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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 8 October 1991, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia)

- Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations [114]
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Hachim (Comoros)
Mr. Cenac (Saint Lucia)
Mr. Ahmed (Chad)
Mr. de Keersmaecker (Belgium)

- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 114 (continued)

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/46/474/Add.1)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/46/474/Add.1, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General informing me that, since the issuance of his communication dated 17 September 1991, the Congo has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. HACHIM (Comoros) (interpretation from French): It is for me both a great honour and a pleasure to take part in the work of the United Nations General Assembly for the first time and to address such a distinguished gathering at a time when the Organization has regained its vitality and its prestige. Indeed, the activities of the Organization over the past three years have highlighted the dynamism, the credibility and the strength with which this community of nations has been able to take up the challenges with which it has been faced.

We have been both impressed and elated by the efficiency and determination shown by the Security Council during the Gulf crisis and by the praiseworthy efforts made by the Secretary-General with a view to finding a final solution to the problem of the hostages held in the Middle East.

(Mr. Hachim, Comoros)

It is in this context, one of hope and optimism, that the delegation of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, which I have the honour to head, congratulates you, Sir, on your election to preside over the forty-sixth session. We wish to assure you, dear brother, of our full cooperation as you carry out your noble task. Your election is a tribute to your country, a friendly country with which we share ideals and a common heritage within the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and a personal tribute to you. Your eminent qualities as a diplomat are known to all. We look forward to working for the success of the current session under your enlightened leadership.

The past year has been rich in major achievements, to which the President of the General Assembly at the previous session, Mr. Guido de Marco of Malta, contributed greatly. We congratulate him on having carried out his lofty responsibilities with such competence and dedication.

To the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, who has done so much to restore the prestige of our Organization and who has served it with such faithfulness, and sometimes at great sacrifice, my delegation wishes to pay a heartfelt tribute. We also wish to express to him our deep appreciation of the outstanding manner in which he has carried out his difficult tasks in the past decade. When his term of office ends his name will occupy a special place in the annals of our Organization.

We also join other delegations in warmly welcoming the nations that have been admitted to our Organization during this forty-sixth session.

The session over which you are presiding, Sir, is being held at a turning point in the history of international relations. For several months now we

(Mr. Hachim, Comoros)

have been witnessing an unexpected upheaval in the geopolitical map of part of eastern Europe. The spectacular developments that have been taking place in that region and elsewhere for three years have ushered in a decade, the last of this century, full of hope and new responsibilities for the community of nations.

The lessening of tensions between the two super-Powers has already yielded tangible results and given rise to significant positive trends in international affairs, as shown by the crucial role the Security Council played during the Gulf conflict. We hope that that role will be further strengthened so that we may see the dawn of a new world based on respect and justice, cardinal principles of the Charter.

After a century of upheavals, revolutions and counter-revolutions set in motion one after the other by collectivist theories, and sacrificing individual freedoms and even freedom as a whole in the name of the masses and egalitarianism, the totalitarian Utopia has collapsed, a victim of its own pernicious system, rejected even by those who imposed it.

Communism, the basis of that philosophy of the denial of man as an individual, imprisoned in a system where a minority could think and act for everyone else, has just come to an inglorious end in the Soviet Union. This triumph of freedom over ideology is the most uplifting phenomenon of the end of the century.

The major changes taking place in all regions of the world are producing a new dynamic, a democratic thrust which consecrates the struggle for the dawn of a new order based on the interdependence of nations.

The end of the East-West rivalry and confrontation, commonly called the cold war, has contributed to the emancipation of the nations of eastern

(Mr. Hachim, Comoros)

Europe, the disappearance of the one-party system in many countries and the reestablishment of freedom of speech, an essential element of democracy.

In our country, the Comoros, democracy has been a reality since December 1989, when President Said Mohamed Djohar came to power. Since then major changes have been taking place in all areas of political, economic and social life. A multi-party system and freedom of the press have been restored. In brief, the Comoros is now gradually introducing republican institutions, the results of a collective initiative giving all citizens the ability to enjoy their rights, while being equally aware of their duties.

However, for the State of law which we all so earnestly desire to become an irreversible reality and for our peoples to agree to abide by it fully and to be able to gain the benefits they have a right to expect, there must be support for this step in favour of democracy. There can be no viable democracy and political stability without economic progress.

Like all the other African countries, we are aware that in order to find our way back to the path of growth and development we must above all invest in our own potential. We are also convinced that we can expect no significant improvement in the economic situation of our countries without leadership that rigorously complies with the rules of budgetary and fiscal orthodoxy in State finances. That is why, aware of its responsibilities, the Comorian Government has concluded with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank an agreement for a structural adjustment programme. That programme is already under way, but it goes without saying that without the support of our partners and of the international community our efforts may be in vain.

We note that international economic relations are still marked by inequitable relations between the North and the South. It is a revealing

(Mr. Hachim Comoros)

paradox that today the South is paying the North more than it receives from it.

Moreover, in spite of the praiseworthy initiatives taken by some countries and the great deal of thought given to the subject by the international community, the debt problem has not yet been satisfactorily resolved. This seriously hinders any development.

Similarly, the dialogue between the producer countries and the consumer countries must be reactivated to ensure that higher prices are paid for commodities.

(Mr. Hachim, Comoros)

Specifically in the case of Africa, the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development is coming to an end, and we cannot say that it has fully achieved the ambitious objectives set for it; nor has it met the legitimate expectations of the African people. This Programme is a prime example of an agreement concluded in good faith between our partners and ourselves on the basis of reciprocal commitments that were formally entered into. Today we must bear witness to the fact that, in the final analysis, the commitments entered into have not been fulfilled to any reasonable extent, since the economic crisis in most of our countries is getting worse rather than better.

A final study of the implementation of the United Nations Programme for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 will be carried out in the course of the current session of the General Assembly. Certain important issues should be raised at that time and an in-depth analysis should be made of the consensus reached in 1986; its consequences for the specific results of the recovery and economic development; and the extent to which all parties to the historic alliance have honoured their commitments in this Programme.

We welcome the changes under way in the countries of the East, even if in some cases their new-found democracy was not easy to achieve. We believe that the end of the cold war will open up new prospects for international cooperation.

