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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 30 September 1987, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. FLORIN

(German Democratic Republic)

- General debate [9]: (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Herrera Cabral (Dominican Republic)

Mr. Al-Shara (Syrian Arab Republic)

Mr. Mock (Austria)

Mr. Yan (Philippines)

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

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I remind representatives that the General Assembly adopted a decision prohibiting the practice of congratulating speakers after statements have been made. I ask all representatives to abide by that decision.

Mr. HERRERA CABRAL (Dominican Republic) (interpretation from Spanish): It is a great honour for me to participate in the forty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly.

First, Sir, I wish, on behalf of the Government and people of the Dominican Republic and on my own behalf, to congratulate you most warmly on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. That decision was made on the basis of your well-known personal and professional skills and experience in international affairs. These qualities will undoubtedly enable you to make a significant contribution to the success of our meetings.

I take this opportunity to extend a cordial greeting to your predecessor, Mr. Choudhury of Bangladesh, and thank him for the competent and authoritative way in which he carried out the duties of President at the last session.

On behalf of the Dominican Government, I also have pleasure in extending warm greetings to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and assuring him of our appreciation and gratitude for his praiseworthy and valiant efforts in pursuing the purposes of our Organization.

The maintenance of peace and respect for the principle of non-intervention are unalterable elements of the foreign policy of my country, as set forth in our fundamental law and supported by our practice in international relations. Negotiation and dialogue are for my country the ideal instruments for the

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achievement and maintenance of peace, both nationally and internationally. Without peace there can be no economic progress or social development.

Peace is not merely the absence of war or peace imposed by a superior force. Peace imposed by fear, conditional upon a balance of destructive power, is despicable and transitory. The fear of a nuclear cloud enveloping our planet prevents the full development of the human intelligence that would make possible the creation of conditions in which mankind could enjoy the material and spiritual benefits of this world. For this reason the Dominican Republic welcomes with hope the agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union that will make it possible to establish conditions for the elimination of medium-range nuclear missiles. We join the other speakers who have already applauded this step in the Assembly.

One basis for peace is humane treatment of and solidarity with immigrants, be they undocumented aliens, political refugees or fugitives from war zones. That is why the Dominican Republic is taking the opportunity offered by this Assembly to consider one of the most harmful practices in this respect: discrimination with regard to the mobility of factors of production. It is a little-known fact, but a fact none the less, that most of the countries represented here practise some kind of discrimination in their immigration policies.

Emigration from our countries is a consequence of the worst economic crisis that virtually the whole of America has suffered since the 1930s. Despair and hunger force many people to leave their countries, homes, families and friends in search of something better. Is it just and charitable to treat our brothers who

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set out on that painful odyssey so harshly and contemptuously? To do so is to undermine the foundations upon which the longed-for peace must be based.

The Dominican Republic is convinced that the basis of a fruitful peace is, among other things, the gradual elimination of the protectionist barriers that prevent the free flow of international trade. Those barriers favour certain monopolistic interests, both political and economic; they increase unemployment and inflation in the countries that take shelter behind this policy.

Protectionism, whether by raising tariff barriers or by imposing quotas, is a two-edged sword that harms producers and consumers equally, to the benefit of a minority. It is extremely difficult, not to say impossible, to quantify the effects of increased protectionism upon our economies. The predictable result, however, is that the path of protectionism leads to the world-wide contraction of international trade.

Protectionism may benefit some, but only in the short term for in the end it harms everyone, including the protectionists themselves. Free, vigorous world trade, unhampered by quotas, is indispensable to the well-being of the world economy. Every protectionist measure removes us further from that objective. We must, therefore, all move together towards a process of liberalization of world trade; but for that purpose, it is necessary that more countries accede to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Our position on the problem of foreign debt is well-defined. Our country is not in a position to honour the debt-servicing scheduled, particularly considering the precarious levels of our foreign exchange resources. What is needed, therefore, is a programme that will reconcile what the country should pay and what it can pay, always bearing in mind that economic growth and the subsistence of our people must not be sacrificed.

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With regard to our debt to commercial banks, we press for the concession of longer grace and repayment periods by the World Bank and the substantial reduction of the interest rates on that debt.

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As regards our bilateral debt, we firmly believe that for the achievement of bilateral negotiations it is not necessary for us to reach a prior agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In this regard we have publicly stated our intention to restructure our commitments with the Paris Club whether or not there exists a financing programme with the Fund. We share the view that the countries members of the Paris Club should urgently revise their restructuring policies in order to permit multilateral agreements with debtor countries.

