

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

ELEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Official Records



**3rd
PLENARY MEETING**

Tuesday, 26 August 1980,
at 10.55 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. Salim Ahmed SALIM
(United Republic of Tanzania).

Address by His Excellency Mr. Ziaur Rahman,
President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1. The PRESIDENT: This morning, the Assembly will hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ziaur Rahman, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome him to the United Nations and to invite him to address the Assembly.

2. President RAHMAN:¹ I bring the Assembly the warm greetings of the people of Bangladesh. My presence here today reflects the importance which Bangladesh attaches to the eleventh special session of the United Nations General Assembly. The road to this special session has indeed been long and painful. The years since the sixth and seventh special sessions have seen very little progress towards the establishment of a new international economic order. Far from seeing the differences between the rich and the poor narrowing down, we find that the gulf between them has further widened.

3. Why is it that, in spite of our common commitment to the principles of the Charter and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [*General Assembly resolution 217 A (III)*], our commitment to the basic human rights of freedom from hunger and want, to promoting higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development, we have made so little progress so far?

4. Why is it that, once we had committed ourselves unanimously to the goals and objectives of the First and Second United Nations Development Decades, the number of the poor and hungry, instead of decreasing, has considerably increased?

5. What is it that makes this most august body, the General Assembly, pledge itself in countless resolutions every year to promote international peace and security, and yet ignore what constitutes the single biggest threat to international peace and security?

6. What are the compulsions under which global defence expenditure has climbed to nearly \$500 billion a year while the flow of economic assistance in real terms has been steadily on the decline?

7. What should we say to the hundreds of millions spread throughout the world, the deprived, the hungry, the destitute, the wretched of this earth for whom day in and day out life is a ceaseless struggle for survival? Would you have us say: Yes, let our planet be divided into two worlds, one in which we accept a life-style based on wasteful consumption, using up precious non-renewable resources, polluting the environment and

creating an ecological imbalance, while on the same planet we have another world of squalor and misery, a world where children die of starvation and are bodily and mentally crippled by malnutrition, where people are doomed to a subhuman life haunted by poverty, disease and despair?

[The speaker continued in English]

8. We welcome the admission of Zimbabwe to the United Nations. Since Bangladesh had the privilege of being closely associated with the Lusaka initiative, it naturally hails the emergence of Zimbabwe as an independent, sovereign State.

9. Mankind has made remarkable progress during the course of this century. The days of colonialism have all but ended. Membership in the United Nations has increased nearly threefold during the past 35 years. The advances in the fields of science and technology, medicine and communication are indeed phenomenal. We have explored the depths of the oceans and the mysteries of outer space. Yet I should like to remind representatives of what was said in this very hall by a former President of the United States two decades ago:

"But the mysteries of outer space must not divert our eyes or our energies from the harsh realities that face our fellowmen. Political sovereignty is but a mockery, without the means of meeting poverty, illiteracy and disease. Self-determination is but a slogan if the future holds no hope."²

10. During the three and a half decades since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, we have been working towards a better world, a better future for both the rich and the poor. The Charter and the evolution of the entire United Nations system are based on the concept of global interdependence and co-operation. Why did we opt for global interdependence? What was the rationale behind it? Because we wanted collectively to maintain international peace and security, to build a world ensuring freedom, human dignity and justice; because the evolution of international society has made it manifest, more than ever before, that most problems today are closely linked and global in character, and that there can be no piecemeal solutions to these problems. Just as there can be no fragmentation of peace, there can be no fragmentation of the world into segments of rich and poor, without a serious threat to peace. If we believe in the community of mankind, we must accept mutual obligations and responsibilities towards that community.

11. But there are far more compelling arguments in favour of global co-operation, as has been forcefully brought out in the report of the Brandt Commission.³ We commend Mr. Brandt and the other members of the

²See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Plenary Meetings*, vol. I, 1013th meeting, para. 72.

³*North-South: A program for survival*: report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues under the chairmanship of Willy Brandt (Cambridge, Massachusetts, the MIT Press, 1980).

¹President Rahman spoke in Bengali. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

Commission for their understanding of the global problems and their constructive proposals for overcoming them. What is particularly significant is that that report demonstrates that it is to the mutual advantage of both the North and the South to establish a New International Economic Order. The concessions that the North is required to make in the fields of trade, finance, transfer of resources and technology have been suggested, not out of any sense of altruism, nor by way of compensating the South for the past misdeeds during the colonial era, but because it is in the interest of the North to do so.

12. I would venture to say that the mutuality of interests has many facets. It is not simply a case of helping to build the purchasing power of the South so that the North may off-load more and more of its surplus exports. While there are, no doubt, very convincing economic arguments, we must not for a moment ignore the far-reaching political implications. Less than a year ago at the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana from 3 to 9 September 1979, the late President Tito reminded us that:

"Security, peace and stability in the world can hardly be ensured without fundamental changes in present international economic relations which expose the developing countries to discrimination and inequality. The material resources at man's disposal, instead of promoting the welfare and harmonious development of all, are being made to do just the opposite. Unequal economic relations are becoming an increasingly dangerous source of new complications and conflicts."

13. Can there really be any doubt in the mind of anyone that peace is indivisible? Does the North believe that it can immunize itself from the turbulence and the cataclysms originating in the South; that in its half there will be peace, progress and prosperity, while in ours there will be war, deprivation and stagnation?

14. The recommendations of the Brandt Commission are balanced and realistic. We find great force and reason in the proposal for a special action programme for the least developed countries and also in the proposals for increasing food production; achieving a satisfactory balance between population and natural resources; taxing armaments and increasing efforts to control disarmament; strengthening co-operation among the countries of the South, including regional co-operation for the greater participation by those countries in the processing, marketing and distribution of their commodities; establishing an international strategy on energy; industrializing the developing countries; removing tariff barriers; establishing an international trade organization; reforming the world monetary order and adopting a new approach to development finance. Of course, where we find it necessary, we can agree to some modifications. But we must act, and act quickly.

15. What is it that moves us to speak with such urgency? Why this sense of desperation? We feel so desperate because of the escalation in the arms race. The current global military expenditure is nearly \$500 billion a year, and is increasing at the rate of \$40 billion annually. By contrast, official development assistance is on the decline and is today less than 5 per cent of the amount spent on armaments. The economic picture for the developing countries as a whole fills us with foreboding and gloom. The combined foreign debt of the developing countries is now in excess of \$300 billion. Forty billion dollars a year is spent on servicing the foreign debt, which accounts for more than 20 per cent

of the total exports of the developing countries. Partly owing to this and partly owing to the trade policies of the developed countries and the increase in the price of their products, the developing countries suffered a balance of payments deficit of \$45 billion in 1979. In 1980, this figure is likely to increase to \$60 billion.

16. The North, including the Eastern European countries, has a quarter of the world's population but commands four fifths of its income. Over 90 per cent of the world's manufacturing industry is in the North. The latest technological developments are jealously guarded by the transnational corporations of the North. Over a billion people in the South live in abject poverty; of these, over 400 million live on the verge of starvation. In 1978 alone, more than 12 million children under the age of 5 died of hunger. Unless some radical measures are adopted, the already grim state of affairs in the South can only grow worse.

17. In the midst of this picture of gloom and despair, we have a group of 30 countries classified by the United Nations as the least developed countries. The plight of these countries is, to say the least, frightening. The least developed countries have a total population of approximately 260 million people, or 13 per cent of the population of all developing countries. Whilst the *per capita* income among all developing countries increased from \$406 to \$505 during the period 1970-1977, in the case of the least developed countries the increase was a mere \$6, from \$133 in 1970 to \$139 in 1977. During this period, the average annual growth rate of *per capita* real gross domestic product at market prices for the developing countries was 3 per cent; in the case of the least developed countries, it was 0.2 per cent. According to the *World Development Report, 1979*, published by the World Bank, even assuming a most vigorous economic expansion in developing countries during the decade of the 1980s, the average income in these countries would be less than a twelfth of that in the industrialized countries; in the least developed countries, it would be less than one fortieth.