The fact remains that certain of our countries are, quite rightly, concerned by the focus on, if not diversion to, the countries of the East with respect to developmental aid from the rich countries. In saying this, we in no way wish to deny those countries their legitimate right to benefit from international support; we simply wish to express our concern, which in fact is

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not a new one, in the face of the growing disengagement of support vis-à-vis Africa. This is why we hope that structures similar to those set up for these countries might also be considered for our continent and for the South in general.

In southern Africa we are receiving encouraging signs every day, the prelude to a lasting peace in this region. Thus, in Angola, a country that had been in civil war since its independence, we can only praise the efforts made by President dos Santos and the leader of UNITA, Mr. Jonas Savimbi, towards the achievement of a fair, definitive agreement. We also express the hope that our immediate neighbours, the people of Mozambique, might finally be able to resolve their differences so that peace might reign in this long-suffering country.

In South Africa, since President De Klerk came to power, we have been witnessing the gradual dismantling of the inhuman apartheid system, thanks to the constant pressures that the international community has put on the South African regime.

Furthermore, we are pleased that many South Africans of all races now agree that apartheid should give way to a new constitutional structure in their country. The draft constitution recently introduced by President De Klerk and his party is a foundation for serious negotiations and a step in the right direction.

It is in this context that we commend the agreement reached between the leaders of the two major parties, Mr. Nelson Mandela and Mr. Buthelezi, in order to put an end to the violence being committed between black communities. We fervently hope that this agreement will be complied with and applied effectively so that there might be an end to the internecine strife

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that has caused so much bloodshed and has retarded the ongoing process of democratization.

As regards Western Sahara, we note with satisfaction that progress is being made towards a just and lasting solution to that problem.

The situation in Liberia still remains very fragile. We do welcome the prospect, however, that the people of this wounded country might soon be able to choose their leaders through free, democratic elections, which will help to restore peace and national harmony.

Regarding Haiti, we vigorously condemn the coup d'état that recently ousted President Aristide, who was democratically elected by the Haitian people. We hope that the isolation of the putschist regime that has taken power in Port-au-Prince will force it to agree to the return of President Aristide in order to preserve peace and stability in that country.

In occupied Palestine, the Palestinian people continue to struggle against and courageously resist the repressive yoke of the Israeli occupation army. But not a week goes by, not even a day, without a Palestinian martyr falling, struck down by the real bullets of the Israeli army.

And yet these terrible sufferings, experienced every day by these brave people, have today become almost a matter of course. In fact, the international media hardly speak of them any more. Indeed, since last year, the Gulf War, events in the USSR and the collapse of communism have taken pride of place on the international scene.

The question of Palestine, unfortunately, has not found any sort of solution. It is now quite clear that nothing can deter the Palestinian people from fighting for their legitimate rights, rights that in fact are recognized by our Organization, including the right to a homeland. As long as this

(Mr. Hachim, Comoros)

problem persists, there will be no peace, no stability and no security in the Middle East.

It is in this context that my Government supports the efforts of the American Government to convene a peace conference of the parties concerned, even though we would have preferred the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East. Such a conference would deal with all unresolved problems in the region while respecting the pertinent resolutions adopted by our Organization and guaranteeing the right of all States in the region to live in security and peace.

Regarding Korea, the Government of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros hopes for and supports the peaceful reunification of the Korean people. We hope that the high-level contacts that took place last year between representatives of the two Koreas will be continued and will result in a better understanding of each other and create the necessary conditions for a peaceful solution to this problem. We are also pleased that the two Koreas, in accordance with the principle of universality of the United Nations, have decided to join the Organization as Members, which will help to strengthen security and international cooperation.

In South-East Asia, the problem of Cambodia seems to be coming out of a state of impasse and seems to be on its way to a peaceful solution. We make a solemn appeal to all the parties concerned to take positive steps that might enable our Organization to put an end to this bloody, fratricidal conflict.

(Mr. Hachim, Comoros)

I could not conclude my statement without referring, if only briefly, as this matter will soon be debated in the Assembly, to the question of the Comorian Island of Mayotte. As members are aware, this painful problem, which has existed for 16 years, has yet to be solved satisfactorily, in spite of the relevant United Nations resolutions. At a time when the Organization would seem to have regained its prestige, when its credibility has been restored and its decisions are being complied with, the Comorian people is entitled to expect a speedy solution to this problem in accordance with the desire of the international community and with United Nations resolutions.

From this rostrum, I should like to reaffirm the determination of the Government and the people of Comoros to continue their tireless efforts to bring about the reintegration of the Comorian Island of Mayotte into the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros and its three sister islands.

The Government and the people of Comoros, strengthened by the fairness and appropriateness of their claim, and supported by the international community as a whole, are as always open to all paths leading to a peaceful solution, as part of the good relations that exist between France and Comoros, and in accordance with international law.

Mr. CENAC (Saint Lucia): I am truly honoured, Sir, to add Saint Lucia's voice to those of previous speakers who have congratulated you on your election to the presidency of the Assembly. The wealth of experience and great fund of diplomatic skills with which you adorn the presidency could never be better expended than now, as you summon them to guide the important work of this forty-sixth session.

Saint Lucia welcomes the international changes, and indeed the new spirit of entente that has allowed the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's

(Mr. Cenac, Saint Lucia)

Republic of Korea to move from the observation periphery to the centre of full membership in the Hall of this Assembly. My delegation was proud to be a sponsor of their membership application, and looks forward to working closely with them in the coming years, confident that this new step will not be a barrier to the desire for reunification.

A special welcome must be extended to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which, against seemingly impossible odds, kept the dream of Baltic sovereignty alive. They have taught us all a new lesson in perseverance.

And as for my fellow island developing countries of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, whose membership in the Organization furthers the lofty goals of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 1960, I greet them with fraternal love and look forward to working with them on matters of mutual concern.

The end of the last decade marked the twilight of the cold war. Four and one-half decades of super-Power rivalry and East-West tension were officially brought to an end as the Berlin Wall - the epitome of the iron curtain - crumbled, in the face of the long-simmering desire for German unity.

All over Europe, there were explosions of democracy: totalitarian regimes falling before floodtides of democratic movements, driven as much by economic need as by a collective desire to exorcise the legacies of Marx, Engels and Lenin; driven not only by the fact that man cannot live without bread, but also by the fact that he cannot live by bread alone. And, by and large, it was a democratic revolution, ignited by the hopes of the Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev. It was those very hopes that aborted the coup carried out against him and brought about this purifying thunderstorm of reform of which he speaks. Indeed, there is a good in every evil, would men observingly distil it out.

