let us not forget that the scourge of the abuse of human rights is man-made: it can therefore be remedied by man. The international Bill of Human Rights exists; the mechanisms are in place. Our task

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Netherlands)

in the years ahead should be to promote the political will to bring about the effective enjoyment of human rights by all mankind.

Developments over the past few years are strengthening my belief that the tide of history is on the side of freedom. People all over the world are showing an ever increasing awareness of their inalienable fundamental rights. The call for democracy and political freedom is heard more than ever before. There is a growing realization that these concepts, while values in themselves, are also basic conditions for shaping a more prosperous and a more just society. Freedom and democracy, we feel, are not luxuries. On the contrary, they go hand in hand with development and prosperity. The age of technology gives an advantage to those societies that allow information to circulate freely and give room to the innovative capabilities of the individual.

But if we cherish human rights so much, it is not only for their intrinsic value or for their contribution to the prosperity of man. Human rights are, as the Universal Declaration states, "the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". Indeed, internal oppression and external aggression have often gone together. It could not have been phrased more aptly than it was by the Secretary-General during his recent stay in the Netherlands when he said that "respect for human rights and peace are inseparable. Just as the violation of human rights leads to conflict, so conflict and war lead, all too often, to the suppression of human rights."

Mr. ADODO (Togo) (interpretation from French): I should like first of all to express the warmest congratulations of the delegation of Togo to Mr. Dante Caputo on his election as President of this forty-third session of the General Assembly. That choice is certainly justified by his well-known diplomatic qualities and the firm devotion of his country, Argentina, to the service of the noble ideals of the United Nations and the values of solidarity among peoples. These are all virtues and assets that make it possible for us to predict success for the work that will take place under his presidency.

Throughout the forty-second session of the General Assembly his illustrious predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, demonstrated tact and competence in successfully guiding the work of the Assembly. My delegation would like once again to express to him its warm appreciation and esteem.

My delegation would like also to congratulate very warmly the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, on the pragmatic and efficient way in which he continues to serve our Organization. I should like particularly to hail his constant efforts to increase the Organization's capacity for action and to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and the application of the United Nations Programme for the Economic Recovery and Development of Africa. I should like to assure him once again of the constant support of my country in his work in carrying out his difficult and delicate responsibilities.

The Nobel Prize, which has just been awarded to the United Nations Peace-keeping Forces, rightly honours the courage and devotion of the thousands of men and women mobilized in our common name to assure peace in the trouble spots of the world. This gesture of the Nobel Prize Committee honours before world public

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opinion the crucial role played by these forces in maintaining peace. Through me, my country, Togo, wishes warmly to congratulate them.

The forty-third session of the General Assembly is taking place in an international climate characterized by both legitimate hope and grave concern. The hope arises from the will of the two greatest Powers to reduce and progressively eliminate the threat of war, particularly nuclear war, and to settle peacefully the conflicts still tearing apart certain regions of the world.

Of course there are grave concerns as well as to the ways and means of overcoming the grave crisis which continues to shake the economies of the countries of the third world. It is time to launch international economic co-operation on a healthy and more equitable basis.

We should like to express our sadness at the failure of the third special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. Here and there rays of light do appear among the storm clouds, which in some areas of the globe seemed to make impossible any hope of peace. The will to undertake a dialogue which has finally been shown in those areas is indeed a miracle. Certainly there has always been a shorter, less painful way to succeed in bringing men to work together on a more equal basis, even if they have not loved each other as brothers. Thus one must ask, is it really necessary that losses of human life and human suffering must lead us to the very brink of exhaustion so that there can be recognition and acceptance, finally, of the basic truth of history that force is only dissuasion if it is not reason?

