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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 5 October 1989, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GUTIERREZ (Costa Rica)
(Vice-President)

later: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)
(President)

later: Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda)
(Vice-President)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Ould Baba (Mauritania)
Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien (Viet Nam)
Mr. Evans (Australia)
Mr. Al-Dali (Democratic Yemen)
Mr. Ndinga-Oba (Congo)
Mr. Van Dunem (Angola)
Mr. Upadhyay (Nepal)

- Programme of work

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica, Vice-President,
took the Chair.

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

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. OULD BABA (Mauritania) (interpretation from Arabic): I have pleasure in extending to Mr. Garba, of Nigeria, the warm congratulations of the Mauritanian delegation on his well deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. This choice is an indication of the great respect and esteem that Nigeria enjoys on the international scene, and a tribute to the experience and personal qualities of Mr. Garba, whose leadership will guarantee achievement of the objectives that have been set for this session. I should like to pay tribute also to Mr. Garba's predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, with whose country - Argentina - we have friendly relations, for the high quality of the work that was done during the forty-third session. I want also to extend our congratulations to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his tireless and devoted efforts towards the realization of this Organization's ideals of peace, justice and equality.

The continued improvement in the international political climate and the new prospects for a settlement of certain regional conflicts give rise to great hopes. Peace has started to become a reality for peoples that have been deprived of it for a long time.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

This process has made it possible, inter alia, to end hostilities between Iraq and Iran, conclude an agreement on Afghanistan, begin the process of implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978) concerning the independence of Namibia, and pursue the mediation efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity relating to the settlement of the problem of the Western Sahara. While lauding the progress achieved in moving towards peace, Mauritania cannot but express its deep concern over the continuation of the Middle East conflict as well as the aggressive practices of the policy of racial discrimination committed against all the peoples of southern Africa.

The unshakeable solidarity of my country with the just and legitimate struggle of the Palestinian and the South African peoples has been a constant of our policy, which stems from the fact that we belong to both the Arab and the African worlds. Our geographical and human realities, as well as our history, qualify Mauritania to play an active and constructive role in this field. That role is manifested in our unremitting efforts to cement relations between those two worlds, as well as our active participation in all Arab and African organizations and subregional groups in North Africa and in the southern Sahara. In this connection, the establishment of the Arab Maghreb Union on 17 February last in Marrakesh, was in response to the aspirations of all the peoples of the region, which have, for generations, longed for such a Union.

While positive elements of current international events in recent years are a source of pride and hope for the international community as a whole, regions of crises and tension remain where our serious and prompt efforts could bring about the necessary solutions.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

In this context, the question of the Western Sahara continues to be the focus of the attention of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations. The acceptance of the peace proposals of the Secretary-General by both parties concerned, and the initiation of a direct dialogue between the King of Morocco and the representatives of the POLISARIO Front last January, are welcome and positive elements. We sincerely hope that that question will be resolved in a satisfactory manner as soon as possible. That would undoubtedly contribute to the consolidation of a united Maghreb and of African Unity as a whole.

These signs of hope, unfortunately, do not emerge everywhere. In the Middle East, the valiant Palestinian people continues to suffer under oppressive Israeli occupation, despite the Palestinian resistance, which grows by the day. The intifadah launched almost two years ago is intensifying in such a way as to leave no doubt that it is not an ephemeral act but is a truly deep expression of the rejection by an entire people of foreign occupation. Therefore, the intifadah will never come to an end as long as the national rights of the Palestinian people continue to be denied.

The conscience of the whole world continues to be touched by this tragedy, which has been going on for more than 40 years. Today, a historic occasion is at hand to find a comprehensive, just and final solution to the Palestinian problem, which undoubtedly lies at the heart of the Middle East conflict. The brave decisions adopted by the last meeting of the Palestine National Council in Algiers and the peace message of Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and head of the Palestinian State, sent to our Assembly at its previous session, are evidence of a sincere desire for peace. In this context, the beginning of an American-Palestinian dialogue is an encouraging sign.

But all those peaceful intentions and the desire for dialogue have encountered the intransigence of Israel, which persists in its practices, thinking that it can

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

stop the course of history through the use of blind repression. It is up to all of us who have the power to bring influence to bear on the course of events to remove the last obstacle to peace, in compliance with the resolutions and recommendations repeatedly adopted by the General Assembly.

We continue to believe that the only possible way of achieving that result is by convening forthwith an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation, on an equal footing, of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. That solution will necessarily have to lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with the Holy City of Al-Quds as its capital, and to the withdrawal of occupying forces from all occupied Arab territories.

If the situation remains highly precarious in the Middle East because of the expansionist zionist policy, peace and security are no less threatened in southern Africa, where the shameful apartheid régime continues to commit the most heinous crimes against the peoples of that region.

The policy of violence which that régime has built into a system of government continually arouses the conscience of the entire world and brings forth its condemnation. Patriots such as Nelson Mandela still languish in South African gaols, and the most elementary rights are still denied the South African people. This policy has already been condemned as a crime against humanity and must not continue. We believe that comprehensive and mandatory sanctions are necessary and that any attempt to delay or oppose them is tantamount to prolonging the suffering of the South African people.

As stated and demonstrated on many occasions, Mauritania will continue to support tirelessly the just struggle of the South African people until the odious system of apartheid is completely eradicated.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

In Namibia, hope grows anew with the incipient implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). After the terrible suffering endured during a lengthy, bitter and pitiless war for national liberation, signs of a final settlement are beginning to emerge as a reward for the Namibian people, who sacrificed life and property in their struggle under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). At this critical juncture, however, when the destiny of an entire nation is at stake, it is necessary to be more vigilant and resolute until the legitimate aspirations of the Namibian people have been completely achieved. While Mauritania commends the efforts made by all parties in order to achieve that result, it hopes and desires that the process thus begun will lead to the independence of Namibia, under the leadership of SWAPO, the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

In the Gulf the war between the neighbouring countries of Iraq and Iran has been ended thanks to the cease-fire that entered into force on 20 August 1988. Mauritania, which has always worked to bring an end to that destructive war, is pleased at the cessation of hostilities. It expresses its hope that direct negotiations will take place between the two parties, with no pre-conditions whatsoever, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General in order to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting peace that will restore stability to the region and enable the two peoples to devote their energies and resources to their own development efforts.

In Afghanistan, the Geneva Agreements of 14 April 1988 have led to the withdrawal of all foreign troops. My country cannot but welcome the impressive victory of the fraternal Muslim people of Afghanistan, who did not grudge any sacrifice for the sake of its freedom and dignity. We hope that the Afghans will be able to surmount their differences in order to tackle the task of rebuilding their country.

In Kampuchea, we take hope from the continuous efforts under way to reach a peaceful solution to its problems. That solution must be based on the many relevant and wise resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, all of which reaffirm the need for the unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops and the free exercise by the Cambodian people of the right to self-determination.

In Central America, the peace process has been relaunched by the Tela agreement. Mauritania is pleased at that positive development and hopes that it will lead to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in that region.

With regard to the Korean issue, my country has always advocated the peaceful reunification of the peninsula in the interest of all the Korean people. That reunification, however, must be the outcome of negotiations and dialogue. We are

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

pleased at the initiatives taken by both sides in this connection and we hope that they will rapidly be crowned with success.

The world economic situation remains a source of major concern. The industrialized countries have registered a significant expansion but the economies of the developing countries are still deteriorating, in spite of the major reforms and structural adjustment programmes undertaken by their Governments. The gap between developed and developing countries continues to grow, and the latter still face the decline in the prices of their main products, the overwhelming burden of debts, and the many obstacles to the transfer of technology.

The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries have just reaffirmed at Belgrade that only the resumption of the North-South dialogue and global negotiations to establish a new international economic order can lead to the acceleration of the economic and social development of developing peoples.

The interdependency of nations and the interaction of problems and interrelated interests call for such an approach. It is to be hoped that the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade will contribute to achievement of that goal.

The developing countries are particularly sorely tried by heavy indebtedness, repayment of which has nullified all their efforts towards development and has led to a situation whose overall outcome is to the benefit of the developed countries.

The urgent need to reverse that situation requires the deepening and expanding of the various initiatives that have been announced in this connection. The initiatives taken by certain countries such as the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Canada deserve particular mention.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

The economic situation in Africa is still particularly critical. Per capita production in the continent has once again declined. Development efforts are still being impeded by external factors over which Africa has no control. Africa is also suffering from the tragic effects of drought, desertification, and the seasonal invasion of locusts. No African country is capable alone of overcoming the combined effects of economic crisis and natural disasters.

Nevertheless, African countries have undertaken major large-scale reforms, in keeping with the commitments entered into in the context of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. The co-operation that was to have been engendered by that Programme has not, however, materialized.

As a result, the responsibility of the international community remains undiminished in connection with the international community's contribution to the continent's economic recovery and development.

In the immediate future an appropriate solution to the debt problem must be sought, and the best way to do so remains, in our view, the convening of an international conference on the subject.

In national terms, Mauritania is continuing to implement the programme of economic reforms begun in 1985. It has just initiated a programme of economic recovery that has met with the support of our main financial backers, particularly our Arab brothers, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. That programme is aimed in the long term at ensuring self-sustaining development and socio-economic growth. The country's population is already participating effectively in that development effort thanks to widespread democratization at the grass-roots level, which has made it possible for urban and rural municipalities to control their own independent management.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

The campaign against illiteracy is another important aspect of the development programme. A special State secretariat has been established to eradicate that scourge by the year 2000. Special attention is being given to the participation of women, who have been playing an increasingly active role in society. In order to institutionalize that role a ministry on the status of women was created a year ago.

I should like to take this opportunity to express our very deep gratitude to the countries and international organizations that have helped us to put our various development programmes into effect. Recently, when thousands of our citizens returned to the national territory under tragic circumstances, those friendly countries and international organizations quickly and generously participated in our efforts to reabsorb the returnees.

In our view, economic questions constitute the major challenge of our time, and for that reason they deserve especial attention.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

The paradox here is that the resources of the Earth and the degree of scientific and technological progress we have reached do make it possible to meet all the needs of mankind, but some States still apparently disregard this fact and are devoting to the arms race immense human, material and technological resources. There is a striking contrast between the hundreds of millions of dollars thus allocated to the manufacture, improvement and stockpiling of weapons and the deprivation and abject poverty in which two thirds of the world's population live. The stockpiling of weapons does not guarantee security: it gives rise to the arms race and fosters suspicion among States. The time has come to put an end to this escalation, to resort always to peaceful means of settling disputes and to seek security in general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

We are pleased at the developments that have occurred over the past few years, but we still hope that further substantial progress will be achieved in this field. Disarmament measures must make it possible to release additional resources for development and thus contribute to the settlement of urgent international economic problems, which, in turn, would enhance the prosperity and welfare of mankind as a whole.

The solution of the world economic problems and conflicts that are still in evidence is within our reach: to solve them, it is sufficient to respect the purposes and principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter, to resort to the means of settlement it sets forth. The progress made along these lines has been great, but it must be consolidated. The peoples of the world aspire to peace, and peace is inseparable from development. The main responsibility in this area lies with the United Nations, which was set up to preserve international peace and security and to resolve international problems of an economic and social nature.

(Mr. Ould Baba, Mauritania)

But to truly carry out this noble mission, the United Nations needs the confidence of all its members. The increased interest in it that has been demonstrated recently bodes well for the future.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania has always been faithful to the ideals of the United Nations Charter and is convinced that the only way to meet the world challenges we are facing today is to uphold the noble and humanitarian principles of the Charter of our Organization.

Mr. NGUYEN DY NIEN (Viet Nam): The delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam wishes to extend to the President its congratulations upon his unanimous election to the presidency of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. I am confident that his guidance will help ensure the Assembly's success in the discharge of its high mission.

I should also like to express our appreciation to Mr. Dante Caputo, President of the forty-third session of the General Assembly, for his contribution to the successful work of the last session. Let me convey my delegation's special appreciation of the efforts made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, towards maintaining peace and solving regional conflicts in many parts of the world during the past year.

Since the forty-third session of the General Assembly we have been witnessing profound changes in international relations, the driving force behind which has been the unprecedented advances of the scientific and technological revolution, together with the dynamic struggle of peoples throughout the world for peace, national independence and socialism over the last 40 years.

Today, all peoples share a common desire for peace, stability and the promotion of international co-operation for the sake of development. The human race has awakened to the danger of the scourge of nuclear war and is constantly on

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

the alert in the face of the readiness of certain ruling circles to continue the arms race. While these circles are continually paying lip-service to peace and disarmament, their arsenals of weapons of mass destruction remain as huge as ever, their annual military budgets have not been reduced in the least, and they continue to set up more military bases abroad. Therefore, the prevention and elimination of the threat of nuclear war, and the defence of world peace, remain a primordial task of the international community, and an arduous battle.

We offer our strong support for the constructive proposals of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty on the elimination of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. We warmly welcome the positive initiatives of the Soviet Union with regard to conventional armed forces, a comprehensive ban on all nuclear explosions, and chemical weapons that were put forward by President Gorbachev last December at the forty-third session of the General Assembly and by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze in the general debate at the current session. We share the views of almost all Member States regarding the imperative need to conclude, at an early date, a convention on the strict prohibition of all chemical weapons.

The political documents concerning international security and disarmament of the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries recently held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, and the Six-Nation Initiative developed in the five years since May 1984 have generated a positive momentum in the struggle for peace and disarmament.

Undoubtedly, the forces of peace have prevailed over those of war, but the path leading to a world free of nuclear weapons and violence in international relations is still fraught with trials and hardships. At present, we are witnessing attempts to redraw the political map of the world through "peaceful subversion", and thus to bring about the collapse of socialism from within.

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

This is only an illusion. In the course of the past few decades, the road towards socialism has been opted for by more than one third of mankind. The new social system is making its positive impact strongly felt. The contribution of socialism lies in the mainstream of the changes in today's world. Temporary difficulties notwithstanding, the forces of socialism will continue their rightful course and are certain to overcome every obstacle and gather greater strength to make a major contribution to human development.

Another equally serious threat that continues to cause concern to all is the economic and social situation of developing countries. The objectives and targets of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (1981-1990) have not been implemented.

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

Production has stagnated, per capita income has declined, unemployment and hunger have affected hundreds of millions of people, external debt has exceeded \$US 1.3 trillion and the outflow of financial resources from developing to developed countries has reached more than \$30 billion a year. There are nearly one billion illiterates.

The gap in the levels of economic, scientific and technological development as well as in living standards between developing and developed countries is increasingly widening. These countries are in danger of being left far behind in poverty and backwardness, the inevitable result of which will be an extremely negative impact on the world economic situation and on international economic relations.

