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A/42/PV.16
1 October 1987

ENGLISH

Forty-second session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 29 September 1987, at 10 a.m.President:

Mr. FLORIN

(German Democratic Republic)

later:

Mr. MOUMIN
(Vice-President)

(Comoros)

- General debate [9]: (continued)Statements were made by:

Mr. Natwar Singh (India)
Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt)
Mr. Varkonyi (Hungary)
Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez (Bolivia)
Mr. Fall (Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. NATWAR SINGH (India): Mr. President, your election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-second session attests to your personal eminence and distinction and our confidence in the guidance and leadership you will provide to our deliberations. We are particularly happy since you come from a country with which India has warm and fraternal relations. We congratulate you on your election and look forward to working together with you.

Allow me also to pay a tribute to our esteemed friend and neighbour from Bangladesh, Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, for the effective manner in which he conducted the proceedings of our last session.

We greet also our distinguished Secretary-General, and wish him well in the discharge of his many exacting responsibilities.

The year 1987 has special significance for us in India. Four decades ago our people won freedom from colonial bondage through a unique non-violent struggle. Independent India took its rightful place in the comity of nations. We have sought to strengthen the foundations of new India by keeping what is best from our own tradition and by assimilating what is admirable from other civilizations. The fundamental concepts of tolerance, non-violence and equality have conditioned our Weltanschauung. Tolerance and non-violence are embedded in our policy of peaceful coexistence and the principles of Panchshila. Equality lies at the root of our belief in democracy and in the sovereign equality of all nations, a principle that is embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

Even before our independence, the people of India reposed great faith in this Organization. We were present at its creation. The founder of modern India, our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, proclaimed that India's attitude towards

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the United Nations was one of wholehearted co-operation, and of unreserved adherence, both in letter and spirit, to its Charter. It was in this spirit that he promised that India would:

"participate fully in its varied activities and endeavour to assume that role in its Councils to which her geographical position, population and contribution towards peaceful progress entitled her."

In our own way, we have endeavoured to fulfil this promise. Though the Organization has had many ups and downs in its short but chequered history, our commitment to it has never wavered. We are happy that it has been resilient enough to withstand the attempts to retreat from multilateralism and the financial and budgetary pressures brought to bear upon the Organization.

My delegation welcomes the significant understanding between the United States and the USSR to eliminate intermediate-range nuclear forces. Even though these forces constitute only a very small fraction of the world's nuclear arsenals, we see the significance of the understanding in the prospects it has opened up for more wide-ranging agreements, which could eventually lead to meaningful nuclear disarmament.

This understanding vividly demonstrates that, given political will, disarmament measures can become a reality. It is imperative that this momentum towards peace and disarmament be sustained. While the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament rests with the United States and the Soviet Union, a decision by other nuclear-weapon Powers to eliminate nuclear weapons would be an important contribution to the promotion of peace.

Not long ago, on 22 May 1987, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi joined with leaders of Argentina, Greece, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania in emphasizing that:

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"For too long, fear and mistrust have prevented progress in disarmament. Arms and fears feed on each other. Now is the time to break this vicious circle and lay the foundation for a more secure world". (A/42/319, Annex).

It may perhaps be premature to believe that the "vicious circle" is broken; but it has perhaps been dented and we hope that the momentum will not be lost.

A historic event in this continuing struggle to save humanity from a nuclear holocaust was the signing of the Delhi Declaration on principles for a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world, in New Delhi last November. Its importance lies in the fact that a major nuclear-weapon Power, the USSR, joined with a major non-aligned country, India, to announce 10 principles that could pave the way to a nuclear-weapon-free civilization. We are happy that a beginning has been made by the super-Powers towards translating at least some of the principles of the Delhi Declaration into concrete action.

The international arms race and its deleterious effect on the world economy was the focus of a conference earlier this month. The International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development threw into stark relief the deplorable dilemma of massive global expenditure on arms, on the one hand, and the non-availability of resources for meeting the basic needs of a large portion of the world's population, on the other. An overwhelming majority of nations took part in it. I had the privilege of presiding over that Conference, which reaffirmed, at the political level for the first time, the relationship between disarmament and development. It is important that follow-up steps be taken quickly so that the conclusions of that Conference may be translated into action. May we now hope that those who stayed away from those discussions will participate in this effort.

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I now turn my attention to southern Africa, where the struggle for freedom and equality continues to this day. The racist régime in Pretoria violates every norm of civilized conduct. Its policy of apartheid is an affront to the conscience of mankind. The Pretoria régime remains in illegal occupation of Namibia and continues to carry out acts of aggression against the front-line States. It is thus the root cause of tension, instability and conflict in the region, endangering international peace and security. It has rejected every initiative for a peaceful resolution of the problems of the region.

In the face of the intransigence of the racist régime, the only peaceful course before the international community is to impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa; the alternative is violent upheaval.

We reiterate our full support for the freedom struggle of the people of Namibia, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization. The only basis for a peaceful settlement of the Namibian question lies in Security Council resolution 435 (1978), without bringing in any linkages.

The non-aligned countries, at their summit meeting in Harare last year, decided to set up the Africa Fund, with the object of assisting the front-line States and national liberation movements in southern Africa against the depredations of the racist régime. India is privileged to have been chosen to chair the fund, which has become operational with wide support from the international community. Those of us who believe in the moral need to work for the peaceful resolution of the problems of southern Africa have a duty to support and contribute to the fund.

On 29 July President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi signed a historic agreement which has brought peace and tranquillity to Sri Lanka after four years. We had throughout stressed the importance and the necessity of a political settlement to the ethnic conflict that had plagued Sri Lanka since 1983.

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I should like to pay tribute to the President of Sri Lanka for signing this agreement, which is a manifestation of the fact that non-aligned countries can resolve their problems without outside interference. Bearing in mind the recent history of the conflict, there are inevitably minor hitches and problems, but they are not insurmountable. Given the existing understanding and goodwill between the two countries they will be resolved sooner rather than later.

The situation in West Asia is gravely worrying. The core problem is the question of Palestine. The people of Palestine are still denied their inalienable human rights, including the right to establish an independent state in their homeland. We support the struggle of the Palestinian people, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We urge that an international peace conference on the Middle East be convened at an early date, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO.

The continuing hostilities between Iran and Iraq concern us greatly. We have close historical ties with both countries. Our heartfelt desire is to see those two nations live in peace. The conflict between two important members of the Non-Aligned Movement, taking place as it does in a region which is in our immediate neighbourhood, has consistently engaged our attention. The United Nations has been deeply involved in seeking ways and means to end the war. The Security Council adopted unanimously resolution 598 (1987) and the Secretary-General has been engaged in important consultations relating to its implementation. We commend and support these continuing efforts in the hope that they will bring about a negotiated, mutually acceptable settlement of this tragic conflict.

India supports the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to secure an early and peaceful solution to the situation in Afghanistan.

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The military presence of great Powers in the Indian Ocean is ominous. Such presence has unfortunately intensified in recent months. The heightened military presence of outside Powers is in conflict with the 1971 Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. It demonstrates vividly that the main objective behind the 1971 Declaration is as valid today as it was when the Declaration was made. What is more, it shows the futility of efforts to dilute the thrust of the primacy in the objective of the Declaration, which is to tackle the external threat in the Indian Ocean. In that context we believe that for the proposed international conference on the Indian Ocean to achieve meaningful results it will be necessary to ensure that all big Powers having a military presence in the Indian Ocean participate.

I come now to another neighbouring region of ours with which we have very close historical and cultural links. As we have always advocated in conflict situations, the south-east Asian question can be resolved only through political dialogue. The legitimate interests and concerns of the countries in the region must be taken into account. We are encouraged by the fact that all countries in the region want a peaceful solution and are engaged in finding a formula for a regional dialogue. We have seen possibilities of common areas of understanding emerge following the recent meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Viet Nam. I have myself recently visited all the countries belonging to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Indo-China States. We believe that such contacts must be strengthened and more widely established among the countries of the region.

The Korean peninsula continues to remain divided. We support the desire of its people for peaceful reunification.

There have been encouraging developments in Central America. Following the invaluable work of the Contadora and Support Groups the Central American States

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have taken a regional initiative of great importance. We warmly welcome the Guatemala accord and the subsequent follow-up action. We trust that all parties, both within and outside the region, will co-operate fully to ensure the success of this regional initiative, which offers the prospect of peace, progress and stability in Central America.

We reaffirm once again our solidarity with the people of Cyprus, whose country remains divided with part of it under foreign occupation. We reaffirm our support for the unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and non-alignment of Cyprus, a country with which we have traditionally had close and friendly relations. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General to bring about a satisfactory resolution of this issue.

The events in Fiji have been deeply distressing. It is particularly tragic that at a time when the political parties representing the people of Fiji had come to an agreement which could have taken the country on the path of national reconciliation the armed forces have dealt a severe blow to that process, by seizing power for a second time. Attempts to deprive citizens of the country of their legitimate rights merely on the basis of their racial origin are against all tenets of democracy and human rights and are contrary to the United Nations Charter. What is happening in Fiji has distinct and unacceptable racial overtones. This development is reprehensible. We believe that the path to peace and prosperity in Fiji lies in the restoration of democracy and the rule of law.

This year India achieved the unique distinction of becoming the first registered pioneer investor under the United Nations régime of the oceans with the allotment of a deep sea-bed mine site in the Central Indian Ocean. An equivalent mine site has been reserved for international exploration and exploitation. We believe that this historic event has set in motion the international régime of deep sea-bed mining and has strengthened the rule of international law.

(Mr. Natwar Singh, India)

I now turn to the world economy, which continues to be in a state of deep disarray. The rates of growth of even developed countries are historically very low. All future projections indicate even lower rates of growth for those countries. The per capita incomes of many developing countries have dropped to levels lower than they were a decade ago. Commodity prices in real terms have collapsed to their lowest levels in 50 years. Despite the launching of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, the proliferation of protectionist measures continues unabated. Interest rates continue to be high in real terms. International liquidity has suffered a sharp contraction in relation both to the volume of trade and to the needs of developing countries. The pattern of trade balance is extremely skewed, with unsustainable surpluses in some countries and deficits in others, and exchange rates continue to show wide fluctuations.

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It is now widely recognized that the world economy faces a structural crisis which cannot be overcome within the framework of the system instituted after the Second World War. There is therefore an urgent need for evolving co-operative strategies informed by the explicit recognition of increasing global interdependence. We require concerted and comprehensive policy measures in the interrelated areas of money, finance, debt, trade, resource flows and development. The current crisis of the world economic system can be overcome only if we work towards a new international economic order.

In the area of international trade, the highest priority must be given to the preservation and strengthening of an open multilateral trading system, and particularly to translating into practice the oft-repeated commitments on standstill and rollback. It is important to ensure that the Uruguay round of negotiations leads to the emergence of a truly international trade régime conducive to growth and development, with a clear recognition of the needs of developing countries. Multilateralism and non-discrimination must form the basis for the sustained expansion of trade.

In the area of commodities, we reaffirmed at the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) the continued validity of the Integrated Programme for Commodities. We trust that with the new ratifications the Common Fund will become operational before the end of 1987. We also hope that the new round of consultations on commodities not covered by existing agreements and arrangements will be initiated soon.