Togo has always proclaimed its faith in the virtues of peace. It appreciates its benefits and has done so for almost a quarter of a century of political stability. We would like to reaffirm here, in this year of the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that the links between peace and human rights are indissoluble. That peace, which should underlie

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any development effort, constitutes the corner-stone of equilibrium in our respective societies and should be assured on the regional level by the implementation by each State of a policy of good-neighbourliness and peaceful coexistence and through the abolition of terrorism, particularly that clandestinely engaged in by States for the purpose of destabilizing their neighbours and thus diverting efforts from the only struggle that deserves to be waged - that for the social and economic development of our peoples. The search for peace should resolutely avoid all temptations of pressure or blackmail by terrorism, which sows grief and imperils progress and security for our populations.

In our interdependent world, military victories are only intermediate stages which do not bring any definitive solutions to the problems of relations among States. We have to discuss, negotiate and understand each other. There is no alternative. Thus we hail with relief the establishment of the cease-fire between Iran and Iraq. This is a result of the efforts constantly and tirelessly made by the Secretary-General to ensure that the region of the Gulf and its peoples, afflicted by eight years of cruel war, can finally rediscover the benefits of peace.

In Western Sahara peace efforts are being given a great impetus and a better chance, undoubtedly because of the need for integration that necessarily brings together the Maghreb States. This conflict, which has seriously and sorely tested bilateral relations in the region and significantly disturbed the evolution of the Organization of African Unity, will soon find its culmination in the referendum which will make it possible for the Sahraoui people freely to express themselves on their future and thus exercise their right to self-determination.

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The tensions which have disturbed relations between Chad and Libya are finally entering a phase of détente. Togo, which follows with great interest this evolution, is pleased with the reaffirmed will of those two countries to seek peaceful means to solve their differences. We urge them to work towards the normalization of their relations so that a new era of good-neighbourliness and fraternal co-operation may open up for their respective populations.

As for Namibia, after decades of hard struggle and intense efforts, it is now moving towards the application of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which stipulated the conditions for the achievement of its independence. It is to be hoped that the dialogue developing within the framework of negotiations between Angola, South Africa, Cuba and the United States will culminate in a just and true peace in that part of our continent.

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The agreements on Afghanistan reached in Geneva last March are a decisive contribution to the peace process in that region. Those agreements are based on the Afghan people's right - finally recognized - to choose, without any foreign interference, the political, economic and social system they regard as being in conformity with their aspirations.

The edifice of peace is being built also in Central America. We pay a tribute here to the five Heads of State of the region, who, by reaffirming their commitment to honour all the obligations resulting from the Esquipulas II agreement, have greatly increased the chances for peace in Central America. The international community should promote and encourage these efforts in order to achieve the hoped-for results.

In Kampuchea the Kampuchean people should be enabled quickly to exercise the right to self-determination which they have been denied for a long time because of the invasion and occupation of their territory by foreign forces. My country, which has always supported the just liberation struggle of the Kampuchean people has taken note of the Vietnamese Government's intention to withdraw 50,000 soldiers. Of course, only the withdrawal of all the foreign troops will make it possible to find a final solution to this painful problem.

In the Korean peninsula, the willingness of the two Governments, of the North and of the South, to engage in dialogue seems to be gradually taking hold and broadening. Togo supports the idea of the peaceful reunification of the two territorial entities and believes that the implementation of the three-point plan proposed by North Korea should be negotiated in the context of sincere and fraternal harmonization of views, taking due account of the free will of the Korean people as a whole.

These harbingers of peace that are springing up here and there go hand in hand, unfortunately, with serious uncertainty, which makes it necessary for us to

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marshal our will and focus our efforts on methods that are worthy of our times and that can deal with the misery of millions of men and women who are still excluded from the community of free and sovereign peoples. That is true of the black majority in South Africa, which endures every day the suffering and humiliation caused by apartheid.

In fact, the leaders in Pretoria, deaf to all the protests by public opinion, are obstinately perpetuating the practice of apartheid, this socio-political system that is inevitably condemned to disappear. Banning or assassinating anti-apartheid militants, prolonging the state of emergency without any reason to do so cannot stop the historic march of the black people towards their freedom.

