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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 28 September 1988, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Vice-President)	(Malta)
later:	Mr. CAPUTO (President)	(Argentina)
later:	Mr. MORTENSEN (Vice-President)	(Denmark)
later:	Mr. CAPUTO (President)	(Argentina)
later:	Mr. MOUSHOUTAS (Vice-President)	(Cyprus)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Olechowski (Poland)
Mr. Lange (New Zealand)
Mr. Kagami (Japan)
Mr. Traore (Guinea)
Mr. Garcia Rodriguez (Chile)
Mr. Peres (Israel)
Mr. Tindemans (Belgium)
Mr. Ngarukiyintwali (Rwanda)
Mr. Kafé (Comoros)

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Borg Olivier (Malta), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the first speaker, I should once again like to remind representatives that, in accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting, the list of speakers will be closed today, at 6 p.m.

Mr. OLECHOWSKI (Poland): Let me at the outset express our profound and sincere satisfaction over the fact that the helm of the current session of the General Assembly has been placed in hands as skilled and competent as those of Mr. Caputo. My delegation wishes to express to him its heartfelt congratulations on his election to this prestigious and demanding office. I am fully confident that he will not only live up to but significantly contribute to the tradition associating with his compatriots - Mr. Carlos Calvo and Mr. Louis Drago - and that he will guide the work of the forty-third session of the General Assembly in such a way as to attain the meaningful results which we all seek.

We wish also to express our warm greetings to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and to assure him of our unchanging respect and support for his indefatigable efforts.

The United Nations has recently proved its vitality and potential.

The Polish delegation has come to the forty-third session strongly convinced of the urgent need for all Members of the United Nations assembled in this Hall to undertake yet another joint effort to further strengthen the role which this Organization has come to play in the world today, to promote positive experiences in its work while seeking to eliminate the lingering weaknesses.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

At present, we perceive auspicious tendencies in international affairs. They manifest themselves in reduced confrontation, the development of East-West dialogue, the resolve to settle regional conflicts but, above all, to halt the arms race. The Treaty signed at Washington entitles the international community to extend to the two signatories a fresh credit of confidence in respect of further disarmament measures, especially in the field of strategic arms, and the discharge of their singular responsibility for world peace and international security in the years to come. The Treaty has been instrumental in removing the psychological barrier that attaches to the view that the arms race is beyond man's control.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

Potentially the most profound changes have taken place in the philosophical aspect of international relations - an area where the new political thinking is making ever greater inroads. It signals, first of all, that effective and lasting resolution of the contemporary dilemmas cannot be accomplished except through political means, with equitable and democratic participation of all interested States, growing mutual confidence, and determination to seek compromise based on international law, with due account taken of the interests of all parties. Under the conditions prevailing today, security cannot be attained through military means alone.

Secondly, it is encouraging that, as far as international affairs are concerned, the great humanist idea of the primacy, in international politics, of human values over group or class interests is reasserting itself.

The significance of these two phenomena cannot be confined to East-West relations alone; they are relevant to international relations at large and to the whole world, as is confirmed by the agreements concerning Afghanistan, the prospects of the termination of the Iran-Iraq conflict, the resolution of the Kampuchean problem, or the progress in regard to the questions of the south of Africa.

We wish to place on record our great appreciation of the productive efforts of the Security Council, as well as of the Secretary-General, with a view to peaceful resolution of acute regional conflicts. We give these efforts our full support, as is manifested in Poland's decision to dispatch a group of army officers to the United Nations good offices missions in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as to those in Iran and Iraq.

The course of international events is also significantly influenced by the development of the internal situation in particular countries. The Polish case demonstrates all too clearly how difficult it is to reconstruct internal

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

relations. In our profound democratic reforms we are guided by the principle of seeking political solutions based on a wide-ranging dialogue between all who stand on the firm ground of the Constitution and the legal order it established. We are seeking to create wide-ranging national understanding and to further democratize the methods of governing the country. We are undertaking these efforts in conditions of persisting economic difficulties and social impatience. We are fully aware that the transformations in Poland are being closely followed by the international community, for which what goes on in a State of 40 million people in the heart of Europe is not irrelevant.

The desire for undisturbed development of the positive tendencies in East-West relations is universal. Poland has irrevocably opted for profound socio-political and economic reform, aimed at increased effectiveness and export- and market-oriented restructuring of the economy. We want to take an active, broadly conceived part in the international division of labour, in keeping with the principle of mutual benefit. In this respect we count on the co-operation of all our partners, including creditor States, both on a bilateral basis and in the international financial organizations. We are confident that all States will have understood, and will lend their support to, the Polish Government's efforts with a view to reforms. We are confident that, given the ameliorating international climate and the increasing co-operation with all States, Poland will be able to overcome its present difficulties and, as so far, will continue making its contribution to the consolidation of international security, détente and comprehensive international co-operation.

The world's primary integrating factor is the common fate of mankind. There is an urgent need to solve global problems and, unfortunately, global threats. There is a growing conviction that only together can we stand up to the challenges of the day, and only together can we hope to survive.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

The United Nations must become to an ever greater extent the primary multilateral forum where solutions to the major world problems of our time can be worked out. Among such problems, the question of the consolidation of peace and international security remains the central one. Some three months ago, the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament concluded its debates in this Hall. Contrary to the expectations of world public opinion, of a majority of nations and Governments, including my own, the session failed to conclude its work with the adoption of a final document. The significance of the third special session consists, however, in the fact that it has demonstrated to the world the outer limits of compromise that are feasible at present. As will be recalled, out of a total of 67 paragraphs of the draft final document, agreement proved possible on 61. These considerable and valuable achievements must not be wasted. They must be consolidated and further developed by, among other things, resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly at its current session.

The Political Consultative Committee of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, which met in the capital of my country last July, has submitted a programme of concrete disarmament undertakings. The documents of the meetings, which, at Poland's request, have been circulated as official documents of the forty-third session of the General Assembly, reaffirm adherence to the ideals of a world rid of arms of mass destruction and all forms of violence, a world based on the principles of mutual and equal security, democratic coexistence and wide-ranging, equitable co-operation.*

* The President took the Chair.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty have addressed an appeal to the international community at large, especially the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the States participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, to increase efforts to bring about the early conclusion of meaningful agreements on the reduction of arms and armed forces and the consolidation of security and stability, as well as to refrain from any steps likely to make progress in that direction more difficult.

The Political Consultative Committee has recognized the following as priority objectives: a 50 per cent reduction of the strategic offensive arms of the USSR and the United States of America; the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests; the elimination of chemical weapons; and the reduction of armed forces and conventional arms in Europe, with a corresponding reduction of military expenditures.

The disarmament initiatives offered by the Warsaw Treaty and the Alliance's individual members, including Poland, over the past few years, also remain valid.

These issues, among other things, have for years been on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. The General Assembly has also repeatedly issued appeals for the process of negotiations to be accelerated. For years we have found that the only progress scored at Geneva has related to chemical weapons. Yet even in that province, regrettably, one finds slow-downs and diverse impediments to the negotiating process piling up, relating, for instance, to the question of verification, despite the fact that the USSR and other socialist States are prepared to accept far-reaching compromise solutions.

The current session of the United Nations General Assembly offers a good opportunity to issue an appeal for a constructive reaction to the initiatives put forward by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

The need for concrete actions in the field of disarmament was similarly pointed out by the conference of non-aligned countries in Nicosia.

The reduction of military confrontation should begin where catastrophe could most easily occur. Inevitably, we arrive here at the problem of Europe. It was on that continent that deep divisions first emerged under the surveillance of the mightiest military potentials ever. It has, therefore, become the highest risk area, but also one that offers singularly great opportunities.

Specific to Europe, and at the same time critically important for its security, is the sphere of conventional disarmament. The positive evolution of the international situation, announced in the Budapest appeal of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, and the subsequent constructive response of the States members of NATO have led to substantive progress in preparations for the negotiating process of the 23 States. Poland and the other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty are prepared to do their utmost to ensure a constructive negotiating process, as they indicated in a special statement on negotiations concerning the reduction of armed forces and conventional arms in Europe adopted at the last meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, in Warsaw.

The socialist States have come out in favour of the commencement of new negotiations in 1988, stressing that the priority objective of such negotiations ought to be the achievement on the continent of Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, of a situation in which the Warsaw Treaty and NATO States retain a level of armed forces and armaments indispensable for defence but far from sufficient to launch a surprise attack and conduct offensive operations.

The first stage of such negotiations should be concentrated on reaching equal and lower collective levels of manpower and conventional armaments for States members of the two alliances, the prevention of surprise attack and the

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

establishment of an effective system of verification of compliance with future treaties, including mandatory on-site inspections. These proposals respect the principle of equal security for all the parties concerned.

Poland has always attached great importance to the consolidation of peace and security in Europe and sought to make its own genuine and autonomous contribution to the European disarmament process. The Jaruzelski plan for decreasing armaments and increasing confidence in central Europe is only the latest manifestation of that policy. The various aspects of the implementation of the plan were addressed in detail in a message from Wojciech Jaruzelski to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. They were also dealt with in a statement by the Government of Poland containing an expanded version of the plan.

I once again emphasize from this rostrum that, in view of the convergence of the proposed plan and the content of documents of the Political Consultative Committee adopted at its Warsaw meeting last July, and in the light of the views and comments of other Governments, our conviction has been strengthened that the plan fits perfectly the pattern of European disarmament undertakings, and represents their most timely and concrete manifestation, going a long way towards meeting the expectations of the broadest social strata, as well as those in many official circles. The plan offers a solution that responds positively to the requirement for the consolidation of security in central Europe, yet is not without a universal relevance owing to the distinct possibility of applying the ideas it advances to solutions on a Europe-wide scale and beyond. On behalf of the Government of Poland, I wish to reaffirm our readiness and determination to offer constructive co-operation to all interested Governments for the further development of the plan.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

We are persuaded that reduction of the level of armed forces and armaments in Europe would be a major factor conducive to the construction of a common European home. Its corner-stone must be due respect for the post-war political and territorial order on our continent. Such a home should provide an ever greater possibility of promoting dialogue and mutually advantageous all-round co-operation, open to the world, in keeping with the process commenced some 13 years ago in Helsinki.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

This explains the great importance that we attach to the CSCE meeting in Vienna. For our part, we shall spare no effort to bring it to a positive conclusion. Similarly, we consider economic co-operation in the European region most important, a fact borne out by the regional conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held at Cracow last August.

Disarmament must be accompanied by the fostering of an appropriate social awareness and promotion of the involvement of public opinion in order to create a special moral sanction - that of universal condemnation of the use of force in international relations. Only in such a state of awareness can one understand Voltaire's observation that in the world there are only offensive wars, the defensive ones being mere resistance to armed robbery.

In a few weeks' time it will be 10 years since the adoption by the General Assembly, on the basis of a Polish initiative, of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, a document whose overriding objective is, first and foremost, to "demilitarize" thinking and ensure that the seeds of the idea of peace fall on the fertile and well-prepared soil of the awareness of all people. The Declaration has not lost any of its topicality; on the contrary, the putting into effect of its recommendations is becoming an increasingly urgent task. Indeed, attempts to anchor the idea of peace firmly in people's minds are a logical and indispensable supplement to the material infrastructure of peace.

The consolidation of peace and the strengthening of international security, disarmament and the growth of mutual confidence are among the conditions necessary to make possible the solution of many of the pressing problems of the day. Among these are global ecological and demographic threats, as well as those arising from external debt, all of which are growing in a snowball fashion. They defy solution by individual States and co-operation and combined efforts on a global scale are necessary. This applies in the first place to relations between highly developed and developing countries, between creditors and debtors.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

The tremendous external debt, especially dramatic for the poorest countries but also painful for those at the medium level of development which are highly indebted, undermines the basis for socio-economic development and international exchange of goods and services. The shortage of hard currency to finance imports cripples reforms, restructurization and modernization of industry. National efforts in respect of economic adjustment encounter barriers to the financing of development. A practical demonstration of the co-responsibility of creditor and debtor countries, with the appropriate involvement of banks and international financial institutions, in an effort to loosen and untangle the noose of indebtedness becomes absolutely indispensable. The General Assembly already has at its disposal resolutions adopted at its two previous sessions from which it clearly follows that an individual approach to solving such problems should be followed as soon as possible by multilateral measures. Such relief action should either precede or constitute a preliminary phase of agreed steps in favour of debtor countries, to stimulate effectiveness and make possible export-oriented restructuring of their economies - undertakings reinforcing the internal efforts of many debtor countries, which often involve acute social sacrifices. The Cracow Debt and Development Research Centre, which co-operates with the relevant United Nations institutions, is now concentrating its attention precisely on such problems.

The state of affairs is much the same as far as the protection of the environment is concerned. Poland values highly the United Nations record in this respect, especially the resolutions of the forty-second session of the General Assembly adopted on the basis of the Brundtland report and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recommendations. None the less, there is a distinct and pressing need for major new, joint undertakings in regard to the protection of the environment. Our Organization should strive to do more than it has so far in that field. For instance, one can conceive of the establishment and implementation

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

within its framework of a concept of international ecological security - a code of binding principles and norms of conduct of States in the field of protection of the environment. Appropriate proposals in that respect were formulated at the Warsaw meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty in a document entitled "The implications of the arms race for the environment and other aspects of ecological security".

However, even the best international legal regulations will prove insufficient unless accompanied by material means for their implementation. Owing to the lack of financial and technical resources, ecology-safe development may well prove for some countries a luxury beyond their possibilities. This is the reason for the need for identification by appropriate international bodies, including those within the United Nations system, of areas of threat, where international aid should be forthcoming with a view to the application of recognized norms of protection of the environment. It need not be financial assistance. For instance, implementation of the principle of unrestricted transfer of experience, know-how and technology in the field of the environment, as proposed by Wojciech Jaruzelski at the fortieth anniversary session of the United Nations General Assembly, would be of considerable consequence.

As postulated by my delegation, the urgent need to expand international economic co-operation and strengthen constructive bonds and interdependency in the world economy requires that we proceed forthwith to promote confidence in international economic relations. The United Nations system, at both regional and global level, has a considerable role to play in that respect, a fact recognized in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The strengthening of confidence in that sphere would promote a new and more just international economic order and the enhancement of international economic security.

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

We must note with satisfaction the marked improvement in the climate of international co-operation within the United Nations system also in respect of social and cultural problems and human rights. For mankind, the resolution of the most burning social questions is as critical as the prevention of an arms race or an economic crisis.

On Poland's initiative, the General Assembly at the previous session adopted a resolution calling for the examination of the possible proclamation by the United Nations of an International Year of the Family. Our initiative has met with the support of many States, which have made known their positive views in that regard. The conditions are increasingly favourable to the proclamation by the General Assembly of such an International Year of the Family at the outset of the next decade.

There exists a tremendous interest in humanitarian problems, especially those pertaining to human rights. Along with other States, Poland attaches considerable significance to the observance of the fortieth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We intend to take an active part in that important event.

It is with considerable satisfaction that we welcome the conclusion of the preliminary phase of the long work on the preparation of a draft convention on the rights of the child. Let us hope that in a year's time, at the next session of the General Assembly, the Member States will adopt the convention to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child.

The problems I have commented upon can be solved provided we succeed in turning our Organization into a genuine centre of co-operation and co-decision exercised by all its Members. We have to strive together to enhance the performance of the United Nations and of its principal organs - the Security

(Mr. Olechowski, Poland)

Council and the General Assembly - as well as to promote the role of the Secretary-General, including in the settlement of inter-State conflicts through negotiations, good offices, mediation or conciliation. It is indispensable to make use in a more effective manner of the entire United Nations system for the maintenance of peace and the consolidation of the primacy of international law. That is the objective of the initiative submitted by the socialist States, including Poland, to develop a comprehensive system of peace and international security.

Poland is deeply convinced that a strong United Nations, faithful to its Charter, promoting the spirit of multilateral co-operation and successfully overcoming partisan interests, stands a very good chance of meeting the challenges of the day and the expectations of nations. We are fully prepared to make our contribution to the construction of such an Organization, in the belief that - in the words of the Charter - all nations ought to "live together in peace with one another as good neighbours".

ADDRESS BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE DAVID LANGE, PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Mr. David Lange, Prime Minister of New Zealand, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Right Honourable David Lange, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. LANGE (New Zealand): Sir, I congratulate you on your election to the presidency of this forty-third session of the General Assembly. I say, with the benefit of my personal acquaintance with you, that it is an honour that you truly deserve. This Assembly is in good hands as it begins to tackle the work on its agenda.