The flows of financial resources from developed to developing countries should be increased substantially and the resources of international financial institutions should be augmented so as to enable them to play a leading role in development finance. We are disappointed that the eighth replenishment of the

International Development Association is no larger in real terms than the sixth replenishment. We are however encouraged by the recent move towards reaching agreement on a general capital increase of the World Bank.

The external debt crisis is one of the most serious problems afflicting the developing countries today. The solution to the debt crisis has to be equitable, flexible and development-oriented, based on the concept of shared responsibility and political dialogue. For the success of such a strategy, the promotion of parallel objectives - such as increased access to markets for exports of developing countries, lower interest rates, strengthened and stabilized commodity prices, more stable exchange rates and more vigorous growth-oriented macro-economic policies in major developed countries - is indispensable.

In the light of the generally dismal state of the international economic dialogue, the recent seventh session of UNCTAD must be viewed as a modest success. In at least some areas progress was achieved. Viewed against the background in which the Conference was held, its major significance lies in the reaffirmation of the validity and mandate of UNCTAD.

The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development is a major contribution to the subject. We are glad to note that the Chairman of the Commission, Prime Minister Brundtland, in her address to UNCTAD VII, sought to allay apprehensions that environmental concerns could be used for imposing additional conditionality in the lending policies of international financial institutions. The Brundtland report clearly demonstrates the importance and urgency of tackling environmental issues on a global level. If we seriously want to attach high priority to this objective, the international community must find additional resources for sound environmental measures. Any diversion of existing resources from growth-focused to environment-focused disbursement will be counter-productive. Poverty pollutes. Any slowing down of development can only aggravate environmental problems in developing countries.

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We meet here each year in the month of September to deliberate on what ails mankind. Does looking back on the past nine months fill us with hope or despair? This is a time for stocktaking, self-criticism and introspection. The international horizon presents a dark and sinister picture. Here and there an all too brief break in the clouds is visible; otherwise we seem to be looking at clouds that have no silver lining.

Some weeks ago the world population exceeded the 5 billion mark - a sobering event. The drain on sources of energy is unabated. The affluent are burning their candles at both ends and in the middle too, while the less fortunate are deprived of the basic necessities of life. The daily onslaught on the environment continues. The economic scene is not cheering. Terrorists and fanatics disturb the peace and repose of nations.

The United Nations does not offer salvation, but it has paved, it can pave, the way, create the atmosphere, provide the venue and propose the agenda for peace. As somebody has said, while it cannot, perhaps, negotiate for the world, the United Nations can help the world to negotiate.

Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of the Egyptian delegation and on my own behalf, on your election to the presidency of the forty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are particularly pleased to see as President a person with renowned skills who comes from a friendly country with which Egypt maintains cordial relations and enjoys mutual understanding.

In the same spirit, I avail myself of this opportunity to express our profound thanks to your predecessor, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, for his wise steering of the forty-first session and his invaluable contribution by conducting its proceedings towards the desired objectives.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

The United Nations, which was born as an expression of humanity's aspirations to peace, security and freedom and whose principles have been beacons on the path to righteousness and justice, still embodies the hopes of many peoples. Forty-two years after its establishment, the United Nations still has a primary role in the maintenance of peace and security and in laying the foundations of relations among States and peoples on the principles of co-operation, solidarity, respect of rights and sovereign equality.

The world today is experiencing extremely delicate international conditions, including conflicts which are being exacerbated or are potentially threatening and volatile. Such a state of affairs makes us more supportive of to and more insistent on the need for relations between States to be based on the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We are confident that the United Nations, which has been a principal forum for the maintenance of peace and security since the end of the Second World War, will continue to play its role and confirm its principles, whatever the difficulties or challenges.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

We believe that peace is indivisible and that security cannot be the monopoly of a few. In the world of today, where interdependence has been enhanced and distances have narrowed, no one can feel secure in isolation from the rest of the international community. At a time when the threat of confrontation between the two super-Powers clouds the entire globe, any progress towards disarmament by them leads to an atmosphere of détente and de-escalation, whose effect extends to several regional conflicts. Therefore, we learned with great interest the news that the two super-Powers had reached agreement in principle on eliminating some types of nuclear weapons. Such enthusiasm on our part results from our firm belief that nuclear weapons constitute the ultimate danger for humanity. Egypt congratulates the two Powers on the success of their efforts in this field, particularly as a ban on such weapons would represent a unique precedent, for it would be the first agreement leading to actual disarmament consistent with the priorities laid down by the international community in that field.

We also commend the agreement by the two super-Powers to make urgent and intensified efforts to eliminate intercontinental ballistic missiles, which would ease international tension and decrease the nuclear threat and its grave consequences.

Disarmament is an all-embracing issue - one of security and politics as well as development. Indeed, it is the issue of the very survival of mankind. It is now a universally acknowledged truth that the use of weapons of mass destruction would leave neither victor nor vanquished. Consequently, persistence in the arms race is insistence on the futile depletion of the energies and resources of peoples to no avail. In this context, the General Assembly resolution on convening the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development

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was recognition that international security and development are inseparable. It is high time humanity directed its efforts towards construction instead of destruction, development instead of the feverish arms race.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the efforts made to utilize nuclear energy for peaceful purposes are complementary. Egypt invites the international community to intensify its efforts to persuade the States that have not signed the Treaty accede to it.

By the same token, Egypt hopes that the Mediterranean will become a nuclear-weapon-free zone and that the Mediterranean sea will continue to be a transit route for trade and culture and a haven of peace and security. In the same vein, Egypt stresses the importance of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and Africa. Egypt has consistently called for the achievement of those two objectives and has taken the initiative of submitting specific proposals to this end. It may be appropriate to appeal from this rostrum to the States of the region and the big Powers to adopt positions and take measures conducive to translating those objectives into facts in the near future.

The Iraq-Iran war is at present the centre of conflict and a source of danger in the Middle East. This should in no way blind us to the fact that the Palestine question is the core of the conflict in our part of the world. Despite the passage of time or the flare-up of conflicts in the region, it remains the main source of danger and the underlying cause of tension and turbulence. Peace can never be established, nor can it last, as long as the Palestinian people are deprived of their legitimate national rights, foremost among which is their right to self-determination on their national soil.

Egypt, which has been committed to the Palestinian question ever since it emerged, is no less committed to it today; nor will it ever shirk its responsibility regarding it. Our commitment to the legitimate rights of the

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Palestinian people is the essence of our endeavours to establish a just and comprehensive peace in our region. We seek to establish peace based on recognition of the legitimate rights of all parties. While the attainment of peace requires that each party make an effort and accept the spirit of settlement and justice, we believe that peace would be an asset to all parties. Conversely, the persistence of tension and conflict is of no benefit to anyone; rather, it means loss for everyone.

The lapse of 20 years since Israel occupied the Arab territories in 1967 and the continued rejection by the Palestinian people of that occupation confirm the need for the establishment of comprehensive peace based on justice and the restoration of the legitimate rights of those deprived of them, within a framework that ensures mutual security and recognition of the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries and of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory through war.

History and experience teach us that the rights of peoples cannot be waived by proscription or vanish through oblivion. We also know that although force may impose a fait accompli it does not grant security or establish peace, and that justice alone is the way to peace. We also realize that peace requires persistence and resolve, and that we should not lose the possible in pursuit of the impossible. We should seize every available opportunity and each propitious occasion. We should nurture every bud until it bears the fruit of justice, security and peace.

Egypt has pursued its relentless efforts world-wide so that 1987 may be the year of peace through negotiations between the parties within the context of an international peace conference. These endeavours, supported by the sincere efforts made by other parties, have led to what may be tantamount to an international consensus in support of the idea of convening an international peace conference.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

In this regard, I wish to place on record our appreciation of the support expressed by the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the European Community and the countries of the Nordic Council. That such support contributed greatly to the evolution of this international consensus - so much so that the convening of the international conference has become a real possibility, indeed, the only option, after being only an idea that lacked support.

In this context, I wish, in the name of the Arab Republic of Egypt, to commend the Secretary-General for his sincere efforts in exploring the views of the parties concerned and those of the big Powers on the convening of the international peace conference, and for his ideas and suggestions, which have received our full attention and appreciation.

Egypt realizes that any attempt to impose a fait accompli and maintain the status quo portends serious dangers and grave consequences. There is no alternative but to act seriously and consistently to give an impetus to the peace process. In this respect, I must emphasize the following points.

First, Egypt's commitment to the cause of the Palestinian people and their legitimate national rights is genuine, firm and unswerving. Egypt also reaffirms that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Secondly, Egypt honours and fulfils its international obligations, abides by them and never ignores them.

Thirdly, the international peace conference has become the possible and acceptable formula for the resumption of the peace drive. It is necessary that all efforts are concerted to persuade the parties that reject this idea that the time has come for an attitude in favour of exploring the prospects of a new era, free from strife and war; an era in which peace would reign supreme.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Fourthly, Egypt believes that, to ensure that the international conference is credible and efficient, it should be held under the auspices of the United Nations. Its terms of reference should be Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as the rights of the Palestinian people. It should be attended by all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, with due attention to the composition of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. It should be attended, also, by the five permanent members of the Security Council, in view of their responsibilities regarding international peace and security in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. Finally, it should be an effective framework for direct negotiations on all the elements of the Palestinian question and the rights related thereto, and on the Middle East problem, of which the Palestinian question is the essence.

In the name of Egypt, I call upon all peace-loving Powers throughout the world, to muster their determination and intensify their efforts with a view to speeding up the attainment of a comprehensive and just settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. The progress made so far towards acceptance of the convening of an international conference may well be an incentive and an impetus for all of us to maintain the momentum and pursue the peace drive to its desired objective.

Lebanon has continued to experience regrettable developments in a most peculiar and protracted civil war, in which responsibility has been lost amid successive incidents. Although the Lebanese issue may well be one result of the freeze on the Palestinian question, we call upon all concerned to lift their hands from Lebanon so that the brother people of Lebanon may have the opportunity to heal their wounds, close their ranks and work together for true national reconciliation that will restore peace and security to the country and enable the friendly

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people of Lebanon to lead a normal life and assume their distinctive Arab and cultural role.

The confrontation and conflict afflicting the Gulf region are being exacerbated day by day and further deterioration is threatened. The situation in the Gulf has become a source of grave international tension and causes profound concern to all peace-loving nations yearning for stability. Unfortunately, such a situation is the natural outcome of the Iran-Iraq war, which for the eighth successive year is draining the energies, potential and blood of the two brother peoples. The war has hindered development and progress, claimed almost a million lives from both countries and depleted their great potentialities. Furthermore, its ramifications have spilled over into the whole Gulf region and impeded international navigation through the Gulf.

Egypt expressed full support for Security Council resolution 598 (1987) immediately after its adoption. We still believe in the imperative need for its implementation as we view the termination of this war as the unique solution to the precarious situation in the Gulf waters and on its shores, a situation which places in jeopardy one of the most important sources of energy in the world. We view the resolution as an integral and comprehensive whole, in keeping with international legitimacy. It should be implemented in its entirety within a reasonable time-frame that would neither detract from its content nor lead to its fragmentation. It would be no exaggeration to say that the implementation of this resolution will be a litmus test of the credibility of international legitimacy and the ability to carry out a decision adopted unanimously by the organ with the highest authority.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

I wish to commend our sister Iraq for its prompt response to the legitimate decisions of the international community. We call on Iran to support this international drive towards a just peace that would give everyone his due and herald an era of peaceful coexistence that would make amends for the material and human losses incurred during the eight years of war. In this regard, I wish to express our support for the efforts being exerted by the United Nations Secretary-General and to invite all parties to give their genuine, effective support to his endeavours and efforts.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

I also wish to emphasize that we consider the security of our brothers in the Gulf States as part and parcel of Egypt's security.