On the multilateral debt, our country considers it absolutely necessary, precisely at this time of financial crisis, for international development banks and multilateral agencies to maintain a net positive flow of resources to our countries. Otherwise debt servicing to these institutions will become virtually impossible. What is required is the greatest possible flexibility on the part of international bodies as regards the repayment of the loans, their methods of procedure, credit policies and a greater supply of concessional resources.

Concerning South-South debt, my country hopes that the financial relations of payment and repayment of external debt with developing countries may be framed in terms of new patterns of compensation, bearing in mind the relative levels of development and the availability of reserves in each of our countries.

We must all make a determined effort to eradicate the inequalities brought about by social maladjustment which provoke international social agitators, who take a heroic stance in their actions but are no more than criminals.

On terrorism my country believes that at this forty-second session the General Assembly should unanimously adopt a resolution appealing to all Governments to set in motion the provisions of General Assembly resolution 40/61 of 1985. Any other course would be a waste of time. We cannot establish distinctions between social agitation and the legitimate struggle of oppressed peoples.

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Another threat to peace is the growing traffic in drugs, a far worse evil than nuclear clouds. We must therefore launch a publicity campaign under the auspices of this world Organization to ensure that, utilizing the most modern and sophisticated means of mass communication, we can inform mankind about the dangers represented by the consumption of and traffic in drugs. As repression has so far proved ineffectual, it would be better to work for a drop in consumption, which would hurt the drug traffic.

My country wishes to emphasize the grave danger to mankind of the spread of AIDS (acquired immune-deficiency syndrome) with its serious consequences. As was recently pointed out by the Holy Father Pope John Paul II, this is a "grave crisis". It has been shown that this illness is not only spreading throughout economically and culturally disadvantaged areas but is also increasing in civilized regions, where its advance has taken on alarming proportions.

My delegation proposes that the United Nations should foster research to find a remedy for this illness; that fellowships be created to help laboratories look into the origin and cause of the disease; and that a data bank be established for the exchange of information about it. This is a matter that is as important as, if not more important than, the other threats mentioned previously, such as nuclear weapons, external debt, protectionism, discrimination against immigrants and the drug traffic.

My delegation also believes that great importance attaches to the problem of the elderly. Many years have elapsed since the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session adopted its resolution 40/30 endorsing the International Plan of Action on Aging.

In view of the enormous magnitude and growing complexity of the question of aging, the Government of the Dominican Republic considers that the time has come

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for the United Nations to adopt a declaration on the rights of the aged and that the Governments of all countries, developed and developing, should lend their sponsorship to this matter so that this sector of the population, to which we shall all ultimately belong, may occupy its rightful place in the community and in society in general.

In our judgement it would also be beneficial to convene in 1992, the tenth anniversary of the Vienna Conference, a second world assembly on aging at which we would use the same kind of complementary measures employed so successfully at the International Conference on Population held in Mexico City in 1984 and at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women held in Nairobi in 1985.

With respect to the measures adopted by the Dominican Government to avert the economic crisis, I must say that these have been very appropriate.

In the fiscal area, the aim we have set for ourselves is that of significantly reducing our fiscal deficit until we make it less than 1 per cent of our gross domestic product. Bearing in mind that during the past year this deficit was in the order of 5 per cent of the gross national product, such a reduction of our deficit would imply a drastic reduction in the inefficiency of our economic system. To bring about this significant reduction in the deficit, we are applying important administrative and structural reforms in our economic policy.

Before reducing its expenses, the Dominican Government is introducing the reform of a fiscal system, designed to simplify our tax structure, to increase its elasticity and to rationalize our tariff system. What has been achieved so far this year indicates that the savings for the central Government were five times greater than for the same period last year. This has helped to bring about the

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duplication of capital expenditure and the reduction of deficits as programmed. The structural reforms include privatization of State sugar-cane lands by sale to the private sector so that the lands may be used for the development of agricultural and tourist projects.

Another structural reform is integration of the production and sale of electric power into the private sector. In the Dominican Republic, this public service has so far been supplied by a State monopoly in a very inefficient manner.