To avoid that situation what is of paramount importance is to establish a new international economic order, and in which international economic relations would be based on real equity, equality and democracy. An immediate and unconditional end should be put to acts of economic blockade and embargo, to the use of economic assistance as an instrument for exerting political pressure, to the shifting of the burden of economic adjustment onto the shoulders of developing countries, taking advantage of capital and technology to maintain the domination and exploitation of developing countries. Developing countries should be completely free to choose their economic and social system without foreign interference or pressure. The resumption of North-South negotiations is a legitimate and urgent demand. The decision to convene a special session of the General Assembly in April 1990 devoted to international economic co-operation, in particular to the revitalization of economic growth and development of developing countries as well as the adoption in 1990 of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, 1991-2000, are important initiatives of developing countries. These events will provide a good opportunity for all nations, especially developed

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

market-economy countries, to work together to find an effective solution to economic and social difficulties facing developing countries and at the same time to cope with intractable global problems of the world economy and of international economic relations.

The demand for strengthening international co-operation to protect the environment is urgent, fundamental and of long standing. We hope that the second world conference on the environment and development, to be held not later than 1992, will come up with the adoption of a code of conduct for the protection and preservation of the environment for the common interest of the international community.

We also fully support all efforts of the international community to fight illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse, which are spreading throughout the world.

We have been witnessing the unfolding of the arduous and complex process of seeking political solutions to the many regional conflicts that have dragged on for decades.

In Namibia, with the signing of the agreements on South West Africa, the granting of independence to Namibia, in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978), has made a start, albeit not an easy one. We hope that soon the international community will be able to welcome an independent and sovereign Namibia. To this end it is required that all parties concerned, the South African régime in particular, abide fully and strictly by resolution 435 (1978) and the agreements reached, ensuring the necessary conditions for a free and fair election in the Territory.

We welcome the efforts made and the agreements achieved by the countries of Central America with a view to restoring peace and stability in the region. Those agreements must be observed, free from outside interference.

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

Viet Nam further reaffirms its most vigorous support for, and solidarity with, socialist Cuba. We also extend our support to the peoples of Nicaragua and Panama, particularly at this juncture, in their struggle to defend their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity against external interference. We support the position of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea towards the peaceful reunification of Korea.

The good will shown by the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union and their scrupulous implementation of the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan must be duly matched. The other parties concerned must likewise implement those agreements strictly.

Our strong support goes to the just struggle of the Palestinian people. The constructive position adopted by the State of Palestine has facilitated the search for a political solution to the question of Palestine. We stand for the convening of an international conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned and of the State of Palestine on an equal footing.

For over a year there have been positive developments in the search for a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian question, especially after the State of Cambodia and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, with the concurrence of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, issued their statement of 5 April 1989 announcing the completion of the total withdrawal of Vietnamese volunteer troops from Cambodia by the end of September 1989. Abiding strictly by its commitment, Viet Nam successfully completed the last withdrawal between 21 and 26 September last, witnessed by over 100 observers from 20 countries, 6 international organizations and over 400 foreign journalists. The heroic sons of the Vietnamese nation have discharged their sacred mission and returned home. International opinion has recognized this fact of decisive significance. I am most heartened by the objective assessment of Viet Nam's good will by many delegations in this

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

forum. From this rostrum I solemnly declare that as of 27 September 1989 there does not remain a single volunteer Vietnamese soldier in Cambodia - either army man, adviser or military employee. The arguments put forth by a minority with a view to distorting that reality are used only as an attempt to justify continuation of the war so as to restore the genocidal régime or to interfere in the internal affairs of the Cambodian people.

The total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia is an important and fundamental contribution to the peaceful settlement of the Cambodian question. It resolves one of the two key issues of a comprehensive political solution, as was determined by the Djakarta Informal Meetings. The task that now poses itself is to continue resolving the second key issue that is interlinked with the troop withdrawal and is an indispensable requisite if a comprehensive settlement is truly to be achieved.

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

The second key issue is the need to prevent the genocidal Pol Pot clique from kindling civil war and re-establishing its genocidal rule in Cambodia. It is both a fundamental political issue and an imperative demand of the Cambodian people, former victims of the scourge of Pol Pot's genocide, as well as of the human conscience, which does not want the nightmare of the killing fields ever to repeat itself, especially in view of the fact that the fortieth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was commemorated not long ago. To this end, the countries concerned need scrupulously to honour their own commitments, terminating all military aid to all the Cambodian parties and refraining from any act that may encourage civil war and from interfering in the internal affairs of Cambodia. This will be a test of their goodwill, of whether they really wish to help secure lasting peace and national reconciliation for Cambodia.

On the basis of the dialogue between the two sides in Cambodia and of the conclusions of the First and Second Jakarta Informal Meetings, the International Conference on Cambodia was held from 30 July to 30 August last in Paris, under the presidency of two co-presidents, France and Indonesia. Although there remain a few substantial outstanding differences, the Paris Conference has agreed on many important issues and thus laid the ground for an early comprehensive settlement of the Cambodian question. It is generally accepted that the momentum generated by the Paris Conference should be kept up and its initial results be built upon further, if durable peace and stability in Cambodia as well as in South-East Asia as a whole is to be restored soon. This would be in the spirit of the communiqué issued on 27 September by the French and Indonesian co-presidents.

The Ninth Summit Meeting of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Belgrade from 4 to 7 September last, once again demonstrated the Non-Aligned Movement's judicious approach to the question of South-East Asia and Cambodia. We highly appreciate the

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

tireless efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations himself to induce the countries concerned and the Cambodian parties to engage in negotiations. In the face of the new developments in the situation of Cambodia and South-East Asia, the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session ought to adopt an objective approach and refrain from siding with one side against the other, which can lead only to the impasse of the last 10 years. Those actions that in fact jeopardize the role which should be played by the United Nations ought not to be repeated. At the present juncture, our common expectation is to see this important world body manifest its equity and impartiality.

The international community's present concern is the need to adopt urgent and effective measures to prevent the danger of a civil war initiated by the genocidal Pol Pot clique and other Khmer opposition parties. On 23 September last the Prime Minister of Thailand put forward an initiative calling for a ceasefire between the Cambodian parties and for the convening of an informal meeting on Cambodia. Viet Nam supports the efforts of the Thai Prime Minister aimed at promoting a ceasefire, preventing civil war after the total withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops, curtailing military aid to the Cambodian parties and preventing the re-establishment of the genocidal régime in Cambodia.

Viet Nam supports the position of the State of Cambodia that in the transitional period from the total Vietnamese withdrawal to the general elections the political and military status quo should be maintained in Cambodia and an on-the-spot ceasefire observed between the two opposing Cambodian forces. Only the Cambodian people can, through internationally controlled free and democratic general elections, modify this status quo and choose their political régime according to their own wish.

(Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Viet Nam)

We hold the view that foreign countries should respect Cambodia's independence and neutrality and refrain from interfering in its internal affairs. We support turning South-East Asia into a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, following the principles advanced by the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

As we stand on the threshold of the twenty-first century, the tireless struggle for peace, national independence, development and social progress is bound to be successfully carried forward, thus enabling future generations to enjoy lasting peace and rise to new heights of human civilization.

Working for our children's future and our future generations' education: such was the greatest goal of the whole life of President Ho Chi Minh, whose centenary as a Vietnamese hero of national liberation and a great man of culture will be celebrated by the Vietnamese people and the peoples of the world in 1990, as decided by the General Assembly of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. We take this opportunity to convey our support for the convention on the rights of the child and for the convening of the forthcoming summit conference on children and the world conference on education.

True to the ideals of President Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnamese people pledge to do their utmost to strengthen their solidarity and friendship with other nations of the world, contribute to the victory of the forces of peace and socialism and turn to the new millennium with a firm belief in a bright future of peace, development and a happy life on our planet.

Mr. EVANS (Australia): Allow me to begin by warmly congratulating the President on his election to preside over this session of the General Assembly. He brings to his role a wealth of experience at the United Nations and, as a former Foreign Minister, in international affairs generally. The ties between Australia and Nigeria date from the very inception of Nigeria's nationhood and have always

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

been close and productive. I look forward to close personal co-operation with him during my presence here, and to a rewarding General Assembly under his leadership.

This year we mark the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Second World War, a war which took more lives, and visited more devastation, than any conflict in human history. The end of that war and the beginning of the United Nations were closely linked. The founding and sustaining inspiration of this Organization has been a vision of world peace, achieved and sustained through international co-operation.

It is an appropriate time now to reflect on how that vision has fared, to look back on what has been achieved, to see what more can be achieved, and to ask what more needs to be done to maximize the United Nations role in maintaining international peace and security. So it is on these themes - on the United Nations role in peace-making, peace-keeping and disarmament - that I want to focus this Australian contribution to the general debate. It is a contribution made against the background of Australia's position as a founding Member of the United Nations, a nation which has always seen the United Nations as a means of giving small and middle-sized countries a significant say in international issues and a nation which has, over the years, sought to make a constructive contribution to the United Nations efforts in all three areas of peace-making, peace-keeping and disarmament.

(Mr. Evans, Australia) .

The political will of the international community to empower the United Nations with the capacity to fulfil the role its founders envisaged has ebbed and flowed in the years since the San Francisco Conference drafted the United Nations Charter. For much of this period, as we all know too well, the cold war cast a long shadow over the work of the Organization. It worked to hamstring the operation of the Security Council, weaken the capacity of the United Nations to deal with regional conflicts, and inject an East-West dimension into virtually every area of the Organization's operations.

But now, by contrast, the thaw that has occurred in the climate of East-West relations in recent years has had a profoundly positive effect on the work of the United Nations. It has cleared the way for United Nations involvement in a record number of peace-keeping operations. It has changed the whole tone of debate in this Hall in a way that makes it easier to arrive at constructive and practical outcomes. And it has, for the first time in many years, opened the door to serious discussion about how to strengthen the peace-making and peace-keeping role of the United Nations.

The primary aim of our Organization remains the maintenance of international peace and security, and there is no doubt that the United Nations can play a hugely important role in peace-making and the avoidance and resolution of international conflict:

In so far as conflict is caused by ignorance of the factual situation or of the motives of rival States, or by mutual misunderstanding, the United Nations can act to bring the parties to a common appreciation of the facts and of each other's intentions.

In so far as conflict is caused by angry and emotional reaction to specific problems, the United Nations can act through discussion and delay to institute a cooling-off period until such problems can be approached through peaceful means.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

In so far as conflict is caused by a lack of imagination in finding original solutions to difficult bilateral problems, the United Nations as an outside party may be able to identify pacific outcomes that the parties directly and intimately involved cannot see unaided.

In so far as conflict is caused by the ambition of individual leaders, United Nations peace-making can utilize the spotlight of global public opinion to press for more reasonable attitudes.

In so far as conflicts are perpetuated by the unwillingness of the parties to back down and make concessions to one another, United Nations peacemakers can be impartial third parties to whom concessions can more easily be made.

And in so far as conflict is created by irreconcilable national interests, the United Nations can at least interpose itself between the parties until such time as those differences do not have the sort of priority that impels nations towards armed conflict, or until longer-term solutions are found.

The Charter assigns the main responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council. Despite its structural and procedural shortcomings the Security Council remains the lynchpin of the United Nations in terms of the Organization's peace-making and peace-keeping functions. In empowering the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which may threaten peace, the Charter's intention was not so much to have the United Nations deal with conflicts once they had broken out as to stop tensions developing into hostilities: its role was essentially preventive. From that evolved the function of good offices, which both the Security Council and the Secretary-General have been called upon to exercise in discharging their duties.

For many years, as we again all know, the Security Council has had at best a mixed record in discharging those functions. But the dark days, when action by the Security Council was impeded by political point-scoring or capricious use of the

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veto, appear to be coming to an end and being replaced by the Council's use for a genuine search for solutions to international problems. Certainly, we welcome the more responsive and responsible recognition by permanent members of the need for decisive steps to make and keep the peace. But it is now timely for us to look more positively and energetically at ways in which the role of the Security Council in averting threats to peace - averting, if you like, our global political environment - can best be strengthened.

Undoubtedly the greatest scope for enhancing the Council's effectiveness lies in improving its ability to take pre-emptive international action to stop disputes developing into hostilities. For peace-making to be effective, both the Council and the Secretary-General need up-to-date, comprehensive and reliable information on which to base assessments and make recommendations. In his 1989 report on the work of the Organization, Mr. Perez de Cuellar has drawn attention to the problems encountered by the Secretariat in ensuring that it is adequately briefed and prepared to deal with incipient breaches of the peace.

Australia wholeheartedly endorses the Secretary-General's observations. From the outset of the United Nations we have argued that the Secretary-General of the Organization should be encouraged to play a bold part in all the work of this body and to take a large measure of initiative. In the Security Council in 1985 my predecessor, Mr. Hayden, indicated Australia's strong support for proposals that the Secretary-General be more extensively involved as mediator, arbitrator, negotiator or catalyst in seeking solutions to international problems that threaten to disturb the peace. That is a role that was developed first by Dag Hammarskjöld in the context of a period of rigid super-Power hostility. Ironically, the new era of co-operation can bring it to full fruition.

In this improved international climate we should be willing and able to make major new efforts to improve the flow of information to the Secretariat and the

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Security Council. Australia has already assisted the Secretary-General in this respect, but we consider the time has now come for more formal methods of communication. One idea that we would support, already widely canvassed, is that the Security Council should hold periodic meetings at foreign minister level, in closed session, to exchange information and views on those events and developments which could escalate into conflict. There seems to be no dissent as to the usefulness of that idea. Perhaps the first such meeting could take place immediately after this session of the General Assembly.

Despite some inherent limitations in the Secretary-General's capacity to act, Mr. Perez de Cuellar has shown through his own personal initiative and courage a determination to pursue the cause of peace. His energetic diplomacy in seeking an end to the divisions and conflicts in Cyprus and Afghanistan, for example, demonstrate the scope for the Secretary-General's good-offices role, and we welcome this timely development. But in recognizing and respecting Mr. Perez de Cuellar's endeavours it is no less important for the General Assembly to recognize the contribution it can make to resolving disputes.

Frustrated as we all sometimes are by repetitious debates and resolutions, we must try to imagine how much worse off the Organization would be if it lacked this representative forum, bringing together as it does not only the great Powers but the medium-sized and small States to exchange information, concerns and experience. It is in this Assembly that the nations of the world are best able to develop, through their collective expressions of will, appropriate norms of international behaviour against which the actions of individual States might be judged.

The weight of international opinion, as reflected in our debates and resolutions, should not be underestimated. The Australian delegation to the San Francisco Conference of 1945 considered that the General Assembly should have the

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widest possible powers of discussion and recommendation so that the pressure of world public opinion could be brought to bear upon countries not living up to their international obligations. By the same token, Australia has consistently taken the position that the General Assembly should avoid exacerbating differences and hindering the peace-making process by manifestly provocative resolutions such as that equating Zionism with racism. The General Assembly is at its best and acting truest to the founding spirit of the United Nations when it is acting constructively, seeking solutions to problems and pointing to practical ways forward.

If I may shift the focus now from peace-making to peace-keeping, it is clear that with the renewed confidence now felt by the international community in the opportunities for collective action to keep the peace, the demands on the United Nations machinery have grown greater and have in turn created their own urgent problems for the Organization. The Secretary-General has himself drawn attention to some of the important implications for the United Nations of these both promising and challenging developments.