With regard to the Palestinian tragedy, Togo shares the concern about the situation in the occupied territories. The Palestinian people's right to a country and respect for the sovereignty of States are principles on which the settlement of this conflict should be based. My country advocates the idea of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations in which all the parties concerned would participate, including, of course, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament should have been a milestone in the long history of the efforts to maintain and strengthen international peace and security. Unfortunately the hopes aroused by the progress achieved since the first special session and by the recent positive developments concerning disarmament did not take concrete form in the relaunching of the process of general and complete disarmament. This special session, which adjourned without the slightest consensus, could well have aroused doubts about our Organization's ability to encourage and strengthen the multilateral approach to disarmament. Nevertheless, this failure should not overshadow the remarkable

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efforts made by the two great Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, gradually to eliminate the threats of war, particularly nuclear war.

The ratification of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles has given concrete form to the two great Powers' will for peace and true disarmament. At the same time, it has the advantage of opening the path to more numerous and more audacious initiatives. Hence, it is in everyone's interest that the two great Powers tirelessly pursue their negotiations to reach agreement on a reduction by 50 per cent in their strategic nuclear arsenals and their conventional forces in Europe.

The international economic situation, which has for almost two decades been in a state of general stagnation, remains disquieting.

The uncertainty about world economic growth is even greater for the developing countries, and particularly for sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, according to forecasts, real income of the countries of that region and the least-developed countries as a whole will increase by 2.5 per cent, and there will be no growth in per capita revenue, or even negative growth, during the period from 1987 to 1995.

In addition to being contrary to the basic principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the protectionist measures taken by the developed countries are preventing the developing countries from participating fairly in international commercial exchanges. Nevertheless, we must hope that the new round of multilateral trade negotiations under way in Uruguay will open the path to a considerable reduction in and the gradual elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers.

It is true that the recovery of the world economy requires both concerted international action and the individual efforts of States. But it is even more true that the Draconian measures of structural adjustment imposed on the developing countries have a very high economic, social and political cost. They reduce the

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rate of development of those countries' economies. Because of the lack of provisions for increasing the prices of raw materials or reducing the excessive debt burden, our countries' economies are the greatest victims of the infernal process of increasing indebtedness, the continuing deterioration in the terms of trade and the reverse transfer of capital.

In those circumstances, the determination of the developing countries to put into effect coherent economic and social policies comes up against external constraints linked to the iniquitous and imbalanced international economic system.

The measures for structural adjustment, in their present form, should be reviewed in order to enable our States to keep their foreign commitments and continue internal development. While the global figure for the debt of the developing countries has been constantly increasing - indeed today it amounts to more than \$1 trillion - the combined price index of the principal non-petroleum commodities exported by those countries has increased by an average of almost 5 per cent since 1980, and the reversal in the net transfer of resources caused them to lose more than \$30 billion in 1986.

The constant decrease in the available financial resources is a major obstacle to the third-world countries' efforts to ensure the recovery of their economies and development. We know that more than two thirds of those countries receive more than half of their export income from the sale of commodities. Hence, the international community must put into effect measures that can stabilize and fix the prices of raw materials at remunerative levels. It must also adopt a new international strategy for development based on greater justice and equity and providing for the harmonious growth of the world economy. That new strategy should envisage urgent and appropriate solutions to the questions of foreign debt and the constant decrease in the financial resources of the developing countries, in

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particular by a substantial alleviation of the debt, and even the cancellation of entire portions of it.

In regard particularly to Africa, it is encouraging to note the increasing interest of our Organization in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. That interest is clear particularly from two initiatives taken by the General Assembly at its forty-second session - that is, on the one hand, the decision to establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Assembly as the most appropriate mechanism to prepare the review and the appraisal of the Programme of Action; and, on the other hand, the request made to the Secretary-General to submit to the forty-third session of the Assembly concrete recommendations for a speedy and full implementation of that Programme. We must however note with regret that the results hoped for during the meeting of the Committee of the Whole have not been attained.