The international community is at present confronted with a serious phenomenon which brushes aside all values recognized and cherished by the civilized community and threatens its peace and security.

The spate of violence and terrorism does not constitute a material threat to the safety of individuals and peoples as much as it represents a grave ideological trend that makes the use of violence both a means and an end, rejects pluralism of opinions, and bars free dialogue and constructive coexistence.

Recently, terrorist activities have been rampant and have expanded to encompass locations dear to our heart and, at the same time, sacred places which enjoy sanctity and command the reverence of hundreds of millions of people throughout the world. These incidents have indicated that the threat of terrorism is still lurking and that it attacks when an opportunity presents itself. It also exceeds all limits when we loosen our grip or when we are beguiled into entertaining good intentions. As the issue of terrorism is included in the agenda of the current session, I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate Egypt's view that it is imperative to tackle the phenomenon of terrorism in all its aspects and guises. Its causes and roots should be traced with a view to concluding a comprehensive treaty that would fill the loopholes existing in international instruments which seek to deal with some aspects of this problem. Countries that have not acceded to existing agreements should be invited to do so as soon as possible and to incorporate the provisions of these agreements in their domestic legislation, taking due account of the right of peoples and recognized liberation movements to their national struggle for freedom and independence.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

The principles on which the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was based are still relevant and valid. The Movement represents a political expression by third world countries of their incessant struggle for freedom and independence. It is also a positive contribution to the maintenance of international peace and the alleviation of tensions. In view of its historical responsibility as one of the founding members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Egypt finds it imperative to preserve the concepts and principles on which the Movement is based. It also considers it essential to take a firm stand against all claims towards extremism and exaggeration which tend to divert the Movement from its original path and sublime principles. In this regard, we wish to pay a tribute to the non-aligned countries for their enlightened awareness of, their firm commitment to, and their success, in preserving the genuine principles of non-alignment despite pressure and difficulties. Such an attitude was best demonstrated during the summit meetings of non-aligned countries at New Delhi in 1983 and at Harare in 1986.

If the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries is the political expression of third world countries, the Group of 77 is an expression of the hopes and aspirations of the developing countries for a more equitable international economic order. It is also an endeavour to confirm and consolidate co-operation and collective self-reliance among developing countries.

Egypt has an authentic affiliation to the Islamic world. That affiliation is essentially a belief in the message of Islam, which advocates that human beings are equal, that there is no preference for an Arab over a non-Arab or for a black over a white except on the basis of piety, and that there can be no duress in religion or opinion. Islam is a heavenly message of justice and peace; a call for righteousness and benevolence; a mode of freedom and democracy. It is regrettable

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and disheartening that the Islamic world is turned into a scene of sanguinary strife between some of its States and that it witnesses attempts to distort the image of Islam, flagrantly and untruthfully clothing it in violence and bigotry, as was demonstrated in the recent incidents in Holy Mecca.

Egypt's return to active participation in the work of the Organization of the Islamic Conference has been a propitious occasion for it to co-ordinate its efforts with those of sister Islamic nations in taking a firm stand against the challenges facing the Islamic world and the dangers to which it is exposed.

The deteriorating situation in which our African brothers in southern Africa are living under the yoke of the racist policies of the Pretoria régime, and the persistence of that régime in illegally occupying Namibia in disregard of the aspirations of its people and their right to self-determination and independence, all warrant profound concern and constitute a flagrant defiance of the will of all peace-loving peoples.

There is no doubt that the scandalous and shameless endeavours by the South African Government, whether through the so-called constitutional reforms or through resort to aggression and military blackmail against neighbouring African States, are acts of hooliganism, which deserve rejection and condemnation. Guided by its African responsibilities and in evidence of its solidarity with its brotherly Africans, Egypt reiterates that it stands firmly and unwaveringly behind the people of South Africa in their struggle for their human and indigenous right to equality and freedom. It also supports the legitimate struggle of the people of Namibia, under the leadership of their legitimate, authentic representative, the South West Africa People's Organization, until they gain full independence. Egypt also calls for the support of the front-line States against threats and aggression.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Egypt appeals to the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities towards the peoples of southern African in order to enable them to lead a dignified life like all other free and independent peoples. The Security Council should make full use of all its powers, including the imposition of sanctions against that inhuman régime.

In this regard, I wish to mention the positive development in Western public opinion and in the attitude of Western countries towards the abominable racist policies of the South African Government, an attitude which heightens the isolation of that régime and hastens its downfall.

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, there is no alternative before us but squarely to face the problems that hinder the march of peace, co-operation and development.

If we state that the Middle East and southern Africa are hotbeds of bitter struggle between obsolete concepts and forward-looking prospects, we cannot, however, ignore other problems that afflict various regions, such as the problem of Cyprus in the Mediterranean, that of Afghanistan in south-west Asia, Korea in East Asia, Kampuchea in South-East Asia and other problems in Central America.

As for Cyprus, there is no alternative to a solution that takes into consideration the inalienable and legitimate rights of all Cypriots on an equal footing in the interest of preserving the unity of the island, its independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status.

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As regards Afghanistan, we fully support the efforts of the Secretary-General to arrive at a just settlement of the Afghan problem. Such a settlement of the problem, while respecting Afghanistan's independence, should be based on the withdrawal of all foreign troops from its territory, putting an end to interference in its internal affairs and ensuring its non-alignment. In this context Egypt supports all serious initiatives calling for the early withdrawal of foreign troops and the restoration of peace and stability to the brotherly people of Afghanistan.

On Korea, we reaffirm our sympathy with, and support for, the legitimate aspirations of the Koreans for a peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula and the attainment of stability and security in the area. We invite them to engage in a serious dialogue towards that end.

In the same spirit, we reiterate that Egypt views respect for Kampuchea's independence as an important element for stability in South-East Asia.

As for Central America, Egypt welcomed the agreement reached recently among the States of the region. We also support the efforts of the Contadora Group and Support Groups to achieve peace and stability in Central America. Egypt reiterates its call for respect for good-neighbourliness and for existing frontiers among all the countries of the region; non-interference in their internal affairs; preservation of the rights, interests and aspirations of the peoples of the region and refraining from policies of provocation and counter-attempts at polarization. We hope that the recent agreement will culminate in a durable settlement putting an end to tension and enabling the peoples of the region to forge ahead to an era of co-operation and development under the banner of democracy.

As the decade of the 1980s draws to a close, it is observed that the accomplishments of the international community in the field of economic relations

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have been so disappointing that some tend to call it "the lost development decade". The international economic crisis has reached immense proportions. As President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak said in his address before the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the debt problem "has reached serious proportions that cannot be ignored, threatening grave consequences unless the international community, debtors and creditors alike, take effective action". In addition to the debt problem, there are the issues of deterioration in terms of trade, the fall in commodity prices, reduced official development assistance flows, high interest rates, fluctuations of exchange rates and the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries.

The international economic crisis has placed the developing countries in general, and the African countries in particular, before grave challenges. It has condemned their peoples to live under arduous conditions. We therefore must take serious action in order to cope with those conditions and resolve those problems at the earliest possible time.

Against this bleak picture, there are some indications offering a flicker of hope that logic may be sought and wisdom resorted to in coping with those vital and urgent economic issues. Such indications were demonstrated mainly in the Final Act adopted by consensus at UNCTAD VII voicing the determination of all participating parties, developed and developing alike, to assume their responsibilities and honour their obligations in tackling this crushing crisis. Such an attitude deserves our encouragement, coupled with a reaffirmation by all of us of our obligations as contained in the Final Act of UNCTAD VII.

The United Nations was established to maintain peace among nations and preserve their freedom and independence. From the beginning, it realized that the freedom of nations is essentially based on the freedom of individuals. It was equally aware that violation of the freedom of citizens in their own countries was

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an extension of a policy which was heedless of law and morality in international relations. Thus the International Declaration on Human Rights represented a moral obligation which transcended borders and restrictions and made the protection of man's rights and freedom a preoccupation of the international community and of humanity at large.

Nothing is more outrageous than aggression against human rights which denies the rights of entire peoples, as is the case with regard to the policy of apartheid in South Africa. Another example is the Palestinian people, which have been denied the right to self-determination and whose basic rights are violated under occupation - rights bestowed on them by their Creator and emphasized in various international pacts.

Egypt has always been in the forefront of countries that advocate respect for human rights and the rights of peoples. Egypt made an outstanding contribution to the formulation of the International Declaration on Human Rights.

In the past six years Egypt, under President Mubarak, has made substantial progress in the field of respect for human rights. During this period Egypt ratified six international instruments related to respect for human rights in various spheres, and they have become part of our legal system.

Since January 1982 Egypt has ratified the following instruments: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid; the Convention against Torture; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the African Charter of Human and People's Rights.

Egypt's ratification of those instruments was not mere form devoid of content; nor was it simply an attempt to go along with the wishes of the international community. Rather, it was the reflection of a wide-ranging and profound democratic

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development experienced by Egypt and enjoyed by its people. The Egyptian political scene is now characterized by pluralism of opinion and freedom of political and intellectual expression under the umbrella of the Constitution and the rule of law that treat the ruler and the ruled on an equal footing, supported by an independent judiciary system that ensures justice and applies the law.

The Egyptian people will soon embark on a new and glorious phase of democratic development when they elect their President through a free public referendum, in a climate of freedom and stability, coupled with their aspirations for development, progress and peace.

I have dwelt on the great hopes we entertain in our constant pursuit of justice and morality, progress and advancement. I have also spoken of the difficulties and perils hindering our drive. May the rays of hope dissipate feelings of despair and the world leave behind the setting sun of the twentieth century and on solid ground forge ahead in a new spirit to welcome the rising sun of the next century, so that humanity may enjoy an era of peace, security, stability and prosperity.

Mr. VARKONYI (Hungary): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you most warmly on your election to the presidency of the forty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am especially pleased by your election since the relations between our countries are close and friendly and our co-operation is fruitful. I can assure you that in your high and responsible post you can count upon the full co-operation and support of the delegation of the Hungarian People's Republic.

Our delegation, guided by the policy of the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic, which is in full conformity with the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter, wishes to contribute actively to the success of the work of the present session of the General Assembly as well.

The conditions for widening the dialogue and developing practical co-operation among States seem more favourable now than they were during the forty-first session of the General Assembly. The positive trends in the international situation have somewhat strengthened, though grave tensions also persist.

The dialogue that has been resumed and become constant between the Soviet Union and the United States of America points in the direction of reduced international tension and strengthened confidence between States. The progress made in their bilateral disarmament talks gives rise to hopes and may induce far-reaching favourable changes that would usher in a new period in the history of international relations, leading us on to the twenty-first century. This imposes increased responsibility on the two leading great Powers. The entire community of nations rightly expects that by accepting mutual compromises they will steer the course of international developments in the desired direction. However, the most important lesson of our foreign policy activity in recent years shows that every country, irrespective of its size, should assume a share of that responsibility and

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do its utmost to contribute towards easing international tension and strengthening co-operation between nations.