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Most recently, the United Nations experience with the peace-keeping operation in Namibia has illustrated the consequences of paying insufficient regard to the prerequisites for efficiently carrying out the Security Council's decisions. As a result of problems in resolving funding and related logistical questions, valuable time was lost in deploying the peace-keeping forces in Namibia, and the success of that operation was potentially compromised. We should not allow such a situation to happen again. The obstacles encountered on this occasion can and must be avoided.

It is obvious that a successful United Nations peace-keeping operation requires prior agreement by consensus on its mandate, precise arrangements for its funding, and adequate prior planning for its deployment. Those pre-conditions are all the more imperative because of the expanding role being accorded peace-keeping operations and the renewed interest being shown by Member States in taking part in these exercises. If the international community is to make effective and constructive contributions to keeping the peace and forging long-term solutions to conflicts, greater resources must be put at the disposal of the Secretary-General and the Security Council.

It is essential, in the first place, that we overcome the difficulties and delays associated with inadequate arrangements for the financing of peace-keeping operations. In part, their inadequacy arises from the failure of Member States in the past to pay their contributions in full and on time. The Secretary-General has mentioned in his report that one possibility for the future would be the establishment of a special reserve fund for peace-keeping, and this idea should certainly be further elaborated. In the interim, however, it would appear that an increase in the working capital fund by \$100 million would go a long way towards overcoming current problems. That, perhaps along with some form of special fund, would ensure that operations do not founder for lack of reserves at an early stage.

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The United Nations needs to have in place not only access to funds but also structures and machinery that can spring readily into action. It cannot afford to re-invent the peace-keeping wheel each time the Organization is called on to exert its peace-keeping mandate.

Australia stands ready to help in all those respects. We have participated in most of the United Nations peace-keeping operations, and have been a member of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations since its inception. To contribute to the Organization's capacity to respond to situations requiring peace-keeping services, we would be willing, among other things, to make available to the United Nations the services of a senior Australian army officer to join the military planning staff.

More, of course, is required than ad hoc individual arrangements of that kind. The renaissance of peace-keeping operations has resulted in a vast increase in the number of countries contributing to operations. In the last year, this number has jumped from 23 to 47, and I understand that another 47 countries are looking to participate. The reality is that the sheer number of operations under way or imminent places a large burden on the very competent members of the Secretariat responsible for co-ordinating and planning operations. Member States should acknowledge that it is now time to increase the number of personnel working on these matters, and to ensure that the Secretary-General is in a position to recruit persons of the highest calibre to the task. Australia would also support a review of the structure of the United Nations Secretariat to look at the desirability of bringing all peace-keeping activities under a single division of the Secretariat.

Peace-keeping arrangements have to be not only planned on a professional basis but also effectively implemented at the operational level. There is a very basic but still very important need to institute on a much more formal and regularized

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basis the training of new members of peace-keeping operations, both in the principles that underline such operations and in the procedures that must be followed.

More training seminars at the regional, national, and international levels are required. An international training center could be set up directly under the auspices of the United Nations, if that is seen as the most economic and effective way to undertake the task. In any event, training in peace-keeping activities along lines recommended by the United Nations itself could, with advantage, become a component of the regular training given by countries to their national armies.

Equally, in order to facilitate the expeditious and most effective use of troops, Australia would support States designating military units and observers that could be called upon at short notice and undergo appropriate training in advance. To the same end, we would support the establishment of a stockpile of essential supplies, such as transport and communication equipment, that would also be readily available at short notice for new and urgent tasks to which the United Nations becomes committed.

Australia also sees value in exploring, perhaps by means of a study, the possible application of modern technology to peace-keeping operations. While aware of the complexities and sensitivities that, for example, satellite monitoring would entail, an evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages would be a useful next step.

In both planning and implementing peace-keeping operations, there is a general need, particularly with so many new personnel-contributing countries entering the arena, to tap more systematically the experience of those countries which have played that role before. Here as elsewhere, better communication and co-operation will help avoid wasteful repetition and duplication of effort.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Consideration of all those steps will take on renewed urgency if and when the United Nations is called upon to sponsor, as Australia believes it should be, an international control mechanism as part of a comprehensive political settlement in Cambodia. It is a sign of the times that what is being proposed here is not a traditional peace-keeping force as such, but a mechanism for supervising, monitoring, and verifying, among other things, a cease-fire, the withdrawal of foreign forces, a cessation of external arms supplies, measures of disarmament, release and exchange of prisoners of war, the holding of democratic elections, and assisting with the maintenance of law and order.

We are gratified that the United Nations Secretariat has taken particular care to prepare itself well in advance for that possible undertaking. Australia was pleased to be able to join the Secretary-General's fact-finding mission to Cambodia, in the context of the Paris Conference on Cambodia, to look at the logistical problems an international control mechanism would face. We see that both as a very useful exploratory exercise in its own right and as a helpful precedent to have created for such planning action in the future.

Peace-keeping is not and should not be an end in itself but a means for establishing the right circumstances in which to advance the cause of peace. But, as some of the more persistent international trouble-spots demonstrate, the customary processes of easing tensions and putting in place the machinery for their indefinite resolution are not sufficient to guarantee global security. What is required is a commitment not only to renouncing the use of force to settle disputes but also to working towards general and complete disarmament.

Disarmament and arms control are not matters exclusively for the great Powers. The super-Powers, for obvious reasons, bear a special responsibility to make real progress towards the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and in this respect we welcome the very encouraging

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outcome, covering several arms control issues, of the most recent meetings between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The rest of the international community, however, cannot afford to sit back and await agreements between the major military Powers. There is also a role for multilateral disarmament efforts that involve the middle and small Powers. Indeed, there are some arms control issues that can only be dealt with effectively through multilateral negotiations.

Foremost among them is the abolition of chemical weapons. For 20 years, concerned Governments have been labouring under United Nations auspices in Geneva to produce an international agreement banning the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, weapons which inflict untold misery and suffering on combat forces and civilians alike.

It was in order to give impetus to those negotiations that just two weeks ago Australia, which has long been active in the United Nations and elsewhere on the chemical weapons issue, hosted the Government Industry Conference Against Chemical Weapons, attended by senior officials from 66 Governments together with representatives of 95 per cent of the world's chemical industry. The Paris Conference on chemical weapons in January this year demonstrated that the international community is politically committed to concluding at the earliest date a comprehensive chemical weapons convention.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

The significance of the recent Canberra Conference, bringing together as it did on a major scale representatives of government and industry, is that it demonstrated that political will is now accompanied by the necessary practical will - a practical will to bring the talking to a close, a practical will to put into effect, sooner rather than later, a convention that will be workable and effective in the real modern industrial world.

At Canberra, for the first time the world's chemical industry collectively signalled its unequivocal commitment to assist Governments to conclude a chemical-weapons ban. Industry also agreed to establish a formal International Industry Forum - representing chemical industries from all major blocs and sectors, not just the developed countries - to address the remaining practical issues to be resolved in the negotiation and implementation of a practical, verifiable, chemical-weapons convention.

The Canberra Conference identified a number of interim steps that could be taken prior to the conclusion of a convention - and which indeed in some countries were already being taken - steps both to build confidence in the possibility of a successful convention and to build the working arrangements that would be needed to put that convention into operation. There was general agreement at the Canberra Conference not only that 1990 would be a critical year for the negotiations, but that it should be possible to negotiate substantive outstanding issues to resolution within that time-frame.

We believe that it is a reasonable hope, and expectation, that as a result of all the developments in chemical weapons diplomacy this year, and in particular with the momentum now generated by the Canberra Conference, the international community will get a better chemical-weapons convention, and get it sooner than might otherwise have been the case.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Already there have been further very positive signs that this momentum will be maintained. The statements made from this rostrum in the last week by President Bush and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, following as they did the agreement a few days earlier between the United States and the Soviet Union on the exchange of data and other confidence-building measures, were very welcome. These developments are important not only in their own right, but because they indicate that the dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union on chemical weapons is keeping pace with multilateral negotiations, that both major Powers are now firmly committed to advancing the Geneva negotiations, and that they will help ensure that those multilateral negotiations conclude successfully and soon.

Nuclear disarmament, through progressive, stabilizing reductions in the existing arsenals, remains a high priority. This is properly recognized as an imperative in its own right. But it is also closely related to another vital objective: preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons. Australia remains a dedicated supporter of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the single most effective and widely supported international arms control agreement in existence. We share with the overwhelming majority of United Nations Members the conviction that the world would be a very much more dangerous place without that Treaty and the standards of international behaviour it sets.

Preparations have begun for the Fourth Review Conference of the Treaty next year. Australia is actively participating with other parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in this important process, with the aim of further strengthening the Treaty to meet the proliferation challenges of the 1990s. Such challenges are emerging strongly in a number of regions. The Treaty's effectiveness would be increased by still wider membership and we appeal again to those States which have not already become parties to do so as a matter of priority.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

A ban on nuclear testing also occupies a central place in the quest for disarmament. We welcome the progress being made in the bilateral super-Power negotiations on nuclear testing and the developments on a number of fronts on the key issue of verification. What is clearly lacking, however, in the Conference on Disarmament - the body that has the relevant ability and authority - is the consensus to establish an ad hoc committee to put in place systematically the building blocks for an effectively verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty. Australia is firmly committed to the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and we shall again sponsor a draft resolution urging the member States of the Conference on Disarmament to meet their responsibilities in this regard.

Efforts at the global level are important in securing the objectives of peace and disarmament. But constructive and balanced endeavours at the regional level can also make an important contribution. Representatives will be aware of the action that the countries of the South Pacific took in 1985 to conclude the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, which has now, just in this last year, been ratified and taken effect. That Treaty is not only consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, but gives important witness to the aspirations of a region which, while it may be remote from most of the world's present centres of conflict, is no less deeply committed to the cause of world peace.

The founders of the United Nations recognized that lasting security required more than even the prevention of wars and the reduction of armaments: that true security was multidimensional in character, resting ultimately on improving the quality of life of all the peoples of the world. Our founders understood that military and economic and personal security were indivisible and that the origins of many conflicts lay in economic hardships and the denial of basic human rights.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

These issues still rightly loom very large in the work of the United Nations system, and, if anything, have increased in their international significance. "We the peoples of the United Nations" - to quote the opening lines of the United Nations Charter - are today bound together in many complex ways. We face common problems which can be solved only by common efforts. The United Nations, if it is to remain a relevant institution, must be closely involved in all these efforts. It has a role to play in co-ordinating, and in some cases leading, international efforts against threats to the environment, such as the depletion of the ozone layer, and other phenomena that put our common habitat at risk. The United Nations has a role to play in encouraging dialogue and practical action on the many pressing economic problems faced by so many countries, especially those of debt, poverty, and other barriers to trade and economic growth. The world simply cannot be regarded as free from the sources of tension which lead to international conflict until the problems of poverty and gross economic inequality are overcome. The United Nations has a role to play in combating terrorism and in the fight against drug trafficking, which today pose threats to the very fabric of some of our communities. It has a crucial role to play in the whole range of humanitarian endeavours - from promoting fundamental human rights and freedoms, to caring for refugees and eradicating life-threatening epidemics - where so much has already been achieved, but so much remains to be done.

The General Assembly will debate all those and other matters of major international concern, demonstrating the unchanging validity and vitality of the Organization, and in so debating the issues it will have the unequivocal support of my country.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Mr. Herbert V. Evatt, who was President of the third session of the General Assembly back in 1948, summed up Australia's view of the United Nations in the following memorable terms over 40 years ago. The United Nations, he said:

"... is the best presently available instrument both for avoiding the supreme and ultimate catastrophe of a third world war, waged with all-destroying weapons, and also for establishing an international order which should and can assure to mankind security against poverty, unemployment, ignorance, famine and disease".

That vision of an active and effective United Nations was shared by all our founding forebears, and the onus on all of us now is to keep faith with that vision.

Mr. AL-DALI (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): The election of Ambassador Garba of Nigeria to the presidency of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly is a recognition of his great diplomatic skills and a confirmation of the effective role that Nigeria plays on the African and the international scene. While extending to him our warmest congratulations, I wish also to express my appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, who conducted the deliberations of the last session with such wisdom. I also pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for his efforts and his activities designed to achieve just settlements to urgent international issues.

Undoubtedly, there are now positive trends in international relations. Foremost among those is the steady improvement in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, where confrontation and mistrust have given way to understanding, détente and co-operation. While welcoming the agreement reached between the two countries on halting the arms race and on disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, we believe that what has been achieved so far is only a small portion of what we aspire to achieve in this field. Further steps are still needed for the reduction of nuclear strategic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction which constitute a threat to life on our planet. Only then will our efforts be in the right direction to implement the will of the international community and the strategy agreed upon for general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Naturally, the positive developments on the international scene have had a positive impact also at the regional level in different parts of the world, enabling this international Organization to play its role in achieving political settlements of a number of questions that remain of concern to the international community. In this context, bringing an end to the destructive war between Iraq and Iran has been a major success for the peace efforts of the international

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

community. We take this opportunity to appeal to both countries to break the deadlock that has stalled negotiations to end their dispute and achieve progress towards the desired settlement and the complete and comprehensive peace that will guarantee the interests of both peoples. We also hope that the two countries can reach an agreement on the exchange of prisoners of war in the immediate future.

In connection with Afghanistan, the Geneva Agreements represent a valid framework for a political settlement that guarantees the interests of the Afghan people. We call upon all concerned parties to remain committed to those Agreements.

As regards the new developments in the Horn of Africa, we welcome the current efforts to halt the fighting and to move to the negotiating table with a view to reaching peaceful solutions to the problems of the region.

In Western Sahara, there are certain new developments of a positive nature. The same applies to the situation in Kampuchea, from which all the Vietnamese forces have recently withdrawn, thus paving the way for a peaceful settlement that would guarantee the security and stability of that region.

We appreciate and welcome the agreement arrived at among the leaders of the States of Central America. All parties concerned are called upon to provide favourable conditions to guarantee the effective implementation of those agreements, in a creative manner, so that peace and stability can prevail in that region.

We also hope that it will be possible to reach a just settlement to the Cyprus problem that will guarantee the unity of Cyprus, its territorial integrity and its non-aligned status. The same is true of the Korean question, whose solution requires the achievement of a settlement guaranteeing the unification of Korea on a peaceful and democratic basis.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

Today, we are following with interest the completion of the process of independence for Namibia in accordance with the United Nations plan. We look forward to the day when independent Namibia and its people can stand side by side with the other members of the international community and participate in its work. But this positive development should not lead us to abandon our common efforts to eradicate the policy of apartheid, or our continued support for the struggle of the people of South Africa for freedom.