18. It is estimated that the *per capita* manufacturing output in the least developed countries will increase from \$7 in 1960 to \$20 in 1990; in the case of all developing countries, the corresponding figures are \$44 in 1960 and \$174 in 1990. It is estimated that agricultural production in the least developed countries will decline from \$69 *per capita* in 1960 to \$62 *per capita* in 1990. While the export performance of all developing countries has shown an upward trend in constant prices during the period 1970-1978, it has registered a decline in the case of the least developed countries.

19. Unless some drastic steps are taken without delay, we fear the situation will soon reach a breaking point for most of these countries. It is for this reason that we urge the international community to implement speedily the Immediate Action Programme adopted at the fifth session of UNCTAD,⁴ held at Manila, which aims at providing an immediate boost to the economies of the least developed countries. We would propose that as a first step the developed countries immediately double their economic assistance to the least developed countries as they have recently pledged to do. It is not merely the quantity of such assistance that matters; the quality is equally important. As much assistance as possible should be in the form of untied grants. While a number

⁴See *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fifth Session*, vol. I, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.II.D.14), part one, sect. A, resolution 122 (V).

of developed countries have written off their loans or provided debt relief to the least developed countries in accordance with the decision of the Trade and Development Board in 1978,⁵ some countries have lagged behind. We would urge these countries to implement this decision without any further delay. All tariff barriers should be removed, and a special effort should be made to enhance the volume of exports from these countries. International banking and financial institutions should provide assistance on a priority basis, and the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) should undertake to meet the entire requirement of the least developed countries for crude oil and petroleum products on special concessional terms. A special effort should also be made to absorb the surplus manpower from those countries.

20. What is it that we, the least developed countries, seek? To provide our people with the basic necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter, education and medicine. We want to be able to develop our own resources to the full. Many of us are rich in natural resources, but we lack either the know-how or the capital—frequently both—to develop these resources properly. According to the Brandt Commission, the total requirements to meet the annual development costs of the least developed countries would constitute less than 1 per cent of the present expenditure on armaments. For the price of one tank we could create storage facilities for 100,000 tons of rice; for the price of one jet fighter we could set up 40,000 village pharmacies.

21. We are told by our friends in the North that, much as they would like to co-operate with us, their hands are tied; their Governments have no mandate for making such far-reaching concessions; their Parliaments would not accept it; the electorates would not understand; their coffers are empty; and we should turn to the OPEC countries for salvation.

22. I would say in reply that we are prepared to help them to overcome these problems and obstacles in the same manner that the members of the Brandt Commission, led by Mr. Brandt himself, have done by speaking to a broad cross-section of people in the North. We shall be happy to send envoys, delegations, students and trade union leaders, journalists and educators who will go on lecture tours, who will speak and explain and, I hope, eventually convince their more prosperous colleagues that, if we cannot break the present impasse and do so speedily, the world will be faced with a disaster that would spare neither the rich nor the poor.

23. We must be honest with ourselves. If we can be of any help, let them please speak to us frankly. If we feel that the problem is essentially a political one and that the far-reaching decisions that are required are beyond the competence of this special session, then, by all means, let us have a summit. But, I urge the Assembly, let us not prevaricate, let us not find excuses for inaction, for we are sitting on a live volcano and time is of the very essence.

24. It is particularly important that the views of the least developed countries should be given careful consideration and that those countries should be allowed to participate in the decision-making bodies of the United Nations on an equal footing. Special efforts must be made to develop the resources of such countries so as to reduce their vulnerability to external pressure and

manipulation. Above all, it is essential that such countries should be allowed to build their own future without outside interference or intervention.

25. It is hoped and expected that due attention will be given to incorporating the substantial action programme for the least developed countries, adopted at Manila, into the international development strategy and that the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, which is scheduled to take place next year, will be able to spell out in detail this programme and the ways and means of implementing it. In preparing for that Conference, we in Bangladesh have already undertaken detailed studies and the formulation of a special programme, which will be geared to the accelerated development of Bangladesh. In the meantime, it is essential that concrete measures should be adopted without delay within the purview of the Immediate Action Programme.

26. The Assembly will bear with me if I say a few words about Bangladesh, which accounts for one third of the population of the least developed countries. Twice as densely populated as Japan and the Netherlands, Bangladesh today has one of the lowest *per capita* incomes in the world. Over 50 per cent of the population is either unemployed or made up of landless peasants who are only seasonally employed. Every year we have 2 million more mouths to feed; more clothes, more schools, more homes to provide. Yet, we have not perished and we shall not perish. We are determined to double our food production in about five years. We shall cut down the birth rate from 2.5 per cent to 2 per cent by 1985. We shall build more schools and more hospitals; no man, woman or child will go without food, shelter or clothing. Our priority is agricultural and rural development. Our aim is to galvanize our entire population of nearly 90 million into action. Our commitment to the democratic process will not be shaken. Our motto is self-reliance. We must succeed because we cannot afford to fail.

27. Those objectives have been spelled out within the framework of our second five-year plan, which we have already launched. We welcome the wide-ranging support that has been extended by our friends for the fulfilment of the targets of the plan, but we are still far short of our requirements.

28. We have been doubly hit by the present world economic situation. We have to pay increasingly more for oil, on the one hand, and for imported capital goods and industrial raw materials, on the other. The cost of our import bill for oil and petroleum products will amount to more than 50 per cent of our total foreign exchange earnings. The cost of oil imports to the least developed countries was estimated at approximately \$600 million in 1976. This year, Bangladesh alone will spend close to that amount to meet its crude oil requirements. I have taken the liberty of proposing that OPEC as a whole should assume concrete responsibility for the oil bill of the least developed countries, and we have all noted the decisions by Venezuela and Mexico to make available oil at concessional terms to the poorest countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region. I should like further to propose that an international consortium be established with the support of both the developed and the OPEC countries with a view to developing the energy resources of the least developed countries. We gratefully acknowledge the generous assistance already extended by OPEC countries, bilaterally and through the OPEC Fund, to the least developed countries. Assistance from the OPEC Fund amounted to \$263 million as of January 1980. There is particular

⁵See *Official Records of the Trade and Development Board, Ninth Special Session, Supplement No. 1* (TD/B/701), resolution 165 (S-IX).

appreciation for this assistance because we recognize that oil is a non-renewable resource and that the OPEC countries are developing countries and have to make optimum use of their oil revenues to develop their own economies.

29. We also welcome the growing interest among some of the States members of OPEC in investing part of their substantial assets in the developing countries. The proposal of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for recycling petrodollars in the third world and its readiness to participate in international measures to support such reinvestment by undertaking to minimize the investment risk to the OPEC countries is an extremely constructive proposal deserving careful study.

30. I have dwelt at length on the least developed countries, and on the need for special attention being devoted to them, not because it is my intention to deflect attention from the problems of the developing world as a whole but because in many cases the needs and requirements of the least developed countries are different. Therefore, the solutions which we seek must also differ. But our belief in and conviction of the need for a New International Economic Order are unshakable. We very much appreciate the support that our more fortunate brethren in the developing world have given to the special efforts and programmes directed at assisting the least developed countries. We are confident that such support will be forthcoming in an increasing measure from all countries, both developing and developed, East and West, North and South.

31. In recent years we have seen an abundance of ideas directed at solving the problems of mankind. We must conserve the world's limited resources; that much has now been clearly established. We must increase food production and wipe out the scourges of poverty and hunger; on that we are all agreed. There are no dissenting voices when we speak of a fair price for the products of the South. It is indeed heartening that after all these years of painful negotiations we have finally given life to the Common Fund for Commodities. No matter that the size of the Fund is much smaller than what we had originally envisaged: we have—albeit hesitantly—taken an important step forward towards the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

32. But we must not stop there. It is essential that we apply ourselves to seeking ways and means to cross the other hurdles, in the fields of energy, trade, industry, financial institutions, employment, transfer of technology, food and agriculture and the transfer of resources. Without a massive transfer of resources, we think it unlikely that many of us from the South, particularly the least developed countries, will be able to break out of the vicious circle of poverty in which we find ourselves trapped. In addition to a sizeable increase in official development assistance from the industrialized countries, including those with centrally planned economies, we should consider an international system of revenue mobilization through taxation of international trade and expenditure on arms. We should also consider imposing a tax on the super-rich, both in the North and in the South. Hundreds of thousands of foreign nationals, particularly from the developing world, are employed in different parts of the globe. These foreign nationals generally pay income tax to the host Governments only. A percentage of that tax should be returned to the country of the foreign national. Special levies should be imposed on the transnational corporations and a substantial part of the income to be derived from the extraction of minerals from the sea-bed should also be made available to the South. We fully support

the idea for a world development fund put forward in the Brandt Commission's report. It is also desirable that a comprehensive reorganization of international institutions, including the United Nations and its specialized agencies, be undertaken with a view to implementing better the structural and functional changes which will result from the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

33. To sum up, I should like to propose the implementation of the following concrete measures which I feel will greatly alleviate the present problems in the South, in particular among the poorest countries.