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

This forty-third session of the General Assembly carries more than the usual sense of occasion. I am not alone in detecting here a feeling of purpose and of achievement that has not always been evident in recent years. I take great satisfaction in being able to address the Assembly at a time when the standing of the United Nations is higher than it has been for some time. Even the fountain works. The mood has changed distinctly since the fortieth commemorative session, because, despite the difficulties and uncertainties it has faced, the Organization has pursued its diverse agenda while tackling a major programme of administrative reform. The record in recent times has been one of solid achievement.

The changing international climate has helped this process. In this Hall on Monday, President Reagan in his valedictory address spoke to us of his satisfaction at the movement towards a more constructive relationship between his country and the Soviet Union. Foreign Minister Shevardnadze pursued the same theme. In certain regions of the world there has been welcome progress in resolving conflicts that had been festering for some time. Many of the signs are favourable.

That will be a matter of particular satisfaction to the smaller members of the international community, including my own country. We have always attached importance to the principle that the collective effort of that community should above all be applied to the task of keeping the peace. That was the central purpose of those who founded the Organization. Today it remains a goal of no less importance. Thus far 1988 has been a year of significant peacemaking, from which the world can take heart and upon which it can build. As one who stood here to address the fortieth anniversary session, I am pleased that we are now seeing renewed recognition of the value of the role and achievements of the United Nations.

Recent developments have highlighted the continuing value of this Organization's efforts in the settlement of international conflict. The accords

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

reached on Afghanistan and the cease-fire in the devastating Gulf War required the co-operation of those directly involved. But a particular tribute must go to the dedication of the Secretary-General. The people who are saved from further threat or have the hope of peace are indebted to his patience, skill, perseverance and unquenchable optimism. We welcome the role he has played.

There are other situations that still need the resources the United Nations can offer by way of mediation or assistance with peacemaking. Western Sahara, Namibia, Cyprus and Cambodia are all affected by unresolved conflicts. But even here the auguries are promising.

In this age regional tensions cannot be isolated from the mainstream of international life. There are dangers for all of us in conflict wherever it occurs. It follows that we share a responsibility to do all that we can to eliminate the conditions in which conflict breeds and to restore the peace if it is broken. At times the principle of collective security has commanded more support than the practice. I hope the success of current peace-keeping efforts under United Nations auspices will reinvigorate the principle of collective security and lead to its wider application.

My Government pledged last year to expand our practical contribution to the United Nations peace-keeping efforts. I am pleased that we have been able to give effect to that undertaking. Our existing commitment to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization has been maintained. In the past month we were pleased to be able to respond to the Secretary-General's request for a contribution to the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG). A contingent of New Zealand army officers was deployed to UNIIMOG following the cease-fire.

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

Earlier this week a Royal New Zealand Air Force Andover transport aircraft with flight crews and maintenance personnel left New Zealand to become an important national contribution to UNIIMOG's air capacity. We stand ready to assist in a practical way if, as we hope, solutions are found to other long-standing conflicts.

I have already welcomed the signing of the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan. Noteworthy as they were, the Accords did not put a final end to the conflict in Afghanistan nor did they bring into being a fully representative government enjoying the confidence of the people of Afghanistan. New Zealand hopes that the withdrawal of the remaining Soviet forces will be accompanied by real progress in addressing those unresolved problems. As Mr. Shevardnadze said:

"The Geneva Accords" [should be] "the first step in a chain reaction leading to a healthier world." (A/43/PV.6, p. 66)

The values of tolerance and respect for the dignity and worth of human beings can be seen by us all in the current Olympic Games. They are a sign of that healthier world and we congratulate the Republic of Korea on its role as host. But it is a matter for regret that divisiveness has persisted on the Korean peninsula for so long. We look for an easing of tensions and an improvement in relations between the Koreans.

Cambodia, too, has been a tragic source of international tension for many years. That impasse has come to seem rather less intractable during 1988. In each of the past nine years, this Assembly has rightly emphasized Vietnam's violation of the Charter of the United Nations by its invasion and occupation of Cambodia. That remains a fundamental issue.

But we must insist also on a settlement there which will prevent a return to power by the Khmer Rouge. The international community was slow to accept the evidence of genocide committed by the Pol Pot Government and we have had to deal

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

with the consequences ever since. We have a responsibility to ensure that such atrocities are never again committed against the peoples of Cambodia.

Harrowing images of mass persecution, unfortunately not confined to a single country or continent, remain fresh in our memories as we commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Much has nevertheless been achieved in the intervening years. But it cannot be denied that gross and massive abuses of human rights continue.

The problem of human rights is more and more the focus of the attention of the Members of the United Nations. All of us are bound to speak up and, if we do not, we bear a responsibility for continuing and future evils. The authority of this Organization as it deals with human rights must rest on a commitment by all to objectivity.

South Africa's system of apartheid is an abuse in a category of its own. Events of the last year have shown the South African Government clinging tenaciously to its course, in spite of the international community's abhorrence of its apartheid policies.

It has so far spurned all the voices of reason and moderation. Nelson Mandela, the most respected leader in South Africa, remains incarcerated. The Sharpeville Six are still under sentence of death. The intercessions of the Security Council have been ignored. The country lives in a continuing state of emergency; it experiences increasing repression. The South African response to protests from neighbouring States is to make repeated terrorist attacks on them and to undermine their economic stability - all totally unacceptable.

New Zealand has implemented wide-ranging sanctions against South Africa. We believe that such sanctions are an effective means of changing the attitude of the

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

white minority. New Zealand is ready to implement further measures. Our goal is non-violent progress to a non-racial, democratic and just society in South Africa.

There has been an encouraging movement recently towards peace in Angola. In Namibia, the United Nations has faced an enormous task. At last a settlement there appears tantalizingly close. We trust that Namibia's independence can be secured peacefully and soon in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978). That would represent a further major achievement in the work of the United Nations on decolonization.

On the initiative of the seven South Pacific member countries of the United Nations, New Caledonia was reinscribed in 1986 on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, thus invoking a United Nations responsibility for the future of the progress of the Territory to self-determination. The tragic events at Ouvea in New Caledonia earlier this year demonstrated the consequences of ignoring United Nations principles and also the aspirations of a major communal group. New Zealand therefore welcomed the decision in June by the new Prime Minister of France and the leaders of the loyalist and independence movements in New Caledonia to move together on a plan for political development. That plan rightly takes account of the interests of all genuine New Caledonians.

That development was recognized last month by the Special Committee on Decolonization in a resolution which was adopted by consensus and has since been endorsed by the South Pacific Forum at its annual meeting last week. No one should underestimate the difficulties that may lie ahead, but everything is looking better.

We look forward to a free and genuine act of self-determination in New Caledonia which is consistent with United Nations principles and leads to a settlement safeguarding the rights of all New Caledonians, including the indigenous Kanak people.

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

Some argue that while the United Nations has a vital role in dealing with regional issues of the kind I have mentioned, the scope for its involvement in the balance between the super-Powers is a limited one. I do not accept that. We have seen how the super-Powers inevitably become involved in the troubles of the world's regions. Equally, issues of disarmament - including those which vitally involve the super-Powers - cannot be considered as anything but questions involving all members of the international community for we are all affected, by choice or otherwise.

The issue of nuclear disarmament has taken on new urgency. Nuclear weapons technology no longer remains the exclusive preserve of the five permanent Members of the Security Council. The capacity to build a nuclear weapon is now possessed by a larger number of countries, and soon even more will have it. There are indications that some of those countries have nuclear ambitions. Whatever their motivation, such ambitions have to be curtailed.

There is a real risk here. Regional conflicts, and their tendency to attract external intervention, are dangerous enough as it is. But the prospect of nuclear weapons being deployed in such situations must now be taken into account. In that event, the dangers we would all face would be appalling.

This is an added reason why the efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union to agree on further reductions in their nuclear arsenals are so important. What prospect is there of blocking the spread of nuclear weapons if these two nations cannot stop their relentless drive to develop and deploy new nuclear weaponry? In the course of last year's general debate, New Zealand applauded the United States and the Soviet Union for their decision to eliminate their land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles. The resulting treaty is now for the first time leading to a real reduction in the world's stock of nuclear weapons. With an

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

agreement in the strategic arms reduction talks, the super-Powers would truly have shown the way to the other nuclear weapons States and those which have nuclear ambitions. It is not too much to hope that a corner would be turned and the threat of vertical and horizontal proliferation would no longer hang over us all.

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

New Zealand believes that achieving reductions and balances in conventional forces will be central, in the search for nuclear disarmament, to the nuclear-free world seen by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev at Reykjavik. In Europe and many other parts of the globe the accumulation of conventional forces, often without regard to actual defensive requirements, has heightened tensions and led some to look for other more dangerous means of deterring aggression; so the processes of nuclear and conventional disarmament must take place in step, and must involve all States.

Yet, at the third United Nations special session devoted to disarmament, when we had an opportunity to set up a multilateral disarmament agenda to take us up to the beginning of the next century, we could not take advantage of it. But our failure then does not mean it cannot be done. Instead we have the task now, beginning at this session of the Assembly, to pick up where the special session left off.

Rather than confess disappointment at the special session's results, or conclude that the job is too difficult, we must try all the harder to broaden the areas of international agreement. The search for consensus on the prevention of an arms race in outer space must go on. The campaign must continue unabated to convince those few remaining States which yet doubt it that a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is an essential measure to end the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The world community must at last bring to conclusion the negotiations on a comprehensive chemical-weapons convention. The Secretary-General has been called on time and time again to investigate allegations of chemical weapons use. He should never again have to issue a finding confirming such a charge. These hideous weapons must be outlawed once and for all, so that the world will never again be a

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

horrified witness to chemical warfare. The main elements of a multilateral agreement have now been elaborated by the Conference on Disarmament. It is time to finish the job.

New Zealand has taken substantial disarmament initiatives. We are proud to have been part of the regional drive to create the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone, a significant multilateral arms-control measure.

The Treaty of Rarotonga makes a decisive contribution to the stability of the region. The majority of South Pacific Forum members have become parties to the agreement. Two of the nuclear Powers, the Soviet Union and China, have ratified the protocols to the Treaty. We look to the other nuclear Powers to do the same. The Treaty covers a wide area of the region, bordering the Latin American nuclear-weapon-free zone to the east, and the demilitarized Antarctica to the south. We support ongoing co-operation with the Latin American parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco so that we can each benefit from our mutual experience.

For nearly 30 years the Antarctic Treaty and its associated instruments have provided the framework for effective and peaceful co-operation in Antarctica, keeping that vast area free of all military activities. The Treaty, which is open to all States, has been the basis for a unique programme of scientific research and for the adoption of measures to protect the fragile environment.

A further element was added to the treaty system with the adoption in June this year of the Convention on the regulation of Antarctic mineral resource activities. New Zealand was pleased to host the final session of the negotiations. The Convention provides a strong mechanism for protecting the Antarctic environment if mineral resource activities ever take place. It is a significant strengthening of international co-operation under the Antarctic Treaty. A peaceful Antarctica is of the highest importance for New Zealand. We

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

look for a consensus at this session of the Assembly to preserve the Antarctic Treaty. New Zealand is strongly opposed to any efforts to undermine it.

The world economy offers us little cause for satisfaction or confidence. Trade growth is uncertain. The economic difficulties facing many developing countries seem almost intractable. Indebtedness and underdevelopment are threats to global economic stability. Much is at stake for developed and developing countries alike in the present round of multilateral trade negotiations. New Zealand calls on all member countries of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to go to the forthcoming mid-term review in Montreal in a positive mood, determined to achieve real progress.

New Zealand places special importance on achieving from the Uruguay Round a liberalization of world agricultural trade and the elimination of domestic and international policies which distort such trade. There would be no better single way of solving the menacing problems of indebtedness and underdevelopment of which I have spoken.

There have been significant moves recently towards regional free-trade areas, including an agreement between New Zealand and Australia to establish a single trans-Tasman market by 1990. It is vital, however, that the international community should continue at the same time to move along the road to an open, market-oriented, multilateral trading system. We must look for strong leadership here from the major economies, which have a special responsibility to apply, fairly and across the board, the principles of comparative advantage and fair competition. Smaller countries like my own, dependent on primary production, require the reassurance that we will not continue to be subjected unreasonably to artificial restraints on trade.

(Mr. Lange, New Zealand)

It is a paradox that the United Nations is demonstrating renewed vitality and relevance at a time when it faces major financial uncertainties. It is unacceptable that Member States should fail to carry out their legal obligations to contribute their assessed financial dues in good time.

We must recognize, nevertheless, that constraints on available resources are likely to remain while at the same time the demands upon the Organization continue to grow. Accordingly, there is no choice but to maintain the worthwhile progress already achieved towards administrative reform; otherwise, the Organization will be incapable of meeting the critical challenges as they arise.

I speak here as the representative of the Fourth New Zealand Labour Government. The First New Zealand Labour Government, and its Prime Minister Mr. Peter Fraser, played a deeply committed role in the discussions leading to the adoption of the Charter in 1945. New Zealand's hopes of those early days have been exceeded by some of the Organization's achievements - in its economic and social work, for example, and in its human rights and decolonization activities. By contrast, our high hopes for the United Nations peace-making and disarmament roles have yet to be fully realized, but we are optimistic that the log-jam has started to move in those areas.

New Zealand continues to set high store on the work of the United Nations - particularly in its tasks of promoting world peace, preserving the global environment, combating world hunger, removing racial discrimination everywhere and creating equal opportunities for men and women throughout the world. We are determined to maintain New Zealand's strong support in the years ahead.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of New Zealand for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. David Lange, Prime Minister of New Zealand, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. KAGAMI (Japan): I should like first to express my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as President of this forty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly. Given the wealth of your experience and knowledge, I am confident that this will be a most successful session of the General Assembly. I assure you that the Japanese delegation stands ready to offer any assistance you may require in the performance of your important duties.

At the same time I should like to express my admiration for the achievements of the forty-second session of the General Assembly under the able leadership of its President, Mr. Peter Florin.

The United Nations has been particularly active and successful recently in efforts to resolve a number of international problems in various parts of the world. The world stands in appreciation of, and holds great expectations for, the United Nations as it strives to fulfil its most important task of maintaining international peace. Indeed, this demonstrates a restoration of its prestige which my Government finds most encouraging. The renewal of the authority of the United Nations was kindled by a general improvement in international relations, but at the same time it is thanks to the outstanding abilities and tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and other United Nations personnel that the United Nations is being revitalized. I should like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's sincere gratitude and admiration to the Secretary-General and his staff.

I should like to begin my remarks today by outlining the basic thinking of my Government on some of the important developments that are affecting global peace and human prosperity.

The first of these is the way East-West relations, and especially relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, have developed over the past year.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

The two States have concluded the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - and their leaders have exchanged visits. It is hoped that this dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union will stabilize East-West relations and that that will accelerate a global trend towards the resolution of differences through negotiations. This is a significant development and deserves a high tribute.

It was against that background that the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan were reached last April, that a cease-fire was achieved in the Iran-Iraq conflict and that renewed efforts are under way for the resolution of problems relating to Angola and Namibia, the Western Sahara, Kampuchea and other areas around the globe. Signs of change are also becoming discernible in the quest for peace in the Middle East. While we realize that these developments are still in their early stages and that it will require considerable effort fully to resolve the various regional conflicts, we find it most encouraging that a start has in fact been made in that direction.

In this context we very much hope that the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, based upon its "new thinking", will be manifested in more concrete actions that will contribute to peace and stability in Asia and the Pacific, including the resolution of the Northern Territories problem and a scaling back of the Soviet military presence in the Far East. Welcoming the Soviet desire for improved relations with Japan, as expressed by General Secretary Gorbachev in his recent Krasnoyarsk speech, we hope that political dialogue between our two countries will be further promoted, starting with the regular foreign ministers' consultations to be held at the end of this year.

The second notable development is a growing recognition of the importance of economic development. Political stability is indispensable to economic

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

development, just as raising the standard of living is vital to political stability and economic development is a prerequisite for raising the standard of living. In order to achieve all of those objectives, a climate of international peace conducive to economic development is essential. The present era - 43 years after the end of the Second World War - is characterized by a general recognition of that axiom.

There are still a number of destabilizing factors in the world economy, such as substantial imbalances in international payments, persistent pressures of protectionism and debt problems hampering developing countries. On the other hand it is encouraging, for instance, that the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has initiated the Uruguay Round of trade talks, aimed at strengthening the multilateral free-trade system, that Japan and the other industrialized countries have clearly started to rectify their trade imbalances and create new jobs, and that the newly industrialized economies are achieving economic development at remarkable rates. These facts demonstrate that so long as favourable domestic political conditions prevail and appropriate economic policies are pursued in a peaceful international environment developing economies can become newly industrialized economies and the latter can become industrialized countries.