We maintain that an excellent possibility of doing so is afforded by the United Nations, which is, within the system of international relations, an irreplaceable forum for co-operation among countries of different size, with different social systems and at different levels of economic development. We are deeply convinced that the world Organization still has considerable possibilities yet to be explored and a great potential yet to be mobilized for implementing the noble objectives and principles of the Charter. To avert and remove once and for all the danger of a nuclear catastrophe, to halt the arms race and adopt effective disarmament measures, to build just economic relations free from discrimination and to create living conditions worthy of man in the twentieth century - these are tasks for the nations and for the international community in which, we believe, the United Nations and its agencies should show more initiative and play a more active and pioneering role. It is this awareness that prompts my Government, together with other socialist countries, when we emphasize the need for the General Assembly to take steps towards bringing about a comprehensive system of international peace and security. The aim of this initiative is to lay the basis for broad international co-operation in inter-State relations to replace the present confrontation and mistrust.

In our nuclear age, the military and non-military challenges to the security of the world, the complexity and intricacy of international problems and the interdependence of States call for entirely new approaches to questions of security. The relevant discussions at the forty-first session of the General Assembly allowed some conclusions to be drawn which should form an integral part of security policy concepts in our time.

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The events of the intervening period have reinforced the conclusion that national and international security can no longer be separated and that neither can be preserved in a lasting way to the detriment of or in subordination to the other. Given the realities of our age, no single country can rely exclusively on military-technical means for guaranteeing its security. This can be achieved only by political means and by joint action. No single country has an exclusive right to security. The creation of a new structure of security policies presupposes the active participation of all States, whatever their size or political and social system. It is impossible in our day to remove the threats to common security except by comprehensive management of the different problems, namely, those which emerge separately or in conjunction in the political, economic, humanitarian, human rights and ecological fields. In our world, interwoven as it is with mutual dependence, this conclusion is on the way to becoming a cliché, but the manner of implementation, the course of action to follow, appears to have won less general acceptance.

The responses so far to our initiative reaffirm our opinion that the objective pursued is right. Taking due account of the interrelationships between different areas and with the involvement of the States Members of the United Nations, joint efforts should be made towards elaborating a viable system which, resting on the Charter of the United Nations, may provide a firm long-term basis for balanced development of international relations. Such a system should be based on the democratization of international relations and world politics; reduction of the role of military strength and its possible relegation as a security policy concept; the creation of conditions and the elaboration and application of an institutional system and rules of conduct necessary for a political settlement of international

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conflicts; joint solutions to global world economic and ecological problems; and the achieving of a fuller measure of human rights.

How are these goals to be attained?

On the one hand, the framework and mechanism of this new system of security should be devised and, on the other, action based on a broad consensus should be taken concurrently on whatever concrete issue is ripe for solution. We consider that such action is possible even on several global problems. I refer to international action against terrorism, drug abuse and diseases such as AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), among other things.

Consideration of the relevant agenda item in the light of such an approach might give an opportunity for a substantive dialogue on both the conceptual aspects and the concrete problems of international security and make it possible for concrete courses of action to be charted on the basis of mutual interest and consensus.

The core and substance of activity in this direction is that no State or group of States may claim a monopoly on action, for the related problems are shared and their solution, too, can be promoted only by joint efforts.

The encouraging progress made in certain areas of disarmament talks over the past years is a clear and most important indication of positive processes unfolding in international life. The Hungarian People's Republic considers it desirable to ensure, and is doing all it can to see, that the favourable opportunities emerging in the field of disarmament are not missed and that their impact is extended globally through the transmissions of international relations.

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The fundamental truth of the nuclear age, affirmed by the leadership of both the Soviet Union and the United States, is that a nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought. The Soviet-United States agreement in principle on the elimination of medium-range and tactical-operational missiles reached recently represents a real breakthrough in the practical implementation of the recognition of that truth. The destruction, under strict international verification measures, of those two categories of nuclear-weapon systems could prove a milestone in nuclear disarmament as a whole. The agreement would create a qualitatively new favourable situation in Europe, and would open the way to new measures aimed at further reducing military confrontation. The favourable political effect of such a highly important step would be felt not only by Europe but also by the world at large.

An agreement between the two great Powers on 50 per cent cuts in strategic offensive weapons and on concurrent strengthening of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty limiting the building of anti-missile systems would be another major step towards strengthening strategic stability. The Reykjavik summit last year paved the way in this field too for bringing closer positions that still differ on several important issues. The range of problems that continue to impede the successful conclusion of the multilateral negotiations of over 10 years on the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons is also narrowing.

In our view there is nothing to support or justify the downgrading of multilateral disarmament talks. Rather, the contrary is true: all of us must jointly seek ways and means to achieve a solution, for which an excellent opportunity will be provided by the forthcoming third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

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Europe, where the greatest stockpiles of weapons and armaments, as well as armed forces opposing each other, are concentrated, is a continent of particular relevance to disarmament. Any armed conflict between States of the continent would be likely to plunge the peace and security of the whole world into danger instantly.

The Stockholm agreement last year opened a new chapter in the efforts to promote European disarmament and to strengthen confidence and security. Initial experience shows that the measures agreed upon have produced favourable effects in themselves. But, what is perhaps even more important, they serve a useful purpose in paving the way for a significant lowering of the level of military confrontation in Europe. On the basis of the Budapest appeal issued by the States Members of the Warsaw Treaty in June 1986 and the responses thereto of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 23 States participating in the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe have, since last February, conducted consultations about the mandate of future negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe. Those negotiations must lead to reductions in conventional armed forces down to minimum levels of sufficiency for defence, and thereby to an increase in European stability.

The proposed measures constitute a short-term programme of action for disarmament. They should be supplemented by steps creating the foundation for an infrastructure for security in the next century. Without the comprehensive prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, without the adoption of effective multilateral nuclear-disarmament measures, and without the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, it is hardly possible to think in terms of twenty-first-century security.

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We are convinced that continuing multilateral negotiating efforts are needed to attain those goals. In the light of the quickening tempo of bilateral and multilateral regional talks, the slow progress or dilatoriness in multilateral disarmament talks within the United Nations system, particularly in certain areas of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, are becoming a source of growing concern.

By signing the Final Act of Helsinki more than a decade ago, the States of Europe expressed their conviction that security cannot be built solely by military means, and that appropriate political, economic and humanitarian conditions are equally indispensable for security. There is no room for doubt that the process of European security and co-operation is an indispensable framework for the maintenance of East-West dialogue and the development of co-operation.

Hungary has a vested interest in the continuation and intensification of this process. The large number of proposals submitted at the Vienna follow-up meeting is another indication of the vivid interest shown by the participating States in the steady development of co-operation in Europe. This is evidenced by the fact that States belonging to different groups of countries and having different social systems have identical goals on several issues.

Hungary, which is situated in the zone of direct contact between countries with different social systems, is bound by myriad traditional ties to the European States. Despite the differences in ideology and socio-economic system, the countries of Europe have established useful, fruitful and ever broadening co-operation in numerous areas. Hungary's relations with the countries of Western Europe likewise testify to the recognition that novel approaches to international relations, dialogue among States, practical co-operation and action based on mutual respect for divergent interests can be the only path to the future for Europe.

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That is naturally true for all continents. It would be a significant contribution to just and lasting solutions to regional conflicts and to the elimination of hotbeds of crisis if the General Assembly adopted at the present session a declaration on the enhancement of the effectiveness of the principle of non-use of force in international relations, the draft text of which was elaborated at this year's meetings of the Special Committee established for that purpose, with the active participation of representatives of socialist, non-aligned and Western countries. Indeed, the most urgent task of our age is that of banishing the use of force from international relations. The adoption by the General Assembly of the declaration, relevant also to the progressive development of international law, would be more than a symbolic gesture of commitment to strengthening this basic principle embodied in the United Nations Charter.

Numerous developments over the past year have strengthened our conviction that the United Nations should play an active and growing role in the relaxation of tension and in the elimination of regional hotbeds of crisis. Effective involvement by the world Organization would considerably increase its chances of taking action in other future issues, while adding to its weight in world politics and enhancing its prestige. The activities of the United Nations, including those of the Security Council and of the Secretary-General and his representatives in the quest for negotiated settlements, the relevant resolutions and mediation efforts, are assuming growing importance in setting good examples. They express the political will of the overwhelming majority of Member States and bring about a mechanism for settlement applicable to any conflict, giving widespread recognition to the principle that a negotiated settlement is the only way out of an armed conflict. That is substantiated also by developments concerning the

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Iraq-Iran war. Consequently, we welcome and support the active and constructive role of the Secretary-General in the search for a solution to the Gulf crisis that is acceptable to all.

Crises can be solved only through a process of comprehensive settlement with the participation of all the parties concerned, and on the basis of the principles of equality and equal security, the principles of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international law. Such efforts can be served most effectively by international conferences to be held under the auspices of the United Nations, whether for a just settlement of the Middle East crisis or a peaceful solution of the conflict in Cyprus. Attempts to use tension as a pretext for increasing foreign military presence and intervention counteract those principles and United Nations efforts to reach settlements.

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Elimination of the crisis in South Africa could be promoted by the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions and by resolute and concerted international action. The racist régime of South Africa persists in its efforts to prevent the black majority from exercising its fundamental human rights by the adoption of internal repressive measures and by resort to force, and it attempts to stabilize its position in the region by economic blackmail and by military action against the front-line States. We support resolute international action to prevent the Republic of South Africa from evading in every way the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and from continuing its illegal occupation of Namibia, as well as from launching repeated armed attacks from that Territory against Angola.

We consider it an urgent task to strengthen security in Asia and the Pacific and to establish constructive co-operation between the countries of the region. It is gratifying to note the increased activity and growing role of small and medium-sized countries in Asia, as well. We support any efforts by the countries of the region aimed at creating peace and security on the Asian continent. In this spirit, we welcome the policy of national reconciliation of the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and support the endeavours of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the peaceful and democratic unification of Korea. In our opinion, the policy of national reconciliation proclaimed by the Afghan Government and the mediation activities of the Secretary-General's Personal Representative have increased the chances of eliminating the crisis situation around Afghanistan.

The events in the Central American and Caribbean regions continue to give us cause for concern. My Government favours a just, negotiated settlement of the Central American crisis on the basis of full respect for the sovereignty of the countries concerned and for the legitimate interests and national dignity of the

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peoples of the region. It lends support to the joint efforts of the Contadora Group as well as to all initiatives of the countries of the region aimed at finding a genuine solution.

At the current session of the General Assembly, our delegation will devote great attention to the condition of the world economy and to the problems of international economic relations. The openness of the Hungarian economy and the intensity of our external economic relations compel us to follow with close attention any shifts in the external environment of our economy.

I must point out that imbalances in the world economy have continued to grow, notable strains have emerged in the international financial and monetary systems and the indebtedness of numerous countries has reached critical levels. The cost of the arms race diverts enormous resources from the productive sphere. The erosion of the international trading system has continued. The growth of protectionist tendencies, discriminatory measures impeding the expansion of international economic relations and restrictions based on non-economic considerations, whose effects are felt especially in trade in modern technologies, are a source of concern.