34. First, the South should extend all possible co-operation in informing and educating public opinion in the North about the need for a New International Economic Order.

35. Second, the developed countries, including those with centrally planned economies, should immediately double their official development assistance to the least developed countries and provide such assistance in the form of untied grants.

36. Third, OPEC countries should effect a 50 per cent reduction in the price of oil for the least developed countries.

37. Fourth, an international consortium should be established to develop the energy resources of the least developed countries.

38. Fifth, OPEC countries should, with the possible participation of developed countries, invest a part of their assets in the developing countries.

39. Sixth, there should be a massive transfer of resources from the North to the South through taxation of international trade and arms expenditure.

40. Seventh, the North should compensate the South for the services of its manpower now making a positive contribution to the economies of the North.

41. Eighth, special levies should be imposed on transnational corporations, and the super-rich should pay a special tax to help the poor in the South.

42. Ninth, the United Nations, its specialized agencies, IMF and IBRD should be reorganized and restructured so as better to serve the interest of the developing countries, including the creation of appropriate institutions to implement the action programme for the least developed countries.

43. Tenth, a world development fund, with universal membership, should be established; it would receive the world-wide levies and would be responsible for the allocation and proper utilization of those funds.

44. The deterioration of the international situation due to foreign military intervention in the region, far and near, is totally incompatible with the objectives of the New International Economic Order. There is an imperative need for the concentration of efforts on national development and internal stability, as well as regional peace and co-operation. It was in this context that Bangladesh recently proposed a South Asian summit conference. We find that, while regional co-operation has successfully struck roots in different parts of the world, there have been no serious efforts to promote co-operation among the countries of South Asia on a regional basis. Our first objective will be to get together and explore the possible areas of co-operation for the mutual benefit of all the countries of the region. We have seen elsewhere in the world how regional co-operation has helped to remove tensions and soften the position of adversaries in the common interest. It is time we made a start in South Asia.

45. I hope I have succeeded in conveying my anguish and agony, which I have no doubt are shared by many of the representatives present here. I can only agree with Mr. Brandt when he says:

"The shaping of our common future is much too important to be left to governments and experts alone. Therefore, our appeal goes to youth, to women's and labour movements; to political, intellectual and religious leaders; to scientists and educators; to technicians and managers; to members of the rural and business communities. May they all try to understand and to conduct their affairs in the light of this new challenge."⁶

46. We must face the challenge of the contemporary world. The need of the hour is for bold and imaginative action. We will not find solutions if we cling to outdated concepts and institutions. We must act in concert and work for a better and nobler life for all sectors of the family of mankind. The nations of the world, taken together, have the resources and technology to achieve that goal. Along the path of co-operation, that goal can be attained much faster than many would believe. Reasons of both economic and political security dictate that we follow that path. I sincerely hope and pray that we make the right choice at the right time.

47. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank His Excellency the President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the important statement he has just made.

AGENDA ITEM 7

Assessment of the progress made in the establishment of the new international economic order and appropriate action for the promotion of the development of developing countries and international economic co-operation (continued):

- (a) New international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade;
- (b) Global negotiations relating to international economic co-operation for development;
- (c) Other matters

48. The PRESIDENT: As I announced yesterday afternoon [2nd meeting], I should like to propose that the list of speakers be closed tomorrow, Wednesday, 27 August, at 12 noon. May I take it that the Assembly agrees to that proposal?

It was so decided.

49. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members that I have received a request from the Secretary-General of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women to present the relevant recommendations of that Conference. May I take it that the Assembly concurs with that request?

It was so decided.

50. Mr. THORN (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, allow me, in my dual capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg and as acting President of the Council of the European Community, to discharge a very pleasant task—that of telling you how much we have admired your *savoir-faire* during your very full presidency. This compliment is not mere words, since it is addressed to you by one who scarcely five years ago experienced the same great

enthusiasm, anguish and hope in presiding over the work of our General Assembly.

51. So far you have presided over three sessions of the General Assembly with a confidence that redounds to the honour not only of your person but also, through you, of your country and, beyond that, of that land of Africa that is dear to us because of the close links that the European Community has with the majority of its States. Now you are at the beginning of the eleventh special session of the General Assembly of our Organization, and the fourth session to your credit. It is an important session that carries with it the hopes of the international community because of its agenda, which deals with questions that are of an overriding importance to North-South relations and the world economy. Rest assured of our full and complete co-operation.

52. As for the Secretary-General, he has long been aware of my feelings for him. Rather than repeating how much we esteem him and how much we appreciate his tireless work for peace and co-operation among peoples, I would prefer to borrow a proverb from our Chinese friends which says that better than a speech a single small word expresses one's feelings. That is why I simply say to him, "Thanks".

53. I have another pleasant task to discharge: that of bidding welcome to this great family of the United Nations to its 153rd Member, Zimbabwe. Thanks above all to the determination and tenacity of its people, and thanks also to the perspicacity of our British friends and the African countries most directly concerned, that country, which for too long was torn by fratricidal war, has just found its well-deserved place among all of those who in our world community wage a daily struggle for peace, human dignity and the right to existence for all the human beings of our earth.

54. The member countries of the European Community, on behalf of which I have the honour to speak, hold out a truly fraternal hand to Zimbabwe, and are ready to offer it honest, friendly collaboration, as has been witnessed by the measures we have already taken in favour of that country in view of its forthcoming accession to the Lomé Convention.⁷

55. Convened as we are for the eleventh special session of the General Assembly, which is devoted to development, we are called upon to evaluate together in the days ahead, in a global perspective, the progress made in establishing a new, more just and more equitable economic order and to give international co-operation a new impetus.

56. I think we are all aware that in the extremely difficult political and economic circumstances currently facing the world community, the North-South dialogue is of exceptional importance for the stability of international relations. We cannot simply let the existing gap between rich and poor countries grow from year to year without running the serious risk of a disruption of the political situation.

57. No one can gainsay the fact that over these last years we have achieved, in the mutual relations between developed and developing countries, significant results which have enabled us to make progress towards the objectives of a new, more just and more equitable economic order.

58. The almost uninterrupted dialogue which has been going on now for more than a decade in the various international forums dealing with development has

⁶See *North-South: A program for survival* . . . , p. 29.

⁷Signed on 28 February 1975.

brought about a better understanding of the reciprocal problems and has generated a collective awareness and an intellectual effort at the level of the international community as a whole.

59. I should like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, headed by Mr. Willy Brandt. The report of that Commission has made a particularly valuable contribution to a better understanding of the flagrant inequalities in development—inequalities incompatible with peace and progress in the world—and has given us food for thought which should contribute to positive results in our work.

60. Of course, progress in the North-South dialogue has been slow. The Community has never denied that fact; indeed, we too regret it. But, obviously, we should be aware that the scope of the problems posed by a restructuring of international economic relations and by the inevitable narrowing of conceptual positions which that implies does not enable us to attain that goal right away. At the same time, we should be aware of the justified impatience—if not anguish—of millions of human beings suffering want. It is precisely the task of the Assembly at this session to respond to that anguish by opening—or trying to open—the way to new progress. A concrete and realistic approach cannot, unfortunately, simply ignore the present international economic climate, which imposes constraints, but which, above all, imposes particular priorities.

61. Without going into a detailed analysis of this situation, I wish nonetheless to point out that, since the notion of global negotiations was launched in 1979, the world economic situation has further deteriorated; and this situation, far from being on the way to recovery, has been complicated by the recent repeated increases in oil prices.