It is regrettable that the positive climate prevailing in international relations has had no impact on the situation in the Middle East, where the Palestine question, which is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, still remains without a just and comprehensive settlement that would guarantee the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

The fact that cannot be ignored is that the Palestinian leadership, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, has proved beyond any doubt its keen interest in achieving peace in the region as well as its positive response to international efforts made to that end. The decisions of the Palestine National Council have been positively received on the Arab and international levels. They also were endorsed by the emergency Arab summit meeting held in Casablanca. They were crowned by the positive initiative that Chairman Yasser Arafat announced before the General Assembly in Geneva. It goes without saying that the increasing international recognition of the State of Palestine reaffirms the belief of the international community in the legitimacy of the Palestine Liberation Organization and its serious endeavours to reach a just and comprehensive settlement to the Palestinian question.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

This positive initiative has been accompanied by the steadfastness of the Palestinian people's intifadah in the occupied territories. From this rostrum we salute the continued courage of the Palestinian people engaged in an unequal confrontation with the Israeli occupation. It is important to state that Israel's true image has been clearly revealed to world public opinion. Does any doubt still persist about the fact that Israel does not want peace to prevail in the region? Does any doubt still persist about another fact: that Israel's policy is based on expansion and colonial settlement? Has it not yet been proved beyond any doubt, through clear, tangible, irrefutable evidence, that Israel violates human rights in the occupied territories? Has the world forgotten the crimes committed by Israel against the defenceless Palestinian people, burying them alive and breaking their bones?

The international community as a whole calls for terminating the Israeli occupation of Palestine and other Arab territories. It calls for seizing the opportunity to proceed with the preparations for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with numerous successive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, with the participation on an equal footing of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. That is the right approach, agreed upon internationally; it would lead to a just political settlement in the Middle East that would guarantee the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which is their right to self-determination and to the establishment of their independent State.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

We take this opportunity to call on the United States to adopt a positive attitude towards the international efforts for peace, and to associate itself with the will of the international community, within the agreed-upon framework for a political settlement in the Middle East, in order to enable the Security Council to take the practical measures for the preparation for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. We also call upon the United States to use its influence to bring pressure to bear on Israel in order to make it respond favourably to the international peace efforts.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

The success of Arab efforts, as represented by the Arab Tripartite Committee, in making some important steps on the road to restoring security and stability to Lebanon is a development which we highly appreciate and of which we are proud. The halting of fighting between brothers and the gradual restoration of normal life to brotherly Lebanon are indeed important developments. We are all the more pleased to witness the success of the Arab Tripartite Committee in convening the Lebanese House of Representatives in Taif, Saudi Arabia, and we hope that a political settlement guaranteeing the unity, security and stability of Lebanon will be reached.

At the same time, we once again demand the immediate and unconditional termination of the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

In the context of the Middle East, we reiterate our warning against ignoring Israeli nuclear armaments and the risk this poses to the region and its peoples, as well as the potential threat it entails to international peace and security. In this respect, we demand the taking of immediate measures to end this danger, a danger that runs counter to the desire of the peoples and States of the region to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the area. We also warn against the risk of Israeli missile-launching tests in the Mediterranean and the threat such tests pose to the peace and security of the States in that region, particularly since one of these missiles landed close to the territory of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Many speakers have made particular reference to certain items on this session's agenda according to their own concerns and priorities. We should like to confirm our country's position on some of those issues. We condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism. We censure using this

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subject as a slogan to strike at national liberation movements and stifle their legitimate struggle for freedom and self-determination or to interfere in the internal affairs of other States. We welcome any joint international efforts to confront terrorism to be agreed upon in the international conference proposed for this purpose within the framework of the United Nations. We also support any joint international effort to combat drugs and illegal drug trafficking.

We believe that no one would oppose international efforts for the protection of the environment. However, we reiterate that our starting-point in this context must not only be confined to the protection of the environment from further pollution or degradation but must also take into consideration our belief in the need to develop and improve the environment to serve the socio-economic development of the developing countries.

Above all, our priorities remain based on the social and economic development of the developing countries and ways to promote that development in order to improve the living standards of our peoples. Hence, we wonder how we can ever boast of the progress achieved both regionally and internationally in the political and security spheres if this is not accompanied by parallel progress in the economic field that is so closely linked to our lives. What kind of peace and security is it if the circle of poverty in the world is increasingly widening and if the gap between the developed and the developing countries is deepening day by day? And how can we ever guarantee the political stability of the world if it is threatened daily by an exacerbated economic and social situation?

The stagnation which has marked the process of growth and development in developing countries and the negative growth rates of their economies have reached tragic proportions. Still worse is the suffering of the foreign debt-ridden States, and that of the least developed countries to which we belong.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

Our situation is made even worse by the national disasters we face. Like many other least developed countries, Democratic Yemen was struck by torrential rains and floods that caused great loss of life and inflicted much damage and destruction on economic installations as well as on agricultural land and crops. While once again we express our thanks and appreciation to all States and organizations that provided us with timely emergency relief assistance, we look forward to more economic support to enable us to rebuild and reconstruct vital economic structures that were destroyed by the floods.

The worsening economic situation prevailing in the developing countries requires the adoption of urgent measures aimed at finding just solutions and bringing about essential changes in the structure of international economic relations, and to establish the new international economic order, an order that will contribute to balanced and steady growth, accelerate the process of development in the developing countries, and deal with the problems of foreign debt, money, finance and trade, as well as other problems affecting the world economy.

In this respect we look forward with keen interest to the convening of the second conference on the least developed countries to be held in Paris. We shall make every effort, along with other least developed countries, to come out of that Conference with a clear strategy that will assist our countries in promoting their economies and increasing their growth rates in a way that will guarantee a minimum decent standard of living for our peoples. We attach the same hope to the special session of the General Assembly, to be held in 1990, devoted to international co-operation for development. We deem it necessary to continue the world economic negotiations between the North and the South and to break the current stalemate.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

We are indeed aware of the requirements of this era in the light of recent developments in international relations. In our country we are undergoing an important phase of comprehensive political and economic reforms which we regard as a necessary, urgent process dictated by subjective and objective circumstances and the developments experienced by our revolution. The process of political and economic reform is based on certain premises, mainly on pursuing a realistic policy, spreading democracy and openness, promoting the rule of law and guaranteeing the political, economic, social and human rights of our citizens.

Side by side with this important internal process, our efforts continue on the national level to achieve Yemeni unity, which is the fate, destiny and the aim of our Yemeni people. We believe that the way to achieve this noble goal is peaceful dialogue and brotherly understanding on a set of common denominators between the two sectors of Yemen. It gives us pleasure that our relations with our brothers in the northern sector of the homeland are positive and developing. The implementation of the two important agreements concerning the movement of our citizens between the two sectors and joint oil investment is proceeding smoothly. We look forward to further measures that will pave the way for the restoration of the unity of Yemen, which can only be a factor contributing to further stability and development in Yemen and in the region as a whole.*

* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

In our relations with our Arab brothers, there has been remarkable progress. We are keen to strengthen and promote these relations on the basis of mutual respect for independence, national sovereignty, and non-interference in internal affairs, for our mutual benefit, in a manner that will serve the interests of our peoples and further our issues of destiny. In this respect, we are working to promote co-ordination with our Arab brothers within the framework of the regional and international organizations to which we belong, so as to achieve stability and to avoid tension in the area.

The same applies to the remaining neighbouring countries in the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, and on the basis of the same principles, we are making intensive efforts to improve and develop our relations with the other countries of the world. In this regard, important contacts and visits were made this year. We hope that our pursuit of this objective will be met with an adequate response so that our relations with other countries may be promoted to the level to which we aspire.

On the wider international front, we are seeking to expand our activities within the framework of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, with whose members we have common principles and goals.

As one of the Indian Ocean States, Democratic Yemen strongly supports international efforts aimed at making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. We look forward with interest to the convening of the international Conference on the Indian Ocean next year. In addition, we shall host an international seminar on the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea early next year. The seminar, which is being organized by our Government in co-operation with the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization, will be attended by prominent persons from all parts of the world.

(Mr. Al-Dali, Democratic Yemen)

In the framework of the United Nations, we take pride in the fact that our efforts will be crowned, in this principal international forum, with the confidence expressed in us by the group of Asian States, which we shall represent in the Security Council during the term 1990-1991. We fully understand the dimensions of this responsibility and declare that we shall spare no effort in shouldering it. We shall be the mirror reflecting the Arab position, and the echo of the Asian voice. We shall reflect the principles governing the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as the will of the international community to maintain international peace and security, in co-operation and co-ordination with the other members of the Security Council.

Mr. NDINGA-OBA (Congo) (interpretation from French): The year that is now drawing to its end has demonstrated the perfectable nature of international life. In a good number of situations which until very recently appeared to be insoluble there have been positive developments. The Congo welcomes this wind of change that has been blowing throughout the world for some time now, fostering dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is a wind that has blown away traditional perceptions of world politics and has created new prospects for peace and co-operation.

However, we are bound to acknowledge that these favourable developments at the political level have not yet had the desired effects in the area of development issues. I am thinking in particular of issues associated with the international economic situation, protection of the environment, and drug trafficking. Despite the persistence of these problems, allow me to associate the People's Republic of the Congo with the hopes that have been expressed by other representatives who share with us the aspiration to a world dedicated to peace, freedom and justice.

I take pleasure in offering to you, Sir, my heartfelt congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session.

(Mr. Ndinga-Oba, Congo)

Your election is a token of the tribute that the international community wished to pay to Nigeria - a country with which the People's Republic of the Congo has excellent relations of friendship, brotherhood and co-operation, and whose traditions of openness and co-operation derive from its natural readiness to stand side by side with the United Nations whenever the situation demands it. Allow me to congratulate also Mr. Dante Caputo, your predecessor as President, whose effective and skilful guidance of the work of the General Assembly at its forty-third session won him the respect of the whole Assembly. Our heartfelt thanks go to him. I want also to express my country's gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar - a great man dedicated to the cause of peace, who, despite short-term difficulties, is carrying out his task courageously and resolutely.

The United Nations - crucible of the nations, the ideal forum for championing just causes, an Organization whose legitimate aim is to serve individuals and States - feels intensely all the turmoil affecting the international community. This should urge the Member States to support its efforts in seeking solutions to the vital problems facing mankind. The crises and conflicts that beset the world justify us in constantly seeking balance, security and peace, and justify our aspiration to a fairer and more equitable order - a vital prerequisite for the creation of an ideal climate of active solidarity, which demands tolerance, the right to be different, justice and mutual acceptance, as well as progress shared by all. That is why we believe that it is imperative that the United Nations be given the operational means and the capacity that it needs to ensure the maintenance of peace among nations.

Consequently, we welcome the fact that the crisis in multilateralism, which was so dreaded a few years ago, has given way to the rebirth of multilateral

(Mr. Ndinga-Oba, Congo)

diplomacy. We hope that this new awareness will continue to inspire us and will enable the Organization to win the battles that it must fight and to tackle the numerous challenges before it.

Disarmament is a matter of concern to all of us. In view of the danger inherent in nuclear weaponry, the signing, in December 1987, of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, and its implementation, are of great historic significance for the strengthening of peace in the world. We hope that the 50 per cent reduction in strategic nuclear weapons will become a reality. All countries that possess nuclear weapons should participate in this disarmament process.

Similarly, my country wishes to express its support for the initiative taken by some Members of this Organization in calling for the convening of a conference of States parties to the partial test-ban Treaty to consider amendments designed to convert that Treaty into a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban Treaty.

(Mr. Ndinga-Oba, Congo)

My delegation welcomes with satisfaction the statements made here a few days ago by President Bush and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. Shevardnadze, on the banning of chemical weapons, endorsing the conclusions of the Paris Conference held in January 1989, at which 149 countries, among them Congo, gave their solemn undertaking not to use chemical weapons.

We have seen appalling pictures in the media showing the use of such weapons in recent conflicts. This is surely an opportunity to urge the participants in the Conference in Geneva to bring the negotiations to a conclusion as soon as possible, with a view to concluding a multilateral convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons.

The climate of détente and the beginning of constructive dialogue which we can see at the present time offer grounds for optimism. My country is dedicated to peace, justice, national concord and democracy, as evidenced by the conclusions reached at the last congress of our party and the results of the legislative elections of 24 September 1989. Thus, my country can only welcome the prospects for peace which are perceptible in various parts of the world where tensions were brewing.

In Central America and the Caribbean, we welcome the results of the tireless efforts of the Heads of State and Government of the subregion since Esquipulas II, which recently yielded fruit in the form of the Tela Declaration of 7 August 1989. This development requires all other States to refrain from any action which might place an obstacle in the way of this process. We follow with particular interest the process of democratization which is now under way there and which the international community should support.

(Mr. Ndinga-Oba, Congo)

In South-East Asia, a number of initiatives have been taken this year which indicate a decisive and significant turning-point in political terms. The policy of national reconciliation which has been launched in Kampuchea should be pursued. The opening of peace negotiations in the form of the Jakarta and Paris meetings represent an undertaking which must be welcomed and encouraged.

In Afghanistan, thanks to the efforts of the Secretary-General and the parties concerned, an important step forward has been taken with the signing of the Geneva Agreements on 14 April 1988. In the absence of any effective cease-fire and given the resurgence of fighting, my country wishes to reaffirm its adherence to the Geneva Agreements as the sole acceptable basis for a settlement to that conflict.

In the Korean peninsula, we note with satisfaction the efforts being made to bring about a rapprochement between the North and the South, which is a necessary prelude to the peaceful reunification of Korea.

With respect to Iran and Iraq, the peace negotiations on which those two countries have embarked are a sign of hope which we should all work to strengthen. The People's Republic of the Congo supports the continued peace talks aimed at the total implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and hopes that the related problems will not obstruct the peace efforts undertaken by the international community.

With respect to the question of Cyprus, my country welcomes the willingness of the leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, thanks to the good offices of the Secretary-General, to undertake to work tirelessly together with a view to concluding a comprehensive agreement to safeguard peace and national unity in that country.

In North Africa, the contacts which have begun between the Moroccan Government and the POLISARIO Front augur well for an era of peace and stability in that region. The referendum provided for in the various relevant resolutions of the

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Organization of African Unity and the United Nations will enable the basic question of self-determination for the Saharoui people to be settled. The efforts of the Secretary-General, who has been working tirelessly to that end, deserve the encouragement of my country and of the whole international community. We hope that the dialogue that has begun will continue in more favourable conditions.

Along these same lines, my country also lends its support to the efforts to achieve peace in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Ethiopia and the Sudan.

The framework agreement signed between Libya and Chad on 7 September last in Algiers, designed to settle the dispute between those two countries, is, as far as my delegations is concerned, the ideal way to work towards a final settlement of that conflict. We continue to be convinced that, from this time on, a climate of tranquillity, understanding and good-neighbourliness will prevail in the relations between those two countries.

While the situations to which I have referred attest to the climate of détente which is favourable to improvement in international relations, we are bound to recognize that these situations are still precarious, as evidenced by the persistence of hotbeds of tension around the world. In the Middle East, the situation is extremely worrisome. That situation, with the thorny Palestinian problem at its epicentre, is at present at an almost total deadlock. One might have thought that following the concessions made by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), a new process might have been begun aimed at reopening the peace process and beginning a dialogue between the Israelis and Palestinians. On the contrary, we are witnessing redoubled violence against the Palestinian people. The intifadah, the symbol of the resistance of the Palestinian people to the occupation of its homeland, reflects the determination of that people to build a free and independent nation. Congo, which recognized the State of Palestine proclaimed in

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Algiers in November last year following the meeting of the Palestine National Council, considers that the restoration of lasting peace requires the liberation of the occupied territories.