The third development concerns population and environmental problems, issues that pose a profound threat to lasting peace and prosperity for all mankind. In July of last year the world population reached five billion. It is reported that on 10 August of this year the population of Asia alone exceeded three billion. Of course, war inflicts tremendous suffering. The population problem spawns different kinds of suffering - those associated with, for example, food shortages, energy problems and environmental deterioration. Moreover, mankind is now faced with a number of grave threats, including the destruction of tropical forests,

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

desertification, the depletion of the ozone layer and even climatic changes. We cannot remain silent in the face of these global threats. I believe it is most important that further efforts be made to resolve these problems, reconciling the need for economic development with the global imperative of environmental preservation.

As we approach the twenty-first century it is incumbent upon us to promote further the favourable trends I mentioned earlier and, taking a global perspective, to work together to resolve our many problems. In so doing it is most important that the nations of the world once again make human contacts the starting-point of their efforts and that they increase such meetings of hearts and minds across national boundaries. When people of different cultural heritages engage in a broad-based international exchange, not only do both sides develop greater understanding and tolerance for each other's culture but also peoples everywhere become better able to make assessments in the global context. It is in this way that the foundation for a truly open international community may be laid.

From this vantage point Japan recognizes that it is increasingly important that it contribute actively to world peace and prosperity and has launched a new policy of active co-operation for the solution of major global issues.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

The Government of Prime Minister Takeshita has made the building of a "Japan contributing to the world" its top policy priority and has recently begun to implement it through the international co-operation initiative, which consists of three pillars: strengthening co-operation to achieve peace, expanding Japan's official development assistance and promoting international cultural exchange. Those policies, as members may recall, were elucidated by Prime Minister Takeshita in his address on 1 June to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I would like next to touch upon the role the United Nations should play and the way in which Japan, with this international perspective and on the basis of the new policies that I have just mentioned, will co-operate in that role.

The most important problem before us is that of how to secure world peace. I would like to say a few words about my Government's views on regional problems and conflicts which have had a major impact on this question in recent years.

Looking first at Afghanistan, we very much hope that the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan will be completed by 15 February 1989, in keeping with the Geneva Accords. I also believe that it is important that the Afghan refugees resulting from that conflict be able to return voluntarily to their native country as soon as possible. Thus, it is imperative that a broad-based Government representing the will of all the people be established in Afghanistan. The Afghan people recognize that they themselves must solve their country's problems, and my Government strongly appeals to them to join together in even greater unity and co-operation to rebuild their country.

Japan heartily welcomes the cease-fire recently achieved in the Iran-Iraq conflict and strongly hopes that Security Council resolution 598 (1987) will be fully implemented as soon as possible, with the withdrawal of forces, the release

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

of prisoners of war and the comprehensive, just and honourable settlement of all outstanding issues. Japan intends to continue to co-operate fully in the Secretary-General's efforts. At the same time, it will contribute as much as possible to the resolution of that conflict.

With regard to the situation in the Middle East, Japan maintains the position that peace must be achieved on the basis of the following principles: Israel's withdrawal from all territories occupied since the 1967 war; recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, including the right to establish an independent Palestinian State; and recognition of Israel's right to exist. There are new developments emerging in this area, and expectations are higher than ever before for the attainment of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. Thus, steadfast efforts by all the parties concerned are now more than ever necessary, and Japan intends to do what it can to support those efforts towards peace. Foreign Minister Uno recently visited the four countries directly concerned - Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Israel - and explained these points to their leaders, as well as to prominent members of the Palestinian community in the occupied territories.

The racial discrimination in South Africa is intolerable and must be completely eliminated as soon as possible. But the Government of South Africa is not abolishing its policies of apartheid; on the contrary, it is resorting more and more to repression by force. In concert with the rest of the international community, Japan will continue to maintain its various restrictive measures against South Africa, as well as its active support for the black population there and for the countries in southern Africa.

On the issues of Angola and Namibia, Japan is encouraged that discussions among the countries concerned are now under way and hopes that Security Council

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

resolution 435 (1978) will be implemented and a new Namibian State established as soon as possible.

As for the question of Western Sahara, my Government sincerely hopes that progress will be made in the dialogue among the parties concerned, in accordance with the Secretary-General's proposal, and that a solution will be found before long.

Regarding the situation in Central America, it is most regrettable that the negotiations on a genuine cease-fire in Nicaragua have encountered difficulties, but Japan continues to hope that true peace will be achieved through the steadfast efforts of all concerned.

Turning now to the question of Kampuchea, Foreign Minister Uno attended the post-ministerial conference of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) with the dialogue partners this July, where he suggested that any real settlement must include a complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces, the establishment of a truly independent, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea and international guarantees regarding the eventual political settlement. At the same time, he reaffirmed Japan's continued support for the efforts of Prince Sihanouk and the ASEAN countries to that end. We hope that the peace process will be further advanced through discussions among the parties concerned.

The Government of Japan believes that the problems on the Korean peninsula should be peacefully resolved, primarily through direct dialogue between the south and the north. Japan thus welcomes and supports the flexible and constructive posture demonstrated by the Republic of Korea in President Roh Tae Woo's special declaration on 7 July. Just prior to the start of the Seoul Olympics, Japan lifted the sanctions it had imposed against North Korea last January as an expression of its firm opposition to terrorist activity. This decision was made from a broad

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

perspective with a view to contributing to a more relaxed climate. Japan hopes that the Seoul Olympics, now under way, will be concluded in an atmosphere appropriate to a festival of peace and that they will contribute to the relaxation of tensions in the area. My Government is pleased that arrangements have been made to enable the representatives of both the Republic of Korea and North Korea to address this session of the General Assembly. Moreover, if the south and the north would consider joining the United Nations as a transitional step towards the unification of the peninsula, Japan would welcome and support membership for both as a means of easing tensions and furthering the universality of the Organization.

The active and noteworthy efforts of the United Nations towards the resolution of those regional conflicts clearly demonstrate the important role that the Organization has to play in maintaining peace.

Looking ahead, I believe it is important that the United Nations, while promoting further moves towards peace and stepping up its peace-keeping efforts, also take measures to prevent the occurrence of disputes. Thus, I very much hope that this session of the General Assembly will adopt the declaration on the prevention of conflicts proposed by Japan and five other countries with the aim of strengthening the ability of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to prevent conflicts before they occur, to remove threats and to settle conflicts at an early stage. It is important that all Member States co-operate so that the purposes of the declaration may be achieved in a dynamic and effective manner.

At the same time my Government would like to stress the need for the Security Council better to fulfil its functions as defined in the Charter. It is crucial that all members of the Security Council take a global perspective and, setting aside prejudices and preconceptions, co-operate as one in discharging the Council's duties and supporting the initiatives of the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

Its permanent members, in the light of their special privileges, have an especially important responsibility in that regard. Only then will parties to a conflict heed the counsel of the United Nations; only then will the way be opened to a peaceful settlement. As a non-permanent member, Japan is working assiduously to find solutions to the various issues before the Security Council, and even after its term expires Japan will continue to work with equal diligence to enable the Security Council to realize fully its lofty purpose.

Japan will extend its fullest support to the resolution of regional conflicts in various parts of the world and to United Nations efforts to that end. This is consistent with Japan's policy as a nation of peace to spare no effort in the cause of international peace and stability.

Specifically, Japan will first of all continue its efforts to provide, to the extent possible, financial support to peace-keeping operations undertaken within the international framework, above all in the framework of the United Nations.

Secondly, Japan will strengthen its co-operation not only in terms of financial support but by supplying personnel in fields it deems appropriate. Recently, civilian personnel from Japan have been participating in the United Nations observer teams in Afghanistan and in Iran and Iraq. We are also studying the possibility of co-operating in such fields as election monitoring, transportation, telecommunications and medical care.

Thirdly, Japan plans to step up the various types of its assistance to persons who have become refugees as a result of conflicts. I am pleased on this occasion to pledge an initial contribution for assistance to Afghan refugees equivalent to \$60 million to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and other United Nations agencies. In making that contribution, Japan is also responding to the appeal issued in June by the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

Recognizing that, as noted in the Secretary-General's appeal, Afghan refugee operations are extremely costly, Japan will consider a further contribution through, for instance, the United Nations Afghanistan Emergency Fund. In addition it is studying the possibility of providing personnel in medical and other fields to help Afghan refugees return home.

Fourthly, Japan intends to do everything it can to help the countries that have been involved in armed conflicts in various parts of the world to recover from the devastation of war, achieve economic recovery and reconstruction, restore stability and improve the living standards of their peoples once the conflicts are over.

Another task as we approach the twenty-first century, one that is inseparable from the quest for peace, is that of disarmament.

If arms control and disarmament are to contribute to true peace and stability world wide, it is imperative that all countries work together so that their legitimate security requirements can be met at the lowest possible level of armament. Only when the bilateral arms control and disarmament efforts between the United States and the Soviet Union are synergistically combined with the multilateral efforts of the United Nations, the Conference on Disarmament and other forums will global arms control and disarmament be possible.

There is no disputing the imperative of nuclear disarmament. A comprehensive nuclear-test ban should be seen as an important part of that imperative, and efforts should be made to find realistic ways to achieve it. At the recent special session devoted to disarmament, Prime Minister Takeshita announced plans to convene an international conference in Japan on the establishment of an international nuclear-test verification network, and discussions are now under way with a view to holding the conference as early as next spring.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

Looking ahead to the fourth review conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in 1990, I should like on this occasion to stress once again the need to expand and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation régime, an urgent task facing us at this time.

As reported by the Secretary-General, most recently on 19 August, there have been instances where chemical weapons were used. These are weapons against humanity. They should never under any circumstances be used. In his address before this Assembly on Monday, President Reagan proposed that a conference of the parties to the Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of chemical weapons be convened in order to strengthen the Protocol's effectiveness. My Government welcomes this initiative. At the same time, Japan will work even more vigorously for the earliest possible conclusion of the negotiations now under way in the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty on a total ban on chemical weapons.

One of the greatest challenges facing mankind as we approach the twenty-first century is the achievement of economic growth in developing countries. If that goal is to be realized, it is essential that developing and industrialized countries alike co-operate in recognition that the world economy is in fact a single entity. In order to expand systematically its official development assistance, Japan intends within a five-year target period to raise its share of total official development assistance disbursements made by the countries of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development to a level commensurate with the size of its economy in relation to the economies of other countries of the Committee. Japan is therefore working to raise the level of its official development assistance to more than \$50 billion over the next five-year period beginning in 1988, which is double the official development assistance it disbursed during the previous half decade. It is further trying

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

steadily to increase the ratio of its official development assistance to its gross national product, and further to expand its grant assistance to least developed countries.

At the same time, Japan continues to enhance its assistance to those developing countries which are burdened with heavy external indebtedness and other problems. This is demonstrated, for example, by the fact that more than 70 per cent of the projects under a targeted \$20-billion resource-recycling plan announced in 1987 to promote the flow of resources to developing countries have already been implemented. On the issue of debt relief, Japan has decided to broaden the scope and application of traditional measures by extending to least developed countries grant assistance equivalent to the amount repaid on total loan aid of \$5.5 billion which was committed to those countries between fiscal year 1978 and 1987.

The countries of sub-Saharan Africa have long been afflicted with economic stagnation, and their plight continues to deserve special consideration. Japan has vigorously supported these African nations through a series of measures such as: the extension of approximately \$500 million in non-project, untied grant assistance for the three-year period starting from fiscal year 1987; the financial recycling plan and debt-relief measures just described; and co-operation through relevant international agencies.

On the other hand, the smooth transfer of capital and technology from industrialized countries is crucial to the development of developing countries. I believe it is important that developing countries make further efforts to create the conditions necessary to attract private-sector investment while trying to avoid the environmental and other problems that have accompanied economic growth in industrialized countries.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

Determined as a matter of basic policy to contribute to a better world, Japan intends to continue to co-operate with efforts to resolve the problems facing developing countries.*

* Mr. Mortensen (Denmark), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

The United Nations has made steady progress over the years, for example in extending co-operation to developing countries and in such fields as human rights and humanitarian assistance. Regrettably, however, it must be admitted that the debates on many issues have not always been productive, and that inefficiencies have developed as a result of the excessive expansion and increased complexity of the Organization.

There has also been a tendency to politicize unduly problems that should more rightly be considered as technical problems belonging to economic, social, cultural or other fields.

As the United Nations regains its dynamism, I should like to make one comment that may accelerate this welcome momentum.

In 1985, Japan proposed the establishment of a group of high-level intergovernmental experts to promote administrative and financial reform in an effort to strengthen the functioning of the United Nations. It did so not merely to restructure the Secretariat and reduce the number of United Nations posts, but also to conduct a review of the United Nations and its operations, so as to maximize the benefits accruing from its activities. The reforms recommended by the Group in its report, which gained wide support among Member States desiring revitalization of the United Nations, are now being implemented. Let us take these efforts even further in order to create a United Nations that functions more effectively.

At the same time, I should like to emphasize the need for further improvements in the organization and functioning of the United Nations in the economic and social fields so that it can truly respond to the needs of the international community. Japan will contribute to the best of its ability towards this end.

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

There is one important point that needs to be made in this connection. The fact is that the United Nations faces a chronic financial crisis. In view of this serious situation, in March of this year Japan made a special contribution of \$20 million to support United Nations activities, particularly peacemaking and peace-keeping operations in connection with the situation in Afghanistan and the Iran-Iraq conflict. Today, when financial demands in the field of United Nations peace-keeping operations are sharply increasing, this financial deficit poses a major obstacle to the revitalization of the United Nations.

Clearly, the cause of this deficit is the non-payment by Member States of their obligatory contributions. Among 159 Member States, it is estimated that nearly 70 of them will be at least partially in arrears in the payment of their dues at the end of this year. This will amount to approximately \$450 million. It is thus essential that we move urgently to redress this situation, taking into account the serious implications of the problem. In this connection, Japan welcomes the positive attitude which the United States and other countries have recently demonstrated regarding the payment of their outstanding dues, and strongly hopes that they will pay in full as soon as possible.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the world placed its hopes for peace and prosperity in the United Nations, which has subsequently achieved considerable success in many areas. However, it must be admitted that in some ways the Organization has been unable to live up to the high expectations held of it. Today, almost half a century since the United Nations was founded, its structure must be improved so that it will respond appropriately to the changing needs and realities of the international community. An organization without the capacity to evolve can only wither. With little more than 11 years left until the year 2000, Japan, with a vision of the United Nations as it should be, hopes to work together

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

with other Member States, as well as with non-governmental organizations involved in United Nations affairs, to consider this issue seriously and take concrete actions towards realizing our goal.

As the only truly universal international organization, the United Nations will have an increasingly important role to play as it continues, now and in the future, to shoulder for mankind the burdens of maintaining world peace and prosperity and of fostering a rich cultural life. This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the world has ever greater expectations of United Nations activities for the protection of human rights. It is thus essential that all Member States support the United Nations and do their best to enhance its activities. Japan is determined to continue to make every effort in accordance with its International Co-operation Initiative, which I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks today, vigorously to support the United Nations as a dedicated Member on which the Organization and the other Member States can truly depend.

Mr. TRAORE (Guinea) (interpretation from French): In addressing this Assembly, I would like to assure it of the political will of the delegation of Guinea to make its modest contribution to the success of the work of the forty-third session.

I should like to take this opportunity to convey the message of friendship of the people of Guinea, and of its Government, which is courageously led by His Excellency General Lansana Conté.

Your well-deserved election as President of this session, Sir, is a just reward for your laudable efforts and your outstanding human qualities, which give our work a spirit of serenity and expectation of success.

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

Your country, in addition to belonging to the third world and to the Non-Aligned Countries, has warm and friendly relations with Guinea, which therefore is sincerely gratified by your election. We can assure you here and now of the active support of our delegation.

Furthermore, the forty-second session is still fresh in our minds, and I should be remiss if I failed to pay a sincere tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, who guided the work of the last session with sensitivity and skill.

We should like solemnly to hail our outstanding Secretary-General, whose firm dedication to the cause of peace and fruitful co-operation among all States has been expressed in the various negotiations he has skilfully guided throughout this year to find just and comprehensive solutions to the various regional conflicts.

The full shouldering of this heavy responsibility is a clear guarantee of the achievement of the legitimate hopes which mankind has placed in the universal Organization.

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

Although, unquestionably, many events have occurred in the past year and a new impetus has been given to the dynamic process of finding solutions to them, it is reasonable to conclude that consideration of the international situation does not justify undoubted optimism. In fact, hotbeds of tension continue to exist throughout the world, and more specifically in the southern hemisphere, which is subject to various political upheavals, aggravated by an extremely precarious economic situation.