Solutions to the problems of the world economy demand a new type of global approach, particularly from Governments that have a decisive influence on the conditions for economic co-operation. In our view, some progress in developing such an approach has recently been made. Let me refer in this respect only to the round of talks started by the contracting parties of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) at the ministerial conference in Punta del Este, Uruguay, and to the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held last summer.

I think that this new world economic outlook, which is more responsive to realities and to world-wide interdependence, is also reflected in the very important

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document, entitled Our Common Future, of the International Commission for Environment and Development chaired by Prime Minister Brundtland of Norway. My Government agrees with the statements and conclusions of that document.

Efforts to create international economic security, also supported by Hungary, are directed towards ensuring that the principles of partnership relations based on mutual respect for one another's interests, stability, reliability, predictability and fulfilment in good faith of contractual obligations are observed in international economic relations. Implementation of these basic principles can promote mutually advantageous solutions to the present-day problems of the world economy, as well as its balanced growth. World economic problems cannot be solved except with the active co-operation of all participants in international economic relations.

Promotion of respect for human rights and their universal implementation - and, to that end, promotion of co-operation among States - is one of the fundamental objectives of the world Organization. Present-day events bear out the recognition expressed in the letter and spirit of the Charter that there is a close relationship between respect for human rights and the maintenance of international peace and security. The United Nations elaboration, through strenuous efforts, of an internationally recognized system of principles and norms relating to human rights is among the Organization's achievements deserving of our recognition.

We consider it a central task of the United Nations to take effective action against mass and flagrant violations of human rights, which also pose a threat to peace and security. Disregard for the right of peoples to self-determination, the humiliating policies and practices of racial hatred, racism and mass discrimination against nationalities and in any other form demand of our Organization, and of each of its Member States, the adoption of a resolute stand, as well as action.

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A no less important task for the United Nations is the promotion of respect for individual and collective human rights and their effective exercise.

We are convinced that the postulate to respect and implement human rights is a major and indispensable achievement of our civilization - a common value of mankind to whose creation we have all contributed. It is necessary to seek points of common interest as well as ways and means of co-operation in order to enrich it.

Countries and peoples have followed different historical paths and have started from different foundations in moving closer to the shared values and ideals evolved within the framework of the United Nations system. Such differences are a natural phenomenon - just as the diversity of cultures is - and awareness of this fact may contribute to strengthening confidence in the human rights and humanitarian fields as well.

The need for universal implementation of human rights implies exercise of the rights of peoples and individuals, just as it implies recognition and protection of rights for different segments and groups in society, including nationalities. Constructive co-operation in matters affecting the situation of national minorities has an important role to play in inter-State relations and in the development of good-neighbourly relations, and may even influence the political atmosphere of entire regions. In Hungary, the equal participation of nationalities in the political, economic and cultural life of society is an important component of national unity. Recognition of the individual and collective rights of nationalities, including the right to education in their mother tongue, and the creation of institutional and democratic frameworks for their existence, serve to help them preserve, develop and strengthen their identities.

The favourable tendencies recently observed in international relations have allowed multilateral forums - including, first of all, the United Nations - to resume an active and effective role in the development of international

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co-operation. To enable the world Organization to live up to that role, it is indispensable to enhance its effectiveness and streamline its activity. At the same time, this requires that every Member State contribute constructively as much as it can to overcome the difficulties in the operation of the United Nations.

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We are now at a propitious moment for the world Organization and for the entire community of nations. The States Members of the United Nations must seize the opportunity to steer the course of the world irreversibly towards disarmament and international co-operation. I hope that the work of the present session of the United Nations General Assembly will also help to ensure that more and more States become aware of this opportunity and take an active part in joint efforts to ensure the accomplishment of this mission.

Mr. BEDREGAL GUTIERREZ (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to begin my statement at this world meeting by extending my congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the forty-second session of the General Assembly. The delegation of Bolivia respects your great personal qualities and experience and your worthy representation of a friendly country.

I wish also to commend your predecessor, Ambassador Choudhury of Bangladesh, for the distinction with which he presided over the last session.

On behalf of the Government of Bolivia, I express gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his selfless and tireless efforts. His skill and perseverance in the search for solutions to the various problems facing the world are recognized by all. He is the champion of peace, understanding and brotherhood among peoples. For all these reasons, his re-election to his important post is a clear acknowledgement of the personal qualities of an illustrious Latin American.

In this Assembly the people and the democratic Government of Bolivia reaffirm their faith in and unqualified commitment to the principles of the Charter and their conviction that it is only through dialogue and decisive political will and understanding among all the peoples of the world that we shall succeed in solving the problems that beset mankind, that our generation will be able to build peace

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and brotherhood and that the interdependence of all nations will be placed above hegemonism and sterile ideological disputes.

We have noted with concern since the last session of the General Assembly that in many areas democratic dialogue among States has been replaced by violence, and that force and the abuse of power have prevailed over reason, tolerance and the rule of law, with attempts to substitute themselves for negotiations in the solution of international conflicts. However, as we are all aware, force and aggression, apart from their illegality, have clearly demonstrated their inability to bring about or preserve peace.

The United Nations has promoted the self-determination of peoples and the peaceful settlement of disputes, which are the very pillars of peaceful coexistence and principles that Bolivia has always respected and furthered.

Peace is the very essence of the code of civilized norms of coexistence that must guide mankind on its historic journey within the framework of the profound sense of ethics that permeates the spirit of all human beings. One enormous obstacle to peace and the attainment of international security is the arms race, which is growing apace and has reached unimaginable levels. The arms race not only jeopardizes the precarious peace that we enjoy at present but is a key factor in the stagnation of the social and economic development of both the nations involved in that mindless race and the countries of the third world, since their efforts and resources would be better spent on raising the living standards of their peoples.

Bolivia, as always, resolutely supports all disarmament initiatives designed to bring about peace and strengthen international security. I hereby declare Bolivia's readiness to seek the establishment of a zone of peace and security in the South Pacific.

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In keeping with those principles, my Government welcomed the announcement by the Governments of the Soviet Union and the United States of their agreement in principle to dismantle the weapons covered by the zero and double-zero options. This marks the beginning of a gradual process of nuclear disarmament, which must be maintained.

In spite of the selfless peace efforts made by the United Nations, we continue to be alarmed by the conflicts in various parts of the world, which thwart the commendable humanitarian work of the Organization.

In the context of eliminating one source of social conflict that is a blight on and a disgrace to mankind, Bolivia reiterates its utter repudiation of apartheid and all forms of discrimination, whether racial, religious, cultural, political, social or economic. Bolivia calls insistently for the self-determination of Namibia and the cessation of military aggression by South Africa against neighbouring sovereign States.

Ideological pluralism, along with the self-determination of peoples, is the foundation of the coexistence of States. In this spirit, just as Bolivia recognizes the juridical and political existence of Israel, so does it recognize the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to form a sovereign State in a free and clearly defined territory. We are certain that a solution to this problem will benefit the peace and security of the countries of the Middle East, and we therefore enthusiastically support the idea of an immediate multilateral conference, with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and the States involved, to reach a consensus on peaceful coexistence in a region so sorely tried by all the horrors of violence and blind hatred.

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Similarly, the search for an appropriate solution to the problem of the two Koreas can only benefit that part of the world. We appeal most fervently to the parties concerned to engage in negotiations inspired by a spirit of reconciliation and brotherhood.

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Tragic and fierce conflicts in Asia and Africa, particularly the Iran-Iraq war, the constant deterioration of the situation in Lebanon, the military occupation of Cyprus - all persist in spite of the pleas of the international community. Bolivia, in its traditional spirit of peace, appeals earnestly to the Governments and the leaders of the parties concerned to take constructive decisions and make meaningful efforts to reach solutions to these conflicts. We emphatically urge implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), which was adopted unanimously.

The persistence of those inhuman situations distresses the Bolivian people, because we see with heavy hearts that similar tensions are now arising in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Happily, the prolonged Central American crisis is entering upon a process of change, thanks to the commendable initiative of the Heads of State of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, who, with the firm support of their peoples, held a meeting of Heads of State of Central America last August under the auspices of the Government of Guatemala. This meeting contributed in raising our hopes for the achievement of diplomatic solutions, hopes which we had voiced even before the efforts of the Contadora and Support Groups began.

Accordingly, we are exceedingly gratified to learn that the five Heads of State decided to unite their efforts and strive as one to bring about an early understanding in favour of peace in Central America. This endeavour must be complemented by the international community, which should make an exceptionally generous contribution to the economic reconstruction of these sister countries.

In spite of this commendable progress, there is a conflict which endures and is a source of concern to Latin America: the vestige of an outdated colonialism that affects the legitimate sovereignty of a sister nation, the Argentine Republic,

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in respect of its territorial rights over the Malvinas Islands. It is imperative, that the parties concerned re-open negotiations with a view to bringing about a just and peaceful solution to the problem; thus Bolivia supports General Assembly resolution 41/11, which declares the South Atlantic to be a zone of peace and co-operation.

Bolivia's support for the rights of the sister Republic of Panama over the Canal is unwavering, and proceeds from our spirit of pan-Americanism. The Torrijos-Carter Treaty is an example of this spirit, and its unqualified implementation is an imperative for the Latin American and Caribbean community.

The world economic situation is of grave concern to my country. There is the threat of a major recession whose repercussions would be felt mainly in the developing countries. It would have disastrous consequences for primary-commodity producers and exporters like Bolivia. We view with amazement the unfair granting of subsidies, intolerable trade discrimination and reactionary protectionism. Those regressive factors impede economic exchanges between nations and cause irreparable harm, in particular to the developing countries which have imposed on them economic restrictions that strangle free international trade. Such a chain of reactionary nationalism leads to the existence of an unjust international economic order.

We now have a global economic system which, even in times of apparent peace, bears the signs of controversy. In this sense, there is a radical lack of symmetry, owing to the fact that some alliances within the system do not answer to any control or regulation machinery and because of their scope, strength and power exert a de facto influence over the entire system.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

Nevertheless my Government hopes that the decisions adopted by the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will be carried out. We should like to take this opportunity to extend sincere congratulations to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Mr. Kenneth Dadzie, who has worked so hard and effectively to promote international trade.

Bolivia wholeheartedly supports the Caracas and Buenos Aires Programmes of Action, which establish economic and technical co-operation among developing countries. In this context I should like to mention the recent agreements of fraternal co-operation between Paraguay and Bolivia, and between Peru and Bolivia, respectively, which we trust will in the very near future greatly benefit our nations.

The Uruguayan Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has given new hope to the developing countries. We believe that the item on natural resources deserves special consideration within that framework.

My country, in keeping with its new economic policy and its plan for reinvigorating domestic production, and having followed with interest the latest actions of GATT, has applied for membership in that body.

External debt, to which we have referred so frequently both here and elsewhere, because of its ill-effects on the economies and the growth of debtor countries, is fraught with political and social dangers from which there is no escape. We view with profound concern that the so-called periodic adjustments do not contribute to finding a solution to this structural problem. They lead to a drain of financial resources from the debtor countries to those States having predominant financial centres that has reached the astronomical figure of some \$200 billion annually. This amounts to a plundering of the poor peoples of the world.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

The United Nations could become the appropriate forum for dealing with this complex problem, given the co-operation of all the countries concerned, both debtors and creditors, in a multilateral effort with positive effects for all States and public and private financial systems that have already tried various alternatives without achieving an adequate definitive solution. This is a concrete issue that requires the immediate consideration of the Organization.

