



General Assembly

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PROVISIONAL

A/40/PV.13
27 September 1985

ENGLISH

Fortieth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 27 September 1985, at 3 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. DE PINIÉS	(Spain)
later:	Mr. MAYNARD (Vice-President)	(Bahamas)
later:	Mr. GAUCI (Vice-President)	(Malta)

- Address by Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, President of the United Republic of Tanzania
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Barry (Ireland)
Mr. Andrei (Romania)
Mr. Aziz (Iraq)
Mr. Chit Hlaing (Burma)
Mr. Mokolo wa Mpombo (Zaire)
Mr. A. K. Koroma (Sierra Leone)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MWALIMU JULIUS K. NYERERE, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): This afternoon the Assembly will hear an address by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President NYERERE: On behalf of the Government and the people of the United Republic of Tanzania, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly during this fortieth anniversary session of our Organization. I offer my very best wishes for a session which, as we all hope, will, under your leadership, contribute substantially to world peace and justice.

Tanzania attaches very great importance to the United Nations and to our membership of this Organization. As we have always understood it, the United Nations was created as a result, and also became an expression, of the spirit of internationalism engendered by the lessons of the 1939-1945 war, and of the economic misery and instability which had preceded it; for the establishment of the United Nations and its institutions was inspired by a recognition that peace and war, poverty and instability were world issues requiring the co-operation of all peoples and all nations. The United Nations and its agencies were thus based on the philosophy that all nations had equal rights and duties, although there were reservations as regards the Security Council and some of the specialized agencies.

(President Nyerere)

In an important sense the United Nations grew more truly internationalist during its first 25 years. For the underlying internationalism which then dominated world politics - perhaps together with some economic facts and the irresistible demands of colonial peoples for freedom and justice - had the result of gradually increasing the membership of this Organization. From a membership of 50 nations in 1945, we have grown to 159. This Assembly is now really representative of the world.

As such, the General Assembly does in practice have the "automatic majority" which its detractors sometimes complain about. Its majority is composed of representatives of nations which are poor and underdeveloped - and mostly members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The effect on this body is similar to that within a parliament when votes are extended to more and more citizens until there is adult suffrage. The interests of the majority - the poorer or less-educated citizens - then have to be taken into account by an elected Government unless it embarks upon an authoritarian policy of systematic repression. The General Assembly has become the world forum - the only world forum - where the poor and underdeveloped can contribute their ideas and express their interests; where, in other words, some element of the philosophy of democracy finds expression internationally. A change in the structure of the General Assembly would thus be an attack both on internationalism and on the validity of the very idea of the legal equality of nations.

For that majority is not effective in the Security Council, where the permanent membership and veto power of five United Nations Members was, from the beginning, a concession to the reality of military and economic power - that is, to the power balance which existed in 1945. Put more kindly, the veto was a recognition of the special responsibilities for upholding peace which inevitably

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fall upon the strong if peace is to prevail in the world. Whether the permanent membership does in fact in all cases still represent the reality of world power centres is highly questionable; but that is not a matter about which I intend to speak today.

But, in any case, as the Secretary-General again points out in his extremely admirable report to the United Nations this year, the United Nations is not a world Government. No nation has, by joining it, surrendered any of its sovereignty.

The ability of the United Nations to carry out the internationalist purposes for which it was established therefore depends primarily upon the attitudes and policies of its Member States, and particularly upon those of the veto Powers. And Tanzania is becoming very concerned about the decreasing internationalism in the attitudes and policies of some very powerful Members of our Organization, and the consequent weakening of the whole United Nations system.

Perhaps the most blatant example - and I can only give a few of many examples - of international authoritarianism is the growing practice of threatening adverse consequences to small nations which use their United Nations votes in a manner displeasing to a strong Power. We know from experience that this has been happening privately for some time. But now even the sense of propriety has gone; small and poor countries are being publicly threatened that they will be punished if they do not vote in accordance with the wishes of a Member of this Organization.

What are we supposed to do when the super-Powers vote against our interests? Twenty-eight resolutions on matters of great importance to Tanzania were considered in the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. They were mostly concerned with African or colonial questions and the law of the sea. One was passed by consensus; the United States of America voted against 17 of them and abstained on 10. Are we then expected to regard that United Nations Member as an enemy? Or are we to accept its assurances that its disagreement is the result of its own

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judgement on the issues and does not indicate any lack of friendship towards us?

And if - as we have until now done - we are to do the latter, what exempts the big Powers from the same obligation?

For nations as for individuals, poverty is itself degrading enough. Do we have to add to it, by attempts to exploit the fact of poverty to deprive the weak and the poor of the only thing which they have - their human dignity and self-respect?

I am mindful of the Secretary-General's appeal to us to avoid divisive rhetoric in this Assembly. But I must reassert the right of all United Nations Members to speak and to vote in accordance with their own judgement, albeit that the judgement of all of us is affected by our own interests. To belittle that right is to threaten the whole structure of international co-operation; it is derogatory to the dignity of the United Nations, and of our separate States.

We were colonies once; we are no longer colonies. And, speaking for Tanzania, we refuse to become a neo-colony of any country under the sun. We third-world countries did not win our independence - in Tanzania's case, with the help of the United Nations system - in order to sell it to the highest bidder, nor even to buy off trouble by voting in the General Assembly at the behest of a veto Power. We will use the only right our weakness leaves to us - the right to scream a protest at international authoritarianism and bullying.

My second example of international authoritarianism relates directly to the future existence of humanity. Matters related to nuclear weapons and their testing, above all other subjects, should be discussed and settled on the basis of the common interest of all peoples.

(President Nyerere)

The partial test ban Treaty of 1963 represented an advance for internationalism. Since then there has just been the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970. It is highly questionable whether it has stopped any non-nuclear Power - a signatory or otherwise - from developing a nuclear weapons capacity if it would otherwise have done so; it has certainly not stopped a continued and massive growth in the number, the size and the variety of nuclear weapons in the hands of the five nuclear Powers.

(President Nyerere)

On the contrary, now we even have the Strategic Defence Initiative - the threat to take nuclear and laser beam war into space. This matter is not even brought to the United Nations or any other world organization for discussion. Yet space belongs to all of us - if it can belong to anyone.

Some of us did feel encouraged by the Soviet Union's announcement of a moratorium on nuclear testing. The stated period was short, but the action itself represented a challenge for peace instead of for war. Yet the response of the other super-Power was to say that this was mere propaganda, and the Soviet Union could watch That Power's own forthcoming nuclear tests. If it was propaganda, surely the answer for anyone who cares about peace is more effective propaganda. Let the United States challenge the Soviet Union to accept a much longer moratorium. What is the use of watching nuclear tests? What humanity needs is an end to all nuclear-weapon testing everywhere.

If all tests stop, the development of new weapons becomes much more difficult. Weapons which may not work, or which may blow up those using them, are less attractive to any army, air force or navy. A comprehensive test ban would thus at least slow down the arms race and provide time for the negotiation and organization of nuclear disarmament. It is possible that verification of adherence to such a treaty may not yet be 100 per cent perfect, but modern technology could certainly monitor nuclear explosions very much smaller than the ones which devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Let us do what can be done, and create an incentive to perfect the instruments of verification.

Movement in that direction would transform the present international climate of mutual suspicion and hostility. Even now I appeal for a new start. I join with other United Nations Members in urging that the planned meeting of the super-Power leaders should provide real and joint leadership for peace in accordance with the original aims of the United Nations.

(President Nyerere)

I now turn to southern Africa. In 1978, after long negotiations, Security Council resolution 435 (1978) was adopted with the active support of the Western bloc nations, without any dissenting votes. It laid down the basis for a peaceful transition to the independence of Namibia under the auspices of the United Nations. Despite quite heroic efforts by the Secretary-General, that resolution has not been implemented. On the contrary, since 1981 it has been effectively blocked by the policy of linking Namibian independence with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. This policy of "linkage" was initiated, and is still backed by the United States of America.

Angola has tried very hard to find some formula which would uphold its right to defend itself against attack with the aid of allies chosen by itself, and which would at the same time avoid political embarrassment for the current American administration. The only effective result has been renewed attacks on Angola by South Africa - which in fact never withdrew all its troops from that country - and a renewed threat by the United States to support dissidents trying to overthrow the Government of Angola.

Thus, once again, we have a veto Power acting in such a way as to undermine the United Nations - and in this case even on a decision which it took an active part in promoting. As a result, South Africa remains in Namibia, attacks Angola and other neighbours with impunity, and is able to mock the verbal condemnation with which it is assailed.

For all of us verbally condemn the apartheid system which is at the root of South Africa's refusal to end its occupation of Namibia and of its attacks on its other neighbours. But we have not been able to use the machinery available in the Charter to deal with this atrocity and its danger to world peace. This despite the fact that apartheid in South Africa is based on the same doctrines of racial superiority as nazism, which the authors of apartheid supported. Even the violence

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against the people of South Africa during the last 18 months has led only to a Security Council resolution - adopted with some notable abstentions but at least no veto - encouraging nations to take unilateral actions against South Africa.

Surely no one can be happy at the situation in South Africa now - neither the allies of the apartheid State nor its enemies. There is too much suffering and too much chaos. The temptation to powerful nations to see their own interests as being involved and thus to spread the conflagration is increasing too fast.

For the people of South Africa have protested against apartheid, have demonstrated, been arrested, tortured and died, year after year. And despite a few incidents of sabotage, the intensified struggle is still basically that of an unarmed people rejecting apartheid angrily and courageously. They are rejecting it with their blood, fighting bullets with stones and the sheer force of numbers. They no longer seem to care about dying. And they are no longer interested in concessions or reforms announced by a white Government. So apartheid is clearly doomed, and the longer it takes to come to an end, the greater will be the misery and the more devastating the chaos.

The United Nations must act now. It is essential that concerted international action should help the local people bring down apartheid quickly. The time for mere warnings has passed.

Mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa under Chapter VII of the Charter is the minimum action required of this Organization. They are merited on three counts: first, South Africa's defiance of the United Nations over Namibia; secondly, its constant and continuing direct and indirect attacks on its independent neighbours; thirdly, the indignity, the slavery, the violence and the dangers to world peace which are inherent in its policy of organized racism - a crime against humanity.

(President Nyerere)

The problems of southern Africa have developed to their present dangerous condition because there has been a failure to act internationally at an early stage. But in the sphere of international economics there has been a clear regression from the internationalism which created the United Nations.

By 1945 it appeared that the world had learned the economic lessons of the 1920s and 1930s. It was thus for hard-headed reasons, as well as renewed feelings of human solidarity, that the Bretton Woods institutions and other United Nations specialized agencies were created to work with and alongside the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

(President Nyerere)

The declared purpose of the entire system was the well-being and prosperity of all nations, based on increased international co-operation and trade, and a reduction of poverty, ignorance and disease throughout the globe. Inevitably, the institutions were not always well-targeted, sufficient in scope, or sufficiently adaptable for the tasks given to them, but they were there, to be improved and extended according to experience.

And the system was extended, with the International Development Association (IDA), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) being created during the 1960s, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as late as 1977. As another reflection of internationalism, in 1960 the General Assembly adopted a target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product to be allocated by the richer and more developed Members to the war against world poverty. Not all nations committed themselves to this target; indeed, quite spurious reasons were advanced by some nations for not doing so. But the majority of the developed nations did accept that target.

Unfortunately, a new orthodoxy, backed up by economic power, has in the last five or six years increasingly ignored the fact that the world's current economic problems arise from rapid technological advance, and the inadequacy and asymmetry of the international structures previously established. So instead of further international co-operation, and an intensified attack on the problems of poverty, we have a return to the monetarism and the economic nationalist insularity of the 1920s and 1930s.

Attempts were made, and work was even begun, on dealing with the increasingly obvious world economic problems through international negotiation. In 1974, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Establishment of a New

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International Economic Order. At the thirty-fourth session in 1979, the Assembly decided to launch global and sustained negotiations on international economic co-operation for development, with the first report of the Committee of the Whole to be submitted to the 1980 special session.

By then attitudes had changed. We had that special session; it achieved nothing, not even agreement on procedures, a time-frame, or even an agenda. Then in 1981, we had the Cancun meeting in Mexico, designed, in the wake of the Brandt Commission report, to search out a basis for negotiations. The Cancun meeting achieved nothing. And since then it has proved impossible even to get talks about talks about global negotiations. The major developed countries, led by the United States, have blocked all progress. They are not even willing to consider the facts of poverty and its interrelationship with the present international economic system; world poverty has been pushed off the international agenda.

Instead, we see the new anti-internationalist climate reflected in the actions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This institution is now little more than an instrument used by the wealthiest and most powerful nations for the international enforcement of their own economic policies on the under-developed countries of the world.

The attempt to use the World Bank system in the same way has not had complete success, although some Member States have been denied access to its funds for what can only be described as ideological reasons. But we have seen a decreasing allocation of funds for the International Development Association (IDA). Not only has the total amount of official development assistance dropped as a percentage of nations' gross national product; the aid which is being given is increasingly allocated bilaterally, so that it can more easily be used for the political purposes of the donors.

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In the light of these developments, it is not surprising that the international financial system is again threatened with collapse as a result of the immense - and now frequently unpayable - debts of under-developed countries. But still the problem is not being dealt with co-operatively and internationally. Instead, creditors as a group insist upon dealing with each debtor individually, and squeezing the maximum amount from it regardless of the health of its people, or its stability and future development. Simultaneously, the developed countries increasingly take refuge from their own problems in some form of protectionism, thus making it ever more difficult for debtors to earn the foreign exchange with which to meet their revised commitments.

There are, however, some nations whose debts are so large that they could on their own jeopardize the international banking system. These countries have the power of their own debt with which to protect themselves - if they are politically strong enough to withstand the combined economic and political pressures of their creditors and the IMF. But no African country is in that position, although Africa's debts are larger as a proportion of its national income than those of any other area. Consequently we have the ludicrous position that billions of dollars are exported from Africa in servicing high-interest debts, billions more are exported from Africa, lost through a deterioration of the terms of trade of primary commodity exporters, and African States beg for food to prevent their people from starving!

Africa has called for an international conference to deal with its debt problem. So far the response has not been very encouraging. That request runs counter to the strong movement away from internationalism.

We see the same attitudes being applied to those United Nations specialized agencies which have a governing structure based on the equality of nations.

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Nations withdraw from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) because they do not like some of its decisions. They downgrade their representation at UNCTAD and UNIDO conferences. The financing of IFAD cannot be agreed despite all the lectures read to impoverished Africa about the importance of agriculture and the small farmer.

All the world's Governments know - or ought to know - where the doctrine "might is right" can lead humanity. The unity and indivisibility of the world has now been seen from space. It is experienced by all nations and all peoples, even those who do not understand it. The only solution to the world's problems is international co-operation, with its recognition of our common humanity and interdependence.

I make this appeal: for our common benefit, and the benefit of each one of us, let us act towards each other with humility, not arrogance, recognizing that none of us knows all the answers to the manifold problems facing us. Let us resume our earlier course - the course we began to follow 40 years ago when the United Nations was established - and together search out a path to justice and prosperity for all. It will be difficult, and we shall argue a lot. But it can be done if we respect each other and each other's freedom.

(President Nyerere)

In this, my last address to the General Assembly, I have described events and trends and needs as we in Tanzania perceive them. My country will not stop saying those things when the new President takes over. For we are a poor and underdeveloped country, and we have no power in the world except the power of speech given by the Assembly - and by our humanity. To be silent when we see danger, to refrain from attacking policies which we see as contrary to the interests of peace and justice, would be to surrender our freedom and our dignity. That we shall never do.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United Republic of Tanzania for the important statement he has just made.

Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. BARRY (Ireland): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the office of President of the General Assembly. We are happy that on the United Nations fortieth birthday the Assembly will be guided by a man of your exceptional skill and experience in international affairs and in the working of this Organization. It is a further source of satisfaction that the President of the Assembly should be a representative of the country with which Ireland has close and friendly relations and which is shortly to join us as a partner in the European Communities.

Forty years ago the representatives of 51 nations met in San Francisco to sign the United Nations Charter. Their object was clear: to create a new organization

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which would prevent mankind from repeating the tragic errors that twice in a generation had plunged the world into war. There could be, and there still is, more important task. We who meet here today, the representatives of 159 States, are the heirs to the first signatories, the custodians of a Charter which embodies the noblest aspirations of mankind. It is we, the current membership of the Organization, who now bear the responsibility for achieving the aims and purposes of the Charter and for making the system created 40 years ago work.

The circumstances in which we try to achieve those ends are far removed from those of 1945. The same global war that gave birth to the United Nations gave birth also to a new international order markedly different from that of the first half of the century and undoubtedly far different from that envisaged by those who framed the Charter. When we look at the United Nations today, and when we try to measure its performance against the hopes of its founders and the expectations of our peoples, it is necessary to bear in mind the momentous changes which have been wrought in international life since the San Francisco Conference. Some of them have been brought about by the United Nations itself. All of them have had a dramatic impact on the shape of the Organization and on its fundamental task of deterring aggression and stopping wars.

The colonial empires which covered much of the globe in the first half of the century have been replaced by an international system of over 160 sovereign States, representing almost all the peoples of the Earth. Long-established and powerful States have had to adjust to a reduction in their power and influence and, it must be said, new States have had to come to terms with the limits of sovereignty in an interdependent world. For the United Nations the principal consequence of those developments has been its growth from a wartime alliance of like-minded countries, intent on keeping the peace, to a universal Organization which reflects within

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itself the tensions, conflicts and antagonisms of international life. The associated fragmentation of common interest and consensus has had a profound effect on the ability of our Organization to harmonize its actions towards common ends.

More significantly, perhaps, the pre-war order of several major Powers has given way to an international order dominated by the adversarial relationship between the two super-Powers. How to manage that relationship is perhaps the supreme challenge of our age. It is, of course, a matter predominantly for the United States and the Soviet Union themselves, but the quality of the relationship and how it is handled affect us all. They affect especially the operation of the United Nations. For the major rift in international affairs, the East-West split, runs right through the Organization, limiting its ability to tackle the most pressing problems of our time and restricting the scope for imaginative and far-reaching solutions. In particular, the rift runs through the Security Council, the body most directly charged with the preservation of international peace, and inevitably complicates its efforts to that end.

The pattern of world politics has also been radically altered by developments in weapons technology. We cannot forget that the same year which saw the birth of this Organization saw, too, the first wartime use of the atomic bomb. We live in the shadow of that terrible event. Nuclear weapons have introduced a new and complex element into the calculus of international power. The unprecedented threat they pose to all humankind has changed utterly the way we think about peace and war. To construct an ethical and political framework capable of withstanding the strains of rapid scientific and technological change is one of the most urgent tasks of our generation.

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The past four decades have also witnessed a growing consciousness of the imbalances in the international economy. Despite the truly remarkable advances in a number of developing countries, wealth and economic power continue to be concentrated in the developed northern part of the world, while the more populous south must grapple with the problems of impoverishment, widespread hunger and mounting debt.

It seems to me that the four themes I have touched on - the need for a multilateral approach to international problems; the management of relations between East and West; the question of disarmament; and the problem of development - constitute the major challenges facing international statesmanship today. Before taking up the important regional issues which feature on our agenda, I should like to outline the views of my Government on these broader issues which affect us all.

On its fortieth anniversary it is clear that the United Nations is passing through a period of public doubt and scepticism. Indeed, I feel that there is a growing and corrosive cynicism, not just in our public but among those involved in the management of international affairs, about the ability of international organizations to tackle the most difficult problems of our time. It is possible to see why this has happened. Since the early 1970s the United Nations has appeared increasingly marginal in its central task of preventing aggression and resolving conflict. The arms race continues. Mistrust and fear pervade the relations between States. Old conflicts continue and new ones have broken out. Issues such as those of Afghanistan, Kampuchea, the Iran-Iraq war, apartheid, Namibia, are listed on our agenda year after year, annual reminders of our unwillingness or inability to make the system work. There is a grave disproportion between the quantity of work engaged in - all the frenetic activity in the Hall and in the corridors - and the quality of the results achieved. Sometimes it seems

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that we measure success more in terms of meetings held, documents issued and resolutions adopted than in the number of lives saved or disputes settled or conflicts avoided. In the perception of our public, rhetoric and posturing have all too often taken the place of serious negotiations and diplomacy; narrow national interest has supplanted a broader collective vision.

If this picture seems somewhat sombre in this anniversary year, it must be set beside the Organization's great achievements over the past four decades: its contribution to the process of decolonization; its efforts to protect and promote human rights world-wide; the contribution of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to development, to the eradication of disease and hunger, to education; the United Nations achievements in the field of disarmament, in particular the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and the crucial part the United Nations peace-making and peace-keeping machinery has played in helping to resolve or mitigate several conflicts that threatened to escalate to the international level. When we point to the deficiencies in the operation of the United Nations we must point also to these enduring achievements, without which the world would be a less safe and a less humane place.

Yet we cannot ignore what the Secretary-General has described as the crisis in the multilateral approach to international relations. Mr. Perez de Cuellar has, in his four annual reports, outlined in detail the dimensions of the crisis and the consequences for humanity if it is not overcome.

What needs to be done to restore confidence in the constructive possibilities of the United Nations?

First, I believe we need to establish a sense of realism about what the United Nations can do. The Organization is an imperfect institution operating in a complex and uncertain world. It is an illusion to think that disputes and antagonisms can be eradicated totally from international life. They will persist

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as long as the nation State exists. What is needed in an international framework sufficiently strong and in which States have sufficient confidence to ensure that antagonisms are managed and conflicts avoided. The primary task of the United Nations must be to ensure that the pressures and divisions which are intrinsic to an international system of nation States do not lead to war. We should not despair because humanity is divided, but we should see to it that the divide does not widen to engulf us.

Secondly, States must come to recognize that they have common interests which transcend national differences and which can be served better by co-operative effort than by individual action. There is an evident need for States to use the mechanisms and procedures of the United Nations as an alternative to the threat or use of force to resolve their differences. This, it seems to me, lies at the core of the malaise which afflicts the United Nations today. In this connection it is well to recall that it was a lack of confidence in co-operative action that hastened the end of the first effort at collective security in this century. We must not let it happen again. A necessary condition for the success of the United Nations is a determination and willingness on the part of its membership to co-operate in making the United Nations system work.

Thirdly, there is the question of leadership. The Charter proclaims the sovereign equality of all Members, but we would be misguided if we believed that each of us had an equal capacity to influence events. It is clear that if it is to succeed the United Nations must deal with the realities of power in international life. That is why the major Powers have been given special rights under the Charter, including the right of veto in the Security Council. The corollary of this is that those same Powers, which do have the ability to influence events, must take the lead in making the system relevant and effective. I believe that if those States were to assume their responsibilities in addressing contemporary

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international ills they would find a ready and positive response among the broad membership of the Organization.

In this connection the prospects for international peace and security have been enhanced by recent developments in East-West relations. Two years ago, in the wake of the suspension of the talks on strategic arms reduction and intermediate nuclear forces and in the prevailing climate of challenge and confrontation between the super-Powers, many in this Assembly spoke of the urgent need for a resumption of dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union. Today that dialogue is under way. The arms talks in Geneva have been resumed, and the leaders of both super-Powers are shortly to meet at the first United States/Soviet summit for many years. We are encouraged by these developments, even if the way ahead is still uncertain and unclear. We believe that both sides approach the talks with a seriousness and commitment commensurate with the great issues at stake. The challenge for them now is to translate their renewed dialogue into enduring agreement.

(Mr. Barry, Ireland)

An improvement in the super-Power relationship cannot fail to have a profound and beneficial effect on the overall state of East-West relations. But we recognize that the efforts to improve the overall relationship between East and West is not solely a matter for the United States and the Soviet Union. For its part, Ireland is committed to multilateral efforts to bring about genuine détente. This year we have celebrated one such effort in marking the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). The process initiated by that Conference represents a central element in the development of more secure and humane relations in Europe. It provides a framework for dialogue and co-operation on matters of vital importance to all the States of Europe and North America, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Although some of the participating States have not lived up to their commitments, we none the less believe that the CSCE process is indispensable and offers a great opportunity for continued progress.

Central to the efforts to reduce tension between East and West is progress on arms control and disarmament. In recent months we have been reminded of the appalling consequences of the use of the atomic bomb 40 years ago. Today, in our quest for a more stable and secure international order, we are still faced with the threat which nuclear weapons pose to the future of mankind.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty represents one response to this threat. By bringing together 127 States out of the current United Nations membership in an undertaking not to acquire nuclear-weapon capability, the Treaty has made a significant contribution to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. However, as yet the nuclear-weapon States have failed to respond in kind by working towards radical reductions of their nuclear arsenals. I renew my appeal to the States concerned to take the first step towards nuclear disarmament by working for the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, and I urge them to undertake

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a commitment to halt tests at the earliest possible date. In this connection I welcome the successful conclusion of the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty last week in Geneva and the agreement reached there on a consensus final declaration calling on the nuclear-weapon States to negotiate without delay on the elaboration and conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

One of the major challenges facing the international community as we approach the 21st century is the exploitation of outer space for the benefit of mankind. The potential for the peaceful use of outer space has already been demonstrated, for example in the field of communications satellites, which make a significant contribution to the verification of arms-control agreements. However, my Government would be profoundly concerned at any prospect of outer space becoming the arena for a new and highly dangerous arms race, and we believe that there is a need for reliable assurance that it will not be embarked upon. If this is not given, the continued advances in space-related technologies and space weapons could lead to greater international insecurity and to increased risks for all. My Government is therefore greatly encouraged by the decision of the super-Powers to tackle these important issues, together with those of nuclear weapons, in their bilateral talks. Similarly, we welcome the substantive work at the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is our hope that both sets of negotiations will lead to the early conclusion of agreements designed to guarantee the immunity of satellites from attack and also to prevent the use of outer space for purposes contrary to the existing arms-control régime, in particular the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

There is a manifest urgency also in connection with the conclusion of a convention banning the use of chemical weapons. The recent battlefield use of these weapons, which has been justifiably condemned by world opinion, confirms the

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necessity for a genuine pursuit of an agreement by all parties to the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament.

If political and military security are indispensable to a just and civilized international order, so too are economic security and freedom from want. I am convinced that there can be no real stability until we face up to the problems of uneven development and the unequal distribution of wealth and resources on our shared planet. Some indication of the dimensions of the problem can be gained from the statistics of deprivation: over 2 billion people live on incomes of less than \$500 a year; 500 million people are suffering from hunger and malnutrition; 5 million children die each year from the six most common childhood diseases, which could be prevented at low financial cost; and each year the developing countries must pay almost \$70 billion to the industrialized world in interest payments.

The figures almost crush our understanding, but faced with them few can question the need to reactivate the process of negotiation between developed and developing countries in the appropriate forums on the interrelated issues of trade, money, debt and aid.

What can be done?

First, I believe that we must recognize that in a world of economic interdependence our problems can best be resolved by greater multilateral co-operation. Recovery and growth in the world economy can be sustained only if they include the weaker countries as well as the economically powerful.

Secondly, and related, we must resist protectionist tendencies in world trade. Developed and developing countries have a joint interest in maintaining a free and open trading system. In this context I hope that the new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) round will advance the multilateral trading system and contribute to an increase in world trade. Steps also need to be taken to improve the functioning of the international monetary system.

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Thirdly, we must tackle the problem of debt. An increase in world trade and in the export earnings of developing countries would greatly help. So too would a reduction in interest rates in the developed world. But beyond these there is an urgent need to examine the possibilities of debt rescheduling, increased investment and long-term finance.

Fourthly, there is a continuing need for increased multilateral and bilateral aid to overcome structural difficulties and help relieve immediate needs. Multilateral bodies in particular must be ensured sufficient resources to carry out their tasks.

Fifthly, we need to ensure that the efforts of development bodies and aid agencies are co-ordinated so that overlapping activities are eradicated and the most effective use made of scarce resources.

The imperative of a renewed and sustained effort to achieve long-term development has been demonstrated clearly and tragically by the famine in Africa. Although the situation in the worst-affected areas appears less acute than one year ago, the crisis is far from over. The international response to the disaster from States, international organizations, aid bodies and, indeed, individuals has been impressive and has helped save millions of lives. But the needs are still immense. Over 30 million people are affected by the drought; 10 million are displaced persons living in destitute conditions without food, water, health facilities or sanitation. Despite the international response there remains a huge gap between the aid pledged and the immediate needs.

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Ireland has contributed to the international aid effort bilaterally and through its membership in the European Communities. We shall continue to support efforts to relieve the immediate needs of the stricken countries, to promote a global and co-ordinated strategy against the drought and desertification, and to resume medium and long-term growth and development in the African countries.

A sustained and serious attempt to resolve the global problems I have outlined is prerequisite for a more just and stable international order. But we cannot forget that most of the bloodshed and suffering of the past 40 years has resulted from local and regional conflicts, from civil strife, and from gross abuses of human rights. It is sobering to recall that since our Organization was founded more than 16 million people have died in over 100 major conflicts. Almost without exception these have taken place in the third world - in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia. A number of these conflict continue today.

In South Africa there has been in the past year an explosion of political violence. Hundreds have been killed in clashes between demonstrators and the police and in violence in townships across the country. The South African Government has sought to control the situation by the declaration of a state of emergency - a term that is shorthand for the application of a range of repressive and brutal measures which only add to the turmoil they seek to calm. It is true that there have been suggestions of reform. That in itself is something. But nowhere is there a clear and unequivocal commitment by the South African Government to abandon apartheid and to enter into a serious political dialogue involving leaders of the black community.

Forty years after the founding of the United Nations we should recall that apartheid has been the subject of debate for 33 of those years, with little tangible progress to show for it. For 23 of those years, Nelson Mandela has languished in a South African prison.

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Ireland believes that the time is ripe to move from words to international action. Already, with the aim of increasing the pressure for change on the South African Government, we have, in concert with our European partners, agreed to implement a series of measures elaborated at Luxembourg on 10 September.

Beyond this, however, we believe that only collective action by the international community as a whole will eventually succeed in persuading those who hold power in South Africa to make the commitment to abandon apartheid. Ireland therefore favours the imposition by the Security Council of carefully chosen, graduated and mandatory sanctions against South Africa - to be fully implemented by all.

Our goal must be the abolition of apartheid. It is imperative to end a system which is in direct contradiction to every accepted notion of justice, equality and the worth of the human person. We urge the South African Government, in its own interests if nothing else, to accept that fact.

Elsewhere in the region, South Africa continues to defy international law and opinion by its occupation of Namibia and its aggressive and destabilizing activities against neighbouring States. The setting up of an unrepresentative internal administration in Namibia, already condemned by the Security Council, appears to be yet another ploy designed to complicate Namibia's transition to independence. We insist that South Africa implement Security Council resolution 435 (1978). We insist, too, that South Africa end its aggressive actions against its neighbours. We condemn unreservedly the South African raid into Botswana and the activities of its forces in Angola.