(Mr. Cenac, Saint Lucia)

There is urgent need, within the broad powers granted to the Security Council in Chapter VII of the Charter, for an early-warning mechanism to identify and react to emerging global issues before they reach the point of crisis. The situation in Haiti is a case in point.

In elections held in Haiti last December, transparently free and fair, witnessed by an international team, elections in which the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) played an important role, Jean-Bertrand Aristide received 1,107,125 votes out of the 1,640,729 votes cast. Eleven parties contested the elections. Two of them received 1.7 per cent of the votes. Aristide alone received 67.5 per cent. All the other 10 parties pledged to support the President in the task of building a democratic Haiti.

I had the honour to head the team of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of CARICOM who went to Haiti in 1989, and was present at the inauguration of the President in February this year. Moreover, I saw with my own eyes the tens of thousands who hailed Aristide as their democratic liberator.

My delegation believes that the military in Haiti has shown itself to be too coup-prone in the past to be trusted to help a President maintain law and order. And we believe, too, that unless the military is replaced there will be no end to the tragic game of musical chairs being played with the lives of 6 million Haitians. If then a constitutionally elected President of the people, still overwhelmingly supported by them, as is President Aristide, were to ask the United Nations to restore Haiti to democratic rule in accordance with the will of the people of Haiti, my delegation would hasten to give an affirmative response to this request. Meanwhile, all necessary and appropriate means must be employed to bring about a speedy return to constitutional government in Haiti.

(Mr. Cenac, Saint Lucia)

The new world political order comes at a time of major economic crises in the world. Political gains cannot be sustained without concomitant economic output. The rate of growth of global economic output has declined for the past few years. From 4.3 per cent in 1988, it declined to 2.9 per cent in 1989 and to only 1 per cent in 1990; and it is expected to achieve zero growth this year. Nearly one-quarter of the world's population now lives in countries with decelerating per capita output, and more people in the developing world are suffering from poverty and hunger today than was the case 10 years ago. The population of the developing countries has more than doubled in the past 35 years, increasing from 1.7 billion in 1950 to over 4 billion today. And it will grow to nearly 5 billion by the end of this century. Within the next 9 years, Africa alone will have an additional 200 million people, while Latin America and the Caribbean will have 100 million more.

This nightmarish population crisis, coupled with developmental stagnation, has created conditions wherein 2 billion people in the developing world have no access to safe water. And an equal number faces chronic hunger and malnutrition. Per capita food output is declining in about one third of the developing countries, and, if current patterns of deforestation, overgrazing and non-stop cultivation of overused lands continue, some 1.2 billion people in the developing world will be affected by desertification by the turn of the century.

The environment is not ours to destroy but to preserve for posterity, whose trustees we all are. The effects of deforestation on the environment are said to be second only to nuclear destruction. The ability of nation States to achieve sustainable development is central to the solution of this

(Mr. Cenac, Saint Lucia)

crisis. The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is therefore most welcome, and it is expected that the special circumstances of small island States, including Saint Lucia, will not be overlooked.

Much of Africa is stalled in a critical economic situation from which there seems little prospect of recovery, and Latin America is trapped in a downward cycle of debt, declining productivity and socio-economic privation. The same is true of some of the most populous Asian countries, and Eastern Europe is in economic turmoil. This dismal economic picture exists at a time when the world is facing the highest tide of rising expectations. Despite this, the new world political order presents an unprecedented opportunity for the further strengthening of the United Nations to deal with contemporary problems and to prepare it for future ones.

We cannot but praise the rejuvenated functioning of the Organization in facilitating solutions to the myriad political problems that we ourselves continually create. The ongoing initiatives in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Western Sahara and Cyprus must be encouraged. And the new areas of election supervision must be continued.

When Iraq invaded the peaceful and comparatively small nation of Kuwait, this wise and caring family of nations for seven months counselled Iraq to return to its own home lest the wrath of the family be visited upon it. Though the wages of its bellicosity, cupidity and intransigence have already been justly handed out to Iraq, still that country seems intent on obstructing the will of the United Nations.

If Iraq dared to challenge virtually the whole of mankind without nuclear weapons, it makes one shudder to think how it might otherwise have acted with them. That is why the present investigation into Iraq's nuclear capabilities must be carried out thoroughly for the peace and security of the world. Now

(Mr. Cenac, Saint Lucia)

that the war is over, it is but right that we pay a tribute to those who have contributed so much to this important cause. We must also salute those who exercised tremendous restraint in the face of provocation. This restraint prevented a widening of the conflagration which might have engulfed the entire region.

It is a fact that South Africa under President De Klerk has undergone some praiseworthy reforms. But there is still no clear evidence of profound and irreversible change. The equal right of all South Africans to vote for a Government of their choice, enshrined in a non-racial democratic constitution, is a major constitutional fundamental around which all other reforms would revolve. We therefore reiterate that the removal of economic sanctions would be premature and would not hasten, but retard, the process which has begun.

For more than two decades now, we have been fighting a battle against drugs. Are we winning the battle or are we losing the battle? If we are losing it in the streets of New York and Chicago, in London and in Birmingham, in Paris and in Lyon - if we are losing it there, where can we win? And if we are losing it in the lands of plenty, we are condemned to lose it in the debt-overburdened countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and the poverty stricken countries of the Sahel and elsewhere.

But why are we losing it? Maybe the answer lies not only in the severe punishment of drug traffickers and the confiscation of the proceeds of their crime, but in the strengthening of the family unit and in developing a true sense of values. Maybe we could begin by distributing some of our yearly expenditure on arms of some \$900 billion among the poor so they could give more and more of themselves to their children. For the battle must first be fought at home. And it must be fought early. And if this generation is already too far gone, let us begin today to save the children of tomorrow.

(Mr. Cenac, Saint Lucia)

Since January this year a constituent assembly of the Windward Islands of Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Saint Lucia has been discussing the question of a political union of these four islands. A referendum on this issue is to await final discussions, in January next, of the economic implications of such a union. My delegation is convinced that a federation of these small islands will guarantee their stability, thereby increasing their investment opportunities and enhancing their economic viability, their negotiating capacity and their administrative efficiency. We must unite to survive. In this regard, I am certain that we can depend on the good will of the international community.