My country believes that the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all the parties, including the PLO, is the only appropriate framework for negotiations which will enable the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination and which would guarantee the right of all the States of the region to live within secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

It is with deep distress that I must now speak of Lebanon, a name which, only about 15 years ago, was synonymous with joie de vivre and which is now synonymous with warfare. Neither the Arab League's cease-fire nor the United Nations cease-fire has been able effectively to stop the fighting, thus making the mission of the committee of good offices of the Arab League even more difficult. To the Lebanese people, the victim of external interference, we reaffirm our solidarity and we support the efforts of the Tripartite Committee of Heads of State, which is seeking to restore peace to that people.

As members are aware, the situation in southern Africa for my country is one of major concern. As far as it has been possible to do so, the people of Congo, under the leadership of President Denis Sassou Nguesso, is lending its support to the establishment of global and lasting peace in the region.

(Mr. Ndinga-Oba, Congo)

Indeed, having worked for the conclusion of the agreements reached at Brazzaville and New York, President Denis Sassou Nguesso has spared no effort to achieve, in conjunction with other Heads of State, the total and final elimination of all the factors that generate tension and conflict in Angola, in South Africa and in all the other countries of southern Africa. In that connection Congolese observers, under the aegis of the United Nations, are taking part in the implementation of some of those agreements in the field. Congo is actively participating in the process of national reconciliation in Angola and shares the hopes raised at the Gbadolite summit meeting on 22 June 1989. We take this opportunity to appeal to the international community and to all the friends of the Angolan people to support the efforts of the Government, the people and all the sons of Angola to bring about national reconciliation and rebuild that country.

Indeed, have five centuries of colonization, 33 years of liberation struggle and 14 years of internal conflict not been an unduly heavy price for a people to pay - a people that aspires only to live in peace so it can work for its country's development?

With regard to the People's Republic of Mozambique, we are convinced that the policy of national reconciliation initiated by President Joachim Alberto Chissano and FRELMO will ensure the genuine peace that is so vital for that fraternal country's reconstruction.

In Namibia a historic event looms on the horizon: the independence of that brother country after long years of heroic struggle by the Namibian people, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), against South Africa's occupation forces. We urge the international community to be vigilant in ensuring the full implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) so that all the necessary conditions are met for the holding

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of free and democratic elections. It is clear that the advent of an independent Namibia on the world scene will require assistance from the international community in keeping with the scale of the challenges the new country must face in consolidating peace and beginning national reconstruction.

In basing its existence on the policy of separate racial development, South Africa is maintaining an anachronism unworthy of the modern world. Recent changes that have occurred in the South African leadership, and the ensuing legislative elections that excluded the black majority, have not basically altered our perception of the nature of that régime. Neither the purportedly reassuring statements of the new Government nor the proposed reforms can alter unshakeable international public opinion, which is determined to abolish apartheid, a crime against humanity. Apartheid cannot be reformed; it must be eradicated. What the international community expects from the South African Government is a demonstration of its good faith and its ability to put an end to apartheid, in keeping with the desire of the non-aligned countries and the members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as expressed in the Declaration of the Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State on Southern Africa, of which my country is a member.

Peace and security in South Africa call for the immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners, the lifting of the state of emergency, the restoration of all civil rights for all citizens and the establishment of a genuinely democratic régime, as well as the termination of any policy aimed at destabilizing the countries of the subregion.

As is obvious, the current situation in South Africa, still far from meeting the requirements of the international community, can only compel us to maintain and intensify our political, economic and financial pressures on the apartheid régime. We venture to hope that national committees in the anti-apartheid struggle and the

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international community as a whole will increase their activities and lend stronger support to the initiatives of the African Committee against Apartheid, of which my country is Chairman, as well as the efforts of the Action for Resisting Invasion, Colonialism and Apartheid (AFRICA) Fund.

As we are all aware, today terrorism concerns the entire world because of the large loss of human life it causes. My country, so recently the victim of a terrorist attack, which caused the death of 49 citizens who perished in the attack against a UTA Airline DC-10, condemns terrorism and urges the international community to wage a pitiless struggle against that evil and to eradicate it.

The drug problem has now reached alarming proportions. It has devastating effects on many countries throughout the world. The link that has been established between drugs and crime threatens the very security of States. Africa, long considered free from the problem of drug trafficking, is gradually becoming involved in that repugnant trade.

It is therefore vital to strengthen international co-operation and to support the efforts that have recently been begun to eradicate that phenomenon, whose ultimate goal is the disintegration of our States. That was the spirit in which an international seminar on legislation to combat drugs was convened at Brazzaville last April - a seminar that brought together 14 African countries and that agreed on the vital necessity to devise and harmonize national legislations under the aegis of the United Nations.

For nearly two years the relaxation of East-West tensions and the resulting beneficial effects on regional conflicts have given us good reasons to hope that we are entering a new era of dialogue and peace. The new political climate of détente, we hoped, would quite naturally prompt the international community to work to find agreed solutions to the crucial problems of the world economy, which is riddled with uncertainties that cast a threatening shadow on the future of the

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developing countries. All reports are unanimous in painting a picture of a world economy marked by glaring contrasts. While the industrialized countries continue to enjoy sustained growth, most of the developing countries are becoming bogged down in stagnation or even recession.

Furthermore, the magnitude of the foreign indebtedness of developing countries which in only 7 years has risen from \$800 billion in 1982 to \$1,320 billion in 1988, has further worsened their economic and social situations by putting a sudden brake on growth and causing an unprecedented deterioration in the living conditions of their populations. In many cases prolonged austerity programmes have led to violence and generated greater insecurity and unemployment, which most severely affect the broadest and most vulnerable sectors of society.

It is true that measures and initiatives have been taken to lighten the debt burden of developing countries. My country welcomes that. But we regret that such measures often exclude countries at the so-called middle-income level, like the Congo, which none the less have the highest ratios of debt. However, given the gravity of the problem those measures have proved insufficient vis-à-vis long-term development objectives. They must be backed up by a comprehensive and integrated strategy in a spirit of shared responsibility in the true sense.

Debt reduction, which is on the agenda of this body and of other forums, can offer real hope only if it goes hand in hand with substantial support in the form of appropriate financial resources. That support is a vital part of any debt-relief policy, particularly at a time when we note with regret an alarming trend towards a diminution of financial flows, especially characterized by the stagnation of official development assistance and a drying-up of flows of commercial finance, while at the same time, paradoxically, the net transfer of financial resources from developing to developed countries rose to \$43 billion in 1988.

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Furthermore, the continued worsening of the economic and social situation in Africa, exacerbated by the debt crisis, bears out the value and relevance of the common position on African debt adopted in 1987 at the third special summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). That debt, estimated in 1988 at \$230 billion, absorbs a considerable portion of the export earnings of African countries.

The world economic crisis has diminished the capacity of our countries to participate actively in world trade. Our products are suffering from the instability of the markets of the developed countries and increasing protectionism. The marked continued decline in the prices of commodities exported by developing countries together with the deterioration of terms of trade have created difficulties that have adversely affected balances of payment and led to a negative transfer of resources. Without question, exports remain one of the main means by which developing countries may achieve economic growth; hence the need to work together to establish a just and equitable international trading system. In this respect, my country attaches special importance to the Uruguay negotiations, whose ultimate goal is to strengthen the multilateral trading system.

Human solidarity prompts us to give priority to the poorest countries. Three years ago, in this very Hall, the international community, in response to Africa's appeal, adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, but that continent, which includes the largest number of least developed countries, is still feeling the negative effects of an economic crisis whose causes are beyond its control, that is thwarting all the efforts of the African Governments to revitalize their economies.

In 1988 the mid-term review of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development concluded that the response of the

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international community had been inappropriate and inadequate. Despite the reforms undertaken at great political risk and significant social cost, the economic recovery which was the supposed objective of such policies is still beyond our reach.

As far as we are concerned, Congo, in conditions of extreme constraint, has courageously implemented the strengthened structural adjustment programme drawn up with the co-operation of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and its creditors. Unfortunately, the efforts we have made have not so far yielded any significant results, and we need more understanding from our partners if we are to achieve economic recovery in my country. The African frame of reference for structural adjustment programmes aimed at bringing about economic changes and recovery, prepared by the Economic Commission for Africa and endorsed by the OAU Summit in July of this year, deserves the attention of the international community.

Without a doubt, the deterioration of the environment requires strengthened international co-operation. This Organization offers an ideal framework for concerted action and co-ordination of efforts in this area. But it should be noted that the tendency to regard the degradation of the environment as an isolated phenomenon overlooks certain aspects of the problems. The question of environment protection, in our opinion, is part of the process of development itself. It is in this context that a whole governmental structure has been set up in the Congo to deal with the problem of the environment. That department is devising and executing a national environmental protection policy. Every year, on 6 March the Congo celebrates Tree Day as a symbol of the policy of reforestation, a policy that has been carried out on an extremely large scale by specialized departments.

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It behoves the developed countries, whose primary responsibility for environmental pollution has been acknowledged, to come to the assistance of developing countries in their efforts to protect the environment by contributing additional financial resources and through the transfer of appropriate and ecologically sound technologies.

We are nearing the end of a decade, a decade of frustrations for the developing countries but which none the less offers extremely promising prospects. Thus, as we turn our eyes to the future, let us hold fast to the hope that, as in political relations, confrontation will give way to dialogue between rich and poor, constructive dialogue aiming at a new, fairer and more equitable order. With this in mind, the United Nations has some important milestones ahead of it, including the following: the special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation, and in particular, to the revitalization of economic growth and development in the developing countries, scheduled for April 1990 - a tremendously important session, for it will be addressing challenges of great importance to the world economy; the International Strategy for the fourth United Nations Development Decade (1991-2000), a crucial decade which should ensure that mankind arrives at the threshold of the next millenium in an active spirit of solidarity and co-operation for a better world.

But the building of such a world demands that the fundamental needs of populations be met. The international community, through this world Organization, must find decisive responses to that challenge, bolstered by a genuine solidarity pact between the rich and the poor, the North and the South.

The PRESIDENT: I know that the General Assembly is the master of its own procedures, but I do recall that it unanimously took a decision a few years ago to forbid congratulations on the floor. In my capacity as President I have reiterated that decision at least twice.

Now, I may be a military man but I am not stupid. Also, having been a Foreign Minister myself I know how important it is to feel that one's colleagues appreciate what one has just said - and that is indicated by the fact that they come up to offer congratulations. So I am going to be realistic and put a proposal to the Assembly.

There are six sections of rows in the General Assembly Hall, three on the left and three on the right. I propose that we do the following: If a speaker comes from one of the three left sections - even from the front row, like the representatives of Singapore, Sierra Leone or the Solomon Islands - after he has finished speaking, let him go around to the left foyer and return via the back of the Hall to his seat. In this way, he can see the representatives who are coming up to him to extend congratulations and can stop somewhere along the left foyer. If he comes from one of the three right sections, he can do the opposite - stop along the right foyer, where people can offer him their congratulations, and then make a detour around the Hall to return to his seat. That would be a one-way route that would not disturb those who are in the centre of the Hall. We should do this out of consideration for the next speaker, who has the right to address an attentive audience in this Hall, in a serene atmosphere.

Since we seem to be unable to adhere to our own previous decision, let us do the next best thing. I repeat that I believe that speakers have the right to address an attentive audience in a serene atmosphere.

Since there appear to be no comments, I shall declare my proposal adopted by acclamation.

(The President)

I rely on the Assembly to stick to its decision this time. I am sure that if we try this procedure once or twice it will catch on. Indeed, I shall ask the next speaker, the representative of Angola, to try the procedure when he finishes his statement.

Mr. VAN DUNEM (Angola) (spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation): Mr. President, today I have the honour of addressing the General Assembly for the first time and I wish to extend greetings to you both personally and on behalf of the People's Republic of Angola and best wishes for your success during this forty-fourth session of the Assembly. We are certain that your abilities and diplomatic experience will contribute significantly to its success.

We should like also to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, who conducted the previous session with brilliance and foresight, contributing, as we all know, to its success.

To the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, we extend our most sincere congratulations, especially on his exemplary performance in the process leading to the search for peace and prosperity for all mankind despite all the political, economic and other problems that the Organization faces.

Only a few days have elapsed since the ninth summit conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which was held in a spirit of modernization. That conference took place at a time when positive changes were occurring in international relations. This is a situation that pleases us because we can now say that the period of the cold war is over. The super-Powers seem to have established between themselves a relationship directed towards ending confrontation and leading to a gradual reduction and dismantling of their respective arsenals, including nuclear arms.

(Mr. Van Dunem, Angola)

These negotiations between the major world Powers on the limitation of arms and on disarmament should be encouraged and supported by every current of opinion in our countries and around the world, as the right to choose between war and world peace should not be restricted to one country or to a small group of countries.

Peace is the patrimony of all mankind, which must fight in a united bloc in order to preserve it. Peace is the indispensable and necessary condition for development and for the building of happiness and well-being for all people. Peace, stability and security are inseparable, and since we live an interdependent world the active commitment of all countries is necessary for the resolution of world problems.

The results reached at the Reykjavik talks opened important prospects for peace for peoples all over the world and emphasized an already strong tendency towards the relaxation of tension in international relations and for the use of dialogue and negotiation as a means to resolve differences, end conflicts and eliminate those points of tension that exist in many parts of the globe.

This new tendency has encouraged the peoples of Africa to engage in a courageous struggle for the liquidation of the last remnants of colonialism and racism. Aware of this reality, the South African régime, supported by some Western Powers, has engaged in armed aggression and acts of sabotage, combining direct action with the participation of mercenaries and puppet groups against the countries in the region, with the dual objective of thwarting the struggle of the peoples of Namibia and South Africa, under the respective guidance of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the African National Congress (ANC), their sole and legitimate representatives, and of destabilizing sovereign southern

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African countries in order to promote subversion and create conditions for the imposition of neo-colonial Governments submissive to the wishes of the Western Powers.

The People's Republic of Angola, as a country fighting to win the battle against underdevelopment at all costs in order to improve the social conditions and standards of living of its people, could not isolate itself from the political context of its region. Our contribution to the solution of the problems that affect the southern region of our continent has been provided within the context of the front-line countries, to which our country has given significant support in the political and diplomatic actions undertaken to find a just solution to the problem of the decolonization of Namibia and the elimination of the vicious apartheid system. Because of this attitude, Angola has been the victim of constant armed aggression.

(Mr. Van Dunem, Angola)

This climate of extreme armed violence generated by the South African aggressors has resulted in remarkable deeds by the Angolans - such as the victorious battles of Cuito Canavale, Tchipa, Calueque and Ruacana - which will remain as glorious pages in the history of our resistance against the invader. In this hard struggle the Angolan people was able to count on the active commitment of Cuba and on the support of the international community, for which we are most grateful.