Permit me now briefly to speak on some particularly important aspects of the situation in my country.

About two years ago Bolivia embarked on a new economic policy and a new style of development. At the same time, we began to put into practice the principles of authority, responsibility and morality within the democratic framework of the life of my country, so as to make of economic democracy a factor for social justice.

In August 1985 the Government of President Victor Paz Estenssoro took over a country in the grip of runaway inflation at an estimated cumulative rate, for December of that year, of 40,000 per cent, accompanied by a 20 per cent drop in its gross national product - all that against the backdrop of a grave political and social disarray. It needed great political courage by the President and his Government to apply the necessary "shock" treatment in order to halt the runaway inflation by establishing control over finances, instituting tax reform and introducing a single, flexible and realistic exchange rate, as well as uniform tariffs.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

These efforts were positive but short-lived. The attempt was frustrated in October 1985 by a blow to our foreign trade caused by a fall in the prices of primary commodities, minerals, particularly tin, and fuels.

Bolivia is facing a historic challenge. In order to preserve its democratic system we are pursuing a drastic anti-inflationary policy and there have been positive results. With financial stability, both internal and external, the annual rate of inflation has been kept below 10 per cent and the exchange rate reflects supply and demand. The amount of tax collected has risen from 1 per cent to 9 per cent of the gross national product and the budgetary deficit has been eliminated. Reserves have risen by over 100 per cent and we have established social discipline and full legal and constitutional order.

It should be recognized that an adverse effect of the success of our policy of stabilization has been a drop in real incomes and employment, problems which we are trying to remedy by restimulating production in the short term and by economic and social development over the medium and long terms.

Moreover, our Government, in spite of serious economic and financial restraints, has not neglected the social area. In the belief that democracy can flourish only in conditions of social well-being, it has established an emergency social fund designed to provide temporary work projects for the unemployed. Similarly, we have established an emergency economic recovery fund and a national social policy council, as well as a national council for co-operatives and a public housing institute. We fully support the consolidation of social property and integral and participative co-operativism.

Pursuant to its effective stabilization programme, Bolivia has signed with the International Monetary Fund a stand-by agreement and a structural adjustment

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

agreement, with expanded facilities over three years, thus becoming the second country to secure such an agreement, which enables it to obtain compensatory financing.

With regard to its external debt Bolivia has arranged with the "Paris Club" to reschedule its bilateral public debt and is now enjoying the co-operation of the members. Preparations are now under way for a new round of negotiations.

In brief, Bolivia is now economically and financially ripe for investment and international co-operation and that, together with its natural resources, justifies expectations of healthy political and social development.

We would like to pay a tribute to the work of the United Nations Development Programme as a source of multilateral technical co-operation and pre-investment. Its activities help to expand economic co-operation among developing countries.

On this occasion I should like to say on behalf of our Government that we are emerging from the most serious hyperinflation in Latin American history and the seventh most acute hyperinflation to have struck any country anywhere. The people of Bolivia wish to resolve these problems within the framework of democracy and freedom and that calls for a great spirit of sacrifice and solidarity in order to avoid falling into the trap of totalitarianism which, unfortunately, in similar situations has been the corollary of transition in such fragile circumstances.

My Government, conscious of the magnitude of the problem of drug trafficking, has recently, in this very forum, condemned that criminal activity and taken the initiative, along with other Governments of the region, of calling on the United Nations to proclaim drug trafficking a crime against humanity and to convene a world conference to examine the problem, a conference which would recommend concerted action to combat it at the international level.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

In pursuit of the same policy, Bolivia took an active part in the preparations for and work of the Conference held last June in Vienna on drug abuse and illicit trafficking. That Conference was a landmark and a testimony to the unanimity of purpose of our peoples and Governments. Its results will benefit future generations. The documents unanimously adopted there constitute a valuable basis for harmonizing the legislation of the different countries, and that will make more effective humanity's fight against this criminal and perverse activity.

Bolivia has also concluded an agreement with the United States of America for the eradication and replacement of the coca plant, with a precise timetable for both the voluntary and the forcible elimination of the crop as well as punitive action against the crime and rehabilitation of the offenders. This step taken by the Government of Bolivia is a clear expression of its determination to fight this scourge of universal dimensions, in spite of the political, social and economic problems involved in carrying out these plans for countries which bear the misnomer of producers.

However, it is an inconceivable paradox that action such as that just mentioned, which has been launched from the highest political level in Bolivia, should not be fully understood by certain agencies of the United States Government, which still show biased and short-sighted understanding of so vast a problem. Bolivian democracy, which is slowly emerging, has just had imposed on it, by the unilateral action of the Government of the United States of America, a "sanction", which only encourages drug trafficking, since the budget cuts recently decided upon seriously weaken the national will to banish from our territory this terrible transnational of organized crime. Whether with or without the economic co-operation of the United States of America, Bolivia will not cease its efforts to eradicate the trafficking in drugs.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

Once again we must emphasize the solid emergence of multilateralism in the fight against drugs. The spirit of the Conference in Vienna and the dynamic action of courage and efficiency of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control are the only firm hope that States have of restoring the honour of their peoples, the health of their youth and the efficient co-operation to build a common united front to put an end to this nefarious crime without political manoeuvring.

These steps have been accompanied by the implementation of domestic policies designed to combat drug trafficking. On 25 July last we created the National Council against the Abuse of and Illicit Traffic in Drugs, charged with the task of formulating and establishing the policies of development, crime prevention and rehabilitation within our overall plan for crop substitution and for development. My Government wishes to reiterate before this Assembly its determination to continue its unrelenting fight against drug trafficking, in compliance with the Declaration and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Plan of Future Activities adopted in Vienna.

On numerous occasions the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Bolivia have made reference to the maritime problem facing my country, a problem which for over a century has seriously effected its economic and social growth. I feel I should now briefly refer to that matter, which is one of the issues of conflict which afflict Latin America.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

Since the Ninth General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), in 1979, the hemisphere's regional organ has insistently recommended and exhorted Bolivia and Chile to find a peaceful, just solution to Bolivia's landlocked situation. This has been embodied in a variety of resolutions adopted by the organization's General Assembly in Washington in 1980, Saint Lucia in 1981, Washington in 1982 and 1983, Brasilia in 1984, Cartagena de Indias in 1985 and Guatemala in 1986.

The substantive part of that OAS resolution states:

"The General Assembly,

"In a spirit of fraternity and with a view to the integration of the Americas,

"Declares that it is of continuing hemispheric interest that an equitable solution be found whereby Bolivia will obtain appropriate sovereign access to the Pacific Ocean, and

"Considering that it is necessary to achieve the foregoing objective and to consolidate a stable peace that will promote the economic and social progress of the area of the Americas directly affected by the consequences of the landlocked status of Bolivia, and

"Resolves:

"1. To recommend to the States most directly concerned with this problem that they open negotiations for the purpose of providing Bolivia with a free and sovereign territorial connection with the Pacific Ocean. These negotiations shall take into account the rights and interests of the parties involved, and might consider, among other things, the inclusion of a port area for integrated multinational development, as well as the Bolivian proposal that no territorial compensation be included."

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

As a consequence of this continental concern and Bolivia's unbending determination to recover its access to the Pacific Ocean, in 1986 Bolivia took the initiative of arranging a new process of negotiations with the Government of Chile with the sole objective of achieving its access to the Pacific and proposing adequate compensation, to our mutual benefit. After a series of informal consultations between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia and Chile, there was an official meeting between the Ministers representing their respective States on 21-23 April 1987 in Montevideo, thanks to the generous hospitality of the Government of Uruguay. There and then the Bolivian Minister gave his Chilean counterpart a proposal, on the basis of which the negotiations began. At that meeting the Bolivian delegation replied to various questions posed by the Chilean delegation, confident that a formal round of diplomatic negotiations had been initiated and that it was obviously being carried out seriously and in good faith by the two countries.

A few days later the atmosphere of favourable expectancy created by a policy of mutual friendliness and accommodation was disrupted by an abrupt and rude declaration by a member of the Chilean naval forces, whose statements certainly did no credit to his uniform. Those comments were both incoherent and aggressive, thus bringing to a halt the course of negotiations aimed at finding a solution to the strained relations between the two brother countries.

On 9 June 1987 the Bolivian representative in Santiago was abruptly summoned to the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he was handed an official communiqué containing a rude rejection of the Bolivian proposal, thus unilaterally breaking off the negotiating process.

At the same time the Government of Chile launched a well-planned publicity campaign aimed at convincing the Chilean people and the international public that Bolivia had never had access to the Pacific Ocean. A flood of fallacious and

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

erroneous historical "facts" were thus used in an attempt to distort and invalidate Bolivia's historical, moral and political right to its own coast and a port area on the Pacific.

Bolivia has repeatedly submitted the irrefutable documented proof on which it bases its historical right to its own outlet to the Pacific Ocean, which was impetuously seized by Chile in a war of aggression in 1879 - an attack brutally and unexpectedly unleashed not only against my country but also against Peru. I do not wish to burden representatives with the details of that documentation. I shall refer only to the most categorical admission by Chile to the effect that the Bolivian littoral was taken by force during the 1879 war. That admission is contained in an official dispatch sent by the Chilean representative Mr. Abraham Konig to the Bolivian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 13 August 1900. The relevant parts read:

"... Chile has occupied the littoral and has taken possession of it in the same way as Germany annexed Alsace and Lorraine to its empire ... Our title is born of victory, the supreme law of nations ... that the littoral is rich and worth millions, we knew. We keep it because we value it; if we did not value it, we would not be interested in keeping it."

That official declaration has never been disavowed by Chile, nor has it been argued that Mr. Konig, the author, was not authorized to make it. The terms of Konig's note were the basis of the Treaty imposed by Chile in 1904.

From the memorandum presented by Bolivia during the Ninth General Assembly of the Organization of American States I shall extract only a few brief points pertaining to the economic impediments from which Bolivia has been suffering as a consequence of the Chilean occupation so brilliantly described by the Chilean diplomat Konig.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

The territory in question has an area of 158,000 square kilometres, an area larger than the state of Pennsylvania, with a coastline of more than 400 kilometres; it includes four ports and seven coves. The copper exported by Chile since 1879, amounting to more than 20 million tons, came from this region. That is the equivalent of the reserves of the entire Asian continent plus the reserves of the Soviet Union. Chile has thus become the world's primary exporter and the second-ranking producer of copper, after the United States. In addition, other natural resources, such as guano, saltpetre, sulphur and so on, are still being extracted from that area.

The basic acknowledgement of the serious juridical, moral and material damage inflicted on Bolivia and the concept that this problem is both detrimental and dangerous to the harmony and social development of the region have prompted the repeated appeals of the OAS for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of this situation. That is why Chile's infamous, inexplicable refusal is so offensive not only to Bolivia but also to the Organization of American States, which seeks to foster Bolivian-Chilean understanding.