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By establishing an advisory group on financial flows for Africa, the Secretary-General has acted upon his intention to give priority to that continent's economic problems and to seek ways and means to hasten implementation of the Programme of Action. In this connection, we must see to it that new financial flows are carefully channelled, at both the bilateral and the multilateral level. Therefore United Nations bodies concerned with development should have access to additional resources enabling them to participate actively in the implementation of the Programme of Action, among other things by devising and putting in place projects specifically designed for sub-Saharan Africa.

In fulfilment of their commitments, African States have undertaken major reforms to secure economic recovery and development, and it is therefore important that the international community too live up to its agreement to participate in implementing the Programme by providing Africa with all the assistance it needs.

At a time when African leaders are tackling with courage and determination the economic and social recovery of their continent, it is especially revolting to see the various wicked attempts by some in the industrial and business circles of the North to turn Africa into a dumping ground for nuclear and industrial wastes, thus gravely harming the health of our peoples and our environment. These operations are motivated by a cynical desire to exploit the current economic and financial difficulties of our countries. In the face of this grave threat to African interests, the Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) unanimously adopted last May a resolution firmly denouncing and condemning the scandal of toxic wastes and undertaking to take the measures necessary to prevent the dumping of these wastes on African soil.

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In that same spirit, the eleventh conference of Heads of State or Government of the Economic Community of West African States adopted a resolution by which it was decided to enact laws in all 16 member countries making it a crime for any person, group of persons, business or organization to participate in any act involving the stockpiling of nuclear or industrial wastes. To spare our continent the torment of the irreversible deterioration of its environment, we call upon the international community, and especially the industrialized countries, to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to prevent the export of toxic wastes to our countries.

This session coincides with the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and we must therefore vigorously reaffirm our total commitment to the humanitarian values that are indispensable in containing mankind's destructive impulses and suicidal passions.

The favourable developments that have taken place in regions long torn apart by hatred and violence reassure us of the usefulness of our Organization and its authority in the sphere of the management and settlement of international affairs. In the light of these developments, we must not stand idly by, but participate in useful activities to ensure that frontiers be no longer barriers between peoples but open doors through which they can pass to meet, join together and ensure that the weakness of certain countries, instead of being a pretext for shameful exploitation, becomes an opportunity for sharing and solidarity.

Mr. CABRERA HIDALGO (Guatemala) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the delegation of Guatemala, which I have the honour to head, I wish to congratulate Mr. Dante Caputo on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-third session. He enjoys the support of the international

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community represented here, because of our esteem for his country and his well-known diplomatic skills and personal attributes.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm my admiration for the work carried out by the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. During his term he has set an example of dedication to the Organization, placing his talent, enthusiasm and tenacity at the service of the United Nations and the cause of international peace and security.

I wish also to congratulate the United Nations peace-keeping forces on having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The international peace and security guaranteed by the United Nations requires that we focus our efforts on the strengthening of our institutions, both within our countries and in our international relations and our gradual adaptation to the demands of the realities of the time. The United Nations must gradually become an instrument enabling the principles of its founding Charter to be fulfilled in all nations. All countries must strive towards institutional compliance with the obligations set out in the Charter.

Over the past 32 months my country has shown its belief in compliance with the principles of the United Nations, and we shall not rest but do everything necessary to remain firm in that determination. Obviously, the noble purposes of the United Nations cannot be achieved while a part of mankind continues to live in poverty and ignorance. All human beings have the right to dignity, progress and intellectual and spiritual development. The priority task of the United Nations, apart from the quest for international peace and security, must unquestionably be to strengthen co-operation in promoting the all-round development of the poorest countries.