There would be little use in my country's applying an economic policy directed outside, increasing national savings and reorienting the role of Government with regard to the economy if there were not a supportive policy on the part of the industrialized countries with whom we conduct trade. From these industrial nations we require a renovation of the process of liberalization of international trade. We would request them to reduce their subsidies to exports since these are prejudicial to our people. The first world must avoid restrictions on its imports so that the exports of the third world will not suffer.

Some industrialized countries should promote a reduction in their real interest rates even if to do this they have to reduce their excessive budget deficits. Moreover, the International Bank could contribute by reducing the margins charged for its loans, especially for those countries that are going through an adjustment process.

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We could create amongst all of us defensive mechanisms that would enable us to face future increases in interest rates - for example, through the use of compensatory financing facilities by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). There is little sense in our having net flows towards the IMF or the World Bank when we could be obtaining from them greater resources than those which we are paying, and precisely when we most need such flows.

The industrialized countries could contribute new funds to the international organizations so that these, in turn, could be channelled to our countries. Latin America will need some \$20 billion annually in coming years. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development - the World Bank - and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) are being called upon to do their share, especially in the short term. These institutions are capable of expanding their co-financing operations and partial guarantees of private loans.

The first objective of my Government's global economic policy is to establish self-sustaining economic growth so as to continue expanding employment and per capita income for the population. In view of the growing external indebtedness, my authorities are responding and mobilizing as many material and human resources as possible for the promotion of economic growth and achieving a rate of real growth of approximately 11 per cent per annum during a large part of this year.

My Government's second objective is to face responsibly the problem of external debt. In so far as we are complying with the deadlines agreed to, we are requiring our creditors to accept that these be paid in the most feasible manner and without extraordinary sacrifices by the people.

Along with those objectives we are working to distribute income more equitably, but not simply by taking away from some to give to others; rather, by

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educating all to produce and create wealth. We recognize that the solution to our poverty is not to divide our wealth amongst more people but to increase that wealth so that it can be better distributed among all. Economic growth is the best means we have to do so, and in that way respond to the essential needs of our population.

To attain those objectives we are orienting our external economic policy, promoting exports, foreign investment and tourism, and requiring more efficient import substitution. To expand our external trade we are seeking a competitive and realistic exchange rate, and trying to avoid protectionist excesses to which we are so inclined.

With regard to the balance-of-payments problems, we are trying to remove the temptation to increase State intervention. Experience has taught us that the final result of such interventions tends to be a wasting of resources and a private sector which is more independent of the Government. In addition, we cannot demand that others be less protectionist if we are not prepared to move towards increasingly free world trade.

We are seeking to stimulate the repatriation of the flight of capital and provide a more secure profitability. We hope truly to reward persons who save so that they can effectively contribute their savings to national endeavours. We are encouraging savings and discouraging consumption, paying attractive interest to those who save and eliminating the subsidies that still exist in our banking system.

Further, we are stimulating the entry of foreign capital, especially if it does not imply debts. Accordingly, within a few weeks the Dominican authorities will begin to permit the conversion of a considerable part of our external debt into investments. This conversion will significantly reduce our debt and its servicing; it will contribute positively to our economic growth and generate more employment and income for our population.

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The Dominican Republic has applied for admission into the Lomé Group. Why Lomé? Because we have a reality before us: the need to rely on the support and solidarity of those industrialized nations which are members of the European Economic Community. The States members of that Community in the Lomé framework are encouraging autonomous and sustained development of the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific; they accord more favourable treatment than the most-favoured-nation treatment and the Generalized System of Preferences; and they implement technical and financial assistance for development in the form of subsidies and special hard and soft loans, among other things.

The Dominican Republic is seriously concerned at the situation prevailing in various parts of the world where existing tensions and conflicts are endangering peace and stability. Our country reaffirms the need to foster national reconciliation in countries with divided communities. Similarly, we urge respect for the right of peoples to self-determination and for the principle that no State has the right to intervene by force of arms or in any other manner in the internal affairs of another State.

On the other hand, we are concerned at the indifference of some States with regard to the implementation of resolutions adopted by overwhelming majorities in the General Assembly with a view to solving extremely important questions for world security. This apathy calls into question the viability of the United Nations as an organization and thwarts its commitment to maintain international peace and security; moreover, it undermines internationalism and threatens the solvency of the United Nations.

It is necessary to strengthen the mandate of the United Nations and, at the same time, avoid any initiative that may weaken its capacity for action and its role as the universal instrument of peace.