We are only too familiar with Chile's arguments: "Chile owes nothing to Bolivia", "There is a Treaty in force between the two States", and so on. These are all feeble arguments designed to paper over a reality which is charged with conflict. We do not seek to denounce or ignore existing treaties, even if they did arise out of military defeat. We are asking the international community to help us to find, through negotiations in good faith, an agreement that will be a contribution to the peace, integration and development of the area, which requires realistic, imaginative and long-lasting solutions that will promote the common well-being of both our nations.

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

To conclude what I have to say on this matter, I reaffirm the determination of the Government and people of Bolivia to press their claim in the Organization of American States, to which we owe our gratitude for the sense of justice and equity it has shown in supporting Bolivia's search, through serious bilateral diplomatic negotiations conducted in good faith, for a peaceful solution to its maritime problem. At the same time the Government and people of Bolivia wish here in the General Assembly, the supreme forum of world opinion, to voice their protest over an unjust situation.

The international community has reiterated here its support for efforts made in the context of multilateralism, an instrument of modern international law and practice, which seeks to build and guarantee a civilized way of life of benefit to all the peoples on earth.

However, some Member States appear to be vacillating over honouring their commitments. Delay in the payment of contributions, as a means of exerting pressure and not because of economic difficulties, represents a serious threat to the United Nations. I therefore reiterate the Bolivian Government's full support for the United Nations system, including all its agencies and bodies. On this basis, Bolivia will continue to co-operate in the further democratization of the United Nations bodies and will insist on just and equitable geographic representation, free from any vestiges of feudalism.

Another threat to the normal functioning of the United Nations system is the disregard for commitments made with regard to it.

The public conduct of Governments comes under the spotlight when it harms or violates positive multilateral laws of which States are the substantive beneficiaries, as in the recent case of an unspeakable incident provoked by the Government of Chile, when it gave offence to a high official of the Bolivian

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State. In a politically and ideologically motivated repressive action, the Government of Chile, in whose territory the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has its seat, denied the Bolivian Vice-Minister of Social Defence and head of the Bolivian delegation an entry visa he required to participate in the first Latin American meeting of heads of national drug law enforcement agencies, which is being held this week at the ECLAC headquarters.

That reactionary police action, which fully reveals the morality of that Government, characterized by ostentatious display of power, was an attempt to prevent the participation of a Bolivian representative in a multilateral meeting - a representative who has always been involved in the struggle for democracy and social justice. I thank the office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary of ECLAC for successfully demanding that the Government of Chile meet its international obligations by granting the visa.

Because of that incident, together with many other acts that have interfered with ECLAC's work since September 1973, Bolivia will take steps within the competent United Nations bodies to have the Commission's headquarters moved. The issues on the agenda of this memorable session deal with problems of concern to all mankind. We should try not to discuss modalities, points of view or interpretations of crises and their diverse forms but to concentrate on real substance: the question of freedom or irrational force. We must be prepared to identify the opponents of freedom, with the aim of uniting the majority of nations to preserve and strengthen it. For that, it is essential to give priority to spiritual values, which in some tragic circumstances are ignored or treated as being of secondary importance.

Perfecting the social order consists in combining force and the law. However, it is essential that force be directed by the law; otherwise, at dramatic moments

(Mr. Bedregal Gutierrez, Bolivia)

in the life of States unilateral arguments are advanced, authoritarian power is exercised and fratricidal violence occurs, reducing to mere chimeras the universal laws and morals of peace and interdependence.

This year's session of the General Assembly coincides with the anniversaries of two events which, both instructively and controversially, have contributed to the development of human society. I refer to the 200th anniversary of the legal adoption of the Constitution of the United States, a document whose ideas have borne much fruit elsewhere in the political development of the world, particularly among those of us whose public institutions are rooted in democracy, freedom of the individual and the independence of States. This year also marks the 70th anniversary of the Russian revolution, a historic milestone indispensable to an understanding of the social changes of the 20th century which have led to the overcoming of those excessive individualistic injustices that obstructed the integral development of the economic expectations of our societies.

The lessons of both those events, and both approaches to supporting the development of the human being, together with other products of the human spirit aimed at reconciliation, must converge towards a synthesis of peace, freedom and economic justice and love and understanding between individuals and nations. In that way the 21st century will combine the light of individual freedom with social security and international justice, to turn the planet into one world, where the State and the free marketplace of ideas, services and goods will once and for all put an end to violence, tyranny and the dogmatism of the ideologies of hatred, and where love and peace will prevail among all God's creatures, including all humanity.

Mr. FALL (Senegal) (interpretation from French): Your election,

Mr. President, is both recognition of the continuing endeavours of the German Democratic Republic for peace and harmony between peoples and a tribute to your

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

great qualities as an experienced statesman and diplomat. I am therefore pleased to offer you the warmest congratulations of the delegation of Senegal and to wish you every success in the discharge of your mandate.

Your distinguished predecessor, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury of Bangladesh, with his lucidity, wisdom and ability, inspired and successfully presided over the last session. I once again extend to him our thanks.

I also pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, a man of conviction, initiative and courage, who deserves our appreciation and support.

I also welcome Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed, in whom we have complete confidence, and congratulate him on his selection by the Secretary-General, which was well deserved.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

This forty-second session of the General Assembly is beginning its work in an atmosphere of expectation and hope.

Our common resolve is to continue the work of building a more balanced and more just world - particularly since the holding two years ago of the fortieth anniversary session of this Organization - has enabled us to glimpse, and sometimes even see, an outline of solutions to some of the major challenges of our age. We must persevere because, above and beyond national stakes and interests, our common efforts are aimed at one objective: to promote the dignity of each individual and of every people through international co-operation.

This great noble undertaking - and we have a historic responsibility to future generations to achieve it - requires of all of us lucidity, political will and active solidarity.

It is in this spirit that I would speak on behalf of Mr. Abdou Diouf, President of the Republic of Senegal, and bring to the Assembly the modest but sincere contribution of the Senegalese people and Government to the implementation of the programme for the rehabilitation of man and peoples in their common rights to peace, development and progress. In this context, re-establishing a growth economy, promoting and protecting human rights and maintaining international peace and security constitute three topics of burning relevance today. May I be permitted to dwell on them for a few moments and share our thoughts with the Assembly.

At a time when the developing countries have the greatest need for financial resources to ensure their growth, what we are witnessing is in fact a reverse trend: in 1985 the developing countries carried out a net transfer of resources of \$US 31 billion to the developed countries, and in 1986 this situation not only continued but also worsened.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

In this context we believe that the North-South dialogue is more than mere wishful thinking; rather, it is an imperative to be translated into tangible action at a time when interdependence between nations is the backdrop to international relations.

The New Substantive Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and also, what is closer to us, the United Nations Programme of Action for the Economic Recovery and Development of Africa, 1986-1990, if successfully concluded in a spirit of active harmony and solidarity, could help to restore the economic health of many countries of the South that are represented here and thus improve the future of their peoples.

As we are all aware, this United Nations Programme of Action for Africa enshrines commitments solemnly entered into here by one and all - by African Governments and by the international community.

Since the Secretary-General has already prepared a detailed follow-up report on the matter, it would be superfluous for me to dwell excessively on the work done by our Organization to implement that Programme of Action. However, Senegal would like to hail the many initiatives taken by the Secretary-General, such as the establishment of a Steering Committee of the United Nations, the establishment of a Group of Eminent Persons, and the interagency meetings held in Dakar in March 1986. The continuation of these efforts, together with co-ordination work and efforts towards implementation at the regional level by the Economic Commission for Africa, should make it possible to strengthen the capacity of the international organizations to respond in time to difficulties encountered in implementing the Programme of Action.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

Part of the international community also responded positively to the debt problem and debt servicing that detract from the adjustment efforts of African countries. My country welcomes the decision taken in this regard by several countries to cancel or to convert into bonds the public debt entered into by African countries that have been seriously affected by the crisis. We trust that this effort of active solidarity will encourage other partners of Africa, if not to take the same political step, at least to take initiatives with the same goal of providing the African countries real relief from the crushing burden of their foreign debts.

The African countries, for their part, are not sitting with their arms folded in the face of the critical situation confronting their economies. After all, they have solemnly stated that they must first count on their own efforts to solve the problem.

I should like to mention briefly the case of my own country, Senegal. According to the World Bank's Consultative Group for Senegal, which met in Paris from 31 March to 1 April 1987:

"Two years ago the Government of Senegal began an extremely courageous and large-scale programme for economic restructuring and institutional reform. While no one questions the need for such measures, some persons were sceptical as to the tenacity and courage needed of the public authorities to be able to follow this difficult path which had just been mapped out. Others, invoking the fragility of the Senegalese economy and the difficulties inherent in such change, had doubted whether the measures would in fact lead to real improvement in Senegal's economic situation. Nevertheless, despite these apprehensions, an agreement was concluded between Senegal and its creditors.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

"Two years after the beginning of this undertaking it would seem to us that, as we look at the progress made, a very clear consensus has emerged whereby the Senegalese Government has to a large extent attained its objectives and in fact achieved far better success than many would have ventured to hope."

Anxious to benefit to the utmost from the experience gained in implementing its adjustment programme, my Government opted for an institutional and functional development of existing structures, following upon the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, on the critical economic situation of Africa.

Thus at the institutional level, the Inter-Ministerial Committee which, under the effective chairmanship of the Head of State, meets quarterly to supervise implementation of the adjustment programme, and the Technical Committee, which provides follow-up during the inter-quarterly periods, have had their membership changed so as to include all of the ministerial departments involved in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action.

On the functional level, the powers of the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Technical Committee have been broadened to include follow-up and implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action. Thus the Technical Committee meets on a monthly basis with the creditors in order to study development projects and programmes and together with our partners, hold economic and financial negotiations as needed.

Thanks to these institutional and functional reforms, the assistance provided by organizations in the United Nations system is directed towards the adjustment programme, the priority programme and the United Nations Programme, thereby strengthening the co-ordinating capacity of the Government in the priority areas.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

These institutional and organic measures and initiatives are backed up by major economic reforms to respond to the priority programme of modalities and objectives of the United Nations Programme of Action.

In the area of public finances, public expenditures representing 32 per cent of the gross national product in 1980-1981, amounted to only 21 per cent of the gross national product in 1985-1986. In 1987, despite the heavy burden of debt-servicing, which accounts for 40 per cent of budget income and almost 25 per cent of export earnings, the deficit is now only 1 per cent of the gross national product, and there has been a sharp drop in the commitments of the public authorities to the banking system and enterprises.

Senegal has also adopted new agricultural and industrial policies in order to stimulate production and growth.

The new agricultural policy is designed essentially to diversify agricultural output; to ensure food self-sufficiency; to ensure that the State is no longer involved in certain activities; to ensure the direct responsibility of the rural population and the peasants; to establish a credit bank to be managed by the peasants instead of the State; and to provide new impetus for production co-operatives. And there are several other measures, including the setting of remunerative prices for agricultural products.

The new industrial policy was instituted in 1986 and is intended to remedy the lack of dynamism and competitiveness in industry. The Government undertook to remove the State from this sector so as to promote private investment, which is essential to regrowth in the secondary sector. This industrial development strategy required corrective intervention mechanisms and techniques. To that end, the State established an inter-ministerial structure to take effective action in restructuring enterprises that were in difficulty.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

In order to ensure greater investment, the State organizes regular meetings with creditors by holding sectoral meetings and meetings of potential private investors.