(Mr. Cabrera Hidalgo, Guatemala)

We are convinced of the value of dialogue as the most effective way of settling disputes and removing tension, and our foreign policy is based on the basic need for peace. In our international relations we reject the threat and use of force and spare no effort in the quest for peaceful political solutions. We continue to observe these essential values both internally and externally. We condemn human rights violations wherever they occur. That clear and definitive stand has been recognized by the international community. Because of all our efforts in this important task, international personalities and organizations understand that in my country the Government of the Republic guarantees the full enjoyment of human rights and unrestricted exercise of all freedoms. Our foreign policy is in keeping with the purposes and principles of the charters of the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

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We reaffirm our belief in the self-determination of peoples and in non-intervention; in ideological and political pluralism; and in the settlement of disputes through peaceful means. Our international policy at the Central American level is one of solidarity and fraternity, continuously promoting the values that sustain our convictions. We recognize and promote a Latin Americanist sentiment and we stand in solidarity with the just aspirations of all third-world countries. We too wish for an international order based on justice and equity.

In this context, I wish to refer to my country's deep concern over the external debt problem, given its overriding importance for our countries. More than five years have elapsed since the first initiatives were taken in this area, but not only does the problem persist but there have been no positive prospects for a solution. I believe that the time has come to analyse the problem once again, this time through a more realistic and pragmatic approach. To this end a basic strategy should be established by taking account of the positions and interests of the debtor and creditor countries alike, not only in financial terms but also through a broader, more comprehensive approach, without underestimating other problems such as political, social and economic problems which stem from or are the cause of the debt problem.

Our countries cannot afford not to grow, sacrificing their economic expansion to honour their financial commitments. Neither can we forget the impact this is having on the standard of living of the majority. On the contrary, Governments are accountable to their peoples; that is why my Government has decided gradually to take care of the social debt consisting of the accumulation of health, education and housing needs which for years had not been met.

Hence my country is in favour of holding a meeting to seek multilateral, comprehensive solutions to the anguishing problem of foreign debt.

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The Central American crisis is deeply rooted in past injustices - social injustice, economic injustice and political injustice. Our recent history is replete with examples of institutional needs - the lack of democratic processes, the absence of pluralism and the denial of democratic participation. There has been much speculation on the peace process in Central America. I wish at this time to state the following: peace in Central America will not result solely from the political will of Central American Governments or peoples; peace in Central America as a fundamental goal will entail a long, difficult and complex process. The root causes of the crisis obtaining today in Central America are authoritarianism, misunderstanding, intolerance, alienation of certain groups, poverty and illegitimate government. That means that the peace which is so deeply desired by 25 million Central Americans, and sought by almost all countries of the world cannot be attained solely through good will on our part.

The goal of peace urgently requires clear and transparent processes of internal democratization in each of our countries, so that every citizen in Central America will enjoy a certain and secure area so that our peoples will become the protagonists of their own destinies, the builders of their own future. We require all the inhabitants of Central America to play a leading role in forming their social model and their historical destiny. To this end, it is essential and urgent to bring about the basic conditions needed for the comprehensive development of the human person - and that means social justice, economic justice and political justice.

If we truly wish for peace for each and every one of our countries, as we stated in the document entitled "Procedure for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace in Central America", we must continually, in the eyes of the world and before history which is our judge, give testimony of our resolve to maintain, above all, a leading role for our peoples, legitimate government, pluralistic and

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democratic participation, and the unalterable applicability of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

It is not enough to speak out and to make promises; we must take action and demonstrate that we are taking action.

On 14 January 1986 President Vinicio Cerezo of Guatemala initiated and promoted steps at the Central American level with a view to arriving at an instrument for peace. It was in Guatemala that the two historic meetings of Esquipulas were held, meetings which gave form and content to the Esquipulas II plan, the Guatemala procedure to maintain a firm and lasting peace in Central America. It was President Vinicio Cerezo of Guatemala who proposed forming a Central American parliament - an appropriate forum and a fitting instrument for discussing the political problems of the area, the economic problems that weigh upon us, and Central American integration as a model of unity to which we Central Americans have aspired for so long.