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Dominican Republic)

This Assembly has before it once again the same crises and conflicts about which it has debated for several sessions. This reflects the repetitive character of the Assembly's debates and the scanty progress achieved in eliminating tensions and problems affecting the international community. The perpetuation of many conflicts is due essentially to non-observance of the principles set forth in the Charter, lack of respect for the standards of conduct enshrined in international morality and law, and the absence of a determination by the parties concerned to find just and equitable solutions to the problems.

My Government reiterates the need for the immediate and complete withdrawal of foreign troops now in Afghanistan and urges all States to respect that country's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty. I express the firm hope that negotiations during the next round of talks will bring about a satisfactory resolution to end this long conflict, thus providing the Afghan people with an opportunity freely to exercise its right to self-determination in a genuine way - because that invasion of Afghanistan is a potential threat to peace. We applaud the mediation efforts of the Secretary-General and once again express support for United Nations resolutions urging a peaceful solution.

There are today countries facing serious crises owing to external causes and pressures, such as Kampuchea and Chad. We support, to the extent of our possibilities, every effort being made to establish freedom and democracy in those regions.

The Dominican Republic has maintained a traditional position of support for Argentina's legitimate claims over the Malvinas Islands; consistent with that traditional position we urge Argentina and the United Kingdom to make every effort to initiate the kind of talks called for in General Assembly resolution 40/21.

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Dominican Republic)

Peace on the Korean peninsula is a matter of the greatest interest to the international community. However, the objective of unification of the communities of South and North Korea must not be brought about by force but by peaceful means, through dialogue and negotiation between the two parties, which should be resumed without pre-conditions or extraneous requirements.

My delegation considers that a concrete way to resume the dialogue would be through conversations between the Foreign Ministers of the two Koreas in conformity with the initiative formulated a few months ago by the Republic of South Korea.

May I now refer to Haiti, the nation with which we share our island of Hispaniola, a country with which we are united by so many links that it would take a long time to enumerate them. The Haitian people and Government face an enormous task in achieving the aims they have set for themselves: freedom, democracy, work for all, and the creation of conditions that enable that people to enjoy its inalienable right to education and health. Only through exercise of their human rights will the inhabitants of Haiti be able to enjoy the fruits of this world, which its Creator has put here for us all. In this respect, the Haitian people needs the help of all of us, which does not imply foreign interference in its affairs. We support the statement made here along those lines by President Namphy.

The Dominican Republic, for its part, is increasing its bilateral contacts with that sister republic to create a modern system between the two countries involving free bilateral trade; the mutual combating of deforestation; and the exchange of journalists, teachers and students so that we may each learn about the realities, needs and pains of the other and so that, for a given length of time, professionals from one country may practise in the other without discrimination.

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Dominican Republic)

The Dominican Republic supports the efforts being exerted to bring an end to the fratricidal conflict in Central America. With hope, we join in the agreement for peace recently signed by five Central American Presidents in Guatemala. That agreement should be encouraged in so far as it constitutes the basis upon which a commitment may be forged to establish democracy, ideological pluralism, freedom and respect in that long-suffering region of our hemisphere. We therefore unreservedly support the appeal made here recently by the President of Costa Rica, Mr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, for concord to prevail in Central America.

The Dominican Republic supports all efforts to bring an end to the long war between Iraq and Iran. In the light of the latest developments in the Persian Gulf, there arises an ominous question as to the world's future: are we moving towards world conflict and reaching the point of no return? We hope that the desire for peace that has been shown by the Great Powers may prevail in those two nations and in their religious feelings.

A constant feature of my country's foreign policy is our deep concern about the Middle East. Ours is a nation of immigrants, and our population includes people of both Arabic and Jewish origin, all of whom are contributing, in an extraordinary fashion, to the development of our country, in a true model of human coexistence. Why should that not be the case in the countries from which those Jewish and Arabic immigrants have come?

My country feels that the only way to achieve peace in the Middle East is through dialogue between the parties to the conflict based on the provisions of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The Dominican Republic maintains its position of unwavering friendship towards the peoples of that region. We do not believe that friendship with one of the countries of the region should result in discrimination against others. Such friendship should not be

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criticized; no country should be criticized for being on friendly terms with either of the parties to the conflict, as sometimes happens when a country helps one of them.