The Government of the People's Republic of Angola has given proof of good faith and understanding in the search for the means to solve its internal conflict. In a constructive spirit, and as a clear demonstration of its peaceful policy, the Angolan Government on 22 June this year, in the presence of 18 African Heads of State at a meeting held at Gbadolite, in the Republic of Zaire, agreed upon a cessation of military hostilities, to become effective on 24 June 1989. That followed intensive consultations with various African countries regarding a series of principles that were included in the peace plan for Angola.

The President of the Republic of Zaire informed us that he had established contacts with Savimbi and UNITA and that they had accepted the principles for the settlement of the internal problem in Angola. Those principles are: first, cessation of external interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of Angola; secondly, cessation of hostilities in all parts of the national territory, including the area around the Benguela railway, which will be considered a peace zone, and therefore used only for peaceful purposes; thirdly, observation of the provisions of constitutional law and other fundamental legislation; fourthly, integration of UNITA militants into the structure of the State, and into other institutions, according to their capabilities; and, fifthly, acceptance of a temporary, voluntary removal of Jonas Savimbi from the Angolan political scene.

(Mr. Van Dunem, Angola)

Unfortunately, since the Gbadolite summit events have not proceeded at the same pace or developed positively, since the UNITA rebels have not stopped their terrorist acts or their hostile statements and propaganda against the legitimate Government of Angola. Moreover, their traditional allies have not ceased their interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of Angola. It must be remembered that we are involved in a peace process, which is not promoted by the supply of arms and increased financial aid to Jonas Savimbi.

The fact that certain groups of Angolans serve as instruments for the realization of the Pretoria régime's aims in the war of aggression against Angola shows that the war against our country has an external origin. Therefore, we regret that despite all the commitments freely made by Angola - not only in the comprehensive negotiations platform of 17 November 1984, but also in the Geneva Protocol of 5 August 1988 and in the bilateral agreement between Angola and Cuba of 22 December 1988 on the withdrawal of the Cuban military contingent from the People's Republic of Angola - the UNITA rebels, in spite of the cease-fire agreed upon in Gbadolite, have carried out various attacks and ambushes. Up to the end of August there had been 285 attacks against the civilian population and the armed forces, 199 ambushes, 127 anti-personnel and mine explosions, the destruction of 58 personnel carriers by mine explosions, 67 abductions, 56 cases of looting, 1,226 deaths, 2,071 wounded, 705 disappeared, one Brazilian citizen wounded, one Filipino citizen assassinated, 135 houses destroyed, 263 cars destroyed and 1,107 head of cattle stolen.

That is the clearest evidence of the dangerous conduct of UNITA, which has thus proved to continue to be a destabilizing element, not only internally, in Angola, but also in the region as a whole.

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Furthermore, the Government of the People's Republic of Angola has supported all those initiatives that would contribute, de facto, to the elimination of disagreement and war, in the interest of defending the inalienable rights of peoples to independence, sovereignty and the free choice of their political system.

Racist South Africa, playing the role of gendarme in our region, is economically destabilizing the front-line countries, and especially the People's Republics of Angola and Mozambique. The actions of the bandits paid by South Africa are aimed at ensuring the realization of those objectives, and have nothing to do with the interests of the Angolan people. For that reason, their preferred targets are the social and economic infrastructure and the villages of peaceful citizens, where the greatest barbarities are committed.

Bearing in mind the fundamental role played by the United Nations, the Government of Angola has been informing the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and the member countries about the evolution of the situation in southern Africa in general and in particular in my own country. The Secretary-General's visits to Angola have made it possible for the highest representative of this international institution personally to witness the extent of foreign aggression and the reasons for our resort to the right of self-defence.

We have had the opportunity to reiterate to the Secretary-General our position regarding the origin of the conflict that has devastated our subregion and those responsible for it. My Government, within its already proven policy of flexibility and respect for the principles that govern relations between States, has presented serious proposals for the re-establishment of peace in southern Africa.

We believe that once the apartheid system in South Africa has been dismantled our region will enter a period of peace, necessary for the development and progress of its peoples, which will be conducive to regional and international co-operation,

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particularly with the independence of Namibia, which we all hope will be achieved within the schedule initially established.

The Angolan Government will not fail to make every effort in the search for a political solution to the problem of apartheid, through talks between the Government in Pretoria, the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other valid political forces in South Africa.

In fact, today the situation in Namibia presents a different scenario. With the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) an irreversible process was set in motion, beginning in April this year. We hope that it will bring an end to the last stronghold of colonialism on the African continent, despite the acts of intimidation against the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) militants and sympathizers by the Koevoet forces integrated into the South West Africa Police, which continue to carry out their activities, especially in northern Namibia. The Koevoet continues to employ tactics of counter-insurgency as well as destabilization in the south of Angola, in collaboration with the demobilized elements of the former territorial troops - the South West Africa Territory Force - especially battalions 54, 101, 201 and 202, which are stationed along the Angola-Namibia border and which maintain close ties with UNITA, in a clear violation of the tripartite agreement.

The People's Republic of Angola reiterates its total commitment to complying with the New York agreements, as long as there is a corresponding compliance by the other parties and the efforts made for Namibia's transition from colonialism to independence are made under conditions of stability and justice. To this end, in accordance with the New York agreements regarding peace in south-west Africa, we should like to refer on the one hand to the more than 22,600 internationalists from

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Cuba who have already returned to their country and on the other hand to the SWAPO elements which are now, as was agreed, north of parallel 16 and under the control of the United Nations representative in Angola.

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The efforts of the Secretary-General in search of a just negotiated solution to the conflict concerning Western Sahara have merited the encouragement of the Angolan Government. We hope the contacts between His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front will continue, opening the way for the implementation of United Nations and Organization of African Unity resolutions on this matter.

A matter of equal importance to the people and the Government of Angola is that of the Maubere people, which has struggled for 14 years against the foreign occupation of its territory. We reaffirm once again our appreciation of the position taken by the Portuguese Government as administering Power of that Territory, and we urge the Secretary-General to make every effort in the search for a just and lasting solution based on the legitimate aspirations of the people of the Territory and relevant United Nations resolutions.

We must commend the efforts of the Korean people towards the peaceful reunification of their country, without foreign intervention and based on dialogue and consultations between North and South, in compliance with the principles established in the Joint North-South Declaration of 4 July 1972.

We salute the positive developments towards resolution of the situation in Kampuchea, reflected in the actions of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in withdrawing its forces stationed in Kampuchea.

Following the April 1988 Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan, we called upon the signatories to fulfil their commitments with a view to establishing a climate of peace, security and stability in South-East Asia.

We encourage the Central American States to continue on the path they have chosen to find negotiated political solutions. We are convinced that the peace agreements recently concluded in Honduras will greatly contribute to the implementation of the Esquipulas II agreements.

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We reiterate our active solidarity with the heroic Palestinian people which under the aegis of the Palestine Liberation Organization is waging a tenacious struggle for the liberation of its territory and for the establishment of an independent State comprising the entire territory of Palestine, including Jerusalem.

We support the efforts of the tripartite committee created by the League of Arab States to seek a negotiated political solution to the fratricidal conflict in Lebanon.

We are sure that sufficient change will take place to permit peace to be restored in all regions of the planet where war situations persist and to ensure that respect for the rights of peoples and States to freedom and independence will lead to a common path of economic and social development.

In speaking of the role played by the United Nations, one cannot overlook the highly positive contribution of the non-aligned countries and their Movement, which has greatly influenced action in favour of halting the arms race, reducing nuclear and conventional arsenals and gradually easing pockets of regional tension.

We find ourselves at the end of yet another decade unfortunately characterized by deep stagnation with respect to the economic development of our countries. In some countries the economic situation is even worse than that of 20 years ago. Since the Common Fund for commodities, under the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, came into effect last June, a few successes have been achieved in the field of international trade. While these are not significant enough to efface the spectre of the weak results obtained, they encourage us in our long, hard-fought struggle for the establishment of a new international economic order.

It is for that reason that we want to reaffirm our total commitment to the holding next April of a special session of the General Assembly on international economic co-operation, and in particular on revitalizing economic growth and

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development, which will undoubtedly constitute an important step towards the adoption of a new international development strategy which we all hope will produce better results than previous ones.

As we again examine the current economic situation in our countries we are compelled to express our great concern with respect to the worsening of the problems faced by the international financial system and the consequences for our countries' already weak economies. Huge loans, along with high interest rates and the unprecedented fall in commodity prices, have aggravated the problem of the foreign debt of developing countries, a problem which has placed those countries in such an absurd situation that they are today repaying more to the developed countries and international financial institutions than they receive in loans. In my view that situation cannot continue because it threatens the social, economic and even political feasibility of our existence as States. We therefore consider it timely and urgent that an international conference be held on financial and monetary questions for the solution of this crucial problem.

When we gathered recently in Belgrade at the latest summit meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, we recognized that increased South-South co-operation is vital as one way to ease the present economic crisis - not as an alternative to co-operation with the North, which is also a priority, but as a means of finding other solutions to this problem, a problem that faces us all and threatens the existence of all.

It is also paramount now to devote special attention to the African continent, where the critical economic situation of its States has reached unprecedented levels. Hunger, malnutrition, epidemic diseases and natural disasters have made any attempt at economic development impossible, to the point where 26 of the 36 least developed countries in the world are on the African continent.

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We deplore the weak commitment of the international community, which has made it impossible for the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development to succeed despite the efforts made by African countries, in some case with enormous social sacrifices. Added to those factors is the enormous foreign debt the continent faces today, a debt that has already exceeded the astronomic sum of \$230 billion, forcing most African countries into a level of debt servicing that is incompatible with their development needs.

The increasing deterioration of the environment, the depletion of the ozone layer and, especially, the flow towards developing countries of toxic wastes "exported" by developed countries have in recent years been the focus of attention by the international community. The People's Republic of Angola unconditionally condemns all such negative activities, which are incompatible with the already critical economic development of those countries. We stress the importance, indeed the urgency, of holding a second conference on environment and development, since we believe it would provide an ideal opportunity to deal jointly with these questions.

The People's Republic of Angola, located in the southern part of the African continent, unfortunately cannot escape the critical economic situation facing that continent. The People's Republic of Angola has recently joined the International Monetary Fund as a full member of that important international financial institution. We should like to take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation to all the countries which, though their contributions, made it possible for us to join. We do not deny the importance of joining the International Monetary Fund, particularly as this relates to the successful implementation of our economic and financial recovery programme, which we in the People's Republic of Angola have been implementing for several years.

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The economic recovery programme of our country places priority on restructuring the foreign debt, valued at \$4,966 million, and on the rescheduling of the terms of repayment in order to re-establish the financial flow of exports and to make possible a global volume of trade compatible with the domestic levels of consumption and projected investments.

The programme concentrates equally on attracting foreign investment, which will be principally directed toward the export rather than the import sector, with a view to restoring production and increasing wages and the availability of consumer goods. The People's Republic of Angola is a country with enormous economic potential, and we trust that we can make further advances in those areas and in continued pursuit of better living conditions for our people.

In conclusion, we should like to take this opportunity to launch an appeal to the international community for an increase in its support and material aid to the programmes the People's Republic of Angola is implementing to counter the effects of the war that can still be felt in our country and losses that now exceed \$12 billion. The emergency situation in the People's Republic of Angola has been rendered more acute by a drought in its southern region and floods in the north.

In that context, a conference on the emergency situation was held in Angola on 22 September, the positive results of which will be a symbolic contribution towards minimizing the difficulties affecting the sectors of public health and agriculture, which most urgently require supplementary assistance.

Allow me, Mr. President, to reiterate our best wishes for success in the proceedings of the forty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, and to assure you of the Angolan delegation's co-operation in any way that may be necessary.

Mr. UPADHYAY (Nepal): I have the honour to convey to you, Sir, and through you to the representatives assembled here, greetings from my august Sovereign, His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, and his best wishes for the success of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

I consider it a great privilege to offer to you, on behalf of the delegation of Nepal and on my own behalf, our sincere congratulations on your election as President of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The complex issues on our agenda demand the qualities of leadership, diplomatic skill, and experience that you so admirably command. Your unanimous election also attests to the important role that your great country, Nigeria, continues to play in promoting international understanding, co-operation and peace. My delegation looks forward to working under your guidance for the success of this session.

May I also convey our deep appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo of the Argentine Republic, for the able and exemplary manner in which he guided the work of the last session of the General Assembly. He more than justified the confidence reposed in him by the international community.

Although the fortunes of the United Nations have not quite turned around, we have come a long way since the challenges of solvency and viability caused a serious crisis only a few years ago. The renewed trust in the Organization as an irreplaceable instrument for regulating international relations and resolving international problems is a remarkable achievement and a lasting tribute to the patient diplomacy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. He deserves our gratitude and support.

The present session of the General Assembly meets amidst far-reaching changes taking place on the international scene. Most encouraging is the visible thaw in the situation of cold war. The Secretary-General rightly emphasized in one of his

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earlier reports that the requisite relationship between the most powerful States was indispensable to the creation of conditions in which the noble concepts of the Charter could be made to function for the benefit of all. A beginning towards that requisite relationship has apparently been made. With the lowering of East-West tensions, support for the United Nations is coming from powerful sources that have the capacity to make the Organization an effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Indeed, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, the cease-fire in the Gulf war, the implementation of the plan for the independence of Namibia, and recent developments in Kampuchea and Central America are just a few concrete examples of what the Organization is capable of achieving given the full co-operation of its Members. However, as the prospects for irreversible progress on those and other fronts are at best tenuous, constant vigilance and watchful tending of the Organization are called for.

As the international community prepares for the advent of the twenty-first century, it is heartening to note that the divisive schisms of the past are being bridged and that many familiar prejudices of yesteryear have crumbled. There is no guarantee, unfortunately, that the dynamics of the international situation, which encourage a return to conducting international affairs in keeping with the principles of the Charter, are irreversible. In fact, as we perceive it, the very fluidity of the present world situation could indeed spur a new generation of threats to international peace and security. As super-Power rivalries are being toned down and areas of super-Power confrontation rapidly shrink, we believe there lurks the danger of adventurist forces seeking to fill or exploit the vacuum thus created. It is also our perception that the uncertainties created by the

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fast-approaching demise of the cold war have greatly enhanced the importance of upholding the fundamental principle of non-intervention.

In that context, I wish to recall the somber assessment of the plight of weak and small States presented by His Majesty King Birendra at the recently concluded ninth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade. His Majesty stated:

"In fact, the small and the weaker nations among us even in our times stand still exposed not merely to under-development but also to threats regarding security and stability. They are susceptible to many forces beyond their control, be it an onslaught of mass communication or the threat of gun-boat diplomacy. While the strong ones can pursue the goals of economic, technological and military prowess, the weaker and vulnerable countries have to struggle constantly for bare survival. That is why we feel their voices should be heard, their identities maintained and their survival assured".*

I may recall here that Nepal has always rejected the primeval concept of "spheres of influence". It also resolutely rejects that obsolete doctrine's pernicious corollary that the security of the bigger and stronger States is more important than that of the weaker ones. To accept such a concept would be not only to make a mockery of the Charter principles of the Organization, but also to invite the Armageddon that the world body has sought to prevent, successfully so far.

* Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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Nepal will therefore support any concerted move by the United Nations to consider seriously practical ways in which the existing mechanisms of the Organization could be used more effectively in meeting the demands created by the exigencies of a thawing but unpredictable international situation. We welcome the initiative of the Maldives to add to the agenda of the General Assembly an item entitled "Protection and security of small States". We have studied with great interest its proposal for strengthening the security of small States by, inter alia, devising a mechanism within the United Nations that would be able to respond quickly in the event the security of a small State is threatened.

In this context, I wish to recall the proposal of His Majesty King Birendra that Nepal be declared a zone of peace. I am pleased to announce that this proposal has secured the valuable endorsement of 110 States Members of the Organization, for which I reiterate our deep appreciation. We have long held that Nepal's zone of peace proposal - which is a natural corollary of our policy of scrupulous adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter and non-alignment - could be a useful addition to the existing corpus of confidence-building measures. We believe that Nepal's proposal will be recognized by the international community as a practical example of how small States may safeguard their security while being permitted to mobilize their total energies and limited resources for the awesome challenges of development.

The need for the United Nations is demonstrated most palpably when it comes to dealing with problems that transcend national boundaries. The environment, and the growing evidence of global climate change, is one such problem that invites our urgent notice. Nepal has always been an active supporter of initiatives connected with the conservation of man's natural environment and looks forward to high-level participation at the proposed United Nations Conference on Development and the Environment slated for 1992.

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I should like to take this opportunity to invite the attention of the international community to the special environmental concerns of my land-locked and largely mountainous country. As the Nepalese delegation has stressed in the General Assembly year after year, there is an urgent need to address the serious problem of environmental degradation of the Himalayan foothills, beginning with an afforestation campaign on an appropriate scale to complement our own determined but necessarily limited endeavours. Such a project, we believe, would not only help check the quite unplanned export of an estimated 250 cubic meters of precious topsoil from Nepal to the Bay of Bengal every year but also greatly assist in preventing the tragic annual visitation of deluge, devastation and despair in the densely populated Indo-Gangetic plains of India and Bangladesh, downstream from Nepal. I should add that such an internationally assisted programme to provide verdant cover to the now largely denuded lower slopes of the Himalayas would also have a most beneficial effect in preserving the traditional climatic pattern of bountiful monsoon rains for three to four months every year that sustains the life of hundreds of millions in our region.

As the first tell-tale signs of climate change and desertification are already beginning to manifest themselves in the Himalayan foothills, along with increasing denudation of forest cover, we believe only a well-planned and adequately funded effort at afforestation can prevent drastic changes in climate, including in the pattern and quantity of rainfall, that looms so ominously on the horizon.

It is against this worrisome backdrop that I must inform the Assembly that since 23 March this year we have been compelled to put our diminishing forests to the axe. Bereft of fossil fuels of our own and dependent on others for the import of gasoline and petroleum products for meeting our energy needs, Nepal has no other recourse. We have been losing what remains of our once plentiful forests at the alarming rate of 240 hectares per day to meet the demand for firewood.

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Another, more costly option, for putting an end to the process of felling trees for the energy needs of Nepal's rising population is to exploit our abundant water resources for power generation purposes. If adequate international assistance were forthcoming, not only would Nepal's demand for such firewood supply be eliminated and imports of petroleum products drastically reduced, but non-polluting energy resources would also be made available for export purposes. I should like to recall the proposal by His Majesty King Birendra in 1977 indicating Nepal's readiness to co-operate with countries in our region for joint ventures to exploit our hydro-resources for the collective welfare of our peoples.

The twin dangers of man-induced climate change and serious environmental degradation of the foothills of the Nepalese Himalayas are inextricably linked, in our case, to Nepal's land-locked geographical condition. While this physical handicap afflicts a score of developing countries, it is not surprising to us that most least developed countries are land-locked. The lack of sovereign access to the sea and its implications, exacerbated by the very remoteness from overseas markets and by the generally poor transit facilities, give rise to crippling freight costs, additional transportation times and additional transport risks. In sum, they can seriously affect their very survival, especially if actions taken by transit countries result in the denial or delay of unrestricted transit of goods and services to such countries.

It is for this reason that Nepal has always championed the cause of land-locked developing countries in this and other international forums. In particular, Nepal has always advocated the unqualified recognition by the international community of the inherent right of land-locked countries to free access to and from the sea and freedom of transit, as has been recognized by various international instruments, including the United Nations Law of the Sea

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Convention. We shall continue to do so in the future, too, working not only for unfettered transit rights for land-locked countries but also for accords that would make this unfortunate category of sovereign Member States equal beneficiaries of the bounties of the seas, as was eloquently urged here the other day by His Excellency General Andres Rodriguez, President of the Republic of Paraguay.

The twentieth century will be remembered for the colossal loss of human life in conflicts as much as for the material and technological progress achieved. With the available technological and scientific knowledge, the spectre of hunger, poverty and backwardness can be eliminated for all mankind. Yet, as this century of war and technological marvels draws to a close, it is indeed a bitter paradox that for millions of people destitution is the way of life.

Since its inception, the United Nations has recognized the inseparable link between political and economic independence. The development imperatives of the developing countries have become the central issue of our times. Wider acceptance of the global economic interdependence notwithstanding, the strategy for the establishment of a just economic order remains only an expression of pious intention. The debt problem is but one manifestation of a crisis which has deeper political implications. We hope that the special session of the General Assembly next year will prove to be an occasion for a sober assessment of the prevailing situation, thereby providing a basis for the launching of a serious North-South dialogue.

The vagaries of the world economy have, predictably, hit the least developed countries the hardest. The targets set out in the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries have largely remained unfulfilled. Experience gained as a result of the Programme have shown that support measures for these countries cannot be predicated on programmes with short-term biases.

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In addition, the structural adjustment programmes should be compatible with the medium- and long-term development needs of the least developed countries. The second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held next year, offers an opportunity to review the entire situation, and my delegation looks forward to the full co-operation of the international community, which will help in placing those countries on the path of sustained growth and development.

I wish now to turn to some of the important political issues before us.

The implementation of the plan for the independence of Namibia is one of the most significant and fulfilling operations ever mounted by the United Nations. We commend the determination of the Secretary-General to stand firm and carry out faithfully the mandate entrusted to him. We are especially heartened by his determination to ensure that the voter registration process, the draft electoral laws and the laws relating to the power of the Constituent Assembly are to the satisfaction of the United Nations, so as to enable the Namibian people to participate in free and fair elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations, without intimidation, threat or interference.

Nepal is equally committed to the eradication of the universally-condemned system of apartheid in South Africa. We salute the brave freedom fighters of South Africa who have refused to compromise in their struggle for equality and justice and for the establishment of a multiracial democratic society in South Africa. We renew our appeal for the imposition of mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter further to isolate South Africa, and call for the immediate and unconditional release of all political detainees, including Nelson Mandela, and the lifting of all restrictions on the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress.

My delegation earnestly hopes that the parties concerned will continue to co-operate with the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Organization of

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African Unity to bring to a satisfactory end the 14-year-old dispute in Western Sahara.

We are encouraged by the Secretary-General's optimism concerning the prospect for the solution of the Cyprus question. My delegation reiterates its support for the good offices of the Secretary-General in finding a solution that ensures the territorial integrity, independence and non-aligned character of Cyprus.

In the Middle East, the continuing uprising of the Palestinian people in territories occupied by Israel since 1967, despite heavy-handed efforts to suppress it, has underlined the need to intensify efforts for a negotiated settlement that would meet the uncompromising valid needs of the two peoples: national self-determination for the Palestinian people and security for Israel. To this end, my delegation reiterates its support for the convening of an international conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations.

We are deeply concerned at the recent deterioration of the situation in Lebanon, where a fragile cease-fire is now in place. As a participant in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, Nepal is committed to upholding the unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Lebanon. We also support the continuing efforts of the Arab League to bring to an end the tragic fratricide in Lebanon.

The cease-fire in the war between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq has brought to an end the heavy toll in human life and material damage. The region, however, remains tense due to lack of progress in negotiations. I wish to reiterate my delegation's full support for the untiring efforts of the Secretary-General to secure the full implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), which remains the only universally accepted basis to secure a just and lasting peace in the region.

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We have welcomed the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in conformity with the Geneva Agreements. Those Agreements constitute an important step; however, agreement among the Afghans themselves is crucial for the settlement of the problem. Faithful adherence to the Geneva Agreements by all parties concerned, together with the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/20, will facilitate such dialogue and create conditions for the Afghan people to exercise their right to self-determination and to enable the refugees to return to their homeland in safety, honour and peace.

The Jakarta Informal Meetings have initiated some positive developments with regard to the situation in Kampuchea. While welcoming the decision of Viet Nam to withdraw its forces from Kampuchea, we wish to emphasize the need for international supervision of such withdrawal as well as for agreement on the establishment of an interim quadripartite authority and on the question of Vietnamese settlers.

We continue to support the aspirations of the Korean people for national unity and reconciliation through direct and peaceful negotiations between the two sides without outside interference. As progress towards that laudable goal continues, regrettably, to be elusive, and in keeping with the principle of the universality of the United Nations, my delegation can support any move for the admission of the two Koreas to the world body, either after reunification, as one State, or, till then, by any State that desires such membership.

We support the agreement reached by the Central American countries recently for the implementation of the goals set out in the Esquipulas II Agreement and the move for the establishment of the international support and verification commission in that regard.

Improved bilateral relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, epitomized by the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, the INF Treaty, have undoubtedly raised hopes for meaningful progress in

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the field of disarmament. Nepal believes that it is crucial to capitalize on what has been achieved to push resolutely for deep cuts in the strategic arsenals of the two super-Powers. A firm reversal of the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons will have the most salutary impact on efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation régime. Together with deep cuts in strategic nuclear arms, the goal of a comprehensive ban on all nuclear-weapon tests needs to be followed resolutely. We have accordingly supported the move to convene a meeting of the parties to the partial test ban Treaty with a view to amending it to cover all nuclear-weapon tests. Efforts for an early conclusion of a comprehensive treaty banning chemical weapons has received fresh impetus from the Paris Conference on chemical weapons, held in January this year. The increasing sophistication of conventional weapons and the growing international transfer of these weapons have added urgency to the need to address the issue of conventional disarmament. We welcome the move towards a major reduction of conventional weapons and forces in Europe, and urge that the goal of conventional disarmament be pursued resolutely at regional and subregional levels in other parts of the world.

As the Secretary-General has noted in his annual report, the spread of know-how, not only in the field of nuclear weapons but also in chemical and missile technology, has introduced a new and potentially destabilizing factor. Unless the international community remains vigilant, such developments may well negate any possible gain made through big-Power disarmament agreements.

It is ironic that, while the political climate in the United Nations continues to improve steadily, the Organization continues to live with a financial crisis. Such a crisis impedes the planning of a credible long-term strategy for peace. The renewed confidence in the world Organization has generated new demands for

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peace-keeping operations. The planning and launching of those operations have, as the Secretary-General noted in his report, stretched to the limit the human and financial resources of the Organization. The valuable suggestions of the Secretary-General regarding financial and personnel aspects of the Organization deserve serious consideration, in view of the growing role of the United Nations in world affairs today.

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

Nepal is deeply concerned about the effect of the escalation in the illicit trafficking of drugs on international social and political stability, particularly in Latin America. We greatly appreciate Colombia's determined battle against this scourge. The fight against the lethal menace of drugs demands a concerted international response. The adoption in December 1988 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances is an important step in that direction. My delegation strongly supports the proposal made by His Excellency, Mr. Virgilio Barco Vargas, President of Colombia, to hold a special session of the General Assembly to chart a complete plan of action to eradicate the menace of the illicit trafficking and use of drugs.

Terrorism is another grave problem which post-dates the creation of the United Nations but which demands the co-operation of all States in meeting the challenges it poses to international peace and stability. General Assembly resolution 40/61 of 1985 and Security Council resolutions 579 (1985) and 638 (1989) represent the unified stand of the international community on this problem. We must exert every effort to build on this international consensus to strengthen international protection against the scourge of terrorism.

Another important issue on the global agenda concerns the development and protection of children. Nepal strongly supports the proposal of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for a world summit on children next year focusing on the rights and needs of children and on measures better to ensure their development and protection.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express to members of the Organization our deep appreciation of the trust and confidence they have placed in us by electing Nepal as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. We have tried to live up to this trust to the best of our ability. It has been a particular honour to be on the Council at a time when it has been able to play an

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important role in establishing a cease-fire in the war between Iran and Iraq and launch the process of implementing the plan for the independence of Namibia - to name just two important issues on the agenda of the Council.

The commitment of Nepal to the principles and purposes of the United Nations is enshrined in the directive principles of the Constitution of Nepal. The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries in their recent ninth conference at Belgrade declared that without the United Nations it would not be possible to realize the fullest and broadest possible democratization of international relations, which has always been one of the primary objectives of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries. Peace and harmony in the world demand that Member States live up fully to their obligations under the Charter. As in the past, we stand ready to join in any concerted endeavour aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations, convinced as we are that the noble purposes and principles of the United Nations remain the most effective agent to bring about timely, peaceful and meaningful change in promoting development and in restoring faith in the dignity of human persons and of nations. The United Nations was established with the determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to promote social progress and better standards of life for all peoples in larger freedom. Today, we have a unique opportunity to begin to translate that vision into reality - a chance to fulfil a 44-year-old promise to our peoples - to bring them peace, justice and a decent standard of living.

I appreciate the President's efforts to find a solution for the inevitable urge of delegations to extend greetings. Because I know there is no other speaker after me, may I be permitted to proceed to my delegation's seat by the shortest route.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

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

Mrs. TON NU THI NINH (Viet Nam): Yesterday afternoon, our Assembly was treated to a belated display of the "Viet Nam syndrome" by the head of the Singapore delegation, who devoted three quarters of his statement to what amounts to a pot-pourri of specious arguments and fallacious allegations against Viet Nam with regard to the Cambodian question. Singapore was indulging in the kind of exercise in which it is widely recognized as a consummate master, namely the art of rhetorical mystification.

We need not scratch very far beneath all the sophisticated rhetoric to lay bare the true nature of this familiar Singaporean exercise. Its first objective is to try to deny the undeniable, that is, the reality of Viet Nam's total withdrawal - amply covered and documented by the world media and particularly by the United States media, which can hardly be suspected of a pro-Viet Nam tilt - and to downplay its significance for the achievement of a solution to the Cambodian question. Singapore's strong insistence in this regard may be explained by its displeasure at the wide recognition, both in the media and in the course of this general debate, of Viet Nam's total withdrawal. But no amount of sophistry, no matter how vocal, can drown the truth.

The second and unavowed objective of the Singapore statement is an unsavoury attempt to gloss over the all-too-sinister image of Pol Pot and his genocidal

(Mrs. Ton Nu Thi Ninh, Viet Nam)

clique. An article dated 27 September in the Christian Science Monitor speaks of the Khmer Rouge rule as

"a régime the intensity of whose cold-blooded cruelty must rival that of the Nazis"

and proceeds to stress that

"those who remember the Khmer Rouge's record find it unthinkable that it could or should share power".