62. The industrialized countries too are confronted by this situation; they are beset by resurgent inflation, increased pressures on their balance of payments situation, the threat of a recession and the risk of the unemployment situation becoming worse even if the inflation rate can be contained. But it must be stressed that the burden of the situation weighs most heavily and most tragically on the oil-importing developing countries. In 1980 they will be facing a balance of payments deficit of more than \$70 billion, and for many of them the indebtedness level has already attained alarming proportions. Those countries are confronted by truly insoluble problems, if not, as far as the weakest of them are concerned, a virtual wiping out of their prospects for growth and economic progress.

63. For a number of developing countries, those problems are compounded by hunger and malnutrition, the seriousness of which requires prompt efforts on the part of the international community to remedy the sufferings of the populations concerned. President Rahman has just referred to this most eloquently. The European Community has demonstrated by its policy the importance it attaches to that problem. The Community considers it indispensable, indeed, that they be taken up in the global negotiations, and it has made proposals to that effect. It welcomes the fact that a consensus seems to be emerging in this respect at least. Indeed, the global negotiations which we talk about so much would, I dare say, lose a great part of their substance if they failed to tackle that problem.

64. It is clear—indeed, it should be blindingly clear—that today no country or group of countries can ignore the growing interdependence which binds all States:

each one has its own responsibility within the international community—a responsibility which must be reconciled with that of its own development.

65. The European Community is striving to face its own difficulties at the present time, and it does so in the interest of the entire international community. As the European Council confirmed at its meeting, held on 12 and 13 June 1980 at Venice, the struggle against inflation remains top priority for the Nine. It has also implemented a programme to reduce the Community's energy consumption in the years to come and to develop its energy potential, particularly through the search for alternative energy sources. Through the European monetary system, the Nine have been contributing to monetary stability throughout the world.

66. Nevertheless, we cannot make the industrialized market-economy countries bear sole responsibility for the growth of the world economy and development assistance. This responsibility should be fairly and equitably shared among all members of the international community, and particularly by the oil-producing countries, which bear special responsibility in this regard.

67. There is no denying that our Community has especially regretted the brutal, sudden nature of the oil price increases decided upon by OPEC, which have inflicted an excessive jolt on the world economy, and which have had an undeniable impact on the economic capacity of the developed countries and are thereby liable, quite logically, to affect their policy on co-operation for development.

68. Similarly, the industrialized countries with planned economies, which are more and more being incorporated into the network of world-wide economic interdependence, must bear their share of the responsibility as well. Their attitude of being exempt from the burden of international co-operation for development is becoming less and less understandable and less and less defensible. That is why the European Community is convinced that one of the conditions for the success of the global negotiations is the effective participation in them by all the groups of countries concerned: the industrialized countries, both market-economy and planned-economy countries, as well as oil-importing and oil-exporting developing countries. I wish to make an urgent appeal to that effect in this Assembly, while confirming the clear will of the Community to assume its own responsibilities in the present negotiations.

69. One way of ensuring from the outset that the global negotiations have the best chance of success would be to work out beforehand an unequivocal agreement among ourselves relating not only to the objectives but to the agenda and to the procedure for those negotiations. All those aspects, as we know or should know, are closely linked. In that regard, I should like to recall the approach taken by the Community: we base ourselves on General Assembly resolution 34/138, which, in our view, is a balanced and well-considered compromise by which we should take into consideration all elements without over-emphasizing some and neglecting others.

70. On the basis of my comments on the present and foreseeable situation of the world economy, we believe that, in the interest of all, the goals of the negotiations should be: on the one hand, to seek ways and means of enabling the world economy to break out of its recession and to regain a quicker growth rate; and, on the other hand, within the framework of restructuring international economic relations towards a more just and equitable economic order, to find a solution to the most

urgent problems on which the development of the third world depends.

71. The ideas of mutual advantage, common interest and shared responsibilities, which in the final analysis are the basis of all international relations, should prompt us to define a negotiating platform that will reflect the basic concerns of all parties, in particular the poorest countries. That negotiating platform should be realistic and concrete. At all costs we must avoid falling back into the errors of the past while trying to tackle too broad a range of questions; this can lead us only to stalemate and frustration.

72. This necessary—this imperative—selectiveness should not, however, cause us to neglect the global character of the negotiations, but must allow an approach to the problems that would take account of their intrinsic relationships while excluding none of the five great themes included in resolution 34/138.

73. The Community has furthermore agreed to hold the discussions on the basis of the agenda proposed by the Group of 77. In the final phase of the preparatory work, while retaining our previous proposals, we drew up a list of subjects which we feel might form a useful contribution to a compromise.

74. We consider that real progress has in fact been made in the course of the preparatory work which provides an adequate basis for the quest for an agreement within this Assembly. At the last meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the New International Development Strategy, the spokesman for our Community strove to draw up a balance-sheet for this work, highlighting the points on which a broad consensus exists, the areas where agreement is near, as well as the questions where major divergences remain. Without wishing to establish a hierarchy among the difficulties which remain at the present time, it seems to us that acceptable compromises could be arrived at more easily on all the questions which remain open if satisfactory solutions could be found for the difficulties which remain in the following areas.

75. Concerning energy, the Community considers that that problem should be approached comprehensively and in depth. In a balanced agenda, an essential element of concern to the whole of the international community would be lacking if we were to ignore the question of forecasting supply, demand and costs of energy. But there are also monetary and financial questions which are a very difficult subject, closely linked to that of the negotiating procedures.

76. Finally, there are the negotiating procedures themselves; this is one of the crucial points which we will have to resolve during this session, and all of whose modalities should be clearly defined even before the commencement of negotiations. It is above all a question of reconciling the global nature of the negotiations with respect for the areas of competence of the specialized agencies in the United Nations system. This means that we must find an appropriate balance—and this may be the decisive point—between the central body and the role of those specialized agencies, whose areas of competence and whose decision-making powers should, to our mind, be fully respected.

77. The Community will approach the negotiations which will take place in the days to come in the same spirit as that which motivated it during the preparatory work, when, I believe, it demonstrated its will for compromise, its desire to see a major, ambitious collective goal set for the global negotiations which would not be limited only to the defence of the interests of one or

another group of countries, but would take truly into consideration those of the international community as a whole, while favouring—if anyone at all is to be favoured—the poorest members of that community. The Community also demonstrated its readiness, while responding to the most urgent of the problems brought forward by the present situation, not to cleave to short-term measures—for we must not confuse urgent with short-term measures—but to consider also a number of medium-term and long-term measures imposed by the necessary restructuring of international economic relations.

78. The new international development strategy, which we are called upon to adopt during the present session, is of particular importance for the future of relations between the developing and developed world to the extent that it represents the will of the international community to make progress in the achievement of the fundamental objectives of development: to improve the economic growth and the well-being of peoples in development, especially the poorest of them, and to work for the establishment of more equitable international economic relations.

79. The Community considers that the aims that will finally be decided on for this strategy must be sufficiently ambitious to encourage action, and yet must take adequate account of the economic realities so as not to raise hopes which will subsequently prove vain.

80. The present strategy should offer us as complete a view as possible of all the short-term, medium-term and long-term questions affecting the world economy. It should not limit itself to the economic and social objectives of development during the coming decade, but should seek to understand the factors which cloud the world economic situation and which cast doubt on the prospects for development of the third world. The strategy, then, should provide us with an effective framework for the required modification, both in the medium and the long term, of the structure and means of action of the international economy to create a lasting basis for the regular, balanced and equitable development of all countries.

81. Finally, it should allow the mobilization of public opinion, both in the developed countries and the developing countries, promoting greater awareness of the longer-term problems affecting the development of the least favoured countries, the solution of which will determine the future of relations between the northern and southern hemispheres of our planet.

82. For our part, we are aware that the preparatory work for this strategy has proved to be extremely arduous, bearing in mind the need to seek, in the light of past experience, a new approach to the problems being tackled. Yet this work has enabled us to make substantial progress on a great number of points and has enabled us to reach tangible results, since we have now come to many, and major, points of agreement.