Against this backdrop, the alarming situation in southern Africa is of vital interest because of the policy of apartheid and the acts of destabilization carried out by the racist régime of Pretoria against neighbouring States, as well as its illegal occupation of Namibia. We are therefore following with continued attention the four-Power talks that are now taking place with regard to the sensitive area of the African continent. In fact, we remain confident that these talks will lead to the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), on the accession to national sovereignty of the Namibian people under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). Moreover, we support the Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted by the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa, held last August in Oslo.

The South African régime cannot stamp out the internal contradictions which batter at the apartheid régime. The attention of international public opinion cannot be distracted from the imposition of a state of emergency and from all the other violations, including repeated acts of aggression against the front-line States and the support given to puppet movements.

The permanent members of the Security Council have a particular responsibility and a decisive role to play in bringing Pretoria round to reason. We hope that these countries, which are dedicated to freedom and to human rights, will assume

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

their share of responsibility for success in the implementation of global and binding economic sanctions as a means of exerting effective pressure on the racist régime of Pretoria.

With respect to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), bold decisions have been taken here by the heads of State and Government, designed to strengthen moral and material support for the fighters of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), as an essential condition for its intensification in the struggle against apartheid and for the establishment in South Africa of a multiracial egalitarian and democratic society.

Among our concerns, the question of the Western Sahara is of high priority. It is encouraging to see the lifting of the clouds which for a long time have darkened the relations between Algeria and Morocco, two brotherly countries linked by history, by geography and by culture. These events reflect not only an act of faith but also mark an important step in re-establishing confidence and the consolidation of Afro-Arab co-operation and the building of a united and prosperous Maghreh.

My delegation greatly values the commendable efforts made in particular by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. His wisdom and far-sightedness have been important factors in resolving the crisis and in ensuring a return to an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

In this respect I should like also to pay a tribute to the OAU and to all the brotherly African and Arab countries whose contribution has in any way helped to improve the situation.

We note with satisfaction the favourable development of the process of settling the dispute between Chad and Libya under the guidance of the Ad Hoc Committee of the OAU, and my delegation firmly supports its mediation efforts.

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

The significant results of contacts between the leaders in the Horn of Africa deserve our attention. This resumed dialogue should be encouraged and pursued with a view to establishing unity, fraternity and co-operation, in the sub-region on the ashes of hostility and mutual distrust.

We must also stress the positive development of the situation in the Comorian island of Mayotte. We hope that the talks will lead to a just solution to the question.

The same holds true for New Caledonia, where any initiative likely to eliminate the atmosphere of confrontation should be implemented. Here, the repercussions of the recent visits of the Prime Minister of France to New Caledonia and the new steps undertaken by his Government are clear signals of good will.

The developments in sensitive areas dominated by instability make us think of the continuing crisis in the Middle East. In that region the heroic uprising of the Palestinian people as the expression of the natural right to legitimate defence against foreign occupation. It is as a function of this inalienable right that justice-loving nations demand the recovery of the occupied Arab territories and the creation of an independent Palestinian State under the aegis of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The convening of an international peace conference in the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO, now seems a viable means of concerted action to find a lasting solution to the conflict.

Moreover, we cannot but be satisfied today at the happy outcome of the fratricidal war which for eight years has pitted Iran against Iraq and which has caused untold loss of life and damage. The cessation of hostilities will doubtless give vigorous impetus to the work of national building and will lead to progress and stability. Here, we should hail the persevering efforts of the

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

Secretary-General to bring the two parties to a peaceful settlement to the conflict through the proper implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and as an important stage in seeking a just and global solution to this terrible conflict. For its part, the Government of Guinea encourages the two parties to the conflict to pursue negotiations and to demonstrate political will, given the steps that are being taken at various levels to overcome all obstacles, within the framework of a peaceful settlement of this dispute.

Concerning the situation in Afghanistan, we continue to hope that the process of normalization will continue through the proper and systematic application of the Geneva agreements by all the parties involved. This will allow that country in the very near future to decide on its own destiny, free from any foreign interference.

This trend towards the defusing of tensions also holds true regarding Kampuchea, where the withdrawal of foreign troops remains the key to the problem. The direct and indirect talks among interested and concerned parties deserve our encouragement.

Tensions continue however in the Korean Peninsula despite the existence of numerous constructive proposals. Foreign intervention and the policy of over-arming seem to be the two fundamental obstacles to the peaceful and independent reunification of the northern and southern parts. The meeting of the North Korean and South Korean parliamentarians is an encouraging event inasmuch as it provides a possibility for the opening of dialogue, which can lead to conclusive results.

Regarding the crisis on Cyprus, the last meeting between the President of the Republic of Cyprus and the representative of the Cypriot-Turkish community in Geneva gives rise to a glimmer of hope regarding the re-establishment under the aegis of the United Nations of national unity and territorial integrity.

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

The situation in Central America continues to be of concern to our community. The hope aroused by the Arias Plan for a global political settlement to the conflict is no longer being reflected in facts. The establishment of an atmosphere of good-neighbourliness among all States of the region and the return to democratic principles, as laid down in that Plan, could, however, have created the necessary conditions for a return to peace and security. There is, therefore, reason to encourage the Contadora Group and the States of the Support Group to continue their efforts with a view to for the integral application of this Plan.

Regarding disarmament and the growing threat which the build-up of nuclear arsenals represents for mankind, the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament had the task of assessing and adopting corrective measures. My delegation keenly regrets that the session was unable to adopt a final document because the defence of national interests dominated over the categorical imperative of global security. Benefiting from a favourable international climate, that session could, through a process of consensus - which to be sure is difficult to achieve on a question as thorny as that of disarmament - have supplemented the positive gains achieved in the bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America.

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

However, throughout this period the arms race has been continuing, devouring enormous financial and material resources which could have contributed to the process of socio-economic development throughout the world. In my delegation's view it is impossible to maintain peace without a consistent policy of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, just as it is unrealistic to attempt to establish a balance in international relations in an environment characterized by non-military threats to security.

A new vision has emerged over these last years in dealing with crucial questions linked to security, following the progress achieved in the disarmament field - in particular, nuclear and chemical disarmament. It is up to multilateral disarmament forums to pursue that work in order to achieve even more substantive results. In addition, the rather positive geo-political environment of the last few years, characterized by a definite will to go beyond political and ideological divergences, is a manifestation of a progressive awareness of leaders and peoples of the virtues of frank dialogue and serious concerted action.

Concerning the zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic, the Government of Guinea will support all efforts likely to promote achievement of the objectives of the declaration in resolution 41/11. It was in this spirit that my country participated in the meeting at Rio de Janeiro, whose final document symbolizes the determination of the States of the South Atlantic to make of their region a genuine zone of peace and co-operation.

Paradoxically, these recent encouraging and positive developments are in contrast to the rather gloomy picture of the international economic situation, given the continuous and increasing difficulties experienced by the developing countries in general and by the African States in particular. Indeed, despite the great sacrifices made by the latter in their various programmes of structural readjustment, they have not yet been able to enjoy the advantages that they have

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

the right to expect, even if, on the domestic front, they have had a slight rise in their gross domestic product and some growth in food production.

In any case, we note with some concern that financial flows are dwindling. The tendency rather is for a transfer of capital from the South to the North. In fact, foreign investment, which represents for our economies a life-saving breath of oxygen, which can achieve certain national growth for development, is drying up. A glimmer of hope appeared when the international community demonstrated understanding and political will by adopting the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. The assessment of the implementation of that Programme has not yet shown prospects for specific measures, although certain international institutions have demonstrated some readiness to take action.

The situation regarding debt-servicing is unfavourable, while inequalities in international terms of trade are worsening. There are reasons for satisfaction at the conclusions of the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which, although of limited scope, stressed these problems while urging rich and poor to pursue negotiations, which at the moment are deadlocked, in order to promote continued and lasting growth of the world economy.

In the Sudano-Sahelian region of Africa, natural disasters, such as locust invasions and floods, are, first and foremost, endangering food production and are decreasing the volume of exports, which have suffered already from unequal terms of trade. That is why it is essential to have an overall view of these various economic and social trends and to emphasize the ever-growing interdependence in international economic relations. Ultimately, in the multipolar world in which we are living, balance can be achieved only through political will, linked to a realistic approach on the part of the international community.

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

It will be recalled that a positive initiative was undertaken by the Secretary-General in 1986 regarding the setting up of a strategy to enable us to cope, through the United Nations Programme for the Environment, with the damage caused to the environment. This decision was based specifically on the attention given to environmental problems throughout the world and, in particular, in the African countries confronted with a most alarming advance of the desert because of deforestation, the practice of large-scale cultivation and other factors contributing to deterioration.

Another ecological phenomenon, which is even more ominous, is threatening the developing countries. If I take the liberty of stressing this, it is precisely because my country, like many others, has been considered a dumping-ground by certain groups of countries and companies, which find yet again in Africa a favoured place for casting out all the evils and ills of this world. Energetic measures must be taken by the international community to do away with such attitudes, which seriously endanger biological diversity and the ecosystem, and are in violation of all international conventions in this field.

Above and beyond its will to co-operate with all well-intentioned countries, the Republic of Guinea, for its part, will adhere to all legal guarantees that are in conformity with international norms and to the recommendations of the Organization of African Unity concerning prohibition of a recurrence of this type of situation in its national territory. We consider that these inhuman actions contribute to the sowing of disorder and dismay among our peaceful peoples and that they are a serious threat to present and future generations.

The promotion of respect for human rights and their universal application, by encouraging co-operation among States, is one of the fundamental objectives of the world Organization. In keeping with the spirit and the letter of the Charter, the events of today are an acknowledgement of the close relationship between respect

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

for human rights and the maintenance of peace and international security. The fact that, through zealous efforts, the United Nations has succeeded in establishing a set of human-rights principles and rules that are internationally recognized should be noted among its most outstanding successes. For us, one of the essential tasks of the United Nations is to take effective measures against mass and flagrant violations of human rights, violations which are indeed a threat to peace and international security. Lack of respect for the right of peoples to self-determination, as well as humiliating practices and policies inspired by racism or apartheid, or existing for any other reason, require of our Organization, and of each of the Member States, the adoption of a firm position and adequate measures. The principle that there must be respect for, and implementation of, human rights is, we are convinced, the corner-stone of our civilization - a value shared by all mankind, a value that we have all set, and one that we must preserve and allow to grow.

The United Nations has demonstrated that it is an irreplaceable universal forum, whose central role has enabled us to resolve certain conflicts and to expand the foundations of democracy, peace, security and development. Its Charter includes rules and general principles that must serve as permanent reference points in our collective and individual actions. Any concept that is opposed to multilateralism undermines the idea of the interdependence of nations and sabotages the will to co-operate. It is by that will that all States - large or small, rich or poor - can effectively contribute to the establishment of a world free from distrust and terror, so long as its structure and means of functioning are adapted to today's realities.

While the uncertainty of a better future makes some sceptics view happiness on this Earth as a mirage, or as the horizon which recedes as we advance towards it,

(Mr. Traore, Guinea)

my delegation, for its part, nevertheless dares to hope that with the dawn of the third millenium the human race will provide the necessary surge of awareness to achieve - burning and eternal in all disillusioned hearts - the basic prerequisite for man's existence which is the thirst to live free and in peace.

Mr. GARCIA RODRIGUEZ (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the Government and people of Chile, I have pleasure in offering sincere congratulations to Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina on his election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. We are confident that in discharging his duties he will not only do honour to Latin America but also make a significant contribution to the progress and success of the work of this Assembly. It is particularly gratifying to Chile to see the Foreign Minister of the Argentine Republic presiding over our work, representing as he does a nation with which we are linked by geography, history, culture and an identical shared peace-loving tradition.

Our congratulations go also to the Secretary-General and his team of collaborators whose active endeavours have been a positive factor in making it possible for this year's General Assembly to see promising signs of the closer approach of wider international peace.

In this address I shall first express my country's opinion on some of the subjects that currently merit international consideration, and then I shall refer in particular to Chile, in view of certain important facts regarding our present situation.

We note with satisfaction that the cause of order and peace has been strengthened. Just a year ago, in this same Hall, the hope was expressed that the new relationship being perceived between the United States and the Soviet Union really would establish a world a climate that would benefit the international community. The strategic agreements that materialized this year offer encouraging prospects and we, together with the other nations of the world, await the new advances which these Powers may succeed in achieving.

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

Similarly, we hope that their concept of peace and constructive international coexistence based on respect will not only induce them to safeguard their own interests but with an awareness of their influence on the world scene, also impel them to encourage just and balanced international development.

We also hope that this newly declared spirit of peace may signify the end of hegemonist intentions or intervention, and will be translated into the effective ending of any such encouragement or assistance to violence as that given from well-known and condemned sources given to extremists groups in my country.

Further, we note with satisfaction the announced withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the quadripartite negotiations between Cuba, South Africa, the United States and Angola on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola; the beginning of the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), designed to lead to the independence of Namibia; the cease-fire agreed upon by Iraq and Iran; and recent reports regarding an agreement between the parties in the region of Western Sahara.

These hopeful advances are part of a process that should continue without faltering until real and completely satisfactory results are attained. We hope that thus we hope, prolonged tribulations will come to an end. In this process, the Secretariat has made great efforts, which deserve our praise, and it should serve as a basis for new achievements in keeping with the paramount principles of the United Nations Charter.

We should like to see these results augmented by new progress on the problems of ecology, denuclearization, outer space, free trade, underdevelopment, terrorism and drug trafficking, and on all the other challenges which mankind must confront in order to achieve the international common good.

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

However, we continue to be concerned about situations affecting other nations and peoples which have not yet found definitive solutions.

We note with sorrow the continued violence in the Middle East and its repeated effect on the life of the peoples there. This anguish is profound because many descendants of the Arab and Israeli peoples form part of the Chilean society and are dynamic elements in our nation.

We reiterate the importance of the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and the need to act realistically to bring about fair agreements that recognize the right of the Palestinian people to establish a sovereign State, and guarantee the peace and security of all the peoples of the region, including Israel, so that they may live within safe and internationally recognized boundaries.

We also observe with great sorrow the continuance of the tragedy affecting the Lebanese people. We trust that the new circumstances that prevail internationally will contribute to the ending of this tragedy by a satisfactory solution for all the parties involved.

We deplore the prolonged tragedy of Kampuchea whose people have been grievously attacked and subjected to sustained violence by a satellite of Soviet imperialism. I reiterate my country's recognition of the valour of those people in resisting the invader. We associate ourselves with the call by the Foreign Ministers of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) last July for a prompt solution of the Kampuchean problem to end the threat to the stability of that region.

We salute the Republic of South Korea on the completion of 40 years of its independence and applaud its efforts to unite its people. We value the call by the President of South Korea for dialogue between the two Koreas, and his Government's desire that both be incorporated into this Organization.

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

On our continent, we share in the situation involving the peoples of Central America, a region that during the last decade has been harassed by the activities of foreign ideologists. We recognize the efforts of the Central American nations to achieve peace. We are confident that the renewed proposals for peace which have been reported to the international community, and to which I referred earlier, will be extended to this area, the countries of which are so closely tied to the Chilean people by principles of freedom, historical origin and traditional friendship.

At the same time, we reaffirm our consistent rejection of any political or social policy that implies any kind of discrimination on racial or religious grounds. For this reason we reject apartheid and any other practice that disregards the equality of rights of man.

We also maintain our traditional policy of supporting true decolonization. As members of the Special Committee on decolonization, we have supported its action in the case of New Caledonia. We observe with interest positive signs emerging in the actions of the Administering Power, that should lead to legitimate self-determination for the people of that territory.

Similarly, as members of the Council for Namibia we shall continue to support compliance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Our action in the Council has taken on a special connotation this year because of the visit of a delegation from the Council to Chile. This permitted us to set forth our position clearly and pinpoint our offer of technical co-operation for the vocational training of Namibian experts in various fields.

We add our condemnation and repudiation to the civilized world's rejection of terrorism. It is a scourge that besets society as a whole, an outrage against the normal life of citizens, their families and their property. Terrorist acts - and

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

I say this in the light of experience in my own country - destroy the human individual or render him an invalid, demolishing in minutes what has taken our national heritage years to create.

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

Furthermore, these acts are often orchestrated for imperialistic purposes or ideological expansionism, in order to undermine the integrity of nations and jeopardize their sovereignty.