In conclusion, I have not dealt with all of the important items on our agenda. I come from a small country, but one that has the good fortune to have a great President, Mr. Joaquín Balaguer, whose modern conception of history enables him to be an insightful observer of the world scene. Thus we feel solidarity with all the peoples represented here who bear the burden of many problems like ours. For that reason, my country will be represented wherever there are appeals for solidarity, respect, and efforts for peace. We wish to live in a world in which nations large and small may have equal opportunities for the benefit of their citizens, and the right to enjoy the resources we should all enjoy without discrimination.

Our country has demonstrated that we have a stable democracy. In my country there are no political prisoners and no discrimination of any kind, religious or cultural. For this reason, our arms are open to all. Because of our history and our language, we are a country of the Caribbean and also a country of Latin America. That is why we wish to serve as a bridge between the two Americas so that peace may prevail in our continent.

Mr. AL-SHARA (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic):
Your election to the presidency of this session of the General Assembly is indeed gratifying, Sir, especially since you represent a country linked to Syria by close ties of friendship and co-operation.

We were greatly satisfied by the success of the outgoing President in conducting the work of the forty-first session. We should like to express our appreciation to him, and to wish him and his friendly country continued success.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

I take this opportunity to put on record our appreciation of the strenuous efforts exerted by the Secretary-General and his assistants to strengthen the role of the United Nations in safeguarding and promoting international peace and security and creating better conditions for co-operation among States.

The world is now moving towards an era of co-operation and détente, following a period of tension and confrontation, and a wave of optimism therefore prevails on the international scene. While we join the international community in welcoming this trend, we sincerely hope that it will lead to the achievement of just solutions to issues afflicting some of the world's peoples, foremost among which are the usurpation of peoples' rights, racial discrimination, occupation, foreign hegemony, economic exploitation and the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries.

The principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, the aim of which is to create a human society in which justice and security reign, ushered in new hope for a better future for mankind. It has been impossible, however, totally to fulfil those noble principles owing to the escalation of aggressive tendencies, the use or the threat of the use of force in international relations and the suppression of the will of peoples with a view to dominating them and their potential.

In the international domain, the arms race poses the gravest dangers to humanity. Foremost among those dangers is the possibility of a nuclear world war, whether triggered by accident or by a sense of superiority. We therefore regard every effort to reduce nuclear weapons with a view to eliminating them completely as an important factor that would help to strengthen international peace and security.

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Accordingly, we support the agreement in principle between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America with respect to the intermediate-range nuclear forces and tactical weapons. We consider it to be a positive step that could have considerable significance if it were followed by wider steps that would eliminate strategic nuclear weapons and lead to comprehensive and complete nuclear disarmament.

Israel's possession and development of nuclear weapons and its participation in the "star wars" programme pose a direct and constant threat to security in the Middle East and Mediterranean regions. It has become imperative to declare the Middle East region a nuclear-free zone in order to ensure peace and security there. The obstacle to the attainment of that objective is Israel's constant refusal to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to place its nuclear installations under international control, as well as its rejection of the system of international safeguards.

The Syrian Arab Republic is well aware of the connection between disarmament and development. It is axiomatic that the world cannot continue to incur the enormous costs of the arms race while simultaneously investing, in an adequate manner, the necessary funds in programmes of economic and social development. Therefore, my country would support any agreement by the international community to embark on an ambitious disarmament programme that would release sufficient funds for investment in programmes of economic and social development in the world, particularly in the developing countries. Furthermore, Syria shares the conviction that the United Nations has a role to play in promoting disarmament and development, and hence in creating a general feeling of collective security.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

We support the initiative of the group of socialist countries calling for the establishment of a comprehensive system of international security. Such a system would be based on strengthening the role of the United Nations in the adoption of practical measures that would guarantee compliance with the provisions of the Charter and ensure their implementation. That is essential to respect for the sovereignty of States, their national independence and their territorial integrity and to the non-use of force in relations among States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the right of all peoples to self-determination, the elimination of colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, apartheid and foreign occupation and domination.

The Arab-Israeli conflict remains one of the most explosive regional conflicts and the farthest away from a just and lasting solution, despite the overall favourable international climate and the world-wide support for the convening of the International Conference under the auspices of the United Nations. That should not seem strange, since other regional conflicts, regardless of their intensity and destructiveness, can come to an end and just, realistic solutions can be found to them so long as neither of the parties claims to have God-given territories and rights - as is alleged by Israel.