Political instability, economic injustice and human rights abuses continue also in Central America. Ireland is convinced that the approach embodied in the Contadora process continues to offer the best hope of a solution to the manifold problems of that region. We therefore regret that, despite the vigorous

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efforts of the Contadora Group over the past year the Central American countries have been unable to agree among themselves on the terms of an Act for Peace and Co-operation. The search for agreement deserves and needs all our support. For this reason I believe that the establishment of a Contadora support group by Latin American nations is a positive and encouraging development. For this reason, too, Ireland has been a consistent advocate of the strengthening of political and economic links between the European Community and the Central American countries. The cost to Central America of a breakdown in the Contadora process would be very great indeed. The long-suffering peoples of the region must be given the opportunity to develop their societies in peace and freedom without external intervention.

So too must the people of Afghanistan. The continuing conflict there, the suffering of the Afghan people, the plight of the refugees and the burden of neighbouring countries bear testimony to the heavy toll of the Soviet intervention. Ireland welcomes the mediation efforts of the Secretary-General's representative and believes that any solution to the Afghanistan conflict must be based on the principles set out in successive United Nations resolutions.

My country remains deeply concerned at the continuing failure to bring an end to the conflicts in the Middle East - both because of the suffering and misery which the peoples of that troubled region have had to endure and because of the grave threats which the conflicts there pose to wider international security.

In the Gulf the war between Iran and Iraq is now entering its sixth year. We have, together with our partners in the Ten, called on both parties to refrain from bombing civilian targets. We have unequivocally condemned the use of chemical weapons. And we have emphasized that the Geneva Convention and other rules of international law must be fully and unconditionally respected. But beyond these efforts, which are intended to reduce the scale and intensity of the conflict,

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there is a clear and overriding need to bring the war to an end. Ireland will continue to support initiatives such as the Secretary-General's which offer hope of an end to this long and tragic conflict.

In Lebanon the bloodshed and loss of life continue in a country deeply divided by religious and communal antagonisms. There is an urgent need to break the cycle of violence and to permit the forces of national reconciliation to emerge. Ireland has appealed to the Lebanese Government and other forces in the country to exercise restraint and to return to the search for peaceful solutions. There is an equal need for restraint by forces outside the country. Israel must complete its withdrawal in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council. A prerequisite for peace in Lebanon is respect by all for Lebanon's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

Elsewhere in the region there is some cause for optimism. The Foreign Minister of Luxembourg has already set out in detail the position of the 10 members of the European Communities on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Ireland is encouraged by the peace process initiated earlier this year by King Hussein and Yasser Arafat and we have welcomed the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement as a constructive step forward. The formulation of these proposals required courage and imagination; they demand a courageous and imaginative response from all sides. We look forward now to concrete progress which will permit a fair and lasting peace between the Arab States and Israel and a just solution to the Palestinian problem.

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But if a fair and lasting solution to this long-standing conflict is to be found I believe that Israel must desist now from actions which could complicate the search for peace and compromise an eventual solution. In this connection, the continued gradual de facto absorption by Israel of the West Bank and Gaza is a matter of real concern and constitutes a growing obstacle to a just solution which would permit the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination.

The efforts of the United Nations to promote a peaceful resolution of the conflicts in the Middle East have for many years been buttressed by the work of the United Nations peace-keeping forces and observer missions in the region. In south Lebanon the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has made an important contribution to providing a more stable environment in which longer-term solutions to the problems of the area might be worked out. However, my Government are concerned that UNIFIL, to which Ireland has contributed since its inception, has not been permitted fully to implement its mandate. We call on all the parties concerned in the conflict to give their full co-operation to the Force to enable it to carry out the tasks assigned to it. If that co-operation continues to be withheld it must seriously call into question the viability of the operation. In this connection, my Government looks forward to the report which the Secretary-General will shortly present to the Security Council on the future of the Force and we shall study his observations and recommendations with the greatest interest.

I think it is appropriate that in this anniversary year we honour the service of all who from many lands have contributed so nobly and so selflessly to the work of the United Nations peace-keeping over the past 40 years. Ireland celebrates this year not only the thirtieth anniversary of our membership of the United Nations but the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dispatch of Irish troops on the United Nations peace-keeping mission in the Congo. We are proud to have been

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involved in almost all United Nations peace-keeping operations since that time. The establishment of the United Nations peace-keeping arm is one of the most encouraging developments in our efforts to construct a safer and more stable world. As the world's capacity for destruction increases the need for continued and sustained support - political and financial - for the United Nations as peacekeeper becomes even more pressing. It is the duty of all of us to ensure that the remarkable achievement which the establishment of the peace-keeping function represents in the first 40 years of the United Nations can be strengthened and renewed for the tasks which lie ahead.

Before I conclude I should like to inform the Assembly of the position in Northern Ireland. The background to the problem of Northern Ireland does not require detailed rehearsal here. Within the narrow confines of the north-eastern corner of Ireland there today exist, side-by-side, two communities with separate and conflicting identities and loyalties. Although no single action or event can be adduced to account for these differences and although their origins and causes lie in the deeper recesses of history, the present form of the conflict derives, in large measure, from the character of the enforced political division of Ireland in 1920.

During the period of Northern Ireland's separate existence the Irish identity of the minority nationalist community there has essentially been disregarded. Although it is a majority within Northern Ireland itself, the unionist community for its part has always felt its British heritage under threat on account of its status as a minority within the island of Ireland as a whole. As a consequence it has tended to shape the political, civil, judicial and security institutions of Northern Ireland entirely according to its own ethos and in a way which has effectively excluded nationalists from full participation in them. This exclusion is all the more tragic given the strong commitment most nationalists have

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displayed to peaceful democratic and constitutional methods of seeking redress. As a result, nationalists have become progressively alienated from the political and administrative framework of Northern Ireland and they have had little to show for their adherence to democratic politics.

Although the situation has become critical under the cloud of the violence of recent years, hitherto none of the efforts to find and sustain a way out of this political impasse has succeeded. However, an attempt is now being made to approach the problem from a new perspective, an attempt which I believe offers the possibility of progress.

Last year, I reported to the General Assembly on the exploratory dialogue which had begun between the Irish and British Governments in the aftermath of the publication of the report of the New Ireland Forum. In November 1984 the Taoiseach, Dr. Garret FitzGerald, and the British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, met at Chequers in Britain and agreed that:

"... the identities of both the majority and minority communities in Northern Ireland should be respected and reflected in the structures and processes of Northern Ireland in ways acceptable to both communities".

This agreement reflected the major requirements for a solution put forward by the Forum in its report six months previously.

Clearly, this is the only foundation on which progress can be built and sustained. Progress cannot be made by giving one community a victory at the expense of the other or by threatening in any way the rights of nationalists or of unionists. Instead, progress towards lasting peace and stability requires that the identities, loyalties and outlooks of both communities be accommodated on an equal footing. I, as a member of the Government of Ireland, believe that Irish nationalists have, for our part, made clear through the Forum report our acceptance of unionist rights.

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The negotiations between the two Governments have continued on the basis of this common diagnosis of the problem. As can be imagined, examining ways of putting flesh on the bones of this agreed view of the problem and devising political structures which would, in practice, protect and promote both identities equally, is a lengthy and arduous process. It is also a process which demands difficult decisions from both Governments. It will soon be time for both Governments to take a final decision to proceed on the basis of the overall package that comes before them.

Both unionists and nationalists are naturally concerned about the degree of public uncertainty arising from the confidential nature of these talks. I have great sympathy with their dilemma. In recent weeks we have heard irresponsible voices raised by extremists in both of those communities but most stridently on the unionist side which have sought to exploit these fears and uncertainties and to stir the people up to violence and hatred.

Northern nationalists know where I stand. I would now like to use this important occasion to repeat what I have already said to the unionist people of Northern Ireland with all the sincerity and authority at my command. The Irish Government has no designs on their rights. We accept and acknowledge their Britishness. We respect and will respect their reasons for opposing Irish unity. We mean them no ill-will; quite the contrary.

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Our hope and commitment are to work for the creation of lasting peace and stability and, for the first time, for real harmony, dialogue and co-operation between our tradition and theirs. Those who seek to tell them otherwise do so either from ignorance or from sheer malevolence. We say to them, "Please do not heed them".

Should both our Governments decide to commit themselves to working a new form of political structure in Northern Ireland, no one should underestimate the challenge we will face from those on both sides of the divide who will seek to wreck all hope for the people of both communities through violence and through terror. In that context, international support for the determination of the Irish and British Governments to maintain any new system would be a valuable encouragement to us in what could be a very difficult period. In this connection, I know that we can rely on the helpful and constructive interest of the United Nations and its membership.

Mr. ANDREI (Romania) (interpretation from French): It is a particular pleasure for me, Sir, to convey to you our warm congratulations and our best wishes for success on the occasion of your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its fortieth session.

At the request of the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu, I wish to set out the position, assessments and thoughts of our President and of Romania on some of the items on the agenda of this Assembly session.

This year, the international community celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the bloodiest military confrontation in the history of mankind. It cost so many human lives and caused huge material destruction. Today when we examine the causes of that great world conflagration, it is clearer than ever that it was possible for war to break out because of a lack of unity and firmness on the part of peoples and realistic democratic forces in the

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face of the expansionist policy of fascism, which was aimed at world domination. We must never forget that the great victory over fascism was possible precisely because of the creation of a broad anti-Fascist coalition and because of the scores of peoples which were committed to the struggle and which rose up resolutely to defend their freedom and independence and to crush the Hitlerite war machine.

Learning the harsh lessons of history, the world's peoples - including the Romanian people, which has been particularly active - have acted with firmness and have succeeded for 40 years in preventing the outbreak of a new major conflagration on our planet.

However, it should be added that during the four decades since the end of the war, the international situation has been marked by a series of grave and complex developments which have given rise to mistrust and tension in relations among States. Although late last year and during the course of the present year some positive developments occurred, other developments in the international situation since the last session of the General Assembly show that the danger persists.

Under these circumstances nothing could be more important than rallying the efforts of the United Nations, of all peoples and of all peace-loving forces to halt the dangerous course towards tension and war, towards the nuclear precipice, and to resume and strengthen the policy of détente, co-operation and peace. Thus it is more than ever necessary to act with all our might to defend the supreme right of all peoples to life, peace and a free and dignified existence. Pride of place in this effort belongs to the United Nations, which was created 40 years ago precisely to contribute to building a better and more just world, without weapons and without war.*

*Mr. Maynard (Bahamas), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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That is why Romania is committed to promoting a wide-ranging policy of dialogue and international relations aiming at constructive solutions of the major problems facing mankind. This is a policy of principle, of broad co-operation with all States in the world, regardless of their social systems, a policy of supporting the struggle for liberation and national independence, and a policy which favours détente and peace. Romania has worked and continues to work consistently to base its relations with all States on the principles of full equality of rights, respect for national independence and sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, mutual advantage, and the renunciation of force and the threat of force, and to affirm those principles in international life. We firmly believe that only such a policy, along with close co-operation and a strengthening of the independence of every nation and of peace in the world, can guarantee the realization of the aspirations of all the world's peoples to freedom, a better life, and progress.

This session of the General Assembly is taking place in a particularly serious and complex international situation. The arms race, first and foremost the nuclear-arms race, is reaching unprecedented proportions; this continues to increase the threat of another world war, which would inevitably become a nuclear catastrophe leading to the destruction of the very conditions of life on earth.

Never in mankind's long history has such a threat hovered over civilization and over the life and freedom of peoples. Therefore, in the opinion of Romania and of President Nicolae Ceausescu the fundamental issue of our time is that of halting the arms race, especially the nuclear-arms race, and proceeding to disarmament, eliminating all nuclear weapons, ceasing all actions to militarize outer space, and defending and consolidating peace.

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The policy of force and the threat of force, and of consolidating and carving out spheres of influence continues with intensity. Armed conflicts and hotbeds of tension persist in various parts of the world. Moreover, the world economic crisis, which in one way or another has affected every State in the world, has further worsened the situation of the developing countries and has broadened the gap separating those countries from the developed countries.

Since the 1982 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the situation in the field of weaponry has moved in a direction contrary to that advocated in the conclusions and documents adopted at that session and contrary to the legitimate hopes of peoples. The arms race continues at an ever more frantic pace; military expenditures have increased every year; efforts to develop and manufacture new types and systems of weapons, including nuclear weapons with ever greater destructive capacities, have intensified; and attempts are being made to militarize outer space.

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There has been a particular worsening of the situation in Europe because of the deployment by the United States of America of intermediate-range missiles in some Western countries and because of the consequent nuclear countermeasures taken by the Soviet Union.

Like other countries, Romania welcomed the start of Soviet-American negotiations in Geneva. As is known, the two rounds of talks that have taken place thus far have led to no concrete results. During this period the deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe has continued, and this has only increased the nuclear danger still further.

An encouraging fact in this regard is constituted by the measures adopted by the Soviet Union regarding the moratorium on the deployment of some nuclear weapons until the autumn of this year and the cessation of nuclear tests until the end of the year, as well as the statement that if the United States of America were to adopt similar measures it would be possible to extend the cessation of nuclear tests and conduct negotiations with a view to the complete renunciation of such tests. We expect from the United States a positive reply to these initiatives and the submission of new proposals designed to reduce and then eliminate nuclear weapons and to halt the militarization of outer space. Mere statements are not enough; real, concrete actions are needed to prove the seriousness of the statements, to prove that there is a willingness to take the path toward the elimination of the nuclear danger.

The fact that there will be a meeting next November between the General-Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the President of the United States of America, Ronald Reagan, is without any doubt a positive event. That meeting could, in Romania's opinion, promote the achievement of positive results in the Soviet-American negotiations in Geneva.

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We do feel, however, that halting the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race, and proceeding to disarmament requires that the European countries should not wait passively for the outcome of the Soviet-American negotiations and of the forthcoming meeting between the leaders of the two countries. Quite to the contrary, those States - and, in the first place, those that are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty Organization - must shoulder a greater direct responsibility and must intensify their actions to lead the two great nuclear Powers to act concretely to achieve a mutually acceptable agreement on nuclear weapons and on preventing the militarization of outer space and, as a result, to reach the appropriate agreements to that end during their meeting in November.

It is in the interest of the peoples of the continent, and indeed of all the peoples of the world, to intensify the efforts and the actions designed to halt the deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe and to proceed to the withdrawal of those already in place and then to the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons, to the cessation of nuclear tests and to the renunciation of any action towards the militarization of outer space.

More than ever before it is now necessary that all Governments, all Heads of State, all political forces act before it is too late to save mankind from nuclear catastrophe.

Romania is in favour of and acts resolutely towards the success of the work of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and on Disarmament in Europe, and towards the beginning of effective negotiations to bridge the positions and reach an appropriate agreement. At the same time, we believe that the proposals made during the Vienna negotiations on the reduction of armaments and armed forces in Central Europe are a good basis for ensuring without delay an initial agreement acceptable to all parties.

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In our opinion, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament must act constructively; it must consider the existing proposals with a view to overcoming the stalemate in the negotiations and achieving agreement on questions such as the prevention of nuclear war, the prohibition of all nuclear tests, the prevention of the spreading of the arms race to outer space, and the prohibition of the development and production of chemical weapons and the destruction of the stockpiles of such weapons.