The world knows that there is a transnational terrorism that still receives the overt or covert support of certain States. Moreover, the odious and repugnant links which at times become evident between terrorism and the drug traffic, bind together these two elements which destroy health and social coexistence. The most vigorous, definite and co-ordinated reaction on the part of the international community, without delay, is needed to eradicate these devastating perversions. One of the tests of the objectives of peace which certain Powers proclaim would be the degree of effective contribution they are able to offer to make such eradication a reality.

We resolutely support the cause of human rights and reaffirm the co-operation which we have offered in support of the responsibility which this Organization should bear in this regard. We do so on this, the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, despite the ostensible discrimination to which we have been subjected.

We want human rights to be protected effectively. To achieve this and it is necessary to introduce in-depth modifications into the instruments and the conduct with which States approach the treatment of the subject.

Experience affirms the need to create juridical and procedural instruments that are universally binding, free of political and ideological content, that will guarantee non-discrimination, ensure impartial objectivity and preserve the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.

The politicization of the subject of human rights has served to distort its high and noble objectives. Use of the subject for political purposes, or to exert

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

unjustifiable pressure has led to manifestly erroneous actions and downright omissions and silences.

This involves the risk of deterioration of the bases of peaceful and correct understanding between peoples and endangers the very human rights and true values they represent.

We fully share the uneasiness caused by the world economic situation, and especially that which affects developing countries. In recent years these nations have suffered from the combined effects of the deterioration in terms of trade, the high level of real interest rates, and the absence of any effective or realistic treatment of the problems arising from the recession of the beginning of the decade, and external debt.

The destiny of the developing countries is closely linked to the possibilities for them to expand their international trade. For that reason, we view with concern the protectionist measures and disregard of multilateral commitments to liberalize trade which are emerging in the more developed countries.

Protectionism restricts international relations in the modern world, intensifies the differences in the world community, and reduces the debtor's ability to meet its financial obligations.

We are hopeful about the results of the Uruguayan Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), but we must point out that we cannot wait for the dismantling of protectionist barriers, or even accept the invoking of a dilatory excuse, such as the conclusion of a new round of negotiations.

The foreign debt problem, in its multiple dimensions - political, social and economic - requires that the debtor countries, as well as the developed nations, assume their respective shares of responsibility - the former by pursuing internal adjustment and reforms that will lead to the strengthening of their economies, and

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

the latter by curbing protectionist tendencies and increasing effective co-operation with the debtor countries.

For those of us who, as in the case of my own country, have liberalized their economy and carried out an internal adjustment of profound ramifications, complying fully with all our commitments, the repercussions of international trade, protectionism and indebtedness have unquestionably a significance about which we cannot remain silent.

We share a common destiny with the developing and industrialized nations alike. We seek an economic order in which all of us can grow. The future of humanity demands that this growth be balanced. To fail to contribute to it and to attempt simply to accept only the short-term advantages is to close one's eyes to tomorrow.

In concluding this first section, I wish to voice the desire that world society should take to heart the profound appeal of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, who, in his last encyclical, said that in the natural interdependence of nations it was necessary to superimpose solidarity among them if an international order of peace and justice was to be achieved. We are encouraged by the hope that this Assembly is leading us on to that noble goal.

I shall now refer to Chile. It seems an opportune moment to do so.

Efforts have been made on the international scene to misrepresent the political realities of Chile. There has been no desire to believe the affirmations of my country and opinions, unjust and without foundation, have been expressed regarding the institutional process which it has been implementing. Time and again we have denounced and rejected the repeated attempts to interfere in our internal affairs. We do not accept attempts from outside to direct or influence the Chilean political process.

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

As history confirms, grave crises suffered by some peoples have very often had their origin in colonialist designs or foreign interventionism. The fundamental principles of international coexistence and the rights and powers of national sovereignties will be gravely impaired by any external abuse that interferes with the a nation's own private political life.

Within a few days the people of Chile will take a political decision of profound significance in its institutionalized transition to democracy. In response to the will of the Government and our citizens, the culmination of our current political process is beginning. A system of government, fully in accord with the constant norms of the political Constitution approved by the people in 1980, calling for a democratic system in keeping with Christian-Western values and principles, will be inaugurated. My participation in this Assembly coincides with this historic national moment. Objective appreciation of this event is certainly necessary for a better understanding of our reciprocal links and for the fusing of our common goal of progress.

It is useful and appropriate to recall that in 1973 the Government of Chile took over a nation on the brink of material disintegration and of the loss of its national identity, with the imminent risk of being deprived of its sovereignty. It was a country in a shattered political, juridical, economic, social and moral condition. The institutions of the Republic had been seriously eroded or derided. The nation's economy was destroyed, its production sources paralysed, its international reserves exhausted. Chilean society was in crisis. The loftiest and permanent values of the nation were threatened.*

*The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

Since then the Government of President Pinochet has assumed the arduous and complex task of reclaiming Chile's democratic institutionality and opening the way to sustained progress, in harmony with the national common good.

To make headway on this great task the labour and effort of all Chileans has been required. We have faced adverse conditions resulting from international crises and recessions, as well as from the lack of understanding and the difficulties that we have encountered even from those that shared our principles and were aware of the nature of our problem.

This difficult task had the object of giving shape in Chile to an authentically free society, based on three fundamental pillars which mutually complement one another. These are, simultaneously, improvement of the Chilean's quality of life through social development, a social economy of the marketplace through economic development, and a solid participative democracy through political development. If an impartial, unbiased visitor were to check on what has been achieved in Chile, he would appreciate the substantial progress which the country has made at these three levels.

As for quality of life and social development, the respective indexes are eloquent and the forecasts are promising. The marked increase in life expectancy, the virtual disappearance of illiteracy and serious infant malnutrition, the increase in school enrolment, the decline in extreme poverty, the noteworthy urban improvement, housing construction, the increase in the number of home owners and the decline in the rates of unemployment to figures even lower than those in more developed nations are some samples of our social achievements, and these will continue to increase in the interest of the welfare of all Chileans.

As far as the economy is concerned, the results obtained have been the object of praise and recognition in specialized technical circles. To mention only a few

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

aspects in this area, it is worth noting that the fiscal budget has been balanced; inflation has been controlled, having been reduced from percentages greater than 600 per cent annually to 5.9 per cent in the first eight months of this year; an increase in the gross national product has been maintained for the fifth consecutive year; diversification of exports has substantially changed our position from that of being predominantly an exporter of a single product, with the result that, overall, exports have increased by more than 500 per cent, with the decisive participation of the private sector; and there has been negotiation of the servicing and reduction of the external debt.

In the political sphere, we have always affirmed that Chile would restore its democratic régime, proceeding with a process of transition outlined in a detailed plan.

The Political Constitution approved in 1980, which governs the country today, provided that in 1988 the people would be called upon to make a sovereign, free, secret and well-informed decision to elect a leader to assume the presidency of the Republic for the next term. It also provided that in 1989 the senators and deputies who would form the two branches of the National Congress would be elected by popular vote. To that end and to ensure the development of full democracy, the necessary legal regulations were prepared and put into effect.

As a result Chile today has a sophisticated system of public electoral registration of its citizens which has enabled almost 7.5 million Chileans to participate now in the electoral process. That is 92 per cent of the possible total in the country - a percentage that not even the more developed nations have attained and that has certainly never before been reached in Chile. Similarly, the legislation that regulates the voting and scrutiny process guarantees the correctness of the voting system and its results. The secrecy of voting is

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

guaranteed, as is public scrutiny, and the representatives of all the political parties can verify results in the voting precincts and associated areas. Any complaints that the electoral processes may produce are dealt with by the Election Qualifying Board, a politically independent organism, in accordance with the respective statutes.

In compliance with the legislation on political parties, these are functioning in significant numbers, participating daily and constantly in the political debate in support of their respective options and arguments.

In addition to the ample freedom that exists for electoral publicity through the media - radio, newspapers and other written material - free time has been legally granted on all television channels, with equal periods for all the electoral options presented to the citizenry. Anyone who does not keep his eyes closed in Chile today can see all the publications representing the most diverse political points of view, and if he does not plug his ears he can also hear innumerable radio stations broadcasting programmes about the different party options.

In addition, all the exceptional measures in effect in the country have been lifted, despite the persistence of extremist activity, so that total legal normality now exists. The last of the prohibitions on entry into the country established by virtue of the state of emergency, now revoked, has also been terminated.

In sum, all these actions confirm the absolute resolve of the Government and people of Chile to restore full democracy.

Within this framework, Chile is now nearing the plebiscite to be held on 5 October, that is to say, a week from today. This plebiscite constitutes a form

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

of election permitted once only under the Political Constitution as an extraordinary and exceptional measure. Its purpose is to allow Chileans an opportunity to give their majority support to the person proposed for the next presidential term and thus to ensure the best possible conditions for beginning the restored democratic institutional process. If this support is granted it will mean that the elected candidate has gained in a direct vote more than 50 per cent of the votes cast, a proportion which no one can contend does not represent the democratic will of a people. If that does not happen, a President of the Republic will be elected at the end of one year, in accordance with the general and permanent provisions of the Constitution.

This is the culmination of Chile's institutional and political development. However, we are not unmindful of the obstacles still to be overcome.

We know that there are elements that seek a breakdown or failure of the institutional process, to the point that they have called for the electoral results to be disregarded or their constitutional effects modified. We also know that they will continue to try to distort the realities in Chile, through disinformation, creation of false images and falsification of results, and will even go so far as to charge fraud. Unfortunately, some of these disruptive elements seem to be able to rely on foreign complicity, or seek to obtain it. The Chilean Government will not hesitate to maintain order to guarantee free electoral expression by its citizens.

(Mr. Garcia Rodriguez, Chile)

Let the international community not be confused with regard to the situation in Chile. The facts I have just set forth confirm that the process that is now going on is in keeping with the deeply felt interests of the Republic, and enables it to face the future with stability, seeking the well-being of all Chileans.

The democracy that is being restored in Chile today constitutes a system in which political and economic freedoms are solidly linked with social development. It is based on our conviction that it is this unity that will give it stability since socio-economic development gives the individual freedom in his personal and social life, and political development involves him in participation in the common good of the nation.

We have full respect for the will of each nation and for the way in which each State manages its internal affairs. We have the right to ask that this respect be reciprocal.

Let me say in closing that it is the desire and the confidence of Chile that this Organization which unites us will succeed in finding proper and timely answers to the desire for peace, justice and development so deeply felt in the world today and that it will also know how to inspire us to make a real contribution to the international common good, a responsibility we all must share.

Mr. PERES (Israel): Mr. President, I should like at the outset to congratulate you on your election to the esteemed post of President of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. I feel sure that the possibility of restoring to the United Nations the spirit of conciliation and peace for which it was founded will depend, in no small measure, on your wise and experienced guidance.

In a discussion of the Middle East, history should precede diplomacy. The region has known epochs of war and golden ages, military conquests and spiritual

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

greatness. It was in the Middle East that an invisible divide saw frustration and promise prevail in an unpredictable, seemingly uncontrollable, cycle. Yet it was man who triggered waves of hope and despair. Thus it was man who determined the course of history.

Today, once again, the region faces a moment of human choice.

We are preparing for a better tomorrow. We are prepared with a vision of peace. It is the vision of an end to a futile, economically devastating arms race now sliding in the inhumane direction of chemical and biological warfare. Ballistic missiles know no boundaries, chemical warheads do not distinguish young from old. Those senseless enough to employ them must recognize that they are creating a danger to themselves as well.

It is a vision of an opportunity to concentrate on scientific and technological breakthroughs on Earth and in space, on civilian requirements rather than military needs where resources wasted on armaments are invested in creative enterprises from the greening of the land to the clearing of the waters, from educating young children to caring for the senior citizen.

It is a vision of a region whose stability is inviting, whose dwelling is hospitable, whose creativity is encouraging, whose needs are seriously addressed by those seeking to invest in promoting stability and in expanding economic potential.

It is a vision of a region come of age, a region cognizant of global rapprochement, a region ready to tackle the heretofore seemingly insoluble in order to offer a better future for all - Jews and Arabs alike - a region ready to respect differences among peoples without discriminating against any.

It is a vision that is a necessity. It is a vision that is within reach.

Yet the smoke of old fires is still in the air and new ones threaten to darken the horizon.

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

Unless we take decisive action to change course belligerency will not be overcome. We have to do our utmost to ensure that never again will a young man or woman die in a war we failed to prevent.

What should be done to achieve this goal?

I shall start with Israel.

Three years ago Israel stood before this Assembly and pledged to dedicate its efforts to the pursuit of peace. That pledge rested not only on resolve, but also on a conviction: that in the north, war can be brought to an end; in the south, peace can be salvaged and nourished and, in the east, the ground can be laid to start meaningful negotiations.

In all three directions we laboured to fulfil the commitment.

In the north, we put an end to our involvement in Lebanon. We are out of Lebanon, its land and politics. Our sole concern is to see that Lebanon no longer serves as the base for hostile activities against us.

In the south, we have revived our relations with Egypt, which has since restored full diplomatic representation in Israel. We have witnessed Egypt, under the steady leadership of President Mubarak - dedicated to progress at home and peace in the region - reassume its central role in the Arab world without parting with its peace strategy.

In the east, we have experienced hope and frustration. Until less than a year ago, before things went awry, the West Bank turned from the centre of violent debate to the focus of diplomatic efforts. Most significantly, in April 1987, energetic and creative diplomacy produced a framework for negotiations. Known as "the London Document", it provided a non-imposing internationally supported setting for direct negotiations.

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

Unfortunately, while still viable, the effort has not yet reached fruition. Sadly, the absence of progress was accompanied by an outbreak of violence. Wrongly, the Palestinians chose to knock on the door of the future with stones in their hands. Knocking with a message of peace would have triggered an entirely different situation.

Indeed, the Palestinians must recognize that it is possible to secure their legitimate rights - but not at the expense of Israel's security. Palestinian aspirations and Israeli security are not necessarily incompatible.

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

Peace is an Israeli national interest. While we have confidence in the capacity of the Israeli Defence Forces to defend our country, by deterring any aggression and defeating it if need be, we consider the achievement of peace through diplomacy the greatest victory of all. My country has never surrendered to the pressures of war and will never yield to violence. In peace negotiations we shall stand firm on our security interests. Yet we stand ready for a historic compromise with our neighbours. For 40 years we have built our strength so as not to negotiate out of weakness. Today we are strong enough to negotiate for peace.

Israel has no intention of harming the Palestinian people. Israel has no desire to dominate their lives or to hurt their pride. We are prepared to negotiate with them, fairly, freely, as equals, a meeting-ground of needs, where Palestinians can enjoy their identity and Israelis security in peace.

We are prepared to conduct negotiations on the basis of the only framework, reaffirmed this week in the trilateral meeting chaired by President Reagan, with the participation of the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and accepted by Arab countries as well as by all permanent members of the Security Council - that is, Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), calling for a territorial compromise and secure borders. They are the only existing common ground.

As we stand ready to live up to these commitments, we shall be as clear in addressing our expectations of our neighbours. For there can be peace, but not unilaterally; there can be accommodation, but only by mutual effort. We expect from the Arab world a clear voice for peace. For how long can a desire for peace be treated as a secret password as though we were living in clandestine surroundings? Commitment to peace must emerge loud and clear, for sceptics to witness, for the hopeful to respond.

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

We expect the Arab world to realize that there is no indirect peace. Peace is meant to reinforce, not to undermine, freedom and security for all involved.

We expect the Arab world, including the Palestinians, to do away with the contradiction of sweet promises and bitter violence. A policy of "no war, no peace", much like a policy that claims to combine both, is an exercise in evasion. A choice must be made: to pay the price of peace or to be resigned to the costs of war.

All of us must recognize changing realities. That which was rejected when offered, that which was doomed by war, that which could have been possible, belongs to the past. In the realities of 1988 the lines of 1947 no longer exist. After the Six-Day War Israel should not be expected to return to the lines from which it was attacked. Readiness for a territorial compromise does not include readiness to compromise security.

A breakthrough requires the understanding that peace is a matter of choice; it is the outcome of decisions; it is the product of a historic compromise. No vague formulation can replace a clear strategy to part with the past. The turn to a so-called Government-in-exile, the return to General Assembly partition resolution 181 (II), represents yet another escape to the realm of self-illusion. Any attempt to add to or subtract from the only commonly accepted basis for negotiations is bound to destroy the existing framework without creating a new one. Fuelled by a commitment to no war and no violence, no terrorism and no pressure, we can travel the distance towards accommodation.

To the Palestinians I must say with candour that violence does not pay off. By avoiding negotiations they are depriving themselves of their hope. For there is hardly a chance for a compromise to emerge in the absence of, or prior to, a free negotiating process.