83. Other questions have not yet been solved at this stage, and certain of them should be examined in conjunction with discussions on the agenda of the global negotiations. There was awareness of this when the General Assembly resolution on the global negotiations was adopted, to the extent that the Assembly indicated that the negotiations should have among their goals the implementation of the new strategy. It is important, therefore, that the discussions that we will be having in the coming days on each of these two matters should not make us forget the need to maintain an overall vision

and to reach conclusions that will ensure consistency between these two exercises.

84. The texts that are before our Assembly seem to us to provide an excellent point of departure for this exercise, for they have the advantage of having identified—and identified with precision—the items on which differences still exist among us. Now, without wishing to underestimate either the magnitude or the implications of those differences, we nevertheless consider that, here again, there is still some leeway and that agreement should be possible, possible to the extent that each party shows itself to be prepared to give due consideration to the concerns and the limitations of the other partners.

85. We have noted with great interest the suggestions presented to the Economic and Social Council by the Secretary-General aiming at the speedy adoption of measures intended to alleviate the very serious difficulties suffered by some low-income developing countries as a result of their balance of payments situations. We would like to assure the Assembly that these proposals will be examined by the Nine with all the attention they deserve and should be quickly taken into consideration by the international community within an appropriate framework.

86. The European Council, which met at Venice two months ago, reaffirmed the political commitment of the Community to the North-South dialogue and to the revival of co-operation with the developing countries. For our Community, this is no mere verbal commitment, but is a fundamental idea—a permanent idea—of its policy on which it acts concretely in its daily practice.

87. Is there any need to recall, in particular, that the Community is linked to the great majority of the developing countries by a network of contractual relations unprecedented both in number and in substance? The Lomé Convention is the most complete example of this, as it is based on the joint quest for predictability and security. This co-operation, based on ideas of shared responsibility, mutual advantage and permanent dialogue between equal partners, is one of the essential components of our Community policy in North-South relations. The European Community is convinced that it can thus make an appreciable contribution to the aspirations of the third world to establish a new type of relationship between the developing and the industrialized countries.

88. It is on the basis of this very clear and very staunch political commitment of our Heads of State and Government that the Nine will approach this special session of the General Assembly. The Community is aware that its future is indissolubly linked with that of the developing world.

89. Mr. TALBOYS (New Zealand): Mr. President, I should like to say first how delighted I am that you are guiding our deliberations. We all know that, with the reputation you have won for fairness and firmness, we are in good hands.

90. I want to say, too, how pleased I was to be here at yesterday morning's meeting to help to welcome Zimbabwe, a fellow Commonwealth member, into this community of nations. I join other representatives in offering New Zealand's warmest congratulations to Prime Minister Mugabe.

91. For the third time in six years we are meeting in a special session of the General Assembly devoted to development and international economic co-operation. That is what this session is about. But what we are equally concerned with is politics—domestic politics no

less than international. Whatever we decide here, whatever we set in motion, we shall first have to convince the men and women of our own countries—they are the ones who will benefit or be hurt—that what we propose to do is essential if they and their children are to enjoy the increased prosperity and opportunities that they are seeking.

92. The past six years have been a time of inflation, economic stagnation and growing unemployment throughout the world. These have resulted in worldwide economic dislocation and social tensions. Inevitably, then, people have looked to Governments for answers. They want Governments to protect what they still have and to provide the opportunities that they need, but that the economic crisis denies them. Most Governments have responded in the traditional way. And yet, if anything is clear, it is that the traditional answers to problems of economic management and development are not working. And so long as we remain committed to those old answers, we are all going to have to live with the consequences. But that, as we all know, is not good enough.

93. So we are all groping towards new national economic orders of one sort or another. Inevitably we have learned that a substantial reordering of the framework of international economic relations is a vital part—indeed often a prerequisite—of movement at the national level. That could, but must not, become an excuse for doing nothing at the national level. It is here that the basic decisions will have to be taken.

94. Action taken by one country to restructure aspects of its management or trading system, however vigorous that action may be, will have little effect unless there are matching actions by others. Economists have often enough talked about the interdependence of the world economy. Now we are learning that without growth in the developing world there is not going to be much further growth in the developed world. The needs of developing countries have to be taken into account in a way they never have been before. The state of their economies and the well-being of their people will increasingly determine the health of the global economy.

95. Economists believe this, and most Governments do. What is lacking at this time is the public understanding that will be essential if the ideas are to be acted upon. It is not just a matter of deciding on a course of action and then following it. There must be public awareness of today's realities and acceptance of the decisions to be taken in their name. In all the remedies that have been proposed as solutions to our economic problems there are risks and uncertainties. These are unavoidable. But they must be understood and agreed to by the people who will be affected; by the men and women of our countries who will in the longer term reap the benefits—just as, even more surely, they will suffer the economic and social consequences if we resist change.

96. The goals we have set out for this session are ambitious: to finalize and adopt an international development strategy and to launch a new round of global negotiations on issues critical to the future development of the world economy.

97. Neither of these exercises is simply about economics and development. They are in essence about politics—about political will and political vision. That will and that vision are required of all of us here, regardless of degree of wealth or poverty and regardless of political system. If this session is to have a constructive outcome, then we must all show a degree of

far-sightedness, of internationalism, of flexibility, a degree of plain common sense far beyond what has been evident over the past 30 years.

98. The strategy for the decade is called "international". The negotiations are called "global". These are bold terms, but they will sound hollow unless we are prepared to give them real meaning. The situation facing us all means that each of us must recognize the economic and political realities that others face. One of those realities is that the wealthy industrialized nations, of whatever persuasion, are not going to discard policies and practices that have helped to bring them that affluence and that development unless change brings tangible benefits for their people too. That is the reality of politics.

99. But there is another reality, one that has to be faced by the economically powerful and the politically cautious. It is that the consequences of not moving on these important questions before us will have serious and far-reaching implications for the welfare of people everywhere. I believe that it is precisely at this time, when the shortcomings and inequities of the old system are plain to all of us, that we should be prepared to set out on the difficult task of taking the basic decisions to modify structures, systems, and institutions.

100. The adaptation of international institutions to make them flexible and effective—more responsive to the needs of a changing world—will not be achieved overnight. The existing system is not about to be overturned. That is not the way of international politics, and neither would it be realistic to look for radical and dramatic changes in the attitudes of world leaders of any grouping, whatever their outlook. The global round will not be and cannot be a complete substitute for the slow process of negotiation of complex problems in specialized international forums. But what we can expect is that, with vision and will, the global round will give those other discussions new momentum and will facilitate agreements in areas to which we all attach importance.

101. There is no area in which a mutuality of interest is more evident than international trade. Developing countries know that the capacity of industrialized countries to import their goods and to transfer resources is related to the health of the industrialized economies. For their part, the industrial countries know that their own opportunities to increase exports, and thus help to solve their own economic problems, are related to the economic growth of the developing world. That growth in turn depends on the willingness of the industrialized to open their markets to the commodities and, increasingly, the manufactures of others, with all the readjustment, even disruption, that that may involve.

102. And yet protectionism is clearly on the increase. Euphemisms are coined to disguise it. We hear so much of so-called voluntary restraints, of orderly marketing arrangements, of tariff escalation or variable levies, of counter-cyclical measures, of striving for self-sufficiency in food or in other sectors. Much of this is said to be in the interests of the consumer. Yet it is most often the consumer who suffers, directly through price rises and indirectly by subsidizing domestic producers and thus calling on resources that could be used more productively elsewhere in those economies. Sometimes it seems to me that policies are almost deliberately designed to produce what a country does not need, in order to subsidize the commodity into other countries, even at the expense of third countries which can produce that commodity more effectively and more cheaply. There is something fundamentally wrong with a policy

that calls for the payment of billions of dollars in supports and subsidies to keep that policy stuttering along from one year to the next, when those resources could be used for restructuring and providing new opportunities for people currently denied them.

103. It is imperative for the global negotiations to help redress that basic imbalance in international trade—the existence of one set of rules for industrial products and another for agricultural products. My country, an efficient producer of temperate agricultural products, suffers in one way; tropical agricultural producers suffer in another. The imbalance which results has not been effectively tackled in any of the negotiations on trade liberalization. GATT continues to apply principles to agricultural trade different from those applied to trade in manufactures. It bases the case for differential treatment on the spurious grounds that agricultural protectionism largely takes the form of price supports rather than more overt trade restrictions. But the effects are often devastating on both temperate and tropical producers.