By retaining the occupied Arab territories and annexing some of them, and by building settlements there, Israel in no way adheres to the principles of international law or of the United Nations Charter. Instead, it acts - as is evident from the overall attitudes of its successive leaders - on the basis of metaphysical convictions and legendary tales backed by extremely reactionary and fundamentalist concepts.

It is naive to believe that the often-spoken-of differences among the rulers in Tel Aviv are differences between those who accept giving up the occupied Arab

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territories and those who refuse to do so. Rather, the difference is between, on the one hand, those who want to extract a formal Arab signature on a document relinquishing most of the occupied Arab territories as well as usurped Palestinian rights and, on the other, those who do not even admit the existence of occupied Arab lands and usurped Palestinian rights. In fact, there is no substantial difference among all the rulers in Tel Aviv in regard to maintaining Israel's voracious appetite for devouring Arab lands and building more settlements thereon. The ultimate objective of the rulers in Tel Aviv is to establish Greater Israel and impose its undisputed hegemony over the countries and peoples of the region.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

It is our conviction that the Israeli attitude to the international conference on peace in the Middle East should be interpreted only in the light of those facts. We ought to proceed sincerely from an objective assessment of Israeli intentions and not from illusions or the attempts of some to justify their support for or dealings with Israel. The international community can thus easily realize why Israel's rulers reject a genuine international conference and why the Israeli faction that accepts the idea of an international conference stipulates that it should be a mere umbrella for direct bilateral negotiations and have no authority whatsoever. The Tel Aviv rulers are all agreed on not establishing a genuine, just peace in the region.

Israel's rejection of peace based on justice is inevitably a source of constant concern to the entire world, no matter how calm conditions may appear on the surface. It must also be a source of true concern also to the Israelis themselves, because violence generates violence, and Israel's extremist doctrine in fighting and attempting to humiliate the Arabs will in turn give rise to more violence and extremism. Israel's bitter experience during its invasion of Lebanon still lives in the memory and will remain an irksome nightmare for the Israelis for many years to come.

Israel will never enjoy peace in our region, irrespective of its military might, so long as it continues to occupy any part of the Arab lands. Israel cannot for ever be protected by the unlimited support of the United States and the strategic alliance between them. Israel's imposition of its peace terms on Egypt did not and will not achieve true peace between Israel and the brother people of Egypt, no matter how hard the rulers in Cairo and Tel Aviv try to obscure these facts and mislead world public opinion.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

Syria believes that the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace depends on the total withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Arab territories and on guarantees of the national rights of the Palestinian people within the framework of an international peace conference, to be held under United Nations auspices, provided that the conference is genuine and has authority.

The economic and social institutions of our sister country, Lebanon, have suffered grave disruptions. The people of Lebanon have suffered greatly from a devastating civil war and the brutal Israeli invasion, both of which brought tremendous destruction of property, acts of terrorism and the forcible evacuation of citizens.

There is no question but that many have lost confidence in the Lebanese régime as a result of the assassination last June of Lebanon's Prime Minister, Rashid Karami, a man who stood for dialogue and national reconciliation, and the failure so far to find the killers and those who backed them. It is regrettable that the Lebanese régime has not tried, as it should have, to benefit from Syria's great help and immense sacrifices, whose purpose was to save Lebanon from fighting and chaos and place it again on the path of dialogue and national reconciliation. Nevertheless, Syria - which is bound to Lebanon by family ties, a shared destiny, security, history and common interests - will spare neither toil nor sacrifice to assist our Lebanese brothers in their effort to emerge from this dark tunnel. Moreover, Syria will continue to support the heroic Lebanese resistance until the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon and the liberation of the last inch of Lebanese territory.

The tense situation in the Gulf region is a cause of grave concern, particularly in the light of the enormous concentration of foreign military fleets. Of particular note is the flocking of the military vessels of Western

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countries, one after the other, in the wake of the arrival of the United States fleet, after the majority of their Governments had initially voiced reservations about sending them.

The Syrian people in particular, and the Arab people in general, have the right to ask whether those huge concentrations of vessels are intended to ensure freedom of international navigation in the waters of the Gulf or are there to secure military bases in the region and restore the policy of spheres of influence. Is the purpose of those military concentrations in the Gulf region to prevent the expansion of the war and limit its damage, or is it to embroil the other countries of the region in order to deplete all their resources and distract them from their essential national role of liberating the occupied Arab territories and recovering the usurped rights of the Palestinian Arab people?