We attach special importance to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world as an important component of the policy of disarmament and security. In that spirit, we act to promote an active policy to ensure the broad development of relations with all Balkan States, both bilaterally and multilaterally, and the transforming of that region into a zone of good neighbourliness, co-operation and peace, free of nuclear weapons and foreign bases. Similarly, we support the establishment of such zones in the northern and central part of the continent as well as in other regions of the world.

To halt the arms race it is necessary to take consistent action for the freezing and reduction of military budgets. It must be understood that with the level reached by existing armaments the question of the lack of balance of forces is irrelevant. Balance must be achieved not through new weapons or new military expenditures, but through a reduction in the existing ones to the lowest possible level, and, in general, through the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. We believe that on the basis of the decision adopted by the Conference on Disarmament in 1985, we can through common efforts contribute to the acceleration and then the successful completion of the process of the formulation of principles on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures, with a view to starting concrete negotiations to bring about international agreements in this field.

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Halting the arms race and proceeding to the reduction of military expenditures could create conditions that would make possible the allocation of large financial, material and human resources to the solution of the serious problems faced by the developing countries. That could not but exert a positive impact on the entire world economy, favouring the expansion of international co-operation and of economic and political stability throughout the world.

In the general context of measures aimed at halting the arms race and proceeding to disarmament, we regard as of particular importance the cessation of the arms race in outer space. The misuse, without any control, of outer space - the heritage of mankind as a whole - is a serious danger for the peoples. We therefore think that it is necessary to stop any action designed to use outer space for military purposes, and to reach a general regulation of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes only. The question of the non-militarization of outer space must be solved appropriately within the context of the process designed to intensify international co-operation in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. In the spirit of that position of principle, we support the proposals put forward by the Soviet Union concerning the peaceful use of outer space, including the convening of an international conference and the establishment of an international organization to that end.

In the light of the importance of nuclear disarmament, of general disarmament, of ensuring peace, the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania recently addressed a further appeal to all responsible political elements and to the peoples of the entire world to combine their efforts and, irrespective of social systems or political, philosophical or religious convictions, to act - before it is too late - to put an end to the dangerous trend of events towards nuclear catastrophe, to save mankind from destruction, to ensure that our peoples and mankind as a whole have

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the right to free development and to use the discoveries of science and human knowledge solely for peaceful purposes, for the well-being, freedom, independence, and happiness of each nation.

(Mr. Andrei, Romania)

Romania, which is firmly in favour of reviving the policy of détente, believes that it is necessary to do everything possible to eliminate existing conflicts and settle all disputes between States solely through negotiations.

Romania has firmly and consistently declared its support for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Arab territories occupied since the 1967 war, recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to create their own State and guarantees of the independence, sovereignty and security of all States in the region. To that end, our country firmly and consistently supports the convening of an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as the Soviet Union, the United States of America, and other States which could contribute constructively to the establishment of peace in that region. We feel that it is particularly important to enhance the role of the Secretary-General in the achievement of that goal and to involve him more actively in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The worsening of the situation in Lebanon is a cause of deep concern. We favour broad reconciliation of the internal political forces with a view to ensuring the unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

At the same time, we must express our concern at the continuing war between Iran and Iraq, which is causing both peoples immense human and material losses. We favour the immediate cessation of military hostilities, the withdrawal of troops by both sides to within the internationally recognized borders that existed before the outbreak of the conflict and the initiation of negotiations aimed at the peaceful settlement of the problems between those two neighbouring States. This would be in the interest of the two countries and peoples and of peace and stability in that region and throughout the world.

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With regard to the Korean question, Romania reaffirms its solidarity with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its active support for the position and initiatives it has taken and for its political and diplomatic efforts aimed at the peaceful, democratic and independent unification of the country.

Romania actively supports the liberation struggle of the peoples and their efforts to consolidate their national independence and completely eliminate colonialism. In this spirit, we support the struggle of the Namibian people, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), to gain their independence and ensure the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

We strongly condemn the new repressive measures taken by the South African authorities against the black population and their blatant armed intervention and aggression against Angola and other neighbouring States. We support the proposals of the African countries regarding the adoption by the United Nations of effective measures to put an end for ever to the racist policy of apartheid.

Generally speaking, in the light of the numerous existing conflicts, which maintain and increase the seriousness of the international situation, we feel that it is high time for the United Nations to undertake with greater determination new measures and initiatives to resolve these conflicts by peaceful means, by negotiation.

It is in this spirit that, on the instructions of the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania we propose that the General Assembly of the United Nations address a solemn appeal to all States involved in military conflicts to cease hostilities immediately and move towards the solution of their problems through negotiations. We propose that with a view to the organization of such talks, the General Assembly request the Security Council to appoint special representatives.

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We propose, further, that all States should make a solemn commitment to comply with the obligation not to resort to the use or threat of use of force, not to interfere in any way whatsoever in the internal affairs of other States and to resolve all situations of conflict and tension by means of negotiations.

The adoption of such an appeal and such a solemn commitment would testify to the political will of all States to respect the United Nations Charter and would be a clear contribution to the policy of promoting détente, improving the international situation, strengthening trust among nations and promoting disarmament, independence, co-operation and peace.

There is deep concern at the fact that the world economy continues to be marked by instability and by a whole series of negative phenomena caused by the economic crisis, whose consequences are felt, to a greater or lesser extent, by all countries. The economic situation of the developing countries has been particularly affected by that crisis. The great majority of those countries find that they are prevented from developing their economies and advancing along the road of economic and social progress because of their external indebtedness and the extremely high interest rates which they must pay, as well as the protectionism increasingly practised in various forms by the developed countries.

As the Assembly knows, Romania has already put forward a series of proposals in this context. Romania, like many other countries, believes that in order to arrive at a global solution to the problems of underdevelopment, including the debt problem facing the developing countries, it is necessary to organize and begin within the United Nations genuine negotiations between the developing and the developed countries. Romania believes that within the framework of those negotiations agreement should be reached on a set of principles and arrangements for the global solution of the problem of the external debt of the developing countries, which would lead to: first, the cancellation of the debts of countries

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with a per capita income of \$500 to \$600, a large reduction in the debts of countries with a per capita income of \$1,000 to \$1,200 and a general reduction of 30 per cent to 50 per cent of the debts of all developing countries; secondly, the remainder of the debt being rescheduled on a long-term, not, as at present, a medium-term, basis, with a maturing period of three to five years; thirdly, interest rates being fixed at reasonable levels, while deducting from the remaining debt the excess payments made in recent years; fourthly, to the rescheduling of debts in such a way that the external debt servicing would not exceed 10 per cent to 15 per cent of the annual export revenues; and, finally, to the establishment, with the contributions of the developed countries, of a special fund from which to make new loans to developing countries at reasonable interest rates.

The adoption of such emergency measures and the need to restructure the international monetary and financial system make it necessary to convene an international monetary and financial conference, as proposed by the non-aligned countries. The system conceived in the light of the conditions and interests that prevailed 40 years ago and on the basis of pre-war experience has become obsolete as a result of the great political and economic changes that have taken place in the world.

It is also necessary to restrain the present strong protectionist tendencies. Our country firmly believes that the developed countries should make a commitment not to introduce new restrictions and should adopt resolute measures to reduce and eliminate in accordance with a precise timetable those that are already in force. It is also necessary for all States to abstain from adopting for political or other reasons economic restrictions and sanctions incompatible with the norms and principles of international law and with the requirements of economic interdependence among all nations. Like other States, Romania favours the convening of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations aimed at the reduction of customs tariffs and the dismantling of non-tariff barriers.

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There is reason to recall also that, in our day, where a major scientific and technological revolution is in full swing, the developing countries find that almost all the channels of access to modern technology are closed to them. Finding ways to revive and intensify the transfer of technology to the developing countries, increasing their access to the achievements of science and technology, would allow them to accelerate their development and their economic potential and, implicitly, it would allow them to increase, for the benefit of all, their own participation in the world economic system.

The growing gap between the economic development and the prospects of the developed countries, on the one hand, and of the developing countries, on the other hand, makes determined action to stop the brain drain more imperative than ever. It is incumbent upon the General Assembly not only to keep this question before world public opinion, but also to work harder to build a framework for international co-operation which would avoid the harmful consequences of the drain of trained personnel from developing countries.

To place international economic relations on a new, sound and fruitful footing and to overcome the instability which characterizes those relations, it is clearly necessary to bring about radical, fundamental changes which would do away with underdevelopment and establish a new international economic order, in keeping with the requirements of progress in today's world.

The vital interests, present and future, of all the peoples of developed and developing countries urgently require that we give up selfish positions and get on with the settlement of these grave problems, while there is still time to control them and to solve them through talks. The dialogue between the developed and developing countries carried out in a constructive, productive spirit in all negotiating bodies must be resumed as a matter of urgency and, finally, global negotiations must be started. Similarly, Romania has been and is in favour of a

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summit conference of the developing countries which would enable them to discuss ways of strengthening mutual co-operation and to develop a common strategy in their negotiations with the developed countries.

One cannot truly overcome the world economic crisis and ensure lasting large-scale recovery, as well as economic stability in the world, without resolving the problems of underdevelopment in all their complexity. The actual start of talks to achieve new relations in international co-operation based on equality, equity and mutual benefit constitute an overriding necessity, a proof of the capacity of States to resolve this fundamental contemporary problem and to lay the foundations for widespread and sustained progress, in harmony with the needs and immense possibilities of the world we live in, and in harmony with the requirements of economic stability and international politics.

Youth now represents an enormous social force for progress and peace which must resolutely have its say on all the major topics of international life. The young must above all act in close unity, side by side with their peoples and with the advanced democratic forces in the world, to curb the arms race and to achieve disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, in order to protect and strengthen peace.

As builders of tomorrow's world, the young are deeply interested in participating actively and responsibly in the discussion and solution of all problems upon which their future peace, progress and well-being depend. Questions dealing with the removal of social injustices, with the guarantee of fundamental rights to work, training, culture and education are closely linked to the life and status of youth in society.

Romania greatly appreciates the proclamation by the United Nations of International Youth Year, under the motto "Participation, Development, Peace". It

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is an event of deep significance for the present and for the future of the younger generation in the world.

We must act in such a way that International Youth Year will be an important factor in uniting young people of the whole world to defend and exercise their fundamental right to create a free and happy life for themselves and to develop in a climate of true security, co-operation and peace.

It is our conviction that broad and representative participation in the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year, during this session of the General Assembly, will make it possible to debate the very substance of the major problems of the younger generation and to adopt, approve and implement guidelines for future programmes devoted to youth, prepared by the United Nations Advisory Committee for International Youth Year.

During this session we shall celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, an event of such great scope and importance in international life. During the four decades of its existence, the United Nations has brought together almost all countries in the world and has contributed to ensuring the necessary climate for peaceful coexistence and for the maintenance of dialogue among States, in order to safeguard peace.

This anniversary provides us with a good opportunity for a realistic evaluation of the activities of the United Nations and for identifying new ways and concrete measures to increase its role and its contribution to the solution of the cardinal problems of humanity.

Increasing the contribution of all States to the debate and to the solution of the problems which concern mankind is an essential characteristic of contemporary political life. We see small and medium-sized countries, non-aligned countries and developing countries, all of which are highly interested in a policy of co-operation, independence and peace, asserting themselves more and more on the

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world scene. It may be said that every State and nation whether large or small, has a share in the responsibility for the fate of peace and of civilization, and its duty is to contribute to the cause of peace, détente and co-operation among peoples.

The United Nations must faithfully reflect the realities of today's world, and it must truly represent a forum for the entire international community. It must provide the necessary framework allowing all States to speak their minds on an equal footing and to decide on the fate of the United Nations and of peace in the world. It therefore seems necessary to improve the activities of the United Nations and of other international bodies, making them more democratic.

Through the years, Romania has presented concrete proposals concerning fundamental guidelines for the activities of the United Nations. It has, with other countries, undertaken a series of initiatives to increase the contribution of the United Nations to the solution of current international problems and to strengthen its capacity for acting in harmony with the requirements of peace and security.

We continue to attach the greatest importance to improving the machinery of the United Nations in terms of the peaceful settlement of disputes within the possibilities provided by the United Nations Charter. Romania has put forward, in the spirit of the Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes adopted by the General Assembly in 1982, the proposal to establish within the United Nations a commission for good offices, mediation and conciliation. It is a proposal which this year was studied in depth within the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on strengthening the role of the United Nations. I should like to make it clear that this proposal is not intended to create new structures, but rather to define, in complete harmony with the spirit and provisions of the Charter and within the functions of the principal bodies of the

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United Nations, a procedure within the Organization which would be permanently available to States and competent bodies of the United Nations, and through which interested countries could at any time go to a commission for good offices, mediation and conciliation, to settle conflicts through political means.

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Romania believes that in order to strengthen peace and security and co-operation between nations it is particularly important to develop and strengthen good neighbourliness between States, the subject of an item that appears on the agenda of the present session, as a result of a proposal by our country. We consider that at the present stage of debate on the matter we should proceed, within a framework to be decided without delay, to identify and clarify all the elements of good neighbourliness, with a view to the drafting of an international document of the United Nations.

In our view, the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization can play a very important and useful role. We believe that the Committee could be used more efficiently than it has been so far in considering and adopting effective measures aimed at strengthening the Organization's ability to take action.

In once again reaffirming Romania's deep commitment to the United Nations and to the purposes and principles of the Charter, adopted four decades ago, the Romanian delegation commits itself to work resolutely, in the spirit of the mandate given it by the President of the Republic, and in close collaboration with the delegations of other States, to contribute to the success of the present session, so that it may help bring about a turning point in international life, one that will make a change from tension and confrontation to détente and disarmament, to a policy of wide co-operation and understanding between States, so that reason and peace may reign on our planet.

Mr. AZIZ (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure to offer my most sincere congratulations to the President on his election to lead the General Assembly. I am confident that his competence and long experience in the United Nations will be an asset to us all in our endeavours to reach positive

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results at this historic session. What we find even more gratifying is the fact that he represents a country with which the Arab nation has had a long history of mutual friendship and inter-cultural relations. The delegation of Iraq wishes to assure him of its readiness to extend its fullest co-operation in contributing to the successful execution of his responsibilities.

I wish also to take this opportunity to express to the Secretary-General once more our confidence in him and our appreciation of his painstaking efforts in the service of the principles of the United Nations.

The current session of the United Nations has a historic significance, in that it embodies a commemorative occasion upon which we ought to pause and consider the road that the Organization has travelled since its foundation. In the normal way we come to the rostrum of the United Nations to air our views about the major issues facing us, but in this particular year it is our duty in dealing with such issues to approach the facts candidly and realistically in the hope that we may better preserve the principles upon which the Organization was founded. Most important among those principles is the establishment of peace, which the peoples of the world see as essential to the exercise of their rights to sovereignty, security and dignity, and without which justice in the world will give way to chaos and destruction.

My country and the other countries of our region stand in greater danger of aggression than any other part of the world, and are therefore in greater need of peace and stability and of the implementation of the principles upon which the Organization was founded 40 years ago.

In our region, there are two régimes that seek their objectives through policies of aggression and expansion at the expense of neighbouring States, policies they carry out with impunity. Unrestrained by conscience, the Zionist

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and Iranian régimes have demonstrated a total lack of responsibility in their persistent disregard for the United Nations and their continual violations of its Charter. Our Organization has yet to succeed in compelling those two régimes to respect its authority and abide by the principles agreed upon by the whole of civilized mankind.