104. It is my view that a more determined and sustained effort to liberalize agricultural trade is essential. It is up to GATT to face up to the challenges of today's world, to demonstrate that it has the flexibility and the capacity to accommodate the legitimate concerns of all countries, and to develop its structures and expertise to handle their concerns.

105. But it is not only in agricultural trade that greater liberalization is needed; it is no less necessary to improve conditions of market access for the products of all sectors. We in New Zealand are taking what are to us painful but necessary steps to restructure sectors of our economy in order to increase efficiency and thereby increase our trading capacity. This adjustment will provide new trading opportunities for other countries. If we are to be encouraged to proceed further in this direction we need evidence that we will in our turn benefit from restructuring elsewhere.

106. A positive example of what can be achieved at the regional level in trade and economic co-operation is the new South-Pacific-Australia-New Zealand Regional Trade Agreement recently negotiated among South Pacific countries, including my own. This provides for duty-free, unrestricted entry into the markets of Australia and New Zealand of a wide range of exports from our South Pacific partners. The benefits are non-reciprocal. The agreement is a relatively modest arrangement and it is certainly not the first or the only one of its kind. The importance we attach to it is that it acknowledges that none can stand alone, that we cannot solve our own problems except in co-operation with others.

107. This applies equally in the field of energy. Nearly all of us have had to cope with the stresses caused by uncertainties of oil supply and mounting trade deficits as the cost of this commodity, so vital to our economies, has risen. In the fullness of time, of course, it may come to be accepted that the trauma of these events has not been without benefit. None too soon it has been brought home that conservation of this non-renewable resource is essential. It is in the interests of producers and consumers alike that the search for alternative and renewable energy sources should command global support and global collaboration.

108. The need to conserve energy shapes economic policy-making in many sectors of many countries. But the commitment to conservation is not as strong as it could be or should be. New Zealand agriculture is less

energy-intensive than that of other temperate agricultural producers, but despite this we see the perpetuation of protectionist agricultural policies, and even the introduction of new ones, by major countries whose economies are energy-intensive. This, I suggest, stands in direct contradiction to commitments about energy conservation. The energy crisis has, in this way, added a new dimension to the theory and to the fact of comparative advantage.

109. My country has introduced measures for energy conservation which have resulted in a 7 per cent reduction in liquid fuel consumption. We are at the same time fortunate that we are in a position to increase our energy self-sufficiency by exploiting our own resources. We are therefore investing heavily in a long-term programme of energy development. Regrettably, that option is not open to all, and the short-term difficulties facing even those of us who have significant potential resources will remain acute. We know that this is recognized by the oil-producing States and, for our part, we understand the long-term concerns which have led them to control this resource in the interests of their economies. What we seek from them is a recognition of the vital global interest involved in reaching an accommodation between producers and consumers. The global negotiations may not prove to be the most appropriate forum for discussing in detail the many issues that must be resolved. But we must trust that, with the evidence already given by members of OPEC of their willingness to sit down and talk about a range of energy questions, our deliberations will lead to the establishment of a framework within which producers and consumers will be able to develop understandings on all internationally traded energy supplies.

110. There will have to be some hard thinking about the implications of the present world monetary and financial situation. Many industrialized countries are building up very large deficits. Developing countries without oil are already carrying a crushing burden of debt. There are countries which cannot afford to borrow because they cannot service their present borrowing. It is debatable whether the international banking system and the private sector will be able to cope with recycling on the necessary scale; thus, the global negotiations offer an opportunity to take a fresh look at such aspects of world monetary and financial arrangements.

111. But the issue of monetary reform cannot be divorced from considerations related to the international trading system. The twin institutions of the International Monetary Fund and GATT were products of the immediate post-war situation. In GATT, some moves have been made, in the Tokyo Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, to adjust the system to meet changing conditions, and the new arrangement is now being put to the test. Because of the basic link, changes in the monetary order should parallel the evolution of the trading system. If the existing institutions show no flexibility or capacity to adjust, then the pressures to set up new bodies to complement, monitor or replace them will grow. The specialized forums and the Governments which make up their controlling bodies must adapt themselves to a world that is receptive to calls for restructuring.

112. It is against that background that we are looking to this special session to provide innovative and imaginative solutions to economic and social problems. The concept of an international development strategy is itself a unique contribution by the United Nations to our way of thinking about development and economic

co-operation. Twice before we have, through such a strategy, sought to provide a framework for efforts designed to achieve more rapid growth and a greater measure of economic justice for all countries. The draft strategy that this session has before it contains elements that many Governments will find difficult to accept. I am convinced, none the less, that a positive spirit of accommodation will prevail in the remaining work on the strategy and that, at the end, a document will emerge to which all can subscribe as an expression of our collective political will.

113. Governments have turned to the United Nations in their search for effective solutions to the economic ills besetting us all. It has the potential, within its Charter, to serve as a catalytic agent for far-reaching economic and social change. But it will achieve nothing without the co-operation of its Member Governments, without their solid commitment to the goal of economic justice and fair opportunities for people everywhere. Many feel, I know, that the process of change during the years since the sixth special session has been too slow and the results to date unimpressive. Others are understandably reluctant to embark upon a process of change whose end results cannot be predicted. That is an attitude that must be overcome. What we achieve now will be measured not against the limited gains of the past five years, but against the goals we set for ourselves at this session and the acknowledgement by Governments and the people they represent of the necessity for change. We cannot afford, after another six years, to find that we are no further forward.

114. Mr. CALDERA (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, I should like to express to you, on behalf of the delegation of Venezuela, our cordial greetings and offer you our co-operation to ensure the success of this session.

115. These greetings are conveyed especially also to the delegation of Zimbabwe, which we are most pleased to see join us. The delegations here present of the Latin American countries that believe in democracy and freedom have expressly asked me to say on their behalf how pleased we all are at this event and to tell the Assembly that we trust that this new State Member of the Organization will work to ensure that the principles of freedom and justice, human dignity and full independence underlying the Charter of the United Nations will triumph.

116. It is with great pleasure that we see among us this new independent African State, born of the common efforts of its own people and of the steadfast support of the international community. This marks the culmination of a process which further highlights the critical situation in southern Africa, to whose proper solution the United Nations is fully committed.

117. We must also express our pleasure at the fact that the Latin American Economic System (SELA) has on the decision of this Assembly been admitted as an observer. This makes it possible for our peoples to be better represented in the struggle for a new international economic order.

118. Despite the growing and justifiable world-wide scepticism over the North-South dialogue, the duration of which has not been in due accord with its actual achievements, this eleventh special session of the General Assembly has attracted considerable attention in important quarters. To begin with, the Organization's persistent search for the true road to peace through understanding does it honour. But while we cannot forget that peace is inseparable from development, the latter will not be attained without substantial

changes in the terms of the international economic system.

119. This special session of the Assembly is meeting at a particularly critical moment, which makes absolutely essential its success in achieving the goals for which it was convened: to assess the progress made in the search for a new international economic order; to launch in the clearest terms the global negotiations to give concerted and effective direction for the North-South dialogue; and to adopt the new international development strategy, so that the countries of the third world can guarantee their peoples the opportunity to develop their own personality—the personality of the whole human being and of all human beings, so aptly put by Lebret.

120. My country, Venezuela, firmly believes in dialogue and, while aware of its limitations, is prepared in complete good faith to contribute to that dialogue whatever may be required to produce satisfactory results. As a developing country, Venezuela finds itself in a singular situation, which some do not wish to understand and others cannot understand, one in which it enjoys financial resources—dubbed by some as extraordinary—earned from the sale of energy resources whose non-renewability offers the prospect of their being sharply depleted in the not too distant future and whose operational aspects imply consequences hindering the very process of development and requiring harmonious consideration within the framework of appropriate international understanding.