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

Although we cannot agree in advance on the outcome of negotiations, we can agree on the process by which to go forward - negotiations as an open-ended effort, free of pressure, imposition or threat. In those negotiations, Jordanians and Palestinians, much like ourselves, may present expectations and demands as they labour to balance contradictory aspirations so as to answer the call of peace. We are ready to enter into negotiations with Jordan and with authentic representatives of the Palestinian people who are men of peace and not men of violence, in order to solve our differences with Jordan and to resolve the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. We are ready to negotiate with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Yet, as peace is unlikely to be achieved in one leap, we are prepared to start negotiations without prior conditions with a Jordanian delegation or a Palestinian one. We hope that the Palestinians will not postpone the prospects of peace; and we hope that Jordan, regardless of its relations with them, will not postpone negotiations either.

I wish to express the gratitude of my people to the United States, its leaders and its institutions for their firm and consistent support. The United States has enabled us to guarantee our security. It has encouraged us, as it has our neighbours, to enter into political negotiations.

The Shultz initiative calling upon the parties to enter into direct negotiations and negotiate a just and fair solution calls also on the permanent members of the Security Council to avoid imposing solutions, refrain from applying pressure and serve as supporters of peace. This initiative, which provides for direct negotiations launched in a non-coercive international setting - remains available for consideration.

When we had an opportunity to review the prospects for peace earlier this week we were reassured by the unanimity among the host, President Reagan, and his guests

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

from Egypt and Israel that there is no substitute for an ongoing, uninterrupted effort towards peace, and that all those attending are resolved to fill the next few months with relevant content.

I wish to express my hope that the policies adopted by the Soviet Union under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev will lead to a world of more ploughshares and fewer swords. Moscow has undertaken some steps, which, though partial and limited, are yet of importance. Zionist prisoners have been released. The number of Jewish emigration permits has grown. Consular groups have been stationed in the Soviet Union and Israel respectively. We have taken note of statements from Moscow calling on all sides in the Middle East to adopt realistic positions with the objective of demilitarizing international relations.

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

I wish to express the hope of my people that the cultural autonomy announced by the Soviet leadership will enable our Jewish brethren to pray to our Lord in their own synagogues, to teach their children the history of the Jewish people, to express themselves in the language of their forefathers, and to set sail to the shores of the promised land.

As we watch with wonder and respect the People's Republic of China rearrange its own destiny, we hope it will find this the occasion to support a non-coercive setting for Arab-Israeli negotiations, as well as to normalize its relations with the State of Israel.

There is nothing in our region's history or in its present that rules out a different future. In an era of peace and co-operation, the industrial dynamics of the Far East, the Economic Community of Europe, the free enterprise and the enterprise of freedom of the United States, and the Soviet capacity to introduce an air of glasnost can all apply to the Middle East. We can draw on the experience of others. We can add that which is unique to us and offer our young generation the dawn of prosperity in peace.

In order to prepare the ground for the launching of our region on the long road to peace, may we suggest that all relevant parties undertake the following: those interested in the promotion of peace and stability in the Middle East undertake a moratorium on all threats or acts of violence; those interested in promoting Arab-Israeli peace negotiations undertake to encourage and facilitate the early convening of such negotiations in a non-coercive setting, free of a renewed arms race and free of external pressure; and those committed to the cause of peace in the Middle East reaffirm their adherence to the only commonly accepted basis for such negotiations - Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) - the renunciation of violence and terror and recognition of the right of all peoples and States in the region to freedom, dignity, peace and security.

(Mr. Peres, Israel)

Before I conclude I wish to refer again to yet another issue that is very close to our hearts. As we have pointed out so often in the past, in Yemen, in Syria, in Iran and elsewhere our brethren are today permitted neither the free pursuit of our common heritage nor free departure to Israel. We call upon the Governments of those countries to respect basic human rights. We also call upon the Governments to reject the shameful assertion that Zionism is racism, a statement that shows no understanding of Zionism and a dangerous misunderstanding of racism.

Forty years ago the founder of our State, David Ben-Gurion, against the background of the turmoil of war and revival, introduced our Declaration of Independence, which stated:

"We extend our hand in peace and neighbourliness to all the neighbouring States and their peoples, and invite them to co-operate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all."

Israel at 40, proud of its accomplishments at home, confident about its future, today reiterates that very call: we extend our hand in peace to all our neighbours, peoples and States, as we stand ready to alter the course of Middle East history. At the all-too-familiar crossroads of hope and despair we are convinced that the choice is ours to make.

Most appropriately, this week our people celebrate the holiday of Succoth, the Feast of Tabernacles, as we pray together

"Spread over us the Tabernacle of Thy peace ..."

"He who maketh peace in heavens, may He make peace for us ..."

We need it; we can help to achieve it.

Mr. TINDEMANS (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I wish first to offer you, Sir, the most sincere congratulations of Belgium on your election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. I view your election as an international tribute to you personally and, through you, to your country, Argentina, which has resolutely chosen democracy and is in the process of consolidating it. I have the utmost confidence in your ability and your experience, which will enable you, with the constructive collaboration of all delegations, to direct our work to a successful conclusion. My delegation will contribute fully to that end.

I take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, Mr. Florin, for guiding with exemplary efficiency the work of the forty-second session of the General Assembly, which was particularly intensive.

This year more than ever I wish to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, to his tireless dedication and to his personal commitment to the common ideal of the constant search for world peace based on human dignity. On numerous occasions, and most recently during our last meeting in Brussels, I have been able to see for myself how deserving of our respect and, above all, our total support is his action.

I associate myself fully with the conclusions of his annual report, a document as complete as it is remarkable, in which he invites Governments to adapt themselves better to a changing international situation, thus allowing us to use our Organization with more determination and to better effect. I endorse this concept all the more heartily in that his ideas have served as the guiding principles for the views I have expressed from this rostrum in recent years. I am convinced that better defined international solidarity would make possible the broadening of the sphere of multilateral activities of of the United Nations at a

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

time when the universal and interdependent nature of many of the problems and challenges facing the international community is becoming increasingly evident.

My Greek colleague, Mr. Papoulias, speaking as President of the Council of Ministers of the European Community, yesterday presented the views of the 12 member States on the whole range of international questions. His speech testified to the will of the European countries to speak with a single voice on the international scene.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

As far as Belgium is concerned, it is convinced that increased recourse to the multilateral settlement of problems will contribute to strengthening the authority, prestige and irreplaceable role of the United Nations.

As a founding Member of the Organization and a signatory of the San Francisco Charter, my country cannot fail to welcome the recent tangible signs that the Organization is again prepared to live up to its vocation. Indeed, conflicts that threaten the security of entire continents are now on the way to being resolved by peaceful means, whether through direct intervention by the United Nations or through efforts being made under its auspices.

This renewed vitality can only be sustained with the active individual and collective co-operation of all Members and, primarily, that of the countries with the greatest influence in international affairs. It is not enough to proclaim loudly and clearly the value of the principles of the Charter. The important thing is that it be faithfully and fully implemented by all, without exception. As certain recent breakthroughs have shown, only the political will of Members - and, in particular, that of the super-Powers - will make it possible for the United Nations to act effectively where such action is needed. The converse is also true. Any strengthening of the United Nations is beneficial to each member of the international community. Such interaction is therefore beneficial to all, but it can be set in motion only through the demonstration of goodwill by all.

Strengthening the Organization's capacity for action means enabling it to achieve such essential objectives as the consolidation of international peace and security, economic and social development and the promotion of human rights, and meeting the real challenges of time - helping to resolve the crisis created by the indebtedness of the developing countries, assisting the most disadvantaged peoples

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

and fighting all forms of poverty, illiteracy, hunger, oppression and intolerance, as well as all violations of fundamental human rights.

In his 1983 report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General stated that the tendency towards the erosion of multilateralism and internationalism had to be halted and reversed, and he took that opportunity to examine various approaches that might make the Organization more effective as a political institution. He concluded that the first step towards strengthening the United Nations should consist in the sincere renewal of the commitments of all Governments to the principles of the Charter.

The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations provided an opportunity for all of us to renew our pledge of faith in the Organization. It also provided an occasion to engage in a sincere examination of conscience and to embark upon a process of United Nations reform to make it more effective and more responsive to the hopes all the peoples of the world have placed in it. Those efforts are now beginning to bear fruit.

Positive developments have also been brought about through the willingness of the Security Council to act unanimously through consensus in a certain number of conflicts. The personal efforts of the Secretary-General thus took on broader scope. To that we should add the valuable contribution the peace-keeping operations have made and will make in the future. All of this increases the real impact of the United Nations, in particular on public opinion, whose support is indispensable, and especially on young people, in whom our hopes for a better future are placed.

I would also note that at the very moment when the effective intervention of the United Nations is becoming so evident our Organization is, paradoxically, suffering from a financial crisis that could well prevent it from meeting its most

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

essential responsibilities. I therefore welcome the intention of the United States to find a solution to its contribution problem, and I trust that all Member States will fully live up to their financial commitments. It is essential that the reforms adopted two years ago by the General Assembly be promptly implemented so that the Organization can act under the best possible conditions and be in a position to justify the trust vested in it.

The international atmosphere to which I have referred has been profoundly affected by the improvement in East-West relations. Belgium welcomes this trend, to which it has actively contributed. For their part, the European Twelve are playing a growing role in the positive evolution of East-West relations. In this connection I would mention the start that has been made on achieving closer relations between the European members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), on the one hand, and the European Community, on the other. Belgium hopes that that progress will continue, with beneficial consequences for the economic and social well-being of mankind.

The signing of the Soviet-American Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles has been hailed, and rightly so, as an event of prime importance. It is a disarmament agreement in the true sense of the term, one that eliminates - and this is the first time it has been done - an entire category of nuclear weapons, accompanied by on-site verification measures that provide adequate guarantees of compliance to both parties.

We do not want it to end there. In a context in which no aspect of East-West relations is being neglected and in which improvements are being sought in all spheres, disarmament efforts are being intensively pursued in various fields.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

Belgium keenly hopes that the agreement on the 50 per cent reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the Soviet Union and the United States will soon be implemented.*

Belgium values the continuation of bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States on nuclear testing. The progressive and pragmatic approach that has been adopted, as propounded by Belgium, opens up real opportunities for achieving the desired results. We support actions that bring us closer to the objective of a comprehensive and verifiable ban on all nuclear testing, on the bilateral level and also on the international level at the Conference on Disarmament.

For several years chemical disarmament has been the object of intensive multilateral effort at the Conference on Disarmament. We remain confident of the possibility of reaching an agreement in the foreseeable future, notwithstanding the difficulties - which we do not underestimate - that lie ahead. Fortunately, the participants in those negotiations continue to manifest a desire to complete those negotiations successfully. To be successful, the agreement will have to have universal application. In this connection I should like to share my country's deep concern over the repeated violations of the 1925 Geneva Protocol that have occurred in recent years, and in the last few weeks. Those are dangerous precedents and we would very much hope that the indignation and keen emotion such odious acts have aroused will prevent their repetition. Belgium is also deeply concerned at the erosion of respect for a ban to which it attaches great value. We cannot forget that, historically, Belgium was the first victim of chemical weapons.

* Mr. Moushoutas (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

Refusal to consider that barbaric weapon a legitimate means for gaining military advantage is clearly the sine qua non of any success in attaining complete chemical disarmament, which is now being pursued at the Conference on Disarmament.

Like many other States, Belgium unequivocally condemned the use of chemical weapons when such use was confirmed by the fact-finding missions of the Secretary-General. Prompted by humanitarian considerations, my country has expressed its concern about the most recent allegations of the use of such weapons. We regret that the experts designated by the United Nations Secretary-General were unable to investigate that matter thoroughly.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

In that connection, I think it essential that the international community have a clear idea of potential risks inherent in recent events and that each State consider ways to prepare for them and to forestall dangerous developments before it is too late. To be sure, this involves respect for the law, but it also involves political will. We must redouble our efforts to achieve a consistent and effectively verifiable treaty totally banning chemical weapons and the production, stockpiling and use of those weapons, yet at the same time we must not relax our vigilance concerning respect for existing laws. I think President Reagan's initiative may be viewed in that perspective.

Belgium hopes that negotiations on conventional forces in Europe will begin soon. Their goal must be to reach the greatest possible stability at the lowest possible level of forces.

Especially in Europe, the disarmament effort is part of a wider process covering all aspects of the diplomatic and human relations among the various parties on a continent that has experienced and continues to experience profound divisions which we are striving gradually to reduce. That approach began with the Helsinki Final Act and is continuing in the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe now under way at Vienna.

Belgium expects that Conference to yield significant progress in human rights, where important commitments have been made in the past. We have seen encouraging signs of greater attention being given to these problems and of a greater willingness to make progress in this area. We hope that all participants will contribute more fully to this process. Belgium also expects that the Conference will set a timetable for the future in order to sustain the vitality of the process of improving East-West relations.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

In that context of détente, the tragedy of Afghanistan, which has caused such human suffering and material damage, appears to be on the way to a solution, with the help of the United Nations. Having contributed to the negotiation of the Geneva Accords, the United Nations is participating in their implementation. For its part, Belgium will closely follow the development of the situation, in particular the continued withdrawal of occupation forces and the Afghan people's exercise of self-determination. On that basis it will determine its position in the General Assembly debate on this issue.

The persistent personal efforts of the Secretary-General have led to acceptance by Iran and by Iraq of full implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), which had been unanimously adopted by the Council with a view to ending a long and bloody war between those two countries. Belgium particularly welcomes the cease-fire that began on 20 August and the beginning of peace negotiations under United Nations auspices. I hope that an honourable, lasting settlement will soon restore peace in the Gulf region.

Other regional conflicts continue to plague Asia and the Middle East. They are a source of constant concern, and we express our hope that a peaceful settlement can be reached as quickly as possible.

In Asia, this would involve true independence for a democratic, neutral and non-aligned Cambodia. Belgium is especially aware of this issue since it is Vice-Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the International Conference on Kampuchea.

Still with respect to Asia, Belgium reaffirms its support for simultaneous admission to the United Nations of the two Koreas and hopes that direct negotiations between the two parties will lead to their reunification.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

In the Middle East, we hope that international détente will help end the Israeli-Arab conflict and settle the Palestinian question. I personally tried to reconcile the points of view of the various parties concerned when I served as President of the Council of the European Community during the first half of 1987. Since then, the uprising of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories has shown that the status quo is not viable and that only a negotiated solution to the conflict can bring about a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement. This situation is, sadly, a perfect illustration of what I said a moment ago: that only political will on the part of the parties directly concerned and on the part of the great Powers can enable the United Nations to play the role we all say it should play. Unfortunately, that is not yet the case in the Israeli-Arab conflict, although there are certain signs that the beginnings of wisdom could lead to the trail blazed in other regions.

With respect to the situation in Central America, it is important that the hopes raised by the Esquipulas II agreement will not fade, and that new impetus will be given to the peace process in the region. The area's problems show how democratization, peace and economic development go hand in hand and how they influence each other.

Cyprus and Western Sahara, where the Secretary-General's role has also been established, are two other issues of interest. With regard to Cyprus, we noted with satisfaction the Geneva meeting between representatives of the island's two communities, under United Nations auspices. In the case of Western Sahara, Belgium welcomes the parties' acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposals concerning a referendum.

Turning to sub-Saharan Africa, I wish first of all to recall what my colleague from Greece said when he stressed the Twelve's rejection of apartheid and when he spoke of the pressure being brought to bear upon the South African Government.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

We are following with keen interest the efforts to bring peace to Angola and grant independence to Namibia. The fact that the parties concerned have agreed to hold talks is another positive element that should be emphasized and encouraged. For the first time in years there is finally hope for a peaceful settlement and wisdom is prevailing among those who only recently seemed adamant.

Indeed, we are encouraged by the progress of negotiations among South Africa, Angola and Cuba, with the mediation of the United States and the accord of the Soviet Union. The various agreements the parties have reached thus far and the prospect of finalizing the agreement on the withdrawal of foreign troops enable us to hope that 1988 will be a decisive, if belated, turning-point in the process of Namibia's accession to independence. Clearly, Belgium, as a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, takes a prime interest in the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), by which 10 years ago the Security Council adopted a plan for the independence of Namibia on the basis of general elections under United Nations supervision.

This progress, however, does not make me forget that the resolution of Angola's internal problems too is vital to ensuring stability and peaceful coexistence in the region.

Africa holds a special place in the heart of Belgians. Our affinity results from history and from the relations of co-operation maintained in the past and in the present by many of my countrymen throughout that vast continent.