On 31 December 1992 the European Economic Community, in its wisdom, will become one giant common market of some 350 million people. For us in the Windward Islands, who depend very largely for our daily bread on the export of bananas to the United Kingdom, this could have disastrous consequences were we to lose the preferential treatment that the United Kingdom has guaranteed us for the past 40 years. The European Commission has assured us, however, that the new marketing arrangements will not, in the circumstances, deprive us of that facility, which we have enjoyed for so long. On the dependability of this assurance rests the economic survival of these islands, and I trust that we shall not have to wrap our hands around the knees of the European Community to plead our case. The Community, among others, has shown much beneficence towards the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, of which we are one. We can always count on its good will, understanding and cooperation.

The United Nations, having had a meteoric rise during the recent past, stands at a crossroads, from which the path ahead can lead to genuine world political, economic and social development. But if that is to happen, the

(Mr. Canac, Saint Lucia)

major Powers must take the degree of their cooperation far beyond the political pinnacle, deep into the world's socio-economic substrata, which is ultimately where universal peace and security will be formulated. Let no nation divert us from this path by waking the sleeping hand of war.

Mr. AHMED (Chad) (interpretation from French): Let me begin by saying that I am honoured indeed to be in New York on this occasion and, for the first time, to speak on behalf of my country at the United Nations General Assembly, at this its forty-sixth session.

The oft-repeated hopes of delegations, expressed from this rostrum, for an end to ideological confrontation and the bipolar division of the world appear to have become tangible realities at this crucial time at the end of the twentieth century. Indeed, the signing, last August, of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and recent statements in which the American and Soviet Heads of State proposed further reductions from the threshold indicated by the Moscow Treaty demonstrate the new spirit of cooperation that characterizes relations between the two super-Powers. For the first time in 30 years we see the spectre of nuclear war receding.

The beginning of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly in that context of hope and expectation gives us reason to adopt a spirit of conviviality and to engage in sincere debate with no ulterior motives.

In other words the session over which you, Sir, are presiding should be an opportunity for us to look at our environment and our world in a new light, with new ideals of solidarity and a sense of being part of the same space. I am convinced that, with you, Mr. President, at the helm, we shall tackle without difficulty the different challenges of our world today - disease, ignorance and poverty. My delegation is very happy that you, the representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - guardian of the Holy Shrines

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

of Islam, and, like Chad, a member of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference - should be presiding at this session. You and the other officers have the full assurance of my delegation's complete cooperation. We wish you every success in your endeavours.

I should like to express to Mr. Guido de Marco the satisfaction of my delegation at the elegant manner in which he presided over the work of the forty-fifth session of the Assembly.

I should like also to express once again to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, who is reaching the end of his second term as Secretary-General of the Organization, the full gratitude of Chad for all his tireless efforts in the causes of peace and development. He is leaving us at a time when multilateralism has been rejuvenated, thanks in particular to his dynamic efforts. We shall greatly miss his familiar face and his dynamism. On behalf of the Government of Chad I wish him a good and pleasant retirement and assure him of our readiness to extend our full support to his successor at a time when the United Nations will be called upon to play an increasingly important role.

My delegation is pleased to note that this great family of the United Nations is continuing to expand. It is with pleasure that we welcome into our midst the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The year 1990 was one of profound change. It was the year that saw the re-emergence of the active role of the United Nations as an instrument in the service of peace. Indeed, for the first time in many years our Organization is playing the role envisaged for it in the Charter - the maintenance of peace through the implementation of relevant provisions.

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

Everywhere in the world, changes towards real democracy have begun. From now on, all the peoples of the world will have the possibility of enjoying the right to self-determination and of taking charge of their own destiny. In Africa the process is continuing, with the holding of national conferences and with the organization of truly free elections, in which people may choose from among many programmes and many candidates.* In Chad the year 1990 was a year of freedom, for it saw the overthrow of one of the bloodiest dictatorships in Africa, one which in the span of eight years murdered more than 10,000 Chadians. Had it not been for the victory of the Patriotic Movement of Salvation, the outside world would never have known of the horrors which that merciless dictatorship perpetrated in my country for reasons of State.

* Mr. Rogers (Belize), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

The parody of a referendum organized in December 1989 with regard to the Constitution was designed to distract the attention of outside observers from the massacres that bloodthirsty regime was carrying out. The "democratic" provisions of that famous Constitution were never implemented. In fact the Constitution only served as a smokescreen for the dictatorship. In the circumstances, all the new authorities could do was suspend it. They did so, replacing it with the new national charter adopted on 28 February 1991, which now governs the political life of the nation. This charter clearly states in article 2:

"The people are sovereign, and no faction or individual may assume the right to exercise sovereignty."

That provision is a striking manifestation of the firm desire of the Patriotic Movement of Salvation and the Government to eliminate once and for all the spectre of flagrant violations of human rights and to establish a pluralistic democracy in the country. Today we are proud to say that Chad is a country of freedom. Freedom of opinion and respect for human rights are central to the policy of the new authorities. Thus, private daily and weekly newspapers influence public opinion in the country and attack - sometimes violently - the actions of the Government, thereby playing the proper role of a free press in a democracy. Furthermore, with the adoption of the charter of the parties on 1 October 1991, the people of Chad now have the freedom to be active in the party of their choice: no more obligatory membership in a single party, no more political prisons and police.

Chad, which has suffered for so long from war, now wishes finally to enjoy genuine internal and external peace. President Idriss Deby has always said that the time has come to deal with one another by means other than

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weapons. It is clear that the choice of the people of Chad is a confrontation of ideas. Thus a national conference will be held in May 1992, and, in addition to drawing up the future constitution, it will establish the framework for democracy. In a country which for more than 30 years lived under a series of bloody dictatorships, we shall have a difficult apprenticeship, but this is our irreversible choice. For we must do everything to avoid going back to the past and must move forward to the building of a State of law in which all citizens will participate at various levels in the open management of public affairs, in order to attain our objectives. Several obstacles to the attainment of those objectives have already appeared. The most difficult are the reorganization of an administration deeply shaken by two decades of war and the reduction of the size of a greatly over-staffed army. This requires considerable material and financial resources, but we are convinced that with the assistance of our partners we shall achieve those objectives.

Chad, a victim of drought and desertification, has been confronted with endemic diseases and other natural disasters such as floods which have left many homeless. In addition, our production structures were disorganized at the time of the rout of the dictator. We shall therefore have to fight on several fronts.