The United Nations is not unaware of the facts of the Iranian aggression against my country. Iraqi representatives have submitted sufficient documents about the facts, together with detailed statements about my country's position, since the beginning of Iran's aggression more than five years ago, an aggression which has figured high on the United Nations agenda. The most flagrant fact about this aggression is Iran's undisguised objective - the toppling of the political and social systems in Iraq and other countries in the region, where the Iranians want to establish their own brand of backward and barbaric rule. That bizarre course of action, which the Iranian régime is determined to pursue against Iraq and other countries, is basically the main cause of Iran's continued aggression and of the dangers and turbulences threatening our region.

Iraq's increasing efforts, together with those of other countries in the region, to establish normal relations with Iran, based on the principles of good-neighbourliness, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, have all been in vain. From the very beginning the Iranian régime insisted upon fomenting trouble and applying its expansionist policies in the area. It started its aggression against Iraq by shelling innocent civilian border towns with heavy artillery in preparation for its full-scale invasion of Iraq and occupation of its territories by force.

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Faced with such imminent dangers, Iraq had no choice but to defend its sovereignty and security. The international Organization has been trying since that time to resolve the dispute on the basis of the Charter and within the means available to it. It passed Security Council resolution 479 (1980), its first on the dispute, on 28 September 1980, calling upon the warring parties to cease hostilities and to settle their differences by peaceful means. While Iran rejected that resolution, Iraq not only agreed to it, but also accepted in all sincerity the Organization's jurisdiction over the dispute, together with every resolution it was to pass calling for the dispute to be resolved peacefully and in accordance with the Charter. Iraq also accepted the jurisdiction of other international organizations, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement. The Iranian régime has, on its part, rejected all resolutions adopted to date by this or any other international Organization. Iran has tried instead to impose pre-conditions for ending the war that were both ridiculous and contrary to the rules of international law and the principles of international relations. These pre-conditions not only reflect the anomalous nature of the Iranian régime, but also accurately reveal its evil, expansionist and aggressive intentions.

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When, in an attempt to resolve certain issues related to the conflict, international efforts were begun with a view to mitigating the war's overall effect, Iraq co-operated in all sincerity with those efforts in the hope that peace could be established step by step. The reality of the situation, however, has shown beyond any doubt that the Iranian régime's response to those efforts has been opportunistic and time serving, very much in line with its plans to prolong the war and to achieve its neurotic, sick dreams to dominate Iraq and other countries in the region.

We are all well aware of the unfounded claims that the barbaric Iranian régime has been making in its campaign of crocodile tears with regard to certain issues related to its own aggression and caused by its own insistence upon prolonging it.

On the question of shelling populated civilian areas, I need not go into a detailed account of the already documented and established facts about how, on 4 September 1980, the Iranian régime began shelling Iraqi cities and civilian centres and about how it has continued to do so ever since that date whenever its aircraft found an opportunity to penetrate Iraqi air space.

The important fact in this issue is that on 27 June 1983 President Saddam Hussein of the Iraqi Republic proposed that a special agreement be signed between the two countries, under the auspices of the United Nations, which would protect civilian targets from further attacks. But Iran rejected that proposal, and that rejection was noted in a special paragraph of Security Council resolution 540 (1983) adopted in 1983 and also rejected by Iran.

Only after Iraq had foiled and completely destroyed Iran's major offensive against its southern sector in February 1984 did the Iranian régime begin to show any interest in this matter and to call upon the international Organization to do something about it.

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The Secretary-General's subsequent initiative brought about the 12 June 1984 agreement, according to which each side undertook to refrain from deliberate attacks on purely civilian centres. That obligation, however, did not deter the Iranian régime from bypassing the agreement by turning its border towns and villages into areas of military concentrations. We warned against this in my letter of 27 June 1984 (document S/16649). In that letter I demanded that a sufficient number of observers be dispatched to the area to supervise implementation of the agreement. The Iranian régime rejected the idea from the outset but ultimately agreed to allow the team of observers to stay in Tehran without giving them the right to make inspection visits to the areas covered by the agreement in order to verify its implementation.

After this we began to receive false Iranian claims of Iraqi violations of the agreement, and Iran's President went so far as to issue a statement on 8 February 1985 in which he threatened to shell the city of Basrah and warned its inhabitants to leave town (document S/16948). The same warning was repeated on 4 March 1985, giving the people of Basrah only 12 hours to evacuate the city.

Ostensibly in response to a raid carried out by Iraqi planes on a factory in the suburbs of Ahwaz, an area not covered by the agreement, a further violation of the agreement occurred at the same time as we were negotiating the matter of prisoners of war here in New York in the Security Council in the hope of finding a solution to their tragic predicament.

The Iranian threat was in fact carried out, and Basrah was subjected to severe shelling. Yet all this was only a prelude to what was to be Iran's largest and fiercest offensive against the southern sector of Iraq. That offensive, which began on 12 March 1985, was aimed at occupying southern Iraq and installing a puppet régime there. The offensive was carried out despite an appeal issued by the

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Secretary-General only three days before in which he had asked both parties to refrain from shelling cities. Our positive response to the Secretary-General's appeal was immediate. We expressed Iraq's complete readiness to participate in the negotiations conducted under his auspices with a view to drawing up effective measures whereby the 12 June agreement would no longer be open to exploitation for aggressive, militaristic purposes.

Does this leave any doubt as to Iran's real intentions in accepting the said agreement? The Iranian régime's acceptance of it was a diversionary tactic and an attempt to neutralize Iraqi strikes against Iranian military concentrations. Part of the diversion also consisted in Iran's deliberate violation of the agreement in an attempt to launch its offensive in an atmosphere of chaos.

Let us briefly consider the issue of the raids on ships. In 1983 Iraq called for serious measures to be taken to maintain security and stability in the Arab Gulf and to guarantee free navigation for all States, regardless of whether they are or are not part of the Gulf area. That proposal was welcomed by the States of the Gulf Co-operation Council and by all those eager to see security and stability prevail in our region and in the world at large.

The spirit of that proposal was also reflected in the legal and political principles embodied in Security Council resolution 540 (1983) of 31 October 1983, a resolution that equitably safeguards the interests of all States in the Arab Gulf area as well as those of the international community and of international navigation and trade.

Although that resolution called for only a partial cessation of hostilities between the two countries, which may in fact have contributed to prolonging the war, Iraq welcomed it, as did the Gulf Co-operation Council and all international circles. The Iranian régime, however, rejected that resolution and spurned all

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international efforts that sought to justify the rejection as a gesture of courtesy to Iran in an attempt to lure it into accepting some kind of undeclared realistic commitment to the resolution.

The Iranians rejected all this because they were preparing a new major offensive against Basrah, one that was eventually carried out in February 1984. However, having seen their offensive foiled, their forces destroyed and their ports blockaded in response to the blockade they themselves had imposed on our ports since the outbreak of the war, the Iranians began to feel the bite of the situation.

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Their régime began to cry wolf about threats posed by the blockade to international navigation in the Gulf. Tehran cried out for international law to be observed. But instead of approaching the situation with prudence by accepting resolution 540 (1983), which is both wise and balanced, the rulers of Iran resorted to attacking vessels belonging to the Arab Gulf States that were in no way involved in the armed conflict. Iran's objective in these attacks was to force the Gulf States to put pressure on Iraq and make it end its blockade of Iranian ports. This was embodied in Security Council resolution 552 (1984), which was also rejected by Iran, together with all other efforts aimed at easing the conflict and reaching a balanced solution in which national, regional and international navigational interests were to be safeguarded. Instead, Iran persisted in exercising its policy of piracy and terror against the countries of the region.

The reason behind this behaviour of the Tehran rulers was the same as that which made them reject resolution 540 (1983) in a previous year. It was that they were preparing for their major offensive of March 1985, aimed at occupying Basrah and installing a puppet government there. Again, as they saw their invasion destroyed by our defence forces, they began to talk of international law and freedom of navigation.

What is worth pointing out here is that the Iranian régime understands the rules of international law and free navigation only in so far as they serve its military objectives. That régime has never stopped its raids against neutral vessels or refrained from its other acts of piracy. Iran has launched 19 such raids since September 1984, in addition to 45 other acts of piracy carried out since the beginning of that year. They were directed not only against Arab targets; the list includes vessels from India, Spain, Greece, South Korea, Liberia, Panama, West Germany, Britain, Belgium and China, as well as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

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Let us consider the tragedy of the prisoners of war. The Tehran authorities have always treated Iraqi prisoners of war on the basis of the political premise of Iranian expansionist territorial ambitions in Iraq. Not only have they premeditatedly killed those prisoners of war who had refused to succumb to their will; they have also planted among the rest of them Iranian elements who have previously resided in Iraq. The aim of this measure is to spread psychological terror and to impose political and physical oppression with a view to undermining the allegiance of the prisoners of war to their country. These practices were such that the head of the International Red Cross team that visited the area on a fact-finding mission confirmed, in a report dated 23 November 1984, that Iranian treatment of Iraqi prisoners of war left them with but two choices: treason or death. The team itself was treated extremely badly by the Iranian authorities - to such an extent that it was forced to abandon its work in Iran.

When the report of the Secretary-General's mission was published, we attended the Security Council meeting of 4 March 1985 to discuss the subject. As usual, Iran was conspicuous for its absence. The reason was, yet again, its preparation for the March 1985 offensive, which, having been foiled, left the Tehran régime with nothing to do but to feign concern about the conditions of the prisoners of war and to pretend to be interested in finding partial solutions to their problem, which in reality is a horrific tragedy. Of course, this came at a time when, as one is bound to remind the Assembly, the Iranian rulers themselves had refused to consider an Iraqi proposal for a comprehensive solution to the prisoner-of-war dilemma, a proposal I submitted to the Secretariat in a letter dated 9 March 1985.

If those rulers actually possessed only some of the human attributes they claimed for themselves, they should not have rejected Iraq's reasoned, all-embracing solution to the prisoner-of-war problem, a solution widely

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appreciated in the international circles concerned. Nor should they have persisted in producing lies about their treatment of Iraqi prisoners of war.

As I explained to the Security Council on 4 March 1985, the Iranian rulers do not consider the question of the prisoners of war a humanitarian issue. They think of them rather as a political card they can use to promote their expansionist schemes against Iraq. From time to time Iran cries wolf about the principles of international law. Yet these cries remain only part of Iran's propaganda tactics.

What is true of Iranian behaviour in relation to the shelling of civilian centres, the attacks on ships or the treatment of prisoners of war is also true in relation to other issues in the conflict, such as aviation and the use of chemical weapons, which are often brought up by the Iranian régime. The common denominator in these issues, as far as Iranian conduct is concerned, remains the fact that the Iranian régime usually takes a selective, self-interested stand towards the United Nations Charter and international law. Iran picks only those parts it finds suitable for its own ends and its plans to prolong the war and rejects those that call for peace and justice, for adherence to the principles of sovereignty, good-neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and for the abandonment of all forms of hegemony, domination, force, terror and aggression.

If the Iranian régime had really been interested in observing international law, it should not have raised the slogan "a clean war", nor should Iran have continued to launch its limited and major offensives against Iraqi territories regardless of the huge losses sustained by its forces in the process.

The number of Iranian military offensives launched against Iraq, for instance, from September 1984 to September 1985 reached 16. Four of these offensives were major ones, including two in the northern sector, one in the middle sector and another in the southern sector. The remaining 12 were launched against the

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southern sectors of Iraq. In none of these offensives has the Iranian régime been able to achieve any of its objectives; its forces have sustained huge losses in both men and equipment.

Iran's insistence upon continuing the war in the hope of achieving its expansionist dreams in Iraq and the region, combined with its eclectic and self-interested approach to international conventions and agreements, has been the main reason for the failure of the theory that peace can be achieved through partial settlements. From the very beginning, in the light of our close awareness of the real nature of the Iranian régime, we did not expect that theory to produce positive results. Yet we treated it in the spirit of hope and co-operation to show the world once again our sincere wish to reach a just and honourable peace based on the Charter, international law and the principles of sovereignty, independence, non-interference and the abandonment of the policies of hegemony, domination and aggression.

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For these reasons and in the light of our bitter experiences with the Iranian régime, which thrives on ideas totally at odds with the spirit of the age and contrary to the rules and practices of modern international relations, it has become imperative that we view with extreme caution efforts aimed at finding partial solutions to issues related to the conflict. Such a method has succeeded only in enabling the Iranian régime to prolong the war over a period of more than five years. Peace is one, an indivisible whole, and if peace is to be realized, then all good efforts must be directed towards achieving it comprehensively according to a practicable programme which has no room for exploitation.

This is the position which I conveyed to the Secretariat on 16 March 1985 in document S/17037 and which provided the basis for our talks with the Secretary-General in New York on 24 March, when he proposed his eight-point programme to both countries, as well as on 8 and 9 April, when he visited our capital. It is also the position expressed by President Saddam Hussein in his letter to the Iranian peoples of 14 June 1985.

It is important to pause here and remind ourselves of the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council after his trip to Iran and Iraq, a report contained in document S/17097. In that report the Secretary-General indicated that, although his consultations with the two sides did not reduce the gap between them, there remained real grounds for efforts to continue being exerted in order to bring peace closer. He also expressed the conviction that the first necessary step on the road to peace should be a meeting of the Security Council attended by both parties to the conflict and at which all aspects of the conflict would be discussed and reviewed.

What has taken place? Members of the Security Council thought that the best way to bring the Iranian régime to the Council table would be through

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appeasement. Hence came the Council's statement of 25 April, which attempted to balance the Council's earlier call for a cessation of hostilities embodied in its statement of 15 March. What was the result? The Iranian rulers announced that the statement of 25 April was still insufficient and that any positive response on their part remained subject to the implementation of their ridiculous pre-conditions, which are contrary to the United Nations Charter and international law.

Thus, the logic of appeasement has led to a stalemate in the sound implementation of the principles of the Charter and international law. It has also alleviated international pressure on the aggressor and practically allowed him to continue his aggression. Appeasement and courtesy do not pay with expansionist, aggressive régimes nor do they promote the objectives of peace, security and stability, for such régimes may interpret appeasement as the willingness to overlook criminal practices and violations of the rules of international relations, and may thus be encouraged to persist in their policies of aggression, sabotage and terrorism.

The Palestinian question, including the rights of the Arab Palestinian people, has been one of the most important issues in the United Nations since its foundation. While the tragedy of this dispersed people remains a pressing matter, the Arabs of Palestine are repeatedly subjected to massacre and extermination. The objective has always been to eliminate this people's heritage, identity and very existence. The Palestinians continue to suffer the most inhuman treatment at the hands of their Zionist oppressors, whose racist measures have included not only expulsion, dispersion, confiscation of property, and so on, but also the establishment of Zionist settlements on Arab lands.

We strongly support the struggle of the Arab Palestinian people under the leadership of its sole, legitimate representative for the restoration of its

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inalienable national rights. We also strongly support the political and non-political struggle of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to attain the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

The flagrant violations and aggressive acts that the Arab nation has faced during the past 10 years have revealed the extent of convergence of the political aims of the racist régimes in the region. The Zionist raid against Iraq's peaceful nuclear installations in 1981, the first of its kind, was timed and carried out in full harmony with an aggressive war which the rulers of Iran persist in launching and intensifying against our country. This highlights the extent of the collaboration between the régimes of Tehran and Tel Aviv in executing their criminal schemes against Iraq and the Arab nation. The main objective of these schemes is to deprive the Arab nation of its opportunities for progress and prosperity and to prevent it from taking its rightful place among civilized nations. They also aim at the dismemberment of this nation into mini-States and warring factions. The ongoing destruction and fragmentation of Lebanon, while demonstrating the extent of the damage that the combined efforts of these two aggressive régimes can cause, call for immediate measures to protect this State from partition and total disintegration, and to restore to it the peace, stability and unity it once enjoyed.