President Cerezo, the Government of the Republic and the people of Guatemala have spared no effort to promote peace in the Central American subregion. We have drawn up procedures and proposed actions; we have accepted advice and criteria; we have done everything within our means; and we will not rest until we attain the goal we have set ourselves. After 32 months of work on, involvement in and commitment to this process, we are able to say to the peoples of the world that we in Central America are continually making progress in building this model - a model in which Central Americans have taken on the leading role that history requires of us, valiantly and resolutely shouldering our own responsibilities. We are facing up to the complexity of our problems with goodwill, imagination, resolve and faith. Today Central America is not the Central America of two years ago, nor is it the Central America we hope to see in a short time; but in Central America today new areas have been opened up and we are marching towards the future; above all, we

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know full well that we cannot turn back. We know that the task ahead is difficult, but we will continue to strive to find appropriate, timely and correct solutions. In this process, we require the goodwill, solidarity and co-operation not only of international institutions but also of all the peoples of the world.

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Here I wish to refer in parenthesis to the valuable and noble solidarity of the Contadora Group and Support Group countries. Those brother countries became involved in our problems and opened up for us valuable and worthwhile opportunities, putting us on the path we had to follow.

I also wish to express gratitude on behalf of my country, Guatemala - and I am sure that I am reflecting the feelings of the 25 million Central Americans - for the valuable and timely co-operation given us by the United Nations, which is actively seeking mechanisms to implement a plan for the economic and social development of Central America.

We are also grateful for the solidarity and co-operation of the European Economic Community, which, in many forums and institutions, has joined us in the quest for peace in Central America. We thank the United States of America for its constant display of solidarity and co-operation, and all the peoples of the world which have joined us in pursuing the cause of peace.

I am happy to take this opportunity to state that the Government of the Republic of Guatemala has fulfilled, and will continue firmly to fulfil, the commitments entered into within the framework of Esquipulas. We have maintained, and will continue to maintain, a policy of active neutrality with regard to the Central American crisis, so that the peace process may result in the establishment of conditions of democracy, freedom, prosperity and respect for the human rights of Central Americans, their right to the territorial integrity and their right to self-determination and to choose their own way of life.

We are giving new evidence of that. With President Cerezo, a number of us last week visited the other countries of Central America to propose new mechanisms to revitalize and reinvigorate the procedure for seeking peace in Central America. I can tell our friends throughout the world that in November there will be another meeting of the Central American Presidents, in the sister Republic of El Salvador,

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to assess - and this may involve self-criticism - the extent to which we have not been able to comply with Esquipulas II, and to strengthen the will and the commitment to comply with all its provisions.

The path that we have followed in Guatemala to achieve a democratic Government that is respectful of its role, the guarantor of freedoms and the faithful interpreter of the aspirations of the Guatemalan people has been long and difficult. My Government faced a difficult task 32 months ago - that of rebuilding a country that was just awakening to the dawn of a democratic era. It is no easy task to initiate and consolidate a democratic process in such a short time. Its enemies are many, as are misunderstandings and frustrations. In my country the majority were forgotten, only marginally benefiting from development and enjoying only minimum respect for their fundamental rights. Today we are learning how to live in a democracy. Guiding a people with a tradition of lack of understanding and intolerance requires moral strength and a firm commitment. Our daily struggle is hard, as we wish to build a truly free, truly just and truly united land. Our commitment is the result of our unbending will, our democratic faith and our historical experience.

However, as we strive to consolidate democracy we face the intransigence of extremist elements using every means available to them to deny us democratic opportunities, slandering and discrediting the process and using international forums and the good will of some representatives to mislead and to distort the truth of what is happening in my country, presenting pictures of earlier times, not of what is now going on in Guatemala.

Here I would appeal to the international community not to allow itself to be misled by groups that politicize human rights committees, thus trying to win outside the country battles that they have lost within it. Condemnation and criticism of countries that have started on democratic processes are no help. We

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have this year worked closely with the expert adviser rightly designated by the Commission on Human Rights, with whom we have prepared a plan of support for national institutions that promote respect for human rights and monitor compliance with the law and its correct implementation.