Belgium believes that Africa cannot be an arena for rivalries and conflicting interests imported from outside. Its policy is to advocate and respect non-interference in the affairs of African States and to support the emergence of an African Africa, totally free and stable: an Africa able to find its own answers to its own problems and whose States will enjoy sufficient domestic and continental stability to be able to prevent, and peacefully settle, their conflicts and concentrate fully on reaching their economic and social development goals.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

I particularly hope that this will apply to Burundi, that friend of Belgium that recently has had to cope with such turmoil. The expectations resulting from the efforts of the Burundi Government should not be lost in vain antagonisms. Belgium, for its part, hopes to propose more thorough attempts at broad-based consultations among among the principal countries co-operating with Burundi, in order to determine the conditions in which they can help it resolve the fundamental problems that give rise to such tensions and tragedies.

Today, we are all aware of the critical problems facing Africa with cumulative and dramatic effect: demographic growth outpaces the growth of food production, and the decline in commodity prices damages export earnings and brings a heavy burden of debt. These fundamental problems bring others, often tragic from the human point of view: widespread malnutrition, high infant mortality, rural exodus, deforestation, desertification. We cannot remain indifferent to the distress of millions of Africans suffering their plight with dignity and courage.

Speaking at the special session of the General Assembly on the economic situation in Africa in May 1986, I pointed out that it was not just emergency measures that were needed, but that we had to tackle the very roots of this problem. We have now defined a set of priority measures to promote the rehabilitation and development of Africa.

Now that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly has completed its mid-term review and appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development, it is the proper time for decisive action.

Belgium is prepared to make its contribution to the recovery of the African countries in a coherent way and in co-operation with the other bilateral and multilateral donors. As time is pressing, such action must be taken without delay.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

In this regard, Belgium expresses satisfaction over the new momentum created by the decisions of the Toronto Summit for the search for a solution to the problem of the excessive external debt experienced by the least developed countries, among which there are so many sub-Saharan African nations. Together with the industrialized countries, in the competent forums the Belgian Government is examining technical measures in this regard, for it is our conviction that a stable and permanent framework for security and prosperity cannot be guaranteed as long as this problem lacks an adequate solution.

At the same time, however, Belgium maintains the strong conviction that the indebted countries need to pursue the closest possible co-operation with the international financial institutions, whose essential role in the process of the elaboration of economic adjustment strategies cannot be questioned.

In a few months we will celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the solemn adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

That very influential instrument has more than symbolic value. Today it constitutes the basis of a complex and impressive set of rules designed to sustain the rights of the human person all over the world.

This celebration gives us the opportunity for reflexion and evaluation. Six years ago, in this very Assembly, I appealed for the establishment of a system to monitor human rights based on both universal and regional mechanisms, associating the cultural diversities and differences between peoples.

I would note that in 1982, on the eve of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration, on the initiative of my country, the General Assembly adopted a resolution urging Member States to engage in closer regional co-operation. Simultaneously, an exchange of information was set up between existing regional systems and our Organization in order to evaluate their mutual experience.

(Mr. Tindemans, Belgium)

I am pleased to note that since then regional mechanisms for the protection of human rights have been set up and are doing their job well, while others, with the same impetus, are fully expanding both with regard to the establishment of norms and the monitoring of compliance with those norms.

In view of those results, the Belgian delegation will continue to do its utmost to encourage this trend.

In one way or another, all the major problems of today derive from disregard for human dignity. That is why it is necessary to find ways to resolve them through a multilateral approach.

In conclusion, let me revert to my opening theme by calling for greater political will from each of us to enable the United Nations even better to fulfil the expectations we have always had of it.

Mr. NGARUKIYINTWALI (Rwanda) (interpretation from French): The forty-third session of the General Assembly gives the Republic of Rwanda the happy opportunity to join with other nations as a faithful participant in this annual meeting of international diplomacy, to evaluate, in an open, constructive and sincere dialogue, the problems facing the world as they pertain to the mission assigned to this great family of the United Nations.

The annual session of the General Assembly follows the time-honored tradition in the life of the world community established by the 51 founding Members of the United Nations when they paved the way for us to maintain international peace and security for the common development of all mankind through international co-operation.

The Republic of Rwanda finds in this Assembly the ideal institutional framework in which to proclaim regularly and solemnly its unshakeable faith in the noble objectives of the United Nations Charter - the reign of peace, concord, freedom and progress for all peoples the world over.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

From this lofty rostrum, Rwanda joins with the nations that have preceded it in paying a solemn tribute to the United Nations, whose commitment to the maintenance and development of peace has been successful despite the many obstacles it has encountered.

That commitment, whose ultimate objective is improvement of the lot of humankind on the basis of multiple interdependence, complementarity and peaceful coexistence among nations, has met with economic and political obstacles in international relations.

In economic terms, international relations have revealed a grim picture of the continuing crisis in raw materials, part of the recession in the world economy, whereby the third world and especially Africa face increasingly alarming situations that compromise the execution of development projects and thus harm peoples languishing in ever-growing poverty.

Low commodity prices, reflecting the trade depreciation in raw materials, have harmed the economies of the developing countries, and are an aspect of this essentially structural crisis inasmuch as they result from the machinery currently governing international economic relations, which are characterized by, among other things, instability in financial markets and the over-indebtedness of the third world.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

The gap which continues to widen between developing countries and developed countries justifies the calls for the establishment of a new, more just, international economic order meeting the aspirations of the peoples of the third world who wish to take up the many challenges of underdevelopment.

Because of the crisis which continues to undermine the world economy, three quarters of mankind finds itself faced with three major obstacles preventing the acceleration of development: the external vulnerability of marginal economies, the continuing trend towards imbalance in foreign trade and the chronic shortfall in savings to meet increasing investment needs.

Among the challenges before the international community, the ravages caused by the seemingly organized anarchy in world markets, the fluctuations in raw material prices in favour of consumers and the consequent and continuing deterioration of the terms of trade, and protectionism by the industrialized countries in the face of disarray as a result of third world over-indebtedness - all reflect the flaws in the current international economic system.

The heavy external-debt burden and the growing dependency of the third world on the industrialized world are of special significance in Africa, for they threaten peoples who are victims of the vicious circle of dire poverty because of a lack of structural reform in the world economy.

Rwanda deplores this international economic situation, marked as it is, by worsening stagnation year by year to the detriment of the peoples of the third world, which are victims of decreasing economic growth, deficits and food shortages, constituting a tragedy for the African continent, which is haunted by the spectre of constant hunger owing, in particular, to unpredictable climatic changes.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

In order to limit the scope and the seriousness of the problems arising from structural imbalances in international economic relations - a disorder which is compounded by the various natural disasters that add to the third world's misfortunes - the industrialized countries should adopt new strategies to hasten the dawning of a new international economic order by reducing the gap which is growing between them and the developing countries.

Thanks to the prestigious framework that is the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the world community has continued to record the grievances of the developing countries as they decry the injustice and other ills of the international economic system and plead for its restructuring so that international relations might be guided by the principles of equity, solidarity, complementarity and open and active co-operation for the harmonious progress of all mankind.

In this connection we must observe that the many appeals of the developing countries have not been sufficiently heeded by our partners in the industrialized countries, as is shown by the latter's lack of deep commitment to the goals fixed for recovery in the economic growth of the third world.

Hence, the goals set in the International Development Strategy for the three United Nations Development Decades, the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries, the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development, the Plan of Action for the Promotion and Implementation of Technical Co-operation between Developing Countries and the Fund for Land-locked Countries have not been reached.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

It is to be hoped that the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 will not meet the same fate owing to lack of financial contributions commensurate with the commitments entered into by the developed countries and the international community during the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the critical economic situation in Africa.

The Rwandese Republic firmly believes that global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development remain the appropriate framework for promoting a new international economic order.

In this context, one must look to the adoption of a new international development strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and on the holding in Paris in 1990 of the second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and hope that there will be renewed impetus in international co-operation for development.

A number of third world States have been disappointed by the latitude of the rich countries in regard to the imbalances in international economic relations, especially in production, investment and trade - a continuing situation which is undermining the efforts at self-development of the poor countries with limited resources.

Among these disadvantaged countries, those which, like Rwanda, are on the list of least developed countries - deserve special attention and even more active support, in order to help them reduce their specific constraints and development problems.

While praising the international community's gesture in recognizing the need for making special assistance efforts for their benefit, Rwanda's optimism is tempered in the face of the meagre results of the Substantial Programme of Action adopted during the Conference held in Paris in September 1981 under United Nations auspices.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

The African continent is still where problems of underdevelopment arise in anguishing terms and where the economic prospects for most of the countries classified by the United Nations as least developed are still grim, especially for those which, like Rwanda, are faced with various structural handicaps exacerbated by a number of situational factors.

Hence it can easily be seen that, when speaking of economic and financial issues, the problem of external debt is of the greatest importance in Africa, where it is a serious threat to Africa's own efforts at self-development.

Whereas creditors believe that the debt problem should be solved on a case-by-case basis on a bilateral framework, the African countries take the view that the solution should be found through shared responsibility within the framework of an international conference, as endorsed by the third special summit of the Organization of African Unity, held in Addis Ababa in November-December 1987, on Africa's external debt.

The Rwandese Republic regrets that the idea of convening an international conference on Africa's external debt, as well as the idea of holding a world conference on monetary and financial problems, have not yet enjoyed consensus between the developed industrialized countries and the developing countries especially within the United Nations, where there is nevertheless wide consensus on the principle of promoting international economic co-operation on the external debt.

On the basis of the pragmatism that characterized the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in Geneva in July 1987, we hope that the realism which also characterized that session will breathe new life into the North-South dialogue, from the standpoint of the commitments made to improve the situation of the poorest countries, whose external debt is, sadly, a bottle-neck in the development process.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

Among the problems that continue to concern the international community is, most assuredly, the problem of protectionism in world trade, which is doing well in spite of the economic crisis, having increased by 4 per cent in volume in the past year. Nevertheless, we regret to note that the major multilateral negotiations that began more than a year ago in Geneva, at the initiative of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), have taken place in an atmosphere of confrontation. On the one hand the resurgence of economic nationalism in some of the rich countries has exacerbated the rivalries among the major industrialized countries, while on the other hand developing countries are still struggling for improved access to the market of the industrialized countries.

The third world expects from these new international trade negotiations, first, the elimination of all the protectionist measures that block their exports, especially of manufactured and semi-finished goods. The developing countries then hope to send their agricultural exports and their food products to the many markets that are still closed to them. The primary objective of these negotiations is to draw up rules for more equitable world trade for the year 2000, in response to the concerns of Africa and many industrialized countries, which fully appreciate the interdependence of the economies of the North and of the South.

Outside the framework of the North-South dialogue, the Republic of Rwanda attaches great importance to the ideals of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), we are in favour of promoting and strengthening horizontal co-operation between developing countries as a formula that will help to solve problems of underdevelopment.

The South-South dialogue is clearly reflected in the Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act, adopted in April 1980 by the OAU, with a view to promoting the gradual socio-economic integration of the continent and ensuring its food self-sufficiency and collective self-reliance.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

In the same context, Rwanda continues to develop relations of friendship and co-operation with other countries in the third world, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Formulas for vertical and horizontal co-operation are all the more necessary because, over the years, the number of African countries faced with the tragic effects of the raw materials crisis, over-indebtedness and climatic disasters has been increasing. Far from giving in to pessimism, Rwanda remains convinced that the efforts and initiatives aimed at promoting effective solidarity in the international community will make it possible to limit the damage caused by the world economic crisis by offering the third-world countries the necessary means to emerge from the rut of underdevelopment.

The Republic of Rwanda firmly believes that world co-operation regarding agro-food strategy is necessary to foster appropriate programmes of action likely to enable countries faced with climatic changes and agricultural production deficits gradually to achieve food self-sufficiency.

Strengthened by this conviction, which at the same time is an expression of hope, I express again from this rostrum, on behalf of the people and Government of Rwanda participating in the national revolutionary movement for development the most earnest and sincere thanks to all our partners, friendly countries and international bodies that have been supporting our country and continue to assist it in its tireless development efforts.

The international community, in addition to the socio-economic challenges that I have just described, is still faced at the political level with crises and areas of tension that encourage a climate of insecurity in the world. Following the violation of the principle of the equality of rights of peoples and of their right to self-determination, the world community is suffering from the escalation of violence in various regions of the world where the principle of respect for the

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

national sovereignty and territorial integrity of States has sometimes been infringed. The Government of Rwanda notes with bitterness that these tensions and conflicts, which threaten international peace and security stem from divergent interests or the determination of oppressed peoples to break the chains of colonialism, neo-colonialism and every other form of disregard of the right to freedom and independence.

In the light of the ills in some parts of the world where the cycle of violence seems to have established itself, Rwanda believes that the fate of these peoples cannot be a matter of indifference to countries that proclaim their dedication to the ideals of our Organization, whose sublime universal mission is to foster, through international peace, security and co-operation, the full development of the dignity of the human person.

It is in this context that the Government of Rwanda follows very closely the initiatives aimed at promoting a policy of détente in southern Africa, putting an end to the Iran-Iraq conflict, seeking an appropriate, just and equitable solution to the question of Western Sahara, and fostering the gradual, smooth withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and Kampuchea, not to mention other efforts to put an end to the violence that seriously compromises the development of certain suffering societies in the third world.

Aside from these prospects of peace, Rwanda also welcomes the initiatives relating to disarmament for the benefit of development, as evidenced, in particular, by the conclusion of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and the results of the third special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

Reason would seem to be triumphing in southern Africa, where the intransigent arrogance of the proponents of the policy of apartheid continues to disgust those

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

nations which, cherishing peace, justice and freedom, remain convinced that the Namibian people must press their right to self-determination until final victory and that the South African people must struggle to achieve true democracy - a starting point for the development of the front-line countries, which are victims of the destabilizing acts of aggression of the Pretoria régime.

Without either underestimating or overestimating the negotiations begun five months ago in London, which have since given rise to another series of talks, the Republic of Rwanda is following with some relief developments in these quadripartite meetings aimed at finding a way out of the conflicts in southern Africa. The history of international relations in our time will record that the countries taking part in these talks have for the first time achieved a new breakthrough towards a return to peace in this suffering region of the African continent.

The racist, minority South African régime, which has been flying in the face of international morality and ethics, should speed up its reconciliation with the international community by letting the Namibian people gain independence, by destroying its odious system of apartheid, and by allowing those front-line States that are prey to its policy of aggression and destabilization to live in peace.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

We express the hope that the quadripartite meetings already referred to will not turn out to be just a sham dialogue likely to compromise implementation of the United Nations process set forth in Security Council resolution 435 (1978) for Namibia's accession to independence.

In expressing this hope we also express our fear that any backsliding might halt the dialogue that has just begun, making it possible for South Africa to use dilatory manoeuvres to perpetuate its minority régime, anachronistic racism and illegal occupation of Namibia, which is waging a liberation struggle under the banner of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO).

Coming to another African issue, the question of the Western Sahara cannot leave proponents of peace indifferent, with the Saharan people striving to win recognition of its right to self-determination, a universal right enshrined in international ethics.

In the context of the new Maghreb dynamic, the Republic of Rwanda puts its hope in direct dialogue between the protagonists in this conflict and in the organization of a referendum in accordance with the spirit of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

As regards the eastern Horn of Africa, the delegation of the Republic of Rwanda salutes the initiatives of peace and détente that have recently heartened international public opinion, after the fraternal dialogue which fostered a resumption of diplomatic relations and an exchange of prisoners between Ethiopia and Somalia. That dialogue should give rise to a strategy that might unleash the dynamics of lasting peace and stability based on the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of borders inherited from the colonial period, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

While we deplore those drawbacks that have weighed heavily on the climate of security in the world and denounce the enemies of development in Africa, we must observe that that continent is not the only place where there has been conflict and tension.

To be sure, the efforts for peace and development have been held back by overt or covert conflicts that have broken out or continued in other parts of the world. So it is that in the Middle East the martyrdom of the Palestinian people, which is at the heart of the Israeli-Arab conflict, and the Iran-Iraq conflict have been sowing destruction and massive killings of frightening proportions, replacing the rule of law with the concept "might makes right".

In solidarity with the Palestinian people, Rwanda remains convinced that a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem requires recognition of and respect for the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to a homeland and free exercise of its rights under the aegis of its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as well as the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied by force since 1967.

We deplore that on the eve of the twenty-first century the Iran-Iraq conflict has taken on the attributes of a war of extermination despite United Nations mediation efforts and efforts made by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which have spared no effort to convince the two warring parties that they should take the path of open negotiation to put an end to the massive killings which recall the tragic statistics of the last world conflict.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

The delegation of Rwanda expresses the hope that Iran and Iraq will now avail themselves of the opportunity offered by the winds of détente now blowing in international relations, and respond favorably to the constant appeals of the international community, urging them to return to concord and development in their region, so sorely tried by hatred, devastating strife and so many other horrors.