As regards the economy, the disorganization of our customs administration because of the events of December 1990 has resulted in a tremendous decline in State income, jeopardizing the objectives of the current adjustment process. We are also suffering from the effects of the world economic situation, particularly since our country is dependent on a single export crop. These difficulties, further aggravated by the burden of the heavy debt of

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3.5 billion CFA francs left by the former dictatorship in Chad's account at the Bank of Central African States, have eliminated all the resources at the Government's disposal to relaunch our economy. Despite all these obstacles, the Government remains determined to foster a liberal economy and to permit the development of small and medium-sized industrial enterprises. In this connection, the Government intends to organize early in 1992 a round-table conference of providers of funds in the private sector. The seminar held on this subject in May 1991 enabled us to establish an overall strategy. This round-table conference will be designed not to examine the strategy in depth, so as to make it functional, but also to seek support from possible future partners.

At the same time, Chad would like to devote the same sustained attention to rural development, thus pursuing the established objective of attaining food self-sufficiency in the future. Furthermore, preliminary prospecting financed by the United Nations Revolving Fund for natural resources exploration has revealed the existence of several minerals. The Government of Chad will continue the search for partners to help us in exploiting the mineral resources which may thus be identified.

The achievement of all these objectives is conditional on the development of our national technical capabilities, which can be done only by means of training. In this connection, the Government of Chad is currently seeking ways and means of implementing the recommendations of the round-table conference on the questions of education, training and employment, held in November 1990 in Ndjamena. The transformation of our educational structures and programmes to carry out proper training for employment requires considerable investment for equipment and the building or remodeling of

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

training centres. In addition to those medium-term and long-term social problems, there are others that are even more urgent, such as the question of the reintegration of refugees, exiles and displaced persons who, since December 1990, have been streaming back to Chad and the regions where they had lived; the problem of the spread of the cholera epidemic; and the devastation of fields and dwellings by the floods caused by the heavy rains in July and August 1991. All those negative factors require us to seek assistance once again from our partners, and in December 1991 we intend to submit to them in Paris an emergency plan covering in particular the needs in regard to the reorganization of the army and the resettlement of the refugees.

Despite all these difficulties, the people of Chad do not despair, for they know that the international solidarity which manifested itself in combating the effects of the drought and the cholera epidemic will once again be forthcoming for us in our implacable struggle for survival. We take this opportunity to thank friendly countries and the agencies of the United Nations system for all the help they have been giving Chad for many years now. Our most sincere thanks go particularly to the friendly Governments that have generously supported us at a critical time in our history. Once again we make a resounding appeal to them from this rostrum to continue to help us in implementing our emergency programme of reconstruction and development, which I have mentioned earlier. We shall continue our practice of previous years and we shall introduce this year two draft resolutions under agenda items 84 (b) and 97 (b). We sincerely and wholeheartedly hope that we shall obtain the support of all Member States for their adoption.

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

If we have enjoyed the support of all these partners, it is because they have demonstrated solidarity with us in our sorrow. At this time, when confrontation has given way to cooperation, Chad is implementing the policy of good neighbourliness in its external policy. Since December 1990, Chad has acted in concert with all peace-loving and freedom-loving countries, particularly with all our neighbours. For the first time since 1982, Chad's relations with its neighbours are not a source of conflict. Indeed, the good neighbourliness policy practised by the new authorities in Chad are based on a spirit of dialogue and agreement for we believe that a policy of continuing confrontation and friction between neighbours is not in our best interests. Not only are our meagre resources drained for military expenses, but most of all implementation of the development programmes which the populations need is thereby delayed.

It is in this political climate that we have come to a decisive stage in the border dispute between my country and the Libyan Arab Jamahariya. The two parties have seized this opportunity to accept a verdict of the International Court of Justice. Since December 1990, relations between our two countries and our peoples have normalized. This is a challenge for cooperation to replace hatred and for understanding to prevail and we welcome this development.

In recent sessions we reviewed the various regional conflicts and without really believing that much would happen, we nevertheless expressed the hope that solutions would be found. This time we see that, due to the new spirit of solidarity and understanding which has developed between the super-Powers, these conflicts are beginning to be resolved one after another. On behalf of the Government and people of Chad, allow me once again to pay a tribute to

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Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev for the new spirit in international relations and the new relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union.

As the Secretary-General stated in his report:

"Peace has won victories on several fronts. Many a people have been released from the agonies of strife. The process is capable of extension to other areas." (A/46/1, page 22)

This analysis properly describes the situation of the world of today. On the one hand, remarkable results have been achieved and, on the other, a great deal still remains to be done before peace can be attained.

In South Africa, the legal pillars of apartheid have been abolished. This is a first step towards the attainment of a multiracial Africa with all citizens enjoying the same rights, but much remains to be done to achieve these results and the path is strewn with many dangers. There is need to expedite negotiations for the adoption of a new constitution and an effective transfer of power to the black majority, particularly by putting an end to the entrenchment of the forces of destabilization which are the source of violence in the townships.

After 16 years of bloodshed in Western Sahara we hope that peace will be established by means of the referendum to be held in January 1992 under United Nations auspices. While we congratulate the Secretary-General for his perseverance we wish, at the same time, to appeal to the parties to cooperate fully with the United Nations and, finally, accept the result of the vote.

In Asia, my delegation welcomes the progress achieved in the negotiations between the various Cambodian factions. Those negotiations have made it possible for the Cambodian delegation to resume its place in this Assembly.

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

The admission to United Nations membership of the two Koreas will, we hope, make it possible one day to achieve reunification of the two countries. Indeed, the reunification of Germany and of Yemen gives us reason to hope that this possibility will be realized if that is the legitimate aspiration of the people concerned.

Regarding Afghanistan, the determination of the United States and the Soviet Union to bring peace to that country will, we are convinced, lead to constructive dialogue between the resistance movements and the Government.

In the Persian Gulf, the consequences of the invasion and liberation of Kuwait should have resulted in the return of peace. Unfortunately, that is not the case and the risk of new confrontations prevails in the region. The delegation of Chad supports the efforts designed to enforce the Security Council resolutions on this subject. However, we would like to advocate that all the Council's resolutions should be equally applied. We refer in particular to the situation prevailing in the Middle East where General Assembly and Security Council resolutions have remained without effect for more than 10 years. Clearly, Chad lends its full support to the steps undertaken by the United States to convene an international peace conference on the basis of the Baker plan and relevant resolutions of the Security Council. However, we insist that all interested parties be invited to participate in this gathering on an equal footing. This condition is indispensable for, without equal treatment, it is unlikely that serious negotiations can really begin.