On this historic occasion at the United Nations, it seems more important than ever before that we do not confine our efforts to making statements and issuing declarations, of which too many have already been produced. The future of this Organization and the credibility of its Members' resolve to defend, protect and improve it for the benefit of peace rests first and foremost upon our willingness to turn words into deeds. To achieve this, practical and effective measures are required.

We ought to remember as well the important issue taken up by the Secretary-General in his annual report, an issue which he describes as being

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"not so much the future of the United Nations as the future of humanity and of our planet and the role of the United Nations in that future" (A/40/1, p.2). In his report the Secretary-General recommends that the Security Council exert, in the near future, special concerted efforts to resolve one or two of the major problems before it, taking whatever measures and actions it deems necessary within the framework of the Charter.

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We call upon the United Nations in general, and the Security Council and the Secretariat, in particular, to find a comprehensive settlement to the Iraq-Iran conflict; a settlement that will ensure peace and justice through the authority vested in the Council by the Charter. The Council shoulders a special responsibility to rise above partial and narrow interests and to view issues through common international interests. These common interests cannot be maintained without deterring the party that takes an aggressive stand by insisting on war and rejecting peace. This is, of course, a stand shared by the Iranian and Zionist régimes, which have both ignored and ridiculed the various resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Just as the Iranian régime insists upon continuing its aggression against Iraq and rejecting all proposals for a just and honourable peace, the Zionist régime maintains its policies of aggression, repression and racial discrimination against the Arab people of Palestine.

Without deterrent action and the measures required to make it effective, the United Nations will remain merely a rostrum for grievances, incapable of living up to its founders' intention of creating an international body through which peace and security in the world could be effectively maintained.

In the light of our categorical rejection of all forms of racial discrimination, we hereby reiterate our full support for, and solidarity with, the people of Namibia in its struggle for liberty and independence under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), its sole legitimate representative. We also condemn the racist policies practiced by the Pretoria régime against the struggling peoples of Namibia and South Africa. We affirm these peoples' right to liberty, independence and a free life.

The fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly comes at a time when the international economic situation is beset by crucial problems. In spite of scattered signs of improvement in certain industrial countries, fears are

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still widespread that the current recession may lead to further deterioration in the economic field, and may seriously damage the economies of developing countries.

The fact that the present economic situation has dragged on for so long demonstrates that the crisis is not just a temporary cyclical phenomenon, but the outcome of deep-rooted imbalances, of maladjustment in the economic structure and of the absence of justice in international economic relations.

The current economic crisis and its negative consequences have also brought about the collapse of traditional methods of co-operation in the field of development. Successive international conferences have either failed completely or produced only disappointing results. Plans to resume global negotiations remain at a standstill, and efforts to halt further deterioration in international trade have not made much progress. In addition to all this, there has emerged a growing tendency to break up the general international consensus on development.

Iraq reaffirms its total commitment to global negotiations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/138. Iraq also wishes to express its conviction that global negotiations still represents the most comprehensive method for the international community to restructure international economic relations, develop the economies of developing countries and strengthen multilateral economic co-operation.

We hope sincerely that as we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, we will succeed in finding the opportunity to achieve real progress in this field.

With regard to the critical economic situation confronting developing countries, Iraq wishes to voice its deep concern about the gravity of the problem in Africa, where economic deterioration is caused both by difficulties in the

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international economic situation and by continual droughts, desertification and other natural disasters on that continent.

We welcome all practical and effective measures adopted and implemented by the international community in support of short-term and long-term efforts by the African countries to deal with their own crises.

We would also like to express our concern about the growing burden of foreign debts shouldered by the developing countries. These debts ought to be seen in the light of their detrimental effects on the economies of these countries.

Finally, Iraq supports all international proposals urging the developed creditor countries and international financial and monetary institutions to enter into direct negotiations with developing countries, with a view to reaching a fair and permanent solution to the foreign debt problem, and thus perhaps enabling the debtor States to resume their development programmes.

Mr. Chit HLAING (Burma): Allow me, first of all, Sir, to express to the delegation of Mexico the deepest sympathy of my delegation for the tragic disaster which has just befallen their country. We share the international community's deep concern over and response to this catastrophe, which has found expression in the unanimous adoption by this Assembly of a resolution calling for solidarity and support for the Government and people of Mexico, who are facing this crisis with determination and courage.

This year's session of the General Assembly marks the observance of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and, accordingly, bestows a glow of distinctive honour to the high office which Ambassador de Piniés, of Spain, holds. Permit me, on behalf of myself and the delegation of Burma, to tender him our warm and sincere congratulations on his election to the presidency of the Assembly. We are confident that the wealth of experience and diplomatic skill which he brings with him will, indeed, be of great value to this Assembly,

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which is meeting at a time that calls for the highest statesmanship to effect a constructive turning point in the history of the United Nations.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay my delegation's tribute to our outgoing President, Mr. Paul Lusaka, for his distinguished services to the Assembly during its last session, and for providing much of the inspiration for this commemorative year of our world Organization.

Anniversaries are traditionally a time for reflection and resolution. The occasion which we commemorate this year symbolizes the common interest shared by all Member States of the United Nations in upholding the aspirations of mankind, as reflected in the purposes and principles of the Charter. We meet at a critical juncture in the fortieth year of the existence of our world Organization. It is common nowadays for some to belittle the performance of the United Nations and to question its relevance and credibility, and their number even includes some of its founders. And so, today what is called for is a sober, even if agonizing, reappraisal, rather than merely an occasion of imposing ceremonial activities. The United Nations surely needs strong and enlightened support if it is to weather the political and economic winds that batter and erode its structure and functions, and if it is to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

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In his reports of the past four years the Secretary-General has been trying to drive home to the international community a message concerning his serious anxiety about the international situation and the challenges facing the world Organization. Hence, in the words of the Secretary-General,

"the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations provides a further occasion not only to review the performance of the Organization over the past four decades but, above all, to encourage a rededication by Member States to the principles and purposes of the Charter, to promote interest in the work of the Organization and support for its efforts, and to reinvigorate international co-operation in all fields of endeavour. There can be little doubt that, if it is governed by such an approach, the observance can help further the cause of international understanding."

Burma became a Member of the United Nations a few months after its re-emergence as an independent sovereign State. To apply for membership in the world Organization was the newly independent Burma's first act in the international field. Attracted by its lofty idealism, we subscribed whole-heartedly to the purposes and principles of the Charter. We looked forward to an era of peace and security, achievement and welfare, freedom and dignity, which are the goals of the United Nations for all peoples. However, the record of the past 40 years, with its conflicts, frustrations and mounting crises, has reminded the world that the United Nations is still far from achieving the ideals so nobly enshrined in the Charter.

Let us look more closely at what gives the United Nations its current importance and at what constitutes its limitations. Notwithstanding its imperfections, there is nothing more illustrative of the relevance and appeal of the United Nations than the record of its expanding membership and the increasing scope of its activities. The fact that the Organization, which started with

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51 Member States, has now increased its membership to 159 is indeed a measure of the acknowledgement of its prestige and its role in world affairs. The United Nations has survived and lived and grown to prove indispensable to the contemporary world.

At the same time, the numerical growth of membership in the world Organization has correspondingly increased the diversity of positions and interests and unavoidably brought with it new internal problems and sometimes even critical situations. While increasing membership imparts greater strength and advantages to the Organization, it also imposes heavier responsibilities in the sense that a greater degree of restraint and moderation and respect for and tolerance of the positions of others have become absolutely imperative. Without this, we can anticipate no breakthrough in the accumulating problems facing the Organization. There is a need, then, for an intensification of efforts, so that all nations, whatever the diversity of their views and interests, may find in the United Nations a ready forum for the solution of their mutual problems, and in the Charter a common reference on all matters which touch the welfare of mankind as a whole.

The Charter, in all solemnity, assigned to the United Nations as its foremost mission "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". The task of carrying out that injunction continues to be the Organization's main challenge. Its effectiveness in fulfilling this role is, however, largely determined by the political and power realities of the world environment in which it operates. Unhappily, factors in the international climate have not proved conducive to helping the Organization measure up to the magnitude and nobility of its tasks. What is not readily understood is that the United Nations is not a self-operating agency and that it simply cannot take significant action without the consent and support of its Members, which provide it with financial and material resources and

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empower and mandate it to act. That is the overall environment in which the United Nations must operate and it means little to evaluate its performance against abstract standards and without reference to these realities. It follows therefrom that the effectiveness of the United Nations flows from the respect which its Members have for its constitutional authority. In the final analysis, the United Nations will never be more than what its Members allow it to be.

The conceptual basis of the United Nations at its birth was that the Allied Powers, which were the victors in the Second World War, would remain united to maintain the future peace of the world. That assumption failed to prove true with the onset of the cold war, which beset the post-War period and extended to dominate the world political scene as East-West rivalry.

Faced with this historical context, the United Nations, from its very inception, has proved unable to co-ordinate, but instead has had to deal with, different interpretations of the Charter. Legal principles have become politicized and double standards have been applied. What is seen as a breach of international norms by one side is often presented as an act of liberation and fraternal aid by the other. Seen through the prism of the different ideologies professed by the opposing blocs, every major issue has been amplified in the battle for hearts and minds. The leading role entrusted to the major Powers in 1945 has deteriorated into a system founded on the antagonistic relations of the two leading Powers and the division of the world on that basis, thereby negating both the substance and the purport of the United Nations.

Thus, the present crisis of confidence confronting the Organization is the result not of shortcomings in its mechanisms but of a policy out of control. The United Nations has been unable to put an end to the confrontation between the two blocs or to halt the arms race between their leading Powers. The rivalry remains and sources of tension still exist in the world. A multitude of problems before

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the United Nations remain unsolved. The security of the small and medium-sized countries is by no means assured, and the danger of local wars still persists.

The fundamental purpose of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of which depends on the development of friendly relations and co-operation among States. The principles for this are embodied in the United Nations Charter and their faithful observance is of permanent importance for the improvement of international relations and for making the United Nations a more effective instrument of international conciliation.

However, in the present-day world situation it has not been easy to live up to that ideal. Thus, in the 40 years since the signature of the Charter a limited peace affording limited security has been precariously maintained through the operation of the traditional concept of the balance of power. While the post-War version of the balance of power - or the balance of terror, as it is sometimes called - may have succeeded so far in warding off a general war, it has grievously failed to prevent limited wars, localized conflicts and other instances of force being used in a manner incompatible with the purposes of the Charter. Again, while it may afford security, however illusory, to the major Powers and those who have sought their protection through military alliances, it has grievously failed to afford assured security to all, especially the weak and the small, the non-aligned and the non-armed, whose security continues to be exposed to all kinds of threats and pressures.

For such countries, the peace and security deriving from the post-War system of the balance of power lacks full meaning and full content. Of course, as members of the international community, all of us have a vital interest in preventing global armed conflict. But no less vital for us is the question of our individual security, and I submit that we should have a clear understanding in our minds as to the meaning of this.

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To our mind, security in its immediate sense means assured freedom from the threat or use of force against our national sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity. But in its ultimate sense security cannot but mean assured freedom from outside interference in our internal affairs in any manner whatsoever and from the application of external pressures in any shape or form. It means for each of us the right to choose freely our own political, economic and social system and to determine our own future in accordance with the ideals that we aspire to and the values that inspire us.

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Relevant principles concerning the matters I have referred to are embodied in the Charter as well as in the Declaration of Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States and in the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. In our view, only universal and scrupulous respect for and observance of these principles, both in word and in deed, could ensure full security for our countries. Any violation of these principles anywhere, directly or indirectly, in whatever guise or under whatever pretext, deals a grievous blow to mankind's hopes for a peaceful and just order. By the same token, whenever and wherever any Power - big, small or medium - resorts to armed force in contravention of these vital principles, the inevitable result is their serious weakening and erosion, creating conditions of far-reaching implications which are of concern to all countries.

We are therefore alarmed and distressed that virtually all the focal points of crises that exist in the world today have been the outcome of the flagrant violation of these principles - be it in the Middle East, Central America, South Africa, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, Namibia or Cyprus. In each of these situations, there has been employment of armed intervention by an external Power in the internal affairs of another independent sovereign State to bring about a change of the government of that State. In almost every case the problem can be resolved only on the basis of the withdrawal of foreign troops, non-interference in the internal affairs of these countries and the exercise by the people affected of the right to choose their own government and to determine their own future and destiny. Whether it is in the Middle East, South Asia, South-East Asia or Africa, Burma cannot accept either interference or occupation as a fait accompli. The position of the delegation of Burma on these issues has often been stated at the United Nations, based as it is on our unswerving and consistent support for respect

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for the principles which are stipulated in the Charter as cardinal principles to be observed in inter-State relations.

May I now briefly touch upon the close relationship between disarmament and international peace and security. It is fair to say that the post-war armaments race is the product of the failure of the United Nations collective security system and the consequent reversion by nations to the old concept of the balance of power to maintain peace and to ensure security for themselves. But the armaments race itself creates greater insecurity for all, and by deepening mistrust and suspicion among the armed Powers generates its own momentum. To halt and reverse it would require, in the first place, the promotion of greater trust and confidence among nations, and the removal of their deep-seated sense of insecurity.

For far too long has the world been split into two major camps, with their leading Powers still encumbered by serious differences and locked in a serious contest for supremacy. But recent developments like the resumption of arms talks and the reactivation of summit diplomacy between the world's two leading Powers will, we hope, offer some prospect of reduced tension. We hope that the impulse generated by this first step will prove productive in the entire spectrum of international relations. Even if it does not yield immediate results, the summit will be a boost to the morale of a world that has been beclouded with the ominous threat of nuclear war. We can only hope that the leading Powers will be able to rise to the occasion to match the mood and expectations they have aroused and break the deadly cycle of the arms race. Fate demands that the two leading Powers must live together and make peace, particularly at this critical threshold, before man's last frontier - outer space - is defiled and becomes sullied by lethal weapons and conflict. Nothing is more urgent than to prevent the militarization of outer space.

The Assembly session this year also marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries

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and Peoples. The most outstanding achievement of the United Nations is certainly in the process of decolonization. The emergence of independent States from colonial rule, under the aegis of the United Nations, has led substantially to the expansion of membership of the Organization and altered the ratio of forces within it. In spite of these tangible results, the last vestiges of the twin evils of colonialism and racialism have persistently defied solution in southern Africa. They are not problems peculiar to Africa, but Africa has witnessed them in their most acute form.

The people of Namibia are still deprived of their inalienable right to freedom, independence and self-determination. South Africa defies the will of the international community by refusing to comply with Security Council resolution 435 (1978) on independence to Namibia. The delegation of Burma considers resolution 435 (1978) as the only acceptable and agreed basis for an internationally recognized settlement in Namibia. For that reason we reject the pre-emptive move by South Africa to establish an interim government in Namibia, a decision that runs counter to resolution 435 (1978).