While posing those legitimate questions, we reaffirm our support for freedom of international navigation for all in the waters of the Gulf. We reaffirm our denunciation of attempts to expand the war and involve other countries in it and our belief in the importance of good-neighbourly relations and understanding between the Arab States of the Gulf and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as our demand that all foreign military fleets be withdrawn from the region.

We all know that in recent years the international community has devoted a major part of its attention to the phenomenon of terrorism. I have previously stated from this rostrum our views on this subject. In our statement at the last session of the General Assembly we set out our views on terrorism and the distinction between terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples for freedom. We also exposed the deliberate attempts to confuse terrorist acts - which are totally rejected and condemned - and the struggle of peoples against foreign occupation, colonialism and racism. We said also that the international community is as much the victim of State terrorism as it is of terrorism by individuals.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

We have called upon the international community through the United Nations to engage in a joint effort to set rules and norms by which to draw a distinction between terrorist acts and the legitimate struggle of peoples for national liberation as provided for in the United Nations Charter and in numerous General Assembly resolutions. Accordingly, we have proposed the convening of an international conference to define terrorism and to differentiate it from the struggle of peoples for national liberation. We appreciate the positive attitude to that initiative adopted by regional and international bodies such as the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

We are pleased to note that the General Assembly has adopted the Arab position submitted by Syria for the inclusion of a new item on the agenda of this year's session of the Assembly with regard to the convening of an international conference to define terrorism and to set norms and standards to distinguish between terrorism and the struggle of peoples for national liberation. My delegation would be pleased to co-operate with other delegations in preparing a draft resolution on this subject for submission to the General Assembly for debate and adoption.

The Group of Non-Aligned Countries, to which my country belongs, was established at the very outset on the concept of persistent work to ensure respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and to observe the application of those principles in dealings among States. On several occasions the Group exerted a constructive effort that had a positive impact on the international scene. We should like, therefore, to express our firm support of the Non-Aligned Movement and of its activities. We fervently call upon all States in the various groups to extend support and encouragement to the Movement, since it has proved on several occasions that it is a positive factor of benefit to the international community as a whole.

Southern Africa still suffers from a tragic colonial situation due to the continued occupation of Namibia by the Pretoria régime in violation of United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which includes the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia. Also, the Pretoria régime continues to carry out acts of oppression, persecution and killing, and to impose the apartheid régime on the majority of the inhabitants of southern Africa.

We should strongly condemn the close collaboration between the régimes of Pretoria and Tel Aviv, which is designed primarily to suppress the will of the

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

Arabs and the Africans and to undermine the aspirations of their peoples. Those two racist régimes should be isolated in the international arena, and an end must be put to their racist and expansionist policies.

The international community is duty bound to confront the challenges of the Pretoria régime. Likewise, the Security Council must adopt a resolution imposing on that régime the mandatory and comprehensive sanctions provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter.

In this context we laud the Organization of African Unity and its resolutions and decisions adopted at its successive conferences, the latest of which are the resolutions and the declaration of the twenty-eighth Summit Conference of the Organization of African Unity, held in Addis Ababa, which reaffirmed the practical measures to be taken by States in various fields in order to isolate and eventually eliminate the apartheid régime.

The question of Cyprus remains a source of concern to the Mediterranean countries. Any solution to this problem should be based on the implementation of all relevant United Nations resolutions so as to safeguard the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus. We welcome the idea of convening an international conference on this subject under the auspices of the United Nations.

We support the efforts of the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea to reunite the Korean peninsula by peaceful means and to achieve the withdrawal of foreign troops from South Korea. We also support its call to transform the Korean peninsula into a zone of peace free from military bases and nuclear weapons.

With respect to Afghanistan, we support the independence, sovereignty and non-alignment of that friendly country. We hope that the efforts exerted to solve

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

the difficulties existing between Afghanistan and its neighbours, to which we are linked with close historical ties, will be successful. Likewise, we welcome the cease-fire declared by the Afghan Government, as well as its initiative to achieve national reconciliation. We also commend the praiseworthy efforts of the representative of the Secretary-General with respect to the Afghan question, and we hope to see a quick solution to the problem.

We express our grave concern over the external pressures exerted upon Nicaragua and the interference in its domestic affairs. We regard as positive the measures agreed upon by the States of Central America in the capital of Guatemala on 7 August 1987 concerning the establishment of a firm and durable peace in Central America, measures which could contribute to enhancing the efforts of the States of the region to safeguard their independence and sovereignty. On this occasion, we commend the efforts exerted in this regard by the Contadora Group and the Latin American Support Group.