It is as if 10 years after the Nuremberg trial, Hitler, Goehring, Goebbels and their like were invited not only to stand for elections but to take part in their organization as members of government. In fact, as emphasized by Mr. Jim Leach, a member of the United States Congress, in an article published that same 27 September in The New York Times,

"Pol Pot should be tried as one of the great criminals of the 20th century"

and

"The Khmer Rouge should be disarmed and universally discredited, not allowed to wreak havoc again in a once gentle land".

And yet Singapore lends the Khmer Rouge a helping hand in this forum, absolving them beforehand from blame for prolonging the bloodshed and triggering off the civil war by putting all the blame on Viet Nam and Mr. Hun Sen. While insisting that the latter should be condemned, Singapore maintains a deafening silence on the Khmer Rouge's past and present infamous behaviour. The Pol Pot clique could not have hoped for a more eager defence advocate.

(Mrs. Ton Nu Thi Ninh, Viet Nam)

Deeds speak louder than words. In this and other forums, Singapore has been posing for the past 10 years in a new-found role as disinterested champion of the Cambodian people's right to self-determination. In practice, it has acted, for decades, in a far less noble manner: during the Viet Nam war, when it did thriving business by providing all kinds of services, and at present, when it is saving money by cutting its contribution to the United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organization, while generously funnelling funds to the Khmer Rouge to help it in its war effort. And because Singapore is supplying weapons to the Khmer Rouge, thus continuing its tradition of war profiteering, it has a vested interest in the prolongation of hostilities so that it can fish in troubled waters.

Moreover, while the general trend is towards the limitation of foreign military bases, Singapore seems to find advantage in going against the trend: recently it opened its territory for the setting up of a new foreign military base.

The Viet Nam syndrome, from which Singapore, despite professions to the contrary, seems to suffer, induces it to turn the United Nations forum into a battlefield for its anachronistic anti-Viet Nam crusade. In an attempt to be more royalist than the king, Singapore, in fact, continues fighting the Viet Nam war, down to the last Cambodian. In so doing, Singapore remains a lone rider blindly pushing against the universal tide towards constructive dialogue and realistic approaches.

Mr. THOMPSON (Fiji): The Foreign Minister of India, in his address to the General Assembly this morning, referred to the situation in Fiji. His statement was misleading since it did not reflect the total situation in my country.

The 1970 Constitution of Fiji guaranteed and protected the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens, including protection against discrimination on

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

grounds of race, sex or religion. These guarantees have been carried into the fundamental rights and freedoms decreed and embodied in the draft Constitution.

As my Minister said in his address to the General Assembly last Friday, 29 September, the interim Government of Fiji is committed to enshrining in the new Constitution the fundamental rights and freedoms of every citizen. The Constitutional Inquiry and Advisory Committee, to which the Foreign Minister of India referred, was an independent, multiracial group of eminent citizens. It comprised six Fiji Indians, five Fijians and five people of other races. For eight months the Committee conducted hearings throughout the country and obtained the views and opinions of citizens of Fiji on a new Constitution.

It took another three months to discuss, consider and submit its report. That report and the recommendations were unanimous. In submitting the report to the President, the Chairman of the Committee said:

"The Committee took into account the prevailing circumstances, evaluated public opinion, and has put together what the Committee believes are proposals for a constructive Constitution. Some of these proposals contain recommendations for various changes. The Committee believes that these proposals should lead to the building of an interdependent, multiracial, multicultural society in Fiji. It could, given goodwill on all sides, ultimately pave the way for a better future."

Substantial progress has already been made in re-establishing normal relations between our different communities and in restoring the economy. The interim Government has accomplished this in spite of the many difficulties with which it has had to contend. Naturally, the process is complex and delicate, involving, as it does, attitudes, aspirations and emotions that are easily stirred up. External interference in our affairs makes the task of nation-building much more difficult.

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

Many countries have been understanding of our difficulties and helpful to us in our search for a way forward. Unfair criticisms will not facilitate our arriving at a solution.

Mr. SISOWATH (Democratic Kampuchea): This afternoon, the General Assembly witnessed yet another attempt by Viet Nam to distort the true nature of the problem of Cambodia - a problem, needless to say, created by the invasion of my country, and its occupation for almost 11 years.

Viet Nam claims that its troops came to and occupied Cambodia in response to the call of the so-called People's Republic of Kampuchea, which is a mere creation of the Vietnamese occupying forces. The Vietnamese pretext is reminiscent of that used by the Nazi forces to invade Austria, Poland and other European countries, thus sparking the Second World War. Viet Nam invokes the principle of non-intervention but claims the right to intervene in the internal affairs of Kampuchea. It demands that others respect its national independence, while ignoring the sovereignty and right to self-determination of its neighbours. It claims the right to live in peace, while invading and occupying Cambodia, denying the Cambodian people their right to live in peace and, most particularly, their right to nationhood.

The fact is that Viet Nam is engaged in all sorts of activities aimed at realizing, at all costs, its Indochina federation strategy - annexing Cambodia into a great Viet Nam under Hanoi's domination. More impudently still, the Hanoi leaders come before this Assembly to seek international legitimacy and protection for their ambition and activities. This effort amply demonstrates that Viet Nam is concerned less about law than about politics. If Viet Nam's cynicism were to pass unchallenged, it would mock the search for peace and freedom, not only in Cambodia but in other parts of the world as well.

(Mr. Sisowath, Democratic
Kampuchea)

The French philosopher Georges Bernanos once said "The worst, the most corrupting, of lies are problems poorly stated." Viet Nam said that the problem in Cambodia now has to do with the danger of a civil war and the return to power by the Khmer Rouge. This definition of the problem by Viet Nam merely deliberately obfuscates the real issue - that is, the ongoing process of the annexation of Cambodia through the continued presence of tens of thousands of Vietnamese forces, despite Hanoi's claim of complete withdrawal of its forces on 26 September last.

In fact, one may ask this: if Viet Nam is truly sincere in its claim of total withdrawal and of respect for Cambodia's right to independence, why does it categorically refuse to place the withdrawal of its forces under the supervision and verification of the United Nations and let the Cambodian people exercise their right to self-determination through fair, free elections under United Nations supervision? Viet Nam cannot answer this question without contradicting itself. After all, if Viet Nam had accepted this, the Paris conference on Cambodia last August would have been crowned with success.

In fact, as stated by our national leader, His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk, in his message on 28 September, Viet Nam's refusal to accept the presence of an international control mechanism and a United Nations international peace-keeping force in Cambodia and the formation of a provisional quadripartite Government demonstrates clearly that Viet Nam "does not have the slightest intention of ending its colonialist occupation and its policy of annexation of Cambodia". His Royal Highness said, "For Viet Nam, to accept United Nations verification and quadripartism is to accept an end to its colonialism in Cambodia and to give up its 'Indochina Federation'."

(Mr. Sisowath, Democratic
Kampuchea)

As the Vietnamese propaganda subsided, the truth about the Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea has been revealed. On 27 September, The Bangkok Post, a Thai English-language publication, wrote: "Vietnamese troops are still in Cambodia ... according to Eastern European sources." According to that article, "as many as 3,000 Vietnamese soldiers have been left in Pailin town alone (in Battambang province), and others are scattered in every province of Cambodia." The same daily wrote, on 29 September, that "as many as 50,000 Vietnamese troops disguised as civilian settlers remain in Kampuchea". Furthermore, three days ago, five Vietnamese soldiers in the uniform of the puppet army were captured on the Thai side of the border. That explains why Viet Nam adamantly rejects the supervision and verification by the United Nations of its so-called troop withdrawal. The number of Vietnamese forces remaining in Cambodia is so high as to be insulting to the human intelligence of those who are expected to believe that they have withdrawn.

In fact, by claiming that all Vietnamese forces are out of Cambodia, Viet Nam aims at: first, persuading the world community to rubber-stamp the so-called cessation of Viet Nam's occupation of Cambodia in the hope that Western aid and assistance would be resumed; secondly, obtaining the de facto maintenance of the Phnom Penh puppet régime which would enable it to continue to occupy Cambodia; and thirdly, lessening the pressure being put on it by the world community.

The date of 26 September was deliberately chosen to coincide with the session of our Assembly.

The Vietnamese representative declared this afternoon that as of 27 September 1989 there did not remain a single Vietnamese in Cambodia. However, according to The New York Times of 28 September, the Vietnamese Ambassador to the United Nations, Trinh Xuan Lang, admitted that "there are civilian advisers" in

(Mr. Sisowath, Democratic
Kampuchea)

Cambodia. And, as recently as 24 August, Viet Nam said that, if necessary, it would intervene again in Cambodia.

Let us not forget that the present rulers of the Vietnamese installed régime in Cambodia are also former Khmer Rouge. Mr. Hun Sen, Mr. Heng Samrin, Mr. Chea Chim and others are close trusted collaborators of Mr. Pol Pot and should like all other criminals be condemned and tried for their crimes.

Viet Nam continues to brandish the Khmer Rouge and "the prevention of its return to power". In this regard, I should like to quote once again the message of our national leader, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who said:

"I do not have the slightest intention of defending the cause of the Khmer Rouge, nor do I have any reason to do so. But objectivity prompts me to say that, if one should condemn the Khmer Rouge for violation of human rights, one should also condemn the Hanoi leaders and their puppets for their crimes against humanity committed in Cambodia ... I agree that the ... respect for human rights in Cambodia is extremely important and that ... effective and realistic measures be taken to ensure that respect. As for the Khmer Rouge, they have given in writing formal guarantees of their non-return to exclusive power after the total withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia."

In this regard, Mr. Khieu Samphan, President of the Democratic Kampuchea Party has reaffirmed, inter alia, in a declaration on 2 October 1989, that his Party: first, calls for an international control mechanism and an international peace-keeping force under United Nations supervision to supervise and verify the total withdrawal of all categories of Vietnamese forces, and to ensure that no single party uses its forces to the detriment of others and monopolizes the power for itself; secondly, proposes the total disarming of all Cambodian armed forces;

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Kampuchea)

and thirdly, solemnly pledges to respect the results of the free and United Nations supervised elections to be held in Cambodia.

One cannot fail to wonder why Viet Nam does not let the international control mechanism, the international peace-keeping force of the United Nations and the people of Cambodia help to prevent the Khmer Rouge from returning to power if it is so concerned about this issue. The truth is that to occupy and annex Cambodia Viet Nam needs a pretext to weaken the unity of the Cambodian people, to sow discord within the resistance forces and to arouse confusion in the world community.

We are convinced that all countries committed to justice, peace and independence will condemn Viet Nam's perfidious manoeuvres and will continue to call for the genuine and total withdrawal of Vietnamese forces under United Nations supervision and verification, and for national reconciliation among all Cambodians through the formation of a provisional quadripartite government under the leadership of Prince Sihanouk. Only then can Cambodia's independence be restored and peace maintained.

Mr. KAUSIKAN (Singapore): I have asked to speak not to engage in rhetorical mystification, as we have been accused of doing, but because the representative of Viet Nam has seen fit to launch a scurilous attack on my country and some of the allegations require a reply. First, the representative of Viet Nam alleged that the purpose of my country's statement in the Assembly yesterday afternoon was to deny the reality of the Vietnamese withdrawal. I would submit that there are good grounds for doubting the credibility of the announced Vietnamese withdrawal.

First, the only Governments that have accepted Viet Nam's invitation to witness the announced withdrawal were those Governments that had recognized the régime installed by the Vietnamese invasion. There is thus good reason to doubt

(Mr. Kausikan, Singapore)

their impartiality. A number of citizens from some other more impartial and credible countries were also invited in their personal capacities. They were not at all impressed by what they witnessed.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Assembly to an article in The Bangkok Post of 28 September 1989, where some Thai MPs who had been invited in their personal capacity to witness the announced withdrawal had refused to sign a declaration presented to them by the Hun Sen régime because they had no proof that all the Vietnamese troops had left Cambodia. The MPs also said that delegations from some other countries which are represented in this Hall also did not endorse the declaration.

Singapore remains convinced that only a United Nations international control mechanism has the expertise and authority to verify whether or not the announced Vietnamese withdrawal is genuine.

Secondly, the representative of Viet Nam accused my country of speaking yesterday afternoon to defend the Khmer Rouge. My country's record of condemnation of the atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge needs no elaboration. It contrasts, in fact, with Viet Nam's record. It was the Vietnamese who installed the Khmer Rouge in Phnom Penh and who defended Pol Pot until a few months before the Vietnamese invasion.

There are numerous examples of this, and I shall cite just one. In April 1978, just a few months before the Vietnamese invaded, Pham Van Dong congratulated Pol Pot on his "ardent patriotism and fine achievements". I have a complete dossier of such endearments which I should be only too pleased to make available, if necessary.

My country was accused by the Vietnamese representative of supplying weapons to the Khmer Rouge. Those who know Singapore will know that that is a blatant

(Mr. Kausikan, Singapore)

lie. For the record let me state clearly and unequivocally that we do not supply weapons to the Khmer Rouge, we never have supplied weapons to the Khmer Rouge and we never will supply weapons to the Khmer Rouge. However, we do believe strongly - as we said in our statement yesterday - that peace can only be restored to Cambodia through an interim national reconciliation government of all Cambodian parties. That interim Cambodian government of national reconciliation should prepare for free, fair and internationally supervised elections which would allow the Cambodian people to exercise their right to self-determination; and it is only the Cambodian people who have the moral or political right to determine who should rule them.

(Mr. Kausikan, Singapore)

There were a number of secondary points raised by the representative of Viet Nam in an effort to cloud the issue. I will not bore the Assembly by going into each of them. Let me just say a word on the allegation that Singapore had allowed the establishment of military bases on its territory.

Any Member of the United Nations is free to visit Singapore and free to travel the length and breadth of the country - it is, as you know, not a very large one and it will not take very much time to do so - and to see for themselves what the reality and the truth are.

Unfortunately, visitors to Viet Nam would find their movements somewhat more circumscribed. I doubt, for example, that they would be able to gain access to the bases at Cam Ranh Bay and Danang to see for themselves which foreign forces are stationed there.

In conclusion, the representative of Viet Nam described Singapore's policy towards Cambodia as that of a "lone rider". I would just remind the representative of Viet Nam that 122 countries support Singapore and the Association of South-East Asian Nations in its principled position on Cambodia. I would advise the representative of Viet Nam that if 122 countries tell you that something is wrong, you would be advised at least to check to see whether that is so.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Viet Nam, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mrs. TON NU THI NINH (Viet Nam): He who sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind. Viet Nam did not start the polemics and only responded to set the record straight. Viet Nam's principled and constructive approach to the Cambodian question has been spelt out in the statement delivered by the head of my delegation earlier this afternoon. I shall therefore refrain from taking more of the precious time of the Assembly.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members that the President has received a request from the Permanent Representative of Libya in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States to the effect that the Assembly consider in plenary meeting tomorrow a draft resolution under agenda item 39, "Question of Palestine", as a matter of urgency. The draft resolution, document A/44/L.2, is being circulated now.

The President intends, therefore, to take up agenda item 39 tomorrow afternoon after having heard the speakers inscribed for that meeting.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.