121. It is well known that the majority of the oil-producing countries face fundamental shortages in the most basic aspects of human life; that, while the oil industry generates financial resources, it offers only minimal opportunities for direct employment; that its very profitability tends to raise the cost of other productive activities, especially agriculture; and that, under a régime of civil liberties, it promotes with alarming speed the growth of urban conglomerations to the point where the problem of marginality becomes enormously difficult to solve. Yet, at the same time, these oil-producing countries have shown, as never before in the history of international relations, their active willingness to co-operate economically with the other developing nations whose own problems are aggravated by the rising price of an energy resource that has been squandered or taken at incredibly low prices to serve the industrial development of the richest and most powerful nations in the world.

122. Venezuela agrees that there is a need for a new international economic order based on a clear philosophical concept: that of international social justice, which I have been advocating for over 30 years. We consider that, just as social justice has entered into internal relations as between employers and workers, landlords and tenants and creditors and debtors, so it must decisively enter the realm of international law, which is still largely viewed as a mere set of flexible rules whereby the obligations of some States towards others are measured on strictly equivalent terms.

123. The Government of Venezuela has maintained that international justice must become imbued with a firm sense of social justice, that economic co-operation does not consist of mere acts of benevolence, let alone paternalism, but that it must be based on the full awareness of the duty of each and every nation to all other nations in support of the international common good; that relations among countries—rich and poor, powerful and weak—cannot be measured in terms of mathematical equality; that law—and not an alleged noble-

mindness—places the burden on those that have and does not grant them greater privileges.

124. Regarding the new international economic order, we have heard from developed countries two oft-repeated assertions, with which—if properly understood—we can of course agree: that it is negotiation rather than confrontation that must resolve the serious matters dividing mankind; and that it is better to aim for solutions emphasizing economic exchange rather than incidental co-operation—in other words, that we should aim for more trade and, accordingly, less aid. But, because we believe in negotiation, we maintain that it must be entered into with a willingness to give up certain privileges, to accept fair solutions and to change those rules that produce deplorable results; and, while we agree that trade is better than aid, we contend that trade must be just and equitable, without barriers or charges that convert into a means of exploitation what should be a source of mutual benefit and an open road along which the poor and the weak can find ways of carrying out their urgently needed development plans.

125. The United Nations believes in dialogue, and this session of the Assembly is further proof of that. But it is essential for the parties enjoying a privileged position in the international order to be prepared to demonstrate that dialogue is truly an effective way to correct our course and to stamp out injustice. The world is facing many varied problems. These involve nutrition, trade, energy, technology, money, finance, environment and, indeed, ethics, without which all other undertakings are devoid of validity or effectiveness. I wish to give special emphasis to some aspects for the following reasons.

126. In July 1979 the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, which was prompted and sponsored by FAO and other international organizations, was held in Rome with the participation of over 150 countries. A document setting forth a Declaration of Principles and a Programme of Action was adopted.⁸ No political confrontations took place at that Conference—a rare occurrence in the difficult international climate in which we live. There were few reservations, and a strong faith in the adoption of fundamental steps became evident, both from each country's internal viewpoint and from a general external viewpoint. The document was the result of a considerable amount of work that included contributions from many technical organizations and important regional conferences. The prominence that must be accorded to rural development and agrarian reform in development plans justifies our insistence on raising this subject at this plenary meeting. Without rural development, which is inseparable from any just programme of national agrarian reform, the third-world countries cannot develop successfully.

127. The Declaration of Principles of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development—over which I had the honour of presiding—defines a consistent set of norms by reaffirming as the guiding framework of the third United Nations development decade the need to improve, individually and socially, the standard of living of the rural population, to make possible the unfolding of that population's potential, and to redistribute economic and political power.

⁸See *Report of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Rome, 12-20 July 1979 (WCARRD/REP)*; transmitted to the members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/34/485).

Within that framework, greater internal resources must be assigned to rural development, promoting the equitable distribution and efficient use of land, water and other productive resources in order to preserve the ecological balance, protect the physical environment, integrate diversified agricultural activities with new industries in rural areas, and guarantee the participation of an organized rural population, in which women will play a role equal to that of men. In international relations, it is necessary to overcome the inequities and the instability now existing in the trading of agricultural commodities, to guarantee world food security—a matter of particular importance to the developing countries—and to foster co-operation by increasing the flow of financial and technical resources allocated to development.

128. The Programme of Action provides clear guidelines for structural changes in land tenure, participation of the people, integration of women, the availability of inputs, credits, markets and services, the promotion of non-agricultural rural activities, education, training and extension courses in agriculture, the elimination of barriers to agricultural commodities in international trade, co-operation among developing countries, Government guarantees for foreign investment, and assistance in financial and technical development and in the activities of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

129. One of the main objectives that have brought me here is, I repeat, to emphasize the fundamental importance of the Declaration of Principles and the Programme of Action to which I have just referred and which were adopted by such a broad consensus at the Rome World Conference in 1979. In doing that, I am fulfilling an undertaking I made when I presided over the Conference.

130. Furthermore, it is appropriate to bring to this meeting of qualified Government representatives the proposals adopted by the representatives of parliaments which will have to adopt the legal rules and authorize and approve the measures designed to ensure that the new international economic order and the international development strategy will become realities. As President of the World Inter-Parliamentary Union, I am also grateful for the opportunity offered to me by my Government, on whose behalf I speak, to place before the plenary Assembly at this special session the recommendations approved by the World Inter-Parliamentary Union's Council at Oslo in April 1980. Those recommendations were regarded as of such urgency that it was decided to convey them to the United Nations General Assembly even before the next conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, scheduled to be held at Berlin next September.

131. The resolution adopted by the World Inter-Parliamentary Union on the third United Nations development decade is annexed to the copies of my statement that have been distributed to delegations. I shall mention here only that the Inter-Parliamentary Union calls on parliaments and Governments to act with a high sense of responsibility for the present and future of mankind, so that the new United Nations development decade may lead to the attainment of the objectives of the new international economic order; to commit themselves to participate actively in the global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development; to set up machinery to secure greater stability for the exports of developing countries; to expedite the discussions designed to revise the international monetary system; to take steps to lessen the burden of external

debt weighing on the developing countries and to attain a whole series of additional goals compatible with the strategy to be carried out and relating to the training of personnel, co-operation among developing countries, accelerated industrial development, integration of the population in all development programmes, more active participation of women, protection of the environment, solution of the world energy problem, health care, and educational development—in particular, elementary education. The resolution strongly recommends an increase in financial, material and technical assistance and asks for assurances that the developing countries will have ample access to modern technology. It further asks that all the parties involved play an active role in defining and implementing the international development strategy, highlighting rural development, industrialization, changes in the structure of world production and trade, training programmes and the drawing up of policies to expand the level of productive employment and the well-being of the entire population, taking into account the needs and the specific problems of the least developed countries which are most seriously affected by their critical situation.

132. The resolution approved by the Inter-Parliamentary Union explicitly calls to the attention of the appropriate organs of the United Nations the desirability of incorporating, within the spirit of international social justice, the aforementioned Declaration of Principles and the Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development into the strategy and programmes to be carried out during the third development decade.

133. It is the duty of parliaments to be the best exponents of public opinion. It is therefore, to a certain extent, world public opinion that is expressed through the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

134. These goals are not mere theoretical talk; they are deeply held aspirations based on the right of all nations to offer everyone an opportunity to lead a truly human life. But experience has shown that neither goodwill on the part of any one Government nor its best efforts, no matter how sincere and heartfelt, is sufficient to enable a developing country to meet the goals it has a right to seek. Rather, changes in a number of worn-out, unjust structures in the international order are essential and we therefore believe in exhausting every means of ensuring that the long North-South dialogue follows a path of frank sincerity and that the agreements that are essential if mankind is to be offered genuine hope will in fact be attained. The excuse that the economic situation is difficult cannot be accepted. It is precisely the current difficulty that makes it imperative to seek solutions that will not be mere temporary palliatives for the most acute problems but will lay solid foundations for the world community to move beyond its present anguish and uncertainty.

135. Venezuela, conscious of its status as a small country, believes that all small countries must play as important a part in this new phase of the dialogue as they have in earlier stages. My fellow representative, Mr. Manuel Pérez Guerrero, the source of many of the ideas I am expressing here, in earlier meetings undertook to speak for the developing peoples and to express their desire to work harmoniously in concert with the developed countries. The Government of Venezuela is fully aware of the value of his contribution and has reaffirmed its full confidence in him so that he may continue to lend his ability and experience to this most important task.