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

While until now Europe has been spared civil war, the transformations of the people's democracies have given rise to serious challenges to certain political structures. The Baltic States incorporated in the Soviet Union following the de facto Soviet-German Pact of August 1939 have become independent. Germany is now united, while the Soviet Union is being transformed following the events in Moscow of August 1991. These transformations have caused serious difficulties in some cases. For example, in Yugoslavia they have led to bloody confrontations which Europe has not seen since the Second World War. My delegation views with alarm this decline in the situation of a non-aligned State and calls upon Yugoslavia to find its path quickly to a settlement of these differences without useless bloodshed.

This glance at the situation prevailing in the world demonstrates how right the Secretary-General is in his appraisal of the situation. In some places, peace is making progress. In others, confrontation continues. This dichotomy between war and peace in certain contiguous areas reminds us that we must make further efforts to ensure peace in the world in general.

In this connection, my delegation would like, once again, to issue a call for peace since only frank and direct dialogue between brothers and parties to a conflict will make the achievement of true peace possible.

The world has witnessed the end of the East-West confrontation with great relief and is nurturing the hope for new prospects in international economic relations. My delegation sincerely believes that the new world order must support the peoples who are struggling to achieve social and economic development. They must be helped to rid themselves of poverty and ignorance by being provided with the means to accomplish it.

(Mr. Ahmed, Chad)

Indeed, the 1991 report of the United Nations Development Programme on human development notes, with regard to countries in the South, that more than half a billion human beings are living in dire poverty, some 180 million children - that is one out of three - are suffering from serious malnutrition, that 1.5 billion persons have no access to primary health services, that nearly 3 million children die each year from diseases for which vaccines exist, that approximately a billion adults are illiterate, and that the number of children of school age who do not attend school is in excess of 100 million.

Those frightful statistics bear witness, if any were needed, to the failure of the last three United Nations Development Decades. At the end of this millenium the burning question is not one of available resources but whether those resources are being properly distributed - which presumes solidarity based on real political will.

Africa, for its part, continues to sink into the implacable crisis that began over a decade ago, notwithstanding the historic contract into which it entered with the rest of the international community in 1986. How could it have been otherwise, when the countries of the African continent do not control the prices of their raw materials and face constantly rising prices for capital goods and when the burden of debt servicing has become intolerable?

Concrete actions must be undertaken urgently to reverse this trend. We must, inter alia, guarantee a fair price for raw materials, lift protectionist measures, lower trade tariffs and cancel the debt. Such actions would enable Africa to realize real economic growth, an indispensable condition for the success of the ongoing democratization programme.

In the next three years the international community is preparing to consider some of the serious problems that concern all mankind and that

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condition its very survival. In particular, there will be the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992; the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 and the Conference on Population and Development in 1994, whose theme will be "Population, Economic Growth and Sustainable Development". These different gatherings are all focused on the human condition in a world that has become more interdependent and that enjoys greater solidarity.

With regard to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Chad attaches great importance to it. As a country of the Sahel, Chad is experiencing a desertification that is affecting the socio-economic activities of its population. We therefore hope that that Conference will be able to come up with a strategy that will enable us both to preserve the environment and to ensure development.

Having rid itself of the fear of a possible nuclear holocaust brought on by ideological confrontations, mankind today has every chance to realize its profound aspiration to the peace it has sought for so long. The time is ripe, and we must seize this opportunity to transform international relations to respond to the requirements of history. We must build confidence and set a single objective: the well-being of mankind. To do this, my delegation believes that true coexistence among peoples without any distinction as to race, language and religion - and among States as well - must be established, coexistence in which the United Nations will finally be able to play the crucial role of guarantor of peace.

In this connection I should like to conclude by calling for a widening of the Secretary-General's field of competence. He should not have to wait to be seized of a conflict but should be able to take up a question immediately when

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threats to international peace and security begin to loom up on the horizon and act as a mediator or peace-maker. Mankind has suffered from too many conflicts in recent years. We must act urgently to put an end to bloody confrontations among States and within States. That too requires the solidarity whose end result is universal peace and an end to human suffering from deprivation.

Peace and solidarity are the key words that, I hope, will guide the future actions of the peoples of the United Nations.

Mr. de KEERSMAEKER (Belgium)(interpretation from French): The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Mr. Mark Eyskens, is unable to be with us today owing to imperative business in Brussels. He has asked me to present for him the statement he had planned to deliver to the General Assembly himself.

"Mr. President, I add my voice to the congratulations expressed by previous speakers on the occasion of your election. Your personal experience in this Organization, together with your unanimously recognized diplomatic skills, are the best guarantee for the quality of our debates.

"I must also congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, for his exceptionally active role as President of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. His dynamism was highlighted in the course of the proceedings concerning the restructuring of certain activities of the General Assembly.

"A special word of thanks must also be addressed to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. As always, his report on the work of the Organization during the past year has furnished us with

(Mr. de Keersmaeker, Belgium)

an inspiring synthesis. We are grateful to the Secretary General for the ten years during which he has guided the United Nations with full personal commitment. A number of multilateral diplomatic successes of recent years bore the undeniable mark of his own input, especially where the resolution of long-standing regional conflicts is concerned. Moreover, the prospects for speedy settlements in a number of cases still pending are also due to his personal efforts. Thus, his activity has certainly contributed to translating the Organization's political revival into concrete actions in the field.

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Mr. van den Broeck, has already spoken here on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community. I subscribe to his statement, and I share in his expression of the Community's views on the major questions facing us today. The wide range of his statement allows me to focus attention on a limited number of subjects.

"Before doing so, however, I wish to express my Government's satisfaction at the fact that several new Member States were admitted to our Organization at the beginning of this session. Belgium has always been in favour of universal membership of the United Nations. In that spirit, we welcome the simultaneous admission of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to membership of the Organization. The admission of new Members is even more welcome when it contributes to the lessening of regional tensions or when it reflects the fast pace of change in the world. We are convinced that the new Member States will enrich our debates with their particular insights.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"The events of recent weeks and months in the Soviet Union have accelerated and confirmed the collapse of communism. The failure of the coup has demonstrated that democratic thinking is alive and well in the Soviet Union and that ~~perestroika~~ could not be undone by a handful of military and KGB personnel.