The history of the Republic of South Africa in racial discrimination, as expressed through its policy of apartheid, is to be deplored. The prolongation of this policy has led to the exposure of all communities - black and white - to mounting acts of violence and suppression and to needless loss of life. The mounting tide of world criticism against the policy of apartheid is already taking the direction of economic pressures, which can only be detrimental to the viability of South Africa's economy. We can only hope that the leaders of South Africa will, in counsel of wisdom, reverse the present trend and remove the ominous threat of extended conflict in the region.

Tremendous economic forces are shaking the world today. We are at an acute phase of a process where the whole of human society is passing through an

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enormously important transformation, so rapid that nations are carried along, without even understanding the underlying factors. This is reflected in the frequency of crisis situations that we encounter in the world economy. The danger inherent in the present situation is that attempts might be made to ameliorate the world's economy ills in a limited way, to serve special ends of exclusive minority interests. Solutions resorted to in this way can only result in increasing misery and the difficulties through which the developing countries, the weakest link in the world economy, are now passing.

When the United Nations was conceived in 1945, few then gave so much as a thought to the fact that the conscious aim set forth in the Preamble to the Charter "to promote social progress and better standards of living" would have special relevance to the developing countries, which constitute three fourths of the world's population, whose physical needs have to be met and whose hunger for human dignity has to be satisfied. The task of bridging the gap between the developed and developing countries assumed primacy in the economic and social work of the Organization in the ensuing years. While the United Nations has been able to launch a series of development decades and strategies and has adopted important documents for a more equitable system in the world economic order, the paradox of the present situation is that the plight of the developing countries has not fared better. Despite all efforts at national and international levels, disparity continues unabated.

In the last 10 years or so, the international system of economic operations has not been favourable to the developing countries. International trade for the developing countries has been marked by a decline in the export of commodities and a decline in raw material prices, while their role as markets for finished products and capital is on the increase. This widening trade gap is one of the most agonizing phenomena of the world today, because it not only will impoverish the

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developing countries through an ever-increasing indebtedness for their imports, but will gradually have an adverse effect on their economy. Trade is indeed of prime importance for development.

The problem of the over-indebtedness of developing countries has now become a principal preoccupation of the international community. High interest rates, unfavourable repayment terms and adverse trade conditions make it impossible for developing countries to earn what is needed for debt repayment. This external debt crisis is a serious element of the on-going crisis in the monetary and financial system. All this illustrates the gravity of the situation and calls for the long-overdue reform of the international monetary and financial system. As monetary affairs affect the whole atmosphere of trade and aid, it appears to us that these matters are the concern of the entire international community. The establishment of a new and equitable international monetary order is also contingent upon the full participation of all those who will be affected by it. Accordingly, the delegation of Burma supports the call for the convening of a conference on international monetary and financial reform.

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International economic relations continue to be characterized by the lack of momentum of the so-called North-South dialogue between the developed and developing countries. Developing countries are steadfast in their position of global approaches to solving economic issues. Developed countries tend to seek solutions on conservative concepts aimed at retaining the status quo. In these circumstances there has been no breakthrough and preparations for the launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation and development have made no headway thus far. As a result, not one of the problems facing the world economy for the last 10 years has been ameliorated or solved. Instead, developing countries continue to be in a position of dependence on the monetary, fiscal and trade policies of developed countries. The prospect of serious resumption of dialogue between the developed and developing countries remains poor without some additional political effort to generate an international climate restoring the necessary trust and understanding of the respective positions of the two groups.

The fact is that the world community is still far from an ordered economic system, planned for the general good, and it seems that a long struggle lies ahead for its achievement.

Developing countries are at present engaged in a determined attempt to achieve a breakthrough in self-sustaining growth. While the result will depend largely on their own efforts, it is recognized generally that the acceleration of their economic growth could be hampered or even impaired if their efforts are not supplemented or strengthened by constructive international action. Economic development also brings in its train equally complex needs for social advancement. The achievements of the United Nations are perhaps more manifest in its responsiveness to these pressing economic and social issues. Less fully appreciated are the effective services of the United Nations family of related

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agencies, institutions and programmes dealing with the economic and human problems of developing countries.

In a world steeped in poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease and injustice, these specialized agencies are all engaged in vital tasks relating to human welfare, national growth, international co-operation and peace. In the forefront of these activities is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). As a major channel for multilateral technical assistance provided through the United Nations system, UNDP has assisted developing countries in their economic and social development in conformity with the spirit of the United Nations Charter. As an agency for international action aimed at combating poverty, malnutrition and hunger, the assistance provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in the area of food and agricultural research and production, is proving valuable to developing countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) is helping to protect and promote the health of all the people of the world by participating in national health programmes.

Adopting an integrated approach to the problems of children all over the world, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) works in partnership with developing country governments to meet the basic needs of children and mothers in a variety of sectors. A noteworthy effort is the present aim of WHO and UNICEF to achieve by the year 1990 the goal of universal immunization of young children against six main diseases that kill children. This is a highly commendable vision and effort which inspires the delegation of Burma to give its keen support and commitment.

It is through its family of related agencies, institutions and programmes that the United Nations has proved, in ample measure, that it can serve as the co-ordinator of man's efforts for the common weal.

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It is important for all of us to realize that in the years before us the shape and substance of the international order, the question of peace and war, will be determined not only by political issues, but more and more by problems of the economy and by rapid technological development that will eventually lead to a shift of the balance of forces in the world. Economic development is regarded by all countries as the only yardstick of economic progress. But the creation of conditions of peace, at both the international and national level, is the prerequisite for economic development and progress. Peace in our time is, therefore, an urgent and immediate need. Unfortunately, the United Nations has not yet found the final answer by which man's achievements in the field of science and technology should be utilized for his betterment and not be permitted to pose a threat of his complete annihilation.

As the United Nations begins the fifth decade of its life, it seems clear that the direction of its persuasion will be determined by a twofold challenge - how can it be a force for greater economic and social equality in the world as well as a force for peace?

This is the task to which we must address ourselves with renewed faith and confidence.

Mr. MOKOLO wa MPOMBO (Zaire) (interpretation from French): My delegation would join in the condolences expressed to the Government and the people of Mexico in connection with the tragedy which has just befallen them and associates itself with any initiative taken by the international community to provide immediate assistance to the people and the Government of Mexico.

I should like to join preceding speakers in congratulating the President most sincerely on my own behalf and on behalf of my delegation on his election to the presidency of the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. In this connection, I would assure him of the full co-operation of my delegation.

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I should also like to express my great appreciation to his predecessor, an outstanding diplomat, His Excellency Ambassador Paul Lusaka, for the competence and perseverance that he demonstrated during the thirty-ninth session and during the intersessional period.

I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the dynamism and clear-sightedness shown by the Secretary-General of our Organization, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, from the time that he assumed that post.

On 4 October 1973, the Founder-President of the Popular Movement of the Revolution and President of the Republic, Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, made a substantial contribution to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly by conveying to the international community a message of peace and friendship from the people of Zaire as a whole as represented in Popular Movement of the Revolution.

True to his belief in the ideals and purposes of the United Nations, President Mobutu Sese Seko, who has never missed any of the major gatherings of our Organization, including the twenty-fifth anniversary of our Organization, has undertaken personally to attend the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of our Organization.

This commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, which coincides with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, takes place at a particularly troubled time in world history, when the antagonisms between the major Powers have been increasing, tension and confrontation have been aggravating this trend and a particularly acute economic crisis affects all developing countries in general, and Africa in particular, slowing down their growth and jeopardizing their very development.

The international situation is worsened still further by an unbridled nuclear-arms race which threatens the survival of mankind and increases the danger

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of a nuclear conflagration. The improvement and stockpiling of conventional weapons in many parts of the world, and particularly in the developing countries, provide a new dimension to the arms race, particularly in the case of States that have the largest military arsenals.*

*Mr. Gauci (Malta), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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The massive supply of such weapons to States that base their philosophy on expansionism, domination and intervention in the internal affairs of other States increases the danger of confrontation between States and prompts such over-armed States to launch attacks and commit acts of aggression against other States less well-armed and therefore more vulnerable.

This commemorative session on the fortieth anniversary offers the international community an opportunity for frankness, requiring a lucid and enlightened analysis of the international situation, in the light not only of the nuclear arms race, but also and above all of the sources of conflict among States, conflicts which have been increasingly frequent since the use of the last atom bomb. It is undeniable that more than 150 conflicts have arisen since the Second World War, and many of them have occurred in third world countries.

The collective security system as established by the Security Council and General Assembly should be reviewed and adapted to the wars that pit the States Members of our Organization one against another.

The conflict between Iran and Iraq is a clear illustration of this approach, as are many other confrontations which are currently occurring in the world.

In view of the many violations of the provisions of the United Nations Charter concerning international peace and security, the means the Charter provides for peaceful settlement of disputes should be strengthened so as to allow for more intensive consultations between the belligerents. Such a procedure would reduce tensions between the States in conflict and would facilitate conditions favourable to a lasting peace agreement, the aim being to make operational and effective the system of collective security.

In fact, faced with many such cases occurring in Africa, Asia and Latin America over the last few years, the United Nations, which is supposed to ensure the independence and territorial integrity of all States, whether large or small,

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rich or poor, has not been able to take effective action to halt such conflicts. It was because of that same inability that Zaire had to send its troops into Chad to assist that brother country in defending its sovereignty and also to defend the aspirations of its people to unity and territorial integrity.

I believe that was a task which should have been carried out by the United Nations and, more specifically, by the Military Staff Committee, whose function is to advise and assist the Security Council on all questions relating to military requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, the employment and command of forces placed at its disposal, the regulation of armaments and possible disarmament, as provided for in Article 47 of the Charter.

It is regrettable that this Military Staff Committee, although it does exist, and is supposed to act as policeman in all cases of threats to or breaches of the peace, has not yet been able to function, thus cutting off the system sounding the alert and ensuring the collective security provided for in the United Nations Charter.

So it is easy to lay a special responsibility upon the permanent members of the Security Council who, moreover, signed the United Nations Charter in San Francisco and undertook to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war just after the Second World War.

It is precisely this gap in the collective security system that enables the white minority in South Africa, under the leadership of Peter Botha, to indulge in barbaric acts which tragically recall the atrocities of the Nazis, against whom those same Powers now permanent members of the Security Council fought in the Second World War.

The entire international community is aware of the cruelty and intolerance prevalent in South Africa today, so repugnant to the universal conscience. To suffer the policy of the extermination of black people through organized massacres and the humiliations going beyond all human understanding is the daily lot of the

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black people of South Africa, the only excuse for the commission of these barbaric acts being the colour of their skin.

The condemnation of such actions by the international community is strong and is sufficient proof that the threshold of tolerance for that régime has long been passed.

My delegation fully appreciates the sanctions decided on by some developed countries against South Africa and we earnestly hope that these measures will be strengthened and constitute an example to be followed by all free peoples in the world, as an expression of their solidarity and their devotion to the concept of human dignity.

The delegation of Zaire associates itself with all the other delegations which have called for the release of Nelson Mandela and condemned the many violations of the borders of the front-line countries, particularly those of Angola, by the rebel forces of South Africa. The absence of any political will on the part of the racist régime of South Africa to start negotiations with the representatives of the black people of South Africa, particularly the leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) is further proof of the obscurantism and the obstinate stubbornness of that régime in its refusal to move away from its policy of apartheid.

The Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Luanda from 2 to 7 September 1985, proffered its moral, political and material support to the black people in South Africa in their legitimate struggle and for the purpose of the intensification of the political mobilization of the masses within that country.

That peace which is sought after in South Africa is also needed in Namibia where the Namibian people, mobilized in the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) under the clear-sighted leadership of Sam Njoma, its President, seek to free themselves from the illegal colonial occupation of their territory by the racist régime of South Africa. The United Nations, in terminating South Africa's Mandate to administer the territory, placed Namibia under its own direct

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authority. Despite many resolutions by the Security Council and the General Assembly calling on the South African régime to withdraw from Namibian territory, South Africa is still, on various false pretexts, trying to perpetuate its domination and exploitation of Namibia. The time has come for the United Nations to demonstrate pragmatism and effectiveness, and to take specific action to speed up the liberation of Namibia and enable its people to enjoy all the fundamental human freedoms.

In the north Africa is faced with the problem of Western Sahara. My delegation believes that a final settlement of the question of the Western Sahara requires the holding of a free and democratic referendum on self-determination under United Nations auspices.

For nearly 40 years now the United Nations has been dealing with the situation in the Middle East. The absence of dialogue between the States in the region increases distrust and aggravates tensions. The very idea of peaceful coexistence within the context of a lasting peace, which should gradually win over the States of the region, in view of the efforts made by the United Nations and some States, is virtually non-existent today. Peace in the Middle East involves: respect for law, that is, the principles of international law relating to friendly relations and co-operation among States; recognition of the sovereignty of each State; respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of each State in the region and its right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries; the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force or war; and the guarantee of a just settlement of the problem of refugees.

Resolution 3236 (XXIX) reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and resolution 3237 (XXIX) recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. It is therefore the duty of the United Nations to ensure that law and justice prevail in the Middle

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East, it being understood of course that its mission is to replace the spirit of war and confrontation with the spirit of consultation and constructive dialogue.

Not far from that region, two brother countries, Iran and Iraq - both also members of the Non-Aligned Movement - are waging an unending war, causing great loss of human life and material destruction, without the United Nations being able to propose any approach that could lead to consultations directed towards negotiations on how best to halt the hostilities. My delegation would once more urgently appeal to the two brother countries, on the eve of International Peace Year, to seek an understanding in a spirit of reconciliation and fraternity.

In Asia, the peoples of Democratic Kampuchea and Afghanistan also aspire to live in peace and independence, honour and national dignity. The sufferings inflicted on those peoples prevent them from concentrating on mobilizing their forces and their national resources to build a united country, neutral, non-aligned and prosperous.

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This tragedy must be ended through a just solution based on the restoration of the sovereignty of the peoples of Kampuchea and Afghanistan and the total withdrawal of all foreign occupation troops from those territories.

In Central America, we should encourage the implementation of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, in keeping with the wishes expressed by the States that signed the Act.

During the four decades of existence of the United Nation a great change has taken place in international economic relations. The pluralism of the United Nations system, strengthened by its universality, has resulted in the creation of a series of economic, financial and commercial institutions and organizations dedicated to increasing multilateral co-operation.

The increased participation of the developing countries in international trade has contributed to the expanded volume of trade between the industrialized and the developing countries. The efforts of developing countries to improve the living conditions of the peoples of the third world have encountered many obstacles. For example, export earnings often suffer the consequences of fluctuations in the prices of the products concerned, thus upsetting the development plans and programmes of those countries. Then there are the demands made by the payment of public debts on maturity; the reduction of loan facilities or of the financing of development projects by the relevant financial agencies, not to mention soaring interest rates; and the transfer of technology, where the absence of any policy at the level of the United Nations system jeopardizes the chances of increasing the industrialization of those countries.

In Zaire a programme of economic, financial and social recovery, established in agreement with the International Monetary Fund, has been started and has

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permitted the repayment of our debts at a satisfactory rate. In the budgetary year 1984 alone, for example, Zaire paid off its medium- and long-term debt amounting to \$328 million, although its actual capacity to repay, having regard to its export earnings, scarcely exceeds \$250 million a year.

That means that Zaire's commitment to meet its financial obligations continues, but it must not jeopardize the objectives of its economic and social development, for the repayment of debt should not prejudice the standard of living of the peoples of the third world and the investment necessary for the progress and development of those peoples.