136. The importance of these global negotiations is increased by the fact that most of the strategy for the past decade remained unimplemented, not having had a monitoring and follow-up machinery of the kind that will be available during this decade. These negotiations must now make a decisive contribution to a new tack in economic relations within the framework of international social justice, and they must make the new strategy really effective.

137. There has been ample opportunity to foster willingness to move towards these goals. This consciousness-raising process must continue. The world situation is such as to imbue us with a sense of urgency, and surely not such as to lend support to any argument that this turbulent period should pass before we undertake any negotiations. The difficulties confronting the world can be overcome only through the concerted efforts of the entire international community, as is emphasized in General Assembly resolution 34/138. It has been proved that the most powerful industrial nations of the world, meeting at the highest level, have thus far been unable to give a healthy, lasting impetus to the world economy. They have not found the required fundamental changes, but have confined themselves to isolated solutions to immediate and short-term problems. In such circumstances, those problems can be extended and indeed perpetuated for lack of thorough attention, if they are not faced squarely without delay or hesitation.

138. It is impossible to resign ourselves to seeing the developing countries continue to lose ground in international trade. It is an optical illusion that the only countries that appear to be in a comfortable position are those that are selling their non-renewable natural resources at a rate that is uncomfortably high for their economies and their development, and that they are doing so to meet the still excessive demands of the big consumers—that is, at the expense of their main material asset. In the final analysis that is in nobody's interest. One condition for the continued economic growth of the industrialized world is the economic growth of the third world, and the third world is aware that no one will escape the effects of an economic catastrophe in the industrial countries. In this age of economic globality and interdependence among nations, no one must attempt to become rich through the impoverishment of others lest the resulting undertow end by undermining the basis of his own wealth. We all know that in a sea of misery islands of prosperity will not survive. As is stated in the Philadelphia Declaration adopted by the General Conference of ILO at its twenty-sixth session, in 1944,⁹ towards the end of the Second World War, poverty anywhere jeopardizes the prosperity of all.

139. Having failed to avail ourselves of earlier opportunities, through misfortune or irresponsibility, it would not be sensible to pass up this new opportunity. There have been some successes, like the agreement on a Common Fund within UNCTAD, and that should give impetus to the North-South negotiations that are now envisaged. One of the risks of acting slowly is the potential loss of what little has been gained through growing disagreements because of a lack of both a consistent common basis and proper reinforcing links between the respective fields.

140. Moreover, there is a set of problems that cannot be solved sequentially. The reasonable approach is

simultaneously to tackle a number of interrelated goals without being unrealistically or overly precise about such simultaneity, yet so as to allow progress on a wide enough front—not only because global negotiations need that in order to allow for a flexible and constructive course and for attention to be given to various interests when such interests do not conflict, as is rarely the case, but because we are dealing above all with a reality that we cannot miss so long as we have our eyes open and our minds clear, and so long as we are willing to see. Just as it would not be sensible to try to solve everything at once, it would not be sensible not to link matters that are so closely related that the solution of one requires the solution of the other in order to complete a task that would otherwise break down for lack of support. Therefore, to act as if trade and money could be confined to separate watertight compartments, and to treat one as being independent of the other, would be like building on sand, and a pure fiction. Is it perhaps not evident that protectionism, whether visible or disguised, rests above all on a lack of solutions that are consistent in one area or another?

141. Resolution 34/138 sets a pattern by stating in paragraph 1 that such negotiations should be action-oriented and should proceed in a simultaneous manner in order to ensure a coherent and integrated approach to the issues under negotiation. That means that such an overall view should prevail from the time that issues for negotiations are selected until the time that results are obtained.

142. Furthermore, it is inherent in the nature of the United Nations system that the central organ must rely on the support of the specialized bodies. In this regard, paragraph 3 of the aforementioned resolution states that the negotiations should not involve any interruption of negotiations in other United Nations forums but should reinforce and draw upon them. A practical approach must be possible.

143. We of the third world—the developing world—have also come better to perceive the reality of our interdependence and complementarity, with all the rich and varied potential for mutual advantage which this implies. We are determined to utilize this potential through concrete measures, thus relying more on our own resources. The meeting of the *ad hoc* intergovernmental group on co-operation among developing countries, which took place in Vienna, was a highly encouraging step towards that goal.

144. It is not a question of turning our backs on the developed countries, with which we desire more mutually fruitful relations than those of the past, which were weighed down by underlying chains of dependency that had their roots in earlier times. In short, this is a goal whose gradual achievement will meet the truly human aspirations of the partners in this great undertaking. It is what Venezuela and Mexico had as their goal when they recently launched a programme of oil co-operation for Central America and the Caribbean, which was welcomed with a warmth which we appreciate.

145. I cannot overlook the message that emerges from the Brandt Commission's report, whose conclusions and observations prove that there is firm ground for mutual understanding and concerted action. Nor can I forget that the European Economic Community and various authorized spokesmen for the world's most important countries have issued declarations and adopted initiatives that are examples of goodwill for the goals of the dialogue.

146. As to the energy position of the seven industrial countries which recently met in Venice on

⁹United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 15, No. 229, annex, p. 104.

22 and 23 June 1980—and I am not speaking on behalf of OPEC, because this would require specific authorization, but as a citizen of an OPEC country—I wish to say that we are in full agreement with the need to conserve petroleum, to avoid wasting it, to investigate more actively all possible sources of energy and to take steps aimed at avoiding a world energy crisis. We have had all of this in mind as oil prices have increased, but those prices are still lower than those of any substitutable source of energy. Where we must disagree is in blaming OPEC for situations caused by the mistaken policies of the industrial countries. Petroleum is not the cause of inflation, nor have oil prices been artificially raised; on the contrary, those prices had been kept artificially low for a very long time. Nor do all of the high prices that users pay for fuel go to the producing countries: the major portion goes to taxes levied by consumer countries and to middlemen who mercilessly exploit the situation. Moreover, OPEC member countries—individually as well as through the organization—have, by their constantly renewed initiatives, set an extraordinary example for co-operation with the other developing countries. This is a fact that even the most intense propaganda cannot destroy; nor can the people of the third world be convinced that petroleum is the only import whose prices have gone up, when the cost of goods manufactured by the industrialized countries, as well as the cost of capital and technology, have risen and continue to rise.

147. In conclusion, what we seek is the practice of social justice at the national as well as international level. We are prepared to acknowledge our own mistakes in domestic policy, but we cannot but call for the correction of the mistakes—indeed, the serious mistakes—made in the international arena. We know that it is difficult in either field to reach the projected goals with the speed demanded by problems which are causing mankind such anguish and suffering, especially those which affect people living in sub-human condi-

tions. But it is crucial that we set out on our path with urgency and seriousness. The world has become conscious of its oneness, but it still has a long way to go before it is ready to practice solidarity—something so often proclaimed, yet so often left undone.

148. There is still much for all of us to do, and only together can we succeed as each of us assumes his proper responsibility. We are not trying to reach all of our goals at once so as to sit back and enjoy our success in this common enterprise. To set out boldly on the road to these goals would be cause enough for general satisfaction. It would affirm a worthwhile and lofty goal for mankind's efforts. Many obstacles will doubtless arise along the way, but the only valid option is to face and overcome them.

149. Venezuela, like other countries, is determined to play the modest role befitting it: to remind us all—but especially the richest among us, since it is they who bear the greatest responsibility—that what is at stake is the world's faith in dialogue and negotiation as the method of solving its problems. Those who, for reasons not always beyond reproach, find themselves in a position of advantage are thus expected to make important decisions and must bear in mind that not only does the whole human race as it exists today hang on their actions: the eyes of history are also upon them. The history of the world in this century is being played out by its appointed actors; when it is finally written, it will judge implacably those whose short-sightedness or niggardliness made them incapable of giving up some of their privileges in order to serve the world community in the light of reason and justice. Let us hope that those who write history in future times may be able to say that our generation was finally able to avoid catastrophe by doing what was morally imperative, as well as essential to its own survival.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.