This is not the appropriate forum in which to go into details about the progress made in this matter. However, I would refer to the case of Guatemalan refugees outside the country, who have continued to return. This year there was a 300 per cent increase in the numbers of those returning, encouraged by the internal democratic climate and by the support that the State, in co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, is offering them. In this regard, I wish to emphasize the importance of the choice of Guatemala as the host country of the first international conference on Central American refugees, to be held next May. We hope that the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, will honour us by opening the session.

We are determined to maintain and consolidate not only political democracy, but also economic democracy, eliminating the serious inequalities that exist, the alienation of many groups in our population, and extreme poverty, and overcoming the lack of opportunities for our young, all with the aim of achieving true social justice.

We seek to establish a broad-based, non-sectarian Government, and we are achieving that. With social and human sensitivity and a sense of tolerance, but modestly, we are establishing a Government based on participatory democracy, with profound respect for every citizen. The policy that we are carrying out is based on the conviction that man can and must play a central part in his own history. The Government is working with justifiable optimism, aware of the hard, creative

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efforts it must make together with all the people of Guatemala, who, because of their patriotism, their hardworking spirit, their moral and spiritual stature and their readiness to overcome difficulties and adversities, have been called upon to fulfil a great destiny.

I can give an assurance at this world forum that the democratic Government of Guatemala is meeting the challenge of history with unshakeable will and resolve.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I call on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind Members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): This morning the representative of the Kabul régime chose to mislead this august forum with several unfounded allegations about violation of the Geneva Accords by Pakistan. This statement was itself in disregard of the Geneva Accords, which have established a clear procedure for the investigation of complaints by the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP). UNGOMAP alone is empowered to investigate complaints and to submit reports for the consideration of the parties. It has done so, and its reports are no doubt available to the Kabul side and provide sufficient proof to refute the baseless allegations regarding the shipment of arms for the Afghanistan resistance, or the existence of training camps inside Pakistan, or about restrictions having been placed on the Afghan refugees, or the involvement of Pakistan militia inside Afghanistan.

Pakistan is extending full co-operation to UNGOMAP. At the request of UNGOMAP teams, United Nations observers have been taken to the border areas of Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province to visit the specific areas to which they requested access. Vehicular traffic in border areas has been duly inspected by them in order to test the allegations made by the Kabul side regarding the trans-shipment of arms. UNGOMAP teams have also visited the Afghan refugee camps themselves, and the refugees have been interviewed by UNGOMAP personnel. In this way the inspection teams have covered an area along more than 1,000 kilometres of

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the international border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is after undertaking these prescribed actions that UNGOMAP has drawn up its reports and reached its conclusions, which are transparent and are on the record.

Regarding the Afghan refugees, UNGOMAP, as well as the many other international organizations providing assistance to the refugees, has confirmed that the refugees have no intention of returning to Afghanistan so long as the régime in Kabul remains in power and the fighting inside Afghanistan continues. The international agencies also confirm that no refugees are being forcibly detained in any camps in Pakistan, and that there is no evidence of restrictions on their freedom of movement or of the existence of training centres in the refugee camps.

For the reasons I mentioned earlier, I will refrain from recalling the large number of specific violations of the Geneva Accords. Suffice it to say that there have been about 387 violations of Pakistan's airspace and territory, causing 40 deaths and injuries to 114 persons - violations that have been registered and have already been, or are currently being, investigated by UNGOMAP. Let me merely reiterate that the Government of Pakistan is solemnly committed to abide by the Geneva Accords and to assist UNGOMAP in fulfilling its obligations in accordance with its mandate.

We welcome the well-deserved honour that UNGOMAP and other peace-keeping forces of the United Nations received just yesterday, because, despite accusations to the contrary, we believe that they are doing their job properly.

Pakistan cannot be held responsible for developments inside Afghanistan, which are the manifestation of the struggle of the Afghan people for liberation and independence. The Kabul régime stands totally discredited in the eyes of the

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Afghan people, who hold it responsible for the decade-long Afghan tragedy. The internal conflict will subside only when a truly representative Government, acceptable to all Afghans, is formed and the Afghan people are able to exercise their sacred right to self-determination, free from foreign intervention.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.