The developed countries should show solidarity with the developing countries in their approach to the debt question. My delegation welcomes the statement by the President of the French Republic, Mr. Francois Mitterand, on the initiative he intends to take to convene a meeting of the leaders of the richest countries of the East and the West and the representatives of the poorest countries of the world to discuss this question. We must recognize that at the level of our Organization, although the General Assembly adopted the International Development Strategies for the First, Second and Third United Nations Development Decades, so little progress has been made that at its thirty-ninth session the General Assembly declared that it was very disappointed that the Committee entrusted with the task of reviewing and appraising the application of the Strategy for the present Decade had not been able to carry out its duties owing to a lack of positive, concrete elements.

Furthermore, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted in 1974, is still being studied to see what measures can best be taken to implement it.

(Mr. Mokolo wa Mpombo, Zaire)

The General Assembly also adopted in 1974 the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order based on justice and equity. The restructuring of international economic relations was to be discussed between the underdeveloped and the developed countries within the framework of global negotiations, but unfortunately that North-South dialogue has not taken place because of the intransigence of certain industrialized countries, which, being well-off, refuse to consider the demands of the developing countries in that regard.

The acute economic crisis affecting the third world, and Africa in particular, results from the present inadequate economic and monetary system, and should lead Member States to show more solidarity and co-operation in making a better world for all peoples. In that connection, my delegation calls on the wealthy nations involved in competition in outer space, in an unbridled nuclear arms race and in star wars to come down to earth and to devote their surplus resources to meeting the pressing, immediate needs of man and his survival.

The Republic of Zaire has great faith in the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and undertakes to comply with them, as it has always done in the past.

As we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of our Organization, the delegation of Zaire associates itself with all the ideas of peace, development and complementarity expressed by other Member States in calling for their realization, for the good of all mankind.

Our Organization should emerge from the celebration of the fortieth anniversary as an instrument truly at the service of the general interest of the international community, of peace, justice and equity for all Member States, large and small, rich and poor.

(Mr. Mokolo wa Mpombo, Zaire)

The future prospects for our Organization therefore involve a strengthening of its role, not only with regard to international peace and security or the liberation of oppressed peoples so that they may achieve self-determination, but also to build a better world in which the peoples enjoy a better quality of life.

Mr. A. K. KOROMA (Sierra Leone): Permit me on behalf of the Sierra Leone delegation and on my own account, to extend to Mr. de Piniés heartiest congratulations on his unanimous election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at its fortieth session. His long experience within this Organization as his country's representative for an appreciable period assures us of the qualities he possesses as a diplomat and a distinguished statesman. Undoubtedly those attributes qualify him to guide our deliberations during this historic session to a successful conclusion.

Allow me also to express my delegation's appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Paul Lusaka, for the able and devoted manner in which he bore the responsibilities of President of the General Assembly at the thirty-ninth session. My delegation applauds his efforts to achieve the objectives of our Organization.

I also commend our Secretary-General and his staff for their tireless efforts to help us achieve the aims and objectives of our Organization.

On behalf of my delegation, I wish to join those who have preceded me in expressing profound sympathy with the people of Mexico on the devastating earthquakes which struck their country. We support the call for assistance to meet both the short- and long-term needs of Mexico.

Forty years ago, concerned as the international community was about the prospects for peace and security in that turbulent world, the signatories to the Charter of the United Nations did not fail to recognize the urgent and burning need

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to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples. To that end, we created institutions which over the last 40 years have attested to our commitment to the international consensus on the duties and obligations of States and individuals in the furtherance and achievement of the noble aims and objectives of the United Nations.

(Mr. A.K. Koroma, Sierra Leone)

Forty years later, as we today review and appraise our progress in the realization of the ideals and goals of the institutions we created, we are also compelled to make an overall assessment of the policies, programmes and mechanisms which we have utilized to realize those objectives. It is my hope that this fortieth session of the General Assembly will make an honest and realistic evaluation of our successes and inadequacies.

The fortieth session of the General Assembly sits uncomfortably amidst renewed uncertainties about the direction, the strength and the pace of the world economy. To be sure, we have witnessed since the founding of this Organization a great upsurge in economic output. The world has seen massive changes. Our lives have been rapidly transformed by new discoveries, new ideas and new technology. The growth in output and the changes attendant on technological development have engendered a new optimism. Unfortunately, the events have belied the promise. Erratic exchange rates, trade imbalances, heavy debt burdens, increased population, the problem of food and the policies of certain institutions and Governments have visibly eroded our optimistic expectations. It is against this backdrop that the economies of countries like Sierra Leone have stagnated and, indeed, even yielded negative growth rates over the last five years or so. However, we still cherish the hope that it is not beyond the imagination and intellectual capacity, or even the will, of this Assembly to proffer solutions to these apparently intractable problems.

It is my delegation's humble view that if the salvation of the world economy is to be assured the international community must recognize the need for concerted action by a large group of countries which, together, can provide the necessary impetus to the world's engine of growth. What we observe today, however, is that

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certain institutions prescribe specific policy reforms for developing countries that impose undue hardship on their populations and, consequently, produce social and political instability, a condition that makes it impossible to achieve sustained economic growth. However, those institutions should be aware that the successful implementation of their strategies and policies in any particular country depends to a considerable extent on other factors in the international environment. Such factors often include the domestic policies of individual Governments in the developed market economies.

How, one must ask, can the economy of a developing country like Sierra Leone successfully realize the objectives of these strategies and policies when deliberate policy-induced actions on the part of some States can, at best, frustrate the main endeavours of many developing countries. Those institutions must also know that such actions constitute a retreat from the multilateral consensus in which we all joined when we proclaimed, a little over a decade ago, the advent of the new international economic order. This is hardly what delegations in this Assembly would wish to encourage. It is our moral duty to arrest and reverse any retreat from multilateralism.

We express the hope that Governments and international institutions will muster the courage and broaden their vision to enhance the bold and concerted efforts necessary for the creation of the appropriate economic climate. It would also be desirable for international institutions to modify their policies to reflect the prevailing circumstances in the developing economies.

Earlier this year the Assembly of Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity which met in Addis Ababa reviewed the critical economic situation in Africa. We as developing countries cannot ignore the fact

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that the present economic situation is certainly in part attributable to some domestic-policy shortcomings. In short, some developing countries can alleviate their present difficulties by taking positive remedial action on the domestic front. We must not and should not spare ourselves this valid self-criticism.

But even for those who were already self-consciously critical, unpredictable disasters in the form of persistent drought, famine and other natural calamities considerably exacerbated their already-precarious pattern of life. Having said that, we must also add that all developing countries and the international community can and must take pre-emptive action to mitigate the worst effects of some of these calamities.

We may give sustained attention and offer profound and convincing analyses of our economic, social and industrial problems; we can define our parameters, programmes, policies and targets; none of these can have much significance without the human element. Mankind remains at the centre of global activity.

The development and enhancement of this fundamental and truly indispensable resource should remain a principal concern of our Organization. Regrettably, disturbing levels of illiteracy, high infant mortality, poor intellectual and technical skills and inadequate and ineffective research techniques still characterize the social conditions prevailing in many developing countries. No form of meaningful socio-economic and political development can ever take place without a proper assessment, an appropriate recognition and the further development of our human-resource potential.

Four decades have elapsed since the most devastating global confrontation in mankind's history. The founding of the United Nations was regarded as a manifestation of the desire for peaceful coexistence among nations and a

(Mr. A.K. Koroma, Sierra Leone)

demonstration of man's determination never again to engage in any brutal encounter of such magnitude. But has the United Nations been entirely successful in ensuring peace and saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war? Is the United Nations still regarded as the guardian of peace and security in this constantly turbulent world? Evidently we have in many ways failed to adhere to the aims and objectives of the Organization in clear violation of its Charter. Many States have resorted to measures in total disregard of their obligations under the Charter and in pursuance of their own specific objectives at the expense of international peace and security.

My delegation is concerned over the renewed escalation of the arms race, particularly in nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. This concern is further heightened by the continued research, testing, production and deployment of such deadly weapons, leading to an intensification of super-Power rivalry. It is for this reason that my delegation looks forward to the conclusion of effective agreements between the super-Powers aimed at preventing the further escalation of the arms race. It is hoped that the current round of discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union will create the necessary atmosphere to lead to the reduction of international tension.

Our Organization speaks for millions, and we who are gathered here today must face and resolutely come to terms with the critical issues of our time with moral courage and principled determination. The evidence of an unsettled world is too visible to catalogue. South Africa continues to perpetuate its mindless and immoral policy of racial discrimination while it imposes its illegal and colonial domination on Namibia. The problem of the Middle East, with particular regard to Palestine, continues to defy solution. The Korean Peninsula remains divided and

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thus the Korean people are deprived of their natural heritage and legitimate right to live together in peace. Foreign troops in both Afghanistan and Kampuchea have brought chaos and destruction to those countries, and Central America remains a volatile region of the world.

(Mr. A.K. Koroma, Sierra Leone)

The paramount political and moral issue of concern to Sierra Leone is the question of South Africa and Namibia. We have lived with the arrogant, insolent and violent apartheid régime for too long. We have witnessed that régime's increasing military strength, which it has used aggressively against its neighbours in the region and to keep Namibia in oppression. We have witnessed the South African régime's brutalizing its black citizens, restricting their movement, depriving them of their social, economic and political rights in their motherland, concentrating them into tribal homelands - all with the tacit support of some of South Africa's Western allies.

South Africa's latest arrogant action on Namibia is the establishment of an interim government, which totally precludes the participation of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which is regarded by the international community as the sole, legitimate representative of the Namibian people. This action is also in contradiction of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which is regarded as the basis for any solution of the Namibian problem. We condemn unreservedly this blatant disregard of international decisions by South Africa.

In the face of South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia, and in the face of that illegal régime's wanton and brutal violence against its own people, it remains the responsibility of this Organization, based on the Charter, to impose forthwith comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the illegal colonial régime. In this connection the Government of Sierra Leone wishes to commend all those nations which have taken steps to impose economic sanctions against South Africa, and in particular to applaud the Government of France, which, in the face of criticism from some of its allies, took the courageous and independent initiative of applying economic sanctions against the intolerable apartheid régime. We implore all those nations which are still ambivalent on the issue of sanctions to conform to the realities of the South African problem.

(Mr. A.K. Koroma, Sierra Leone)

The situation in the Middle East continues to pose a threat to international peace and security and remains a cause of constant concern to this Organization. Thirty-eight years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 1947, we still await its full implementation. That resolution took a clear and definitive decision on the establishment of both an Israeli and a Palestinian State. Unfortunately the State of Palestine is still not in existence, and Israel continues to occupy certain Arab territories.

My delegation reiterates its call for the establishment of a Palestinian State, for the immediate unconditional and total withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories in conformity with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We reject all political, economic and military support that encourages Israel to perpetuate its occupation and annexation of Arab territories.

In Afganistan and Kampuchea we see a clear violation of the principles and purposes of our Organization. The occupation of foreign territories by force of arms in pursuance of the political beliefs and interests of certain Member States is totally in violation of the principles of the Charter.

The massive flow of refugees consequent upon the crises in those two regions has caused enormous social and economic difficulties for the receiving States.

Sierra Leone continues to maintain a firm stance in calling for the total withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afganistan and Kampuchea and for their peoples to be given an opportunity to choose their own governments and build their future free from foreign interference. We must remember that freedom is indivisible. A loss of freedom anywhere is a threat to freedom everywhere. A call for the freedom of any people must be supported by a call for the freedom of all people. We cannot and must not lose sight of that noble ideal, which is the heritage of all humanity.

(Mr. A.K. Koroma, Sierra Leone)

My Government has followed with keen interest the course of events in the Korean peninsula over the years. We have taken note of the efforts being made by both North and South Korea to achieve a better understanding between them, and we welcome the programme of exchange visits by Korean families. It is our view that these developments augur well for better and closer co-operation between the peoples and Governments of both sides. In addition, based on the principle of universality, and with a view to lessening tension in the Korean peninsula and creating a forum for greater understanding between the two States, we support the call for the admission of the two Koreas to membership of the United Nations without any prejudice to the attainment of their long-term objective.

In conclusion I should like to recall here the words of the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization to the fortieth session, in which he states:

"In our journey of 40 years we have had many experiences, some encouraging, others frustrating, and many that have been deeply enlightening." (A/40/L, p. 16)

Sierra Leone was not there when that journey began 40 years ago. But this Organization, by its now famous resolution 1514 (XV) of 1960, on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, created a new awareness that colonialism had no place in the modern world. That Declaration inspired a marked increase in the membership of this Organization and enabled a country such as Sierra Leone to assume a place in this council of nations. This in our view is a vindication of the tremendous foresight of the founding fathers of this Organization, for despite its vicissitudes the United Nations remains the main instrument for the attainment of international peace and security and for the economic and social progress of all our peoples. Let us therefore rededicate

(Mr. A.K. Koroma, Sierra Leone)

ourselves anew in our determination to uphold the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter of our Organization. For only in this way can international peace and security and economic and social progress be attained by all our peoples.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting, but I shall now call on representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

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

Mr. ROA KOURI (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Cuba has to speak in exercise of the right of reply quite frequently in this hall. I recall the occasion when Commandant Che Guevara included Cuba's responses to a whole series of attacks in one statement. Che Guevara devoted just a few words to every one of the errand-boys of the imperialists.

Now things have changed. The number of States pursuing independent policies are no longer an exception in Latin America and the Caribbean. Hence, our replies can be briefer.

To the representative of the régime in El Salvador I would simply recall what bothered him in our statement. We support the position of the representatives of the people of El Salvador - that is, the fighters of the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation, in favour of negotiations making possible an end to the war and opening the path to democratic solutions. The other option is to go on waging war with the support of North American imperialists. That is a longer and bloodier path, one moreover doomed to defeat.

(Mr. Roa Kouri, Cuba)

The Salvadorian people shall overcome.

To the other respondent we merely repeat that, in our struggle to transform the present situation and to prevent the intolerable burden of external debt from impeding our efforts for independent development, as well as in the struggle to establish a new international economic order which must be launched forthwith and not begged for, the unity of our people is essential. Those who strike at that unity serve our enemies. We need that unity urgently in order to attain victory in this battle, which is a major one.

To those who fight and follow their words with action, we offer our support. To those who serve the enemy and who falter at the moment of truth, they shall be judged by the people.

Mr. MARTINEZ GUTIERREZ (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish): As usually happens in totalitarian régimes, which have a great deal to conceal from the international community, the representative of Cuba applies to democratic countries such as mine pejorative adjectives which apply perfectly to those régimes but not to ours. He speaks of "genocide" - but who is committing genocide? Is it not he who sends to foreign wars on distant continents the flower of his youth as cannon-fodder in the service of alien and remote causes? Thus Cuba pays in blood that which it must acquire abroad since it is unable to produce it at home.

Mr. ROA KOURI (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I should simply like to say to the representatives here that I am not surprised that the representative of the genocidal régime of El Salvador should refer in such unusual terms to the fact that our people, discharging its internationalist duties, has supported the independence of Angola and Ethiopia. We are thus discharging the internationalist duties which we inherited precisely from the liberators of America for it was Bolivar and San Martin who taught us to strive for freedom everywhere, for all peoples.

Mr. MARTINEZ GUTIERREZ (El Salvador) (interpretation from Spanish):

There is a Spanish proverb that says that "a word to the wise is sufficient". I think that what we have said here today is very clear and I do not wish to try any further the patience of the representatives here.

The meeting rose at 7.35 p.m.