"Belgium joins in the rejoicing at the victory of constitutional and legal order over the totalitarian adventurism of those in the Soviet Union who had failed to realize that the reforms initiated by President Mikhail Gorbachev had reached the point of no return.

"Would it be true, then, that the history of this twentieth century is merely a passing phase - one that has already passed? Indeed, our century has, by and large, been marked by the life-and-death struggle against two evil forms of totalitarianism: fascism and communism. These two perverted forms of sociological thinking and of political action have, throughout the major part of this century, reduced hundreds of millions of individuals to conditions of mental slavery, moral exploitation and, eventually, self-destruction. These totalitarian ideologies are responsible for the loss of human lives by the millions.

"Today, it is our privilege to see, with the utmost relief and joy, this century ending in 1991 with the implosion of communism. Communism has come to an end both as a political regime and as an ideology.

"The rejection of communism by ever more people in the world means that this ideology is no longer credible as a guideline for social reform. Because of the events in the Soviet Union, democracy and the defence and exercise of freedom and basic human rights have considerably enhanced and are now quite likely to be accepted internationally.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"The recognition of political freedoms must, however, go hand in hand with the granting of economic freedoms. Thus we get this dual concept of democracy and a competitive market economy, which seems to be conquering the world - democracy as a political framework ensuring a socially responsible redistribution of the benefits gained through an efficient market economy.

"After the revolutionary changes in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the leaders in the Soviet Union have the historical duty to bring the democratic and economic reforms in their country to a speedy conclusion. But this task must be achieved in a spirit of international solidarity. In this regard, the European Community and its member States, including Belgium, cannot and will not shun their responsibilities. Obviously, such support cannot be seen as a substitute for the reforms democratically elected leaders in these countries must undertake. That being said, we must offer them the broadest and most effective cooperation possible.

"Moreover, the Europe of the Twelve also serves as a model: its various forms of economic cooperation among its members; and the manner in which it cooperates with third States and regions or constituent republics of third States. In this context we hope that the Soviet Union - and I stress the word 'Union' - will be able to work out a balanced formula for cooperation between its various constituent republics.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"National feelings harbour great energy which can be applied to good purposes as well as to evil ones. When a national feeling degenerates into nationalism, that is, into forms of collective selfishness, a destructive force can be set free. History is replete with tragic examples of this. But the national conscience of peoples able to enjoy their own language, history, culture and religion is an important asset for the world community. Without such inputs, international society would become merely a colourless mixture of stateless people.

"Personally I am convinced that the countries of the European Community, having undergone the great ordeals of the first half of this century, have cast out their nationalistic demons thanks to a policy of integration in numerous fields.

"The European Community has also given an example of how to transcend national feelings; and we are willing to assist others in seeking workable solutions for similar problems. We hope that the granting of a wide measure of autonomy will neither increase the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons nor obstruct or undermine the trend towards disarmament which, happily, exists in so many fields.

"Belgium welcomes with satisfaction the regained independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. My country never recognized their annexation by Stalin's Soviet Union. We are particularly proud that we were able to contribute to the establishment of a Baltic information centre in Brussels and that we supported their delegations in various international forums prior to their recognition under international law. We also salute the memory of those citizens of the Baltic republics who gave their lives in the struggle for independence.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"The events of recent months and years, so full of hope for peace and for the freedom of ever more people in the world, have also demonstrated the growing importance of human rights. The Marxist notion, according to which respect for human rights, in keeping with a materialistic logic, is seen as a consequence of a specific of socio-economic development, is now clearly being abandoned. Respect for human rights now appears to be the sine qua non for the balanced socio-economic evolution of any society. Hence there is an interaction at work between development and respect for human rights.

"There is no doubt that States individually, rather than the international community, bear the primary responsibility for the protection of human rights within their territory. But each State is responsible to the international community in cases of non-compliance with its obligations. International consensus on this issue is steadily growing: States are liable internationally for their national policies in the field of human rights. This combination of national responsibility and international liability entails an increasing internationalization of human rights issues. We therefore favour a definition of human rights which is both broad and precise.

"The individual human rights set forth in the Universal Declaration and in the two International Covenants remain the basic components of any evolving human rights policy. Consequently, these Covenants ought to be accepted and applied by all United Nations Members. Aside from the right of peoples to self-determination, more attention should now be given to the social exercise of certain individual human rights, such as cultural and religious freedom, including the elimination of ethnic and other forms of discrimination.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"Belgium continues, as in the past, to plead that we take into account the regional dimension of respect for human rights so as to enable each region to consider its cultural and socio-political idiosyncrasies in respecting fundamental rights. It is also necessary to grant special protection to persons belonging to certain social groups, such as women and children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recent World Summit for Children made significant progress in that respect.

"The protection of human rights is of course a duty, but it is also a right. In signing the Charter and in adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two additional Covenants, the Member States of the United Nations undertook to respect human rights within their territories.

"True exercise of State sovereignty consists not of resisting any external interference in this field, but, rather, of mobilizing of all means available to States to ensure respect for human rights. Each State has this obligation not only to its own citizens - in particular minorities within its borders - but also with regard to other States.

"In contradistinction to the position generally advocated by the now increasingly discredited totalitarian regimes, actions by third States to protect human rights should not necessarily constitute interference in domestic affairs. This is very clear in cases where actions are undertaken in response to a request by a State no longer able to ensure the protection of human rights on its own territory. But even if the action is taken without the consent of the State on whose territory human rights are violated, it is not necessarily interference in domestic matters.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"Indeed, effective respect for human rights is at the heart of the problem. The international community must help States to respect human rights, and force them to do so if need be. To prevent any abuse the Charter rightly implies that any such intervention must take place in an orderly and acceptable fashion. It should be in accordance with well-defined rules. The existence of a violation must, as a matter of principle, be clearly established. The response must be gradual and must obtain the agreement of the international community. Only in the case of actions undertaken in situations of extreme emergency should it be possible to bypass these rules until the international community itself is able to take all the necessary measures.