Lastly, studies are now under way and measures have been taken to minimize the impact of structural adjustment on the social sector.

That, in brief, is a summary of a few aspects of the implementation of the programmes undertaken by Senegal. We solemnly reaffirm our will to persevere on this path of organized and planned adjustment of our economy. Nevertheless, and this is a very important point, these efforts have involved sacrifices on our part in the area of employment and the social sector in particular. Such sacrifices will prove viable for Senegal and for other countries undertaking such reforms only if there is active support and real commitment from the international community.

Of course, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have established special mechanisms for reform programmes in Africa. Donors have indeed carried out the eighth replenishment of the resources of the International Development Association (IDA) amounting to \$12 billion, and the World Bank has decided to raise to 45 per cent the IDA resources for investment in Africa south of the Sahara. The International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Food and Agricultural Organization have also committed themselves to specific programmes for the countries of Africa.

However important those efforts may be, they cannot conceal the even more important and major efforts that remain to be made. That is why Senegal ardently hopes that in the near future the response of the community of donors will deal more with official development aid, on the one hand, and, on the other, with an agreed approach to easing the external debt burden of Africa, whose conditions and modalities will have to be decided on in the context of an international conference.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

The struggle against drought, desertification and acid rain continues to mobilize us within the African regional context - in the Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development and the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference - so as to ensure food self-sufficiency in a manner in which the balance of the ecosystem will be respected and restored. On the occasion of the fourteenth anniversary of the Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, in his message of 11 September 1987, President Abdou Diouf, in his capacity as Chairman of that Organization, after expressing once again his thanks to the international community, solemnly stated that despite the perils of drought and desertification, the States members of the Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel were resolved to win what he called "the war against hunger and desertification".

The Head of State of Senegal, in speaking about the long-term prospects for action against hunger and accepting the Hunger Project "Africa Leadership" prize here in New York on 17 September 1987, appealed to the international community to stand side by side with the African States in a world front for economic peace in Africa.

The objective of such a front is to continue and increase action now under way to deal with the critical situation and nutritional needs and, above all, to establish an integrated strategy for carrying out lasting and definitive solutions to the problem of hunger. The initial responses to that appeal strengthen our conviction that this Assembly, which has already dealt with the concept of countries stricken by desertification, will indeed offer the support which this initiative deserves.

As important as economic recovery is, there is another aspect of building a world of progress, justice and peace, namely, the protection of human rights and the rights of peoples. Senegal, whose Government recognizes human rights as

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

fundamental for all mankind, has placed the individual at the very centre of its policy and its day-to-day preoccupations, continues to be involved in the exalted work of the international promotion of human rights. Human rights are an indivisible and interdependent whole. The same importance must be devoted to promoting and protecting all the rights of man - civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; individual rights or collective rights; the rights of the first generation, of the second generation, and even the third.

International co-operation thus has open to it a vast field in which to seek the necessary conditions to achieve human rights through an approach that embraces the social, economic and cultural heritages of peoples. This must necessarily involve a regional approach, as it is true that such action will also strengthen international co-operation in the area. Against this background, we are happy to welcome the entry into force, on 21 October 1986, of the African charter of the rights of the individual and of peoples, which indeed holds great promise. It is the decisive contribution of our Mother Africa to the universal endeavour of protecting and promoting human rights. We are also pleased that its monitoring group, the African commission on the rights of the individual and of peoples, has now been established with the election of its 11 members on 29 July 1987, and we trust that its work will indeed live up to the hopes of all those who hold justice dear.

While we welcome these measures taken by the Organization of African Unity to ensure true respect for human rights in Africa, we must recognize that much remains to be done, particularly in the southern-most part of the continent, specifically in South Africa, where the apartheid régime, that crime against mankind, continues to run rampant.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

That system of racism and institutionalized racial discrimination, with its permanent state of emergency, arbitrary detention, unjust sentences and arbitrary executions constitutes a serious challenge and threat to the authority and credibility of the United Nations. It is the most widespread and flagrant violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Illegally occupying the international territory of Namibia, the Pretoria régime continues to carry on with impunity its acts of aggression, destabilization and invasion against neighbouring African countries, thereby negating the principles and norms of modern international law.

In the face of such a situation, it is difficult to conceive of any peaceful solution apart from pressure on the Botha régime. It is difficult to conceive of measures other than the imposition of comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa, to try to provide the conditions necessary to ensure the initiation of honest negotiations, carried out in good faith, between the Pretoria authorities and the legitimate representatives of the liberation movements and patriotic forces of South Africa with a view to establishing a system based on equality, democracy and fraternity..

There was a glimmer of hope at the meeting held at Dakar from 9 to 12 July 1987 between representatives of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and a group of white Afrikaaners from South Africa who initiated a new approach designed to avoid any conflict situation that could become tragic in its dimensions. That new process of evolution towards a non-racial, democratic and egalitarian society does indeed inspire some hope of dispelling misunderstanding and fear.

Those who participated in the meeting at Dakar - people of all races, all political persuasions, all social positions - unanimously recognized that the establishment of a non-racial democracy in South Africa was both urgent and imperative.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

The recent international conference on children, repression and the law under the apartheid regime, which met at Harare only a few days ago and brought together representatives of the ANC, domestic anti-apartheid movements and representatives of more than 30 countries, and the first meeting of 800 national delegates of South African white groups against apartheid within the context of a conference entitled "Towards Democracy" were carried out in the same spirit as the Dakar meeting and extended its scope.

The advent of democracy in the southern part of our continent is indeed a real challenge to the United Nations. To take up this challenge, which is a blot on the millenium that is drawing to a close, the United Nations - which, in 1985, in a coming together of mind and heart, celebrated the fortieth anniversary of its Charter and, in 1986, commemorated the International Year of Peace and the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the International Covenants on Human Rights - must once again show that it is capable of mobilizing support for just causes that are in keeping with its purposes, principles and objectives.

By virtue of the powers vested in it under its historic responsibilities, the Security Council must take the necessary measures under Chapter VII of the Charter to dismantle as soon as possible the abominable system of apartheid, which is the source of all the evils from which the southern part of Africa is suffering.

Achieving peace also depends on improvement of the world situation as regards the maintenance of international peace and security. We can indeed be happy at the agreement, in principle, entered into by the United States and the Soviet Union on eliminating medium-range missiles from Europe. This is a contribution to disarmament, to security and to peace among the nations. We would express the hope that this process, now begun, will continue and that it will be extended to other kinds of weapons, to other countries and to other regions; that it will lead to

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

general and complete disarmament and to the strengthening of peace and international security; and that it will help to make available additional financial resources for aid to development.

On the question of the conflict between Chad and Libya and the question of Western Sahara, my country welcomes the promising initiatives that have been taken at the African level by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its ad hoc committee and also at the level of the United Nations by the Secretary-General and the current chairman of the OAU. We hope that such initiatives will yield positive results.

But, despite these few encouraging signs, the international political situation over the last year is still marked by the persistence of traditional hotbeds of tension and the intensification of blind violence in many cases.

The conflict in the Middle East, because of its complexity and the seriousness of the implications, is one of the most painful problems facing the international community and one for which a final solution must be found. Yet it is not recommendations or resolutions providing the framework for settlement of the conflict that are lacking. There is even a broad consensus in favour of a just and lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East based on the implementation of a global and balanced approach, taking duly into account the interests of all parties involved. This is a consensus, which today is supported by unanimity, on the recommendation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East. As the appropriate framework for a search for a just and lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East, the conference should be held as soon as possible under the auspices of the United Nations and with the full participation of all parties involved or interested, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and authentic representative of the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

The question of knowing what role such a negotiating forum should play and who the actors will be should not, in the view of Senegal, continue to block the efforts of the international community to convene it, if the political will to move ahead is indeed present in everybody. The Security Council must resolutely proceed with the preparatory phase of the international peace conference. The tireless efforts of the Secretary-General made throughout this year confirm that this is the only right path in the present circumstances that can lead to the restoring of trust and a dialogue, both of which are essential to a return to harmony and peace in a region that has given so much to civilization.

How can we fail to express once again our concern over the interminable war between Iran and Iraq? Recent developments in the conflict do indeed strengthen our belief that the United Nations, through the Security Council in particular, should bring its full authority to bear to limit the threat of a general outbreak and to bring about a cessation of the fighting and lead the two parties to have recourse to the means of peaceful settlement of their dispute.*

*Mr. Moumin (Comoros), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

Some months ago information was made available about an imminent complete withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, but this has not yet been confirmed in fact. On the contrary, the military situation in that country has worsened and the political situation seems to be deadlocked judging by the state of the negotiations in Geneva. It is high time for the resolutions adopted by this Organization during the last eight years to be taken into consideration so that the people of Afghanistan may finally exercise their right freely to determine their own future.

This aspiration to self-determination also inspires the people of Kampuchea, who are still living under foreign occupation despite the constantly renewed efforts of our Organization to bring back peace to that part of the world.

Under the far-sighted leadership of the President of the International Conference on Kampuchea, Mr. Leopold Gratz, the Ad Hoc Committee established by that Conference, over which my country has the honour of presiding, continues to seek ways and means of removing the obstacles to the application of the principles that were defined in July 1981 for a just, lasting and definitive settlement of all aspects of the problem of Kampuchea.

Senegal, for its part, reaffirms its support for the eight-point proposal of the provisional coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea and will continue to spare no effort to help the people of Kampuchea to regain its dignity. It is, more specifically, a question of the withdrawal of the foreign troops to enable the Kampuchean people to exercise in all freedom their right to self-determination, achieve reconciliation and buckle down to the tasks of reconstruction and development of a country devastated by war.

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

In Central America, the political settlement of conflicts, both internal and external, should be accompanied by regional guarantees of security and non-interference, protection of human rights and the establishment of democracy, with absolute respect for the sovereignty of States, as recommended by the Contadora Group, the Lima Support Group and the Guatemala agreement. My country welcomes the agreement entered into by countries in the region and assure those friendly countries of our support for its implementation.

The international community is faced with the phenomenon of international terrorism, which also constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. The struggle against international terrorism must be waged with courage and far-sightedness and in accordance with the principles set forth in the Charter of our Organization. Senegal will continue to spare no effort to make its contribution to the international community's efforts to put an end as quickly as possible to international terrorism.

This year once again the credibility of this universal Organization has been sorely tested. The political, economic and financial problems facing the human race as a whole constitute real threats to international peace and security. Our people are wondering what the future will be and they fix their hopes on us and our work. We must respond to their questions and expectations by genuine co-operation and international solidarity. We have the means to do this for, as the President of the Republic of Senegal said here when he was Acting Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU):

"Mankind has in the past given us too many examples of its ability to meet constant challenges for us to have any doubts that it will be able to overcome those that beset it today." (A/40/PV.42, p.15)

(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

Each and every one of us must show the political will necessary for our response to live up to the hopes placed in us. It is in that spirit that my country, whose candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council has been unanimously recommended and endorsed by the countries of our region and by the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and which will endeavour to merit the trust that Members would place in us by electing us; assures the Assembly that we will make the most positive contribution we can to ensuring the advent of a world of peace, progress and solidarity and the emergence of a planetary village where, in the shadow of the skyscrapers of Manhattan, taking the place of the baobab tree under which palavers take place, our dialogue will be able to solve all the problems facing the human race.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.