In South-East Asia, Rwanda observes with sorrow that a climate of peace and security is still being prevented by the trials of the Cambodian people following after the incursions of foreign forces into a political crisis that has become a bloody ideological struggle of which many have fallen victims and that has caused so many to become refugees.

We should here express our appreciation for and encourage the atmosphere of détente surrounding the various talks that have begun between the parties concerned since the end of 1987. May this glimmer of hope enable the Cambodian people to find a solution to the tragedy imposed upon it.

Our Organization acknowledges that divided countries have the right to seek the ways and means to regain their unity through constructive dialogue free from outside interference and pressure. It is in this spirit that the Republic of Rwanda salutes and supports efforts to promote the peaceful and independent reunification of the Korean nation.

In this context, still referring to the basic principles of the Charter of our Organization, Rwanda continues to hail and encourage initiatives to promote the normalization of relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic to meet the legitimate and profound desire of the German people to regain its national unity.

Furthermore, the Republic of Rwanda encourages the continuation of direct negotiations, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, on the

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

question of Cyprus, a solution to which should be found through implementation of principles enshrining respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

Humankind, which still remembers the massive killings of the last two world wars, the many victims of regional conflicts, the division of the world into spheres of influence, and the unbridled contest in the most destructive weaponry's throughout the twentieth century, seems to be asking our Organization to help make the twenty-first century one of disarmament and development, so as to exorcise the spectre of apocalypse.

In applying the principles that govern our great United Nations family, principles in keeping with the wishes and aspirations of the international community it is high time that the savings achieved through the disarmament programmes of industrialized countries were recycled for development projects in the third world, especially for the poorest nations which make up the group of least developed countries.

The delegation of Rwanda wishes to avail itself of the opportunity provided by the current World Cultural Development Decade to express its desire that a new pacifist ethic will guide international relations and that man's creative genius will not devour human, technical and scientific material and financial resources for the production of ever more sophisticated weaponry, in a vicious circle of competition but will, rather, be devoted to solving the tragic problems of underdevelopment.

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

Most surely such a change in thinking would be reflected in some industrial change, in turn involving a cultural revolution of mankind, whose future would no longer be darkened by the excesses of the military-industrial complex, but rather reassured by the significant and positive factor of a recycling of capital from disarmament to the economic recovery of the third world, especially in the current situation of constant world economic crisis.

After describing the concerns which the Republic of Rwanda shares with all countries devoted to peace, freedom, equality, justice and progress, concerns which pertain to the world economic crisis in general and to the economic crisis of the third world in particular, where many political tensions are developing, I should like, as other speakers before me at this rostrum have done, to convey to Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina, on behalf of the delegation of Rwanda, its most earnest and sincere congratulations both to him personally and to the officers who have been elected along with him to guide the work of the current session of the General Assembly.

May I also pay a tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin of the German Democratic Republic, who presided with such competence and dignity over the work of the forty-second session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

In conveying to Mr. Caputo our most earnest and warm congratulations, I should like also to emphasize our conviction that his sound and prestigious experience, together with his outstanding qualities, will help to ensure the success of the work of the Assembly under his guidance.

In the same vein, the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, is also deserving of the warmest congratulations, which I should like to convey to him on behalf of the Rwandan Government, since we greatly appreciate the outstanding qualities he has constantly shown in carrying out his noble and difficult tasks so

(Mr. Ngarukiyintwali, Rwanda)

that our Organization may always work for peace, solidarity and complementarity among nations.

The Republic of Rwanda would like most particularly to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for his patient and persevering efforts, which are increasingly bearing fruit in a climate of détente and constructive negotiations designed to put an end to conflicts in all parts of the globe.

Permit me also to mention, as a guarantee of the success of the work of this session of the General Assembly, the determination of each and every Member State to work for the principles of peace, security, freedom, justice and progress, with a view to a new world order offering the third world the opportunity of escape from the vicious circle of underdevelopment, while benefiting from a definite reduction in the hotbeds of tension to which it is often exposed.

In this spirit, the Republic of Rwanda would like here to reiterate most solemnly from this prestigious rostrum its commitment, deriving from its membership in our Organization, to the principles which are the best guide for a planet seeking peace, security, co-operation and prosperity for the well-being of all mankind.

Mr. KAFE (Comoros) (interpretation from French): Allow me first to offer to the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina, on behalf of the delegation of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, our cordial congratulations on his election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

There can be no doubt that Mr. Caputo's sound diplomatic judgement and long experience in international affairs will be exceedingly helpful to us. We regard them as a strong pledge of a successful outcome of our work.

Let me take this opportunity also to pay a well-deserved tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin of the German Democratic Republic, for the dedication

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

and competence with which he conducted the work of the last session of the General Assembly.

It should be emphasized that the last session of the General Assembly, and in particular the third special session devoted to disarmament, opened up welcome prospects for a strengthening of multilateralism.

This state of affairs is, without any doubt, due to a heightened awareness of the dangers that threaten our planet. But in particular we must acknowledge that we are indebted, above all, to the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, to preserve peace in the world. Let me offer to him our most emphatic appreciation and profound support.

As I have just emphasized, each of us will have noticed that confrontation is gradually yielding to a better understanding, which thus gives us hope for the gradual elimination of the tension and conflict which had characterized international relations. We must work hard to encourage and consolidate these gains so as to meet the challenge of our age and respond to the calls for peace and justice which resound throughout the world.

We welcome particularly the fact that after eight years of war, Iran and Iraq have agreed to a cease-fire and are meeting at the negotiating table under the auspices of the Secretary-General. We encourage them to press ahead with their dialogue and to show patience and tolerance so that they may arrive, in the near future, at a felicitous outcome in keeping with our hopes.

The situation in Afghanistan has developed in a positive manner, as was shown by the Geneva Accords completed last April.

In our opinion, this is a decisive element in the quest for a peaceful settlement, which we earnestly hope for and which we trust will enable the

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

brotherly people of Afghanistan freely to enjoy its sovereignty.

It is crucially important in this regard that the process of the withdrawal of foreign troops should continue, in order to eliminate any interference in the internal affairs of that country.

As we refer to this problem we have in mind the thousands of Afghan refugees who have had to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, particularly in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, whose late and much lamented President, Zia Ul Haq, paid with his life for his commitment to peace. We pay a tribute here to his courage and beg Allah, the all-powerful, to grant blessing and eternal peace to his soul.

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

In the same vein, the problem of Namibia is also moving towards a solution. We emphatically support the diplomatic activities being carried out in that part of the world to find a peaceful solution of the problem. It is our firm belief that settlement of the Namibian question must necessarily involve the implementation of Security Council 435 (1978).

Notwithstanding such tangible progress, we still deplore the persistence in southern Africa of the odious system of apartheid, giving rise to an explosive situation that threatens the political stability of the countries of the region. My country condemns without reservation the inhuman system of apartheid and calls for its abolition, as this is the only way to restore civil peace in South Africa and political stability in that part of the continent.

We are gratified to note that we are moving towards a just and lasting solution of the problem of Western Sahara. In this regard, we welcome the fact that the peace plan proposed jointly by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity has been accepted by the parties to the conflict. We encourage them to persevere in their efforts to achieve a lasting solution of the problem.

As regards Kampuchea, it is most distressing to us that that country continues to be subject to military occupation, in spite of the General Assembly resolutions calling for the unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops. It is our belief that the people of Kampuchea is entitled to a free choice of the system of government it deems most suitable, without any external constraints. Thus we have been following with great interest and encouraging the process of dialogue that was recently started among all the parties concerned.

While in some parts of the world there is hope for the restoration of peace, the Middle East region, on the other hand, does not enjoy the same relaxation of tension. The deterioration of the situation in the occupied Arab territories serves

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

to emphasize the gravity of the danger to international peace and security. We cannot remain indifferent to the atrocious acts of terrorism perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian Arab population, which have taken the form of barbarous crimes, the despoliation of their property and the expulsion of Palestinian Arabs from their territory. It is the duty of the international community to use every means available to it to put an end to such actions.

My country continues to believe that there can be no lasting peace in the Middle East without the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, particularly Security Council resolutions 252 (1968) and 338 (1973), duly taking into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, in particular its right to self-determination. My delegation supports the idea of an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, obviously including the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole and authentic representative of the Palestinian people.

Another problem of equal importance is deserving of our consideration, that is, the situation prevailing in the Korean peninsula. We are pleased that the parties to the conflict have taken a constructive stand, with a view to finding a solution of the problem through dialogue and mutual agreement. We encourage them to press ahead along that path and we assure them of our support in their quest for a peaceful settlement. We believe that the admission of both Koreas to this Organization would do much to promote a rapid solution of the problem.

My country, like others of the same region, continues to be concerned by the military build-up in the Indian Ocean. For that reason we support the convening of a conference with the object of making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, demilitarized, and denuclearized, in accordance with the Declaration contained in General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI).

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

Before concluding these political remarks, let me refer again to a problem of the highest concern to the international community as a whole in the sense that it emanates from an injustice and a breach of the territorial integrity of my country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros. I refer, of course, to the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte. The problem is on the agenda of the Assembly for this session, because no solution has yet been found to it. Therefore we shall have an opportunity to come back to it in greater detail. However let me now point out to the Assembly that the Comorian people remain concerned by the persistence of this problem notwithstanding the open-mindedness it has always manifested and its willingness to adopt the path of dialogue and mutual agreement, in accordance with the principles of the Charter and the United Nations resolutions on the subject.

Without wishing to anticipate the debate that is shortly to take place, let me take this opportunity to reaffirm once more from this rostrum that the Comorian Government and people, strengthened by the justness of their cause, will spare no effort to restore the territorial integrity of their country. The international community, for its part, faithful to the sacred principles of the Charter, is in duty bound to support them until their just cause has triumphed.

While we can welcome the new hope prevailing in international political relations, it is nevertheless deplorable that the economic situation is more disturbing than ever. Our session is taking place at a time when the economic crisis is having an increasing impact and is greatly detrimental to the majority of the developing countries, particularly the weakest among them, commonly known as the "least developed countries". My country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, which is one of those countries, is stricken particularly hard by the damaging effects of that crisis. These include dislocation of the international economic system characterized by a decline in the amount of capital available on

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

favourable terms, which gives rise to inordinate growth of the debt burden in relation to the repayment capacities of the developing countries, and also an abrupt lowering of in commodity prices.

My country, being an island with a small area and quite lacking in mineral resources, is confronted with major obstacles in implementing the development process in which it engaged after acquiring its independence, under the enlightened guidance of Mr. Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, President of the Republic. The obstacles to which I have just referred include in particular lack of sales of the products that account for 90 per cent of our export earnings and lower prices for those products.

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

They also include: the three-fold increase in the volume of our debt service in less than three years; the intransigence of our creditors on the clearly unfavourable terms of their loans; the reduction in absolute values of our export earnings; the failure of certain of our partners to meet commitments entered into at the Round Table of Donors, held in Moroni, our capital, in July 1984.

Notwithstanding these numerous constraints, the Comorian Government continues to work hard to sustain growth and improve the living conditions of its people. Accordingly, it has embarked upon a programme of restructuring, particularly in the productive sectors. This has been accompanied, inter alia, by a series of measures designed to restore the health of public finances and of the para-public sector.

In particular, this has made it possible to better rationalize the functioning of the State and to sustain growth by favouring private initiative and highly productive activities.

The policy of economic recovery thus begun has given rise to some noteworthy performances until 1983.

As a result of the multiplier effect of the programme our country had, during that period, attained an appreciable economic growth rate and tangible improvement in real per capita income.

However, the worsening of the international environment of my country, characterized by the sharp drop in our commodity prices and the rapid expansion of debt service payments caused by the exorbitant rise in interest rates and the exchange rates of the principal currencies used on the credit market, has, since then, wiped out our own domestic efforts. But we are not disheartened.

The Comorian Government remains firmly committed to the spirit of enterprise and is determined to press on with its fight against under-development. None the less, without increased and sustained assistance from the international community,

(Mr. Kafé, Comoros)

my country will be unable to meet its objectives. Therefore this year again I urgently appeal for good will on the part of all to demonstrate practical solidarity with my country by providing valuable support as called for in the relevant resolutions of the Organization.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm the unswerving commitment of the Comorian Government and people to the United Nations system and the ideals of peace and justice it embodies.

The PRESIDENT: The Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization has asked to be allowed to reply to a statement made by one of the speakers in the general debate. I intend to call on him on the basis of General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, and particularly on the basis of the ruling made by the President of the thirty-first session and of the precedents established in similar circumstances during subsequent sessions of the General Assembly.

May I remind him that his statement must be limited to 10 minutes.

I call on the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)): When vision is marred, blurred and clouded by short-sightedness and arrogance it ceases to be vision but becomes obsessive to the extent that it distances the visionary far from reality and leads him to persist in his arrogance, falsehoods and brutality.

While Mr. Peres was pontificating this afternoon about peace, his fellow party member and colleague in the Israeli cabinet, Mr. Rabin, was saying, according to today's New York Times, in referring to the heroes of the intifada

"They will have to learn that more violence will bring more suffering to them".

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Mr. Rabin was referring to those heroes who were resisting foreign occupation by stone-throwing.

Since last December more than 350 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli army and the illegal Zionist colonial settlers. Scores of thousands have been detained and the deplorable concentration camps have been enlarged to hold more and more Palestinians. But the resolute determination of our Palestinian brothers in occupied Palestinian territory, in Jerusalem, Hebron, Nablus, Bethlehem, Gaza, has proved beyond any doubt that they reject, oppose and resist, by all means available, the prolonged occupation.

Mr. Rabin adds that the old methods - firing tear gas, beating, breaking bones, deportation, brutalizing, and brutality in all its forms - have ceased to be effective, "so we use plastic bullets to hit or injure stone-throwers".

Now it is important for Mr. Rabin to get the message that the occupation troops can better achieve their mission in occupied Palestinian territory. One wonders whether the soldiers of Israel had reached such a point of demoralization that they need a boosting.

Mr. Peres, in his statement, considers that for the promotion of peace and stability, all those interested should undertake a moratorium on all threats or acts of violence. I think we can fully agree. But we ask: Is not the ending of military occupation and the ending of committing repressive measures and violations of the norms and obligations, under international law and relevant conventions - is not this the initial step to be taken by the Israelis? But Israel persists in committing acts of violence and not merely threats. Thus we call upon Israel, if it really intends to show any concrete signs of achieving peace, to renounce the acts of State terrorism against our people and to desist from committing such acts.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Israel, as the occupying Power, must move in the direction of withdrawal and termination of the occupation. The security of Israel does not depend on its distance from its borders. Mr. Peres himself admits that "ballistic missiles know no boundary". Thus the security of States depends primarily and completely on their relations with the people and also on their relations with their neighbours. Israel knows that the principal party in the conflict, the victim - the enemy if you wish - is the Palestinian people and not only their neighbours. So Israel must realize, and have the vision to see, that peace is attainable through relations with the Palestinian people. We have made it very clear; we are for peace. As Chairman Arafat said in Strasbourg, we are for peace for our people and peace even for the children of our enemy.

The United Nations has offered a forum and the mechanism. The United Nations was created with the aim of achieving peace, of bringing people to the negotiating table. We in the Palestine Liberation Organization, the authentic representatives of our Palestinian people - those under Israeli occupation and those in the places of dispersion - extend our hands again, and it is not Mr. Peres who decides who our authentic representative is. It is the Palestinian people who decide that, and they have already done so. Even the General Assembly has done so by inviting us to be here.

So, let us all heed and respond to the efforts of the Secretary-General and facilitate the convening of the international peace conference. We will be most willing to participate - but will Israel participate? It should, if the political will to achieve peace exists in Israel.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

In our opinion Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) are not the only commonly accepted bases for peace negotiations. It is respect for the totality of the principles of the Charter and other United Nations Security Council resolutions relevant to this issue and, naturally, the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

Our people are struggling with stones to secure freedom from foreign occupation and they are struggling for their rights, their dignity and their security. Israel must renounce violence and State terrorism against our people. The rubber bullets and lethal gas will not quell the "Intifadah". Israel knows better. Our people say: "Get out, we have no use for you. Your occupation is a negation of our dignity and your continued presence in our homes is a denial of the exercise of our rights, internationally recognized - the right to life, the right to self-determination and the right to live in peace with dignity in our own sovereign State of Palestine."

The meeting rose at 7.50 p.m.