"This rostrum is not the appropriate place to enter into the details of a juridical exposition. Let me just point out that Article 56 of the Charter implies the possibility of interference of this kind. Each United Nations Member has committed itself to individual or collective action in defence of the principles set forth in Article 55, including the protection of human rights. All States and the international community as a whole are obliged not only to respect human rights but also to have them respected.

"Protection of human rights encompasses both combating violations and preventing them. It is the duty of Member States to ensure that basic political rights are effectively granted to their citizens, that they can participate in political decision-making, that conditions for economic growth are created, that there is the indispensable social redistribution of wealth, and that sound sanitary and ecological standards of living are achieved. Inversely, it is also true that

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

respect for human rights contributes to political stability and to a spirit of entrepreneurship.

"Using confidential procedures, direct and indirect pressure and diplomatic interventions, third States and the international community can bring about a change of attitude by a State violating human rights. If these measures fail, the greatest leverage against those violating human rights is to be found in concern publicly expressed by third States or by pressure groups. For that reason, the work of non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International must be vigorously supported.*

"But the international community must also be able to intervene rapidly. The diplomatic impact of the United Nations must be strengthened, and the Organization should be able to take action at very short notice. Now more than ever before, countries should train military and civilian units required for rapid deployment within the framework of such United Nations operations.

"Moreover, Member States should whenever possible consider the inclusion of human rights clauses in international agreements, following the example of the Lomé Conventions and the recent constituent Act of the new European Development Bank. Such clauses are inspired not by any type of cultural imperialism, but by our deep conviction of the interrelationship between human rights, pluralism and economic and social development. In this spirit, Belgium has recently insisted upon the introduction of the notion of respect for human rights in its bilateral

* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

agreements with States with which it maintains close traditional links of cooperation.

"The international community therefore must provide itself with sufficient means to make States violating human rights change their behaviour when confidential procedures or pressure from public opinion are ineffective. We clearly see a role for the Security Council in this field. Prior multilateral approval of interventions is desirable in almost all cases. In certain extremely urgent and flagrant cases, a State should be allowed to intervene on its own initiative to protect human rights. Such an intervention could be legitimate when, for example, citizens of that State outside its borders are subjected to gross and systematic violations of their basic human rights. Such situations generally arise in times of war or civil war, when State authority collapses, or when States obstruct the delivery of the necessary humanitarian aid. But even in those cases it is of course indispensable for the State carrying out the intervention to submit its actions within a reasonable time limit to the Security Council. Such unilateral intervention should, moreover, be discussed and monitored by the relevant regional forums.

"Existing multilateral institutions are already in a position to do a lot of useful work in this field. In the longer term an extension of legal options could be envisaged. We view the creation of an international court for human rights and the appointment of a high commissioner as the most important possible innovation.

"What we are aiming for is the establishment of a more structured mechanism to investigate individual, specific cases of human rights

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violations and then reach a conclusion and ensure legal redress. We are well aware that in these matters we have to attain and respect a balance between existing and future institutions, between political fields of competence and legal procedures, and between mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels. More specifically, the powers of the Commission on Human Rights may have to be reviewed to allow for transmission of the files on the worst cases of human rights violations to the Security Council.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"The international court for human rights and the high commissioner should 'filter' dossiers, thus enhancing their authority, avoiding procedural abuses and preventing overburdening the Security Council.

"Taking into account these ideas, we may envisage the following procedures: the high commissioner would have to submit complaints by States to the court, while he would have the option of submitting complaints from individuals; he would have the right of inquiry and the court would be able to summon States; if the State involved refused to collaborate, its refusal would be notified to the Commission on Human Rights; the court would determine whether the State had indeed violated human rights; the State would then be given an opportunity to acknowledge its responsibility, restore the rights concerned and make legal reparation to the victims, and if that were not done the court's judgement would be transmitted to the Commission on Human Rights.

"The Commission is a political organ which has to concentrate on the policies and practices of States violating human rights. Its effectiveness could be strengthened in, for example, the following ways. The behaviour of a State could be brought to the Commission's attention by another State, by the court or by the high commissioner. The commissioner would then check whether human rights had indeed been systematically violated. It would be entitled to order an inquiry. Refusal to collaborate would be viewed as an aggravating factor. If the Commission found that a State had indeed systematically violated certain human rights, that State should be given a short period to put the matter right. If the State did not take such action, the facts would be notified to the Security Council.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"When it is thus clearly established that a State refuses to end its violations of human rights, two further means of pressure can be envisaged. First, States can use existing unilateral means of exerting pressure, which they will have a right to apply to the extent that they have inserted human rights clauses in their treaties with other States. A number of States will inevitably want to review their economic, political and diplomatic relations with another State on whose territory human rights are systematically violated. Secondly, if the Commission on Human Rights finds that a State persists in systematic and gross violations of human rights, that State's attitude will be brought to the attention of the Security Council for consideration.

"When we recommend the path of pluralism and respect for human rights with such insistence we may run the risk of seeming self-righteous.

"States in which democratic institutions have been functioning for generations have no other choice but continuously to watch over the vitality of those institutions and be increasingly aware of the problems arising outside their own borders, in a spirit of solidarity.

"There, too, we face a real challenge.

"The greater attention now being devoted to the development of new East-West relations does not mean that Belgium, or indeed Europe as a whole, will forget the urgent issues pertaining to North-South relations.

"We are even more aware of the urgency of these issues since the General Assembly recently concluded its assessment of the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. Criticism has been levelled, rightly, at the implementation of this Programme.

(Mr. de Keersmaecker, Belgium)

"We must not forget that the economic situation of many developing countries is also linked with the political reforms they are currently undertaking. Our aid must be adjusted accordingly, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

"It is also becoming increasingly clear that we need to envisage a new relationship between donor countries and recipient countries, taking into account the interdependence of the world economy. We must also find an acceptable level of economic growth, while giving due attention to its adverse side effects, especially for the environment.

"I cannot close without emphasizing that the past year has been exceptional for our Organization. The widening of its role and the extent of its intervention in the political world order would have been inconceivable only a few years ago. Having for long pleaded for a return to the spirit which inspired the authors of the Charter, we find ourselves now to some extent prisoners of our own words. The Members of the United Nations are capable of uniting their will-power and assuming with determination their responsibility for peace, human dignity and social progress."

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to inform representatives that item 145, "Crisis of democracy and human rights in Haiti", will not be considered tomorrow, as previously announced. It will now be considered on Friday, 11 October, in the morning. The list of speakers on that item is now open.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.