The United Nations General Assembly exerted considerable effort in 1974 with respect to the adoption of a resolution on the establishment of the new international economic order. That order sets forth the structural changes as a policy based primarily on the concept of interdependence among the peoples of the world, rich and poor, to realize international security and global welfare. However, all of us know that this new international economic order has not been implemented because of the lack of political will on the part of most of the developed countries. Recommendations were adopted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development aimed at achieving some structural changes in the system of international economic relations, in general, and in trade and financial relations, in particular. Those recommendations, however, were not given due attention by the group of rich countries, while other recommendations that were translated into resolutions have not been implemented.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

The main cause of this painful state of affairs in international economic relations lies in the fact that the group of rich countries, while advocating the concept of interdependence among all nations, in practice do not act upon it. Their primary concern is rather to realize the maximum and most expedient profits, which is the extreme opposite of the concept of interdependence among peoples.

It is strange that this policy, characterized by greed and short-sightedness, often backfires against the interests of the group of rich countries themselves, sometimes leading to controversies, protectionist measures and trade wars among them. We have already seen this take place on many occasions. The major losers in this unjust situation, however, are the developing countries, which still suffer from the deterioration of the prices of their raw materials and from the enormous burden they shoulder due to their international indebtedness, as well as from the protectionist measures imposed by the developed countries on their exports.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab
Republic)

Sufficient proof of this grave imbalance in current international economic relations is the fact that the developed countries control the fixing of prices of raw materials produced by the developing countries according to their own interests. At the same time, they are free to fix the prices of their manufactured goods according to their own interests too. As a result, unequal and unfair trade exchange relations ensue, to the detriment of the developing countries.

The peoples of the world always look to the United Nations full of hope that the international Organization will meet its commitment towards issues of justice, peace and development. The United Nations role is highly significant and will have a profound effect if efforts are directed to the achievement of objective, non-selective solutions for chronic conflicts, foremost among which is the Arab-Israeli conflict, which poses a continuous and far-reaching threat to peace.

Syria affirms its continued commitment to support and promote the role of the United Nations as a collective world instrument for fulfilment of the hopes pinned on it.

Mr. MOCK (Austria): It is with great pleasure that I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of this session of the General Assembly. It is an expression of esteem for your country. We wish you luck and success in carrying out your important task.

I also wish to convey my sincere thanks to your predecessor, Mr. Humayum Rasheed Choudhury, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, for the leadership that he showed on so many occasions during the forty-first session of the General Assembly.

Let me, further, pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, for his untiring efforts to promote peace and international

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

co-operation. We thank him for his dedicated work to improve the effectiveness of our Organization.

In the Charter of the United Nations our solemn obligation "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom" is enshrined as a matter of utmost importance. Thus, already in its preamble, the United Nations Charter reflects mankind's basic aspiration for personal liberty and economic prosperity, safeguarded by a network of social security.

One of the most important tasks with which the international community is confronted is the elaboration of concepts of disarmament that are both ambitious and realistic. Multilateral disarmament negotiations are a necessary complement to the negotiations between the most powerful States.

Assessment of the result of the recent International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development might vary from State to State. Austria agrees with the conclusion reached by the Conference that disarmament and development are among the priority concerns of the international community and are pillars on which enduring international peace and security must be built.

The recent agreement in principle reached by the Foreign Ministers of the United States and the Soviet Union on the complete elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces augurs well not only for the relations between East and West but for the entire world community.

We welcome this agreement as a first step in the right direction. If it is to lead to more stability, it will have to be followed by substantial reductions in conventional armaments and by the total elimination of chemical weapons. We also regard the early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty as a vital measure to inhibit the further vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

A few days ago the fourth negotiating session of the follow-up meeting to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) was opened in Vienna. The Conference has thus entered the decisive stage.

The Conference must now transform the more than 150 proposals into a concluding document which contributes to the full implementation of the Helsinki commitments and serves as a blueprint for a renewed and genuine European détente policy.

We expect substantive progress in removing the barriers which, contrary to the Final Act of Helsinki, still inhibit contacts, communication and the free flow of information between the people of East and West. Only when people in all participating States enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, only if they can come together and communicate freely, will we have achieved our goal: a genuine and lasting European peace order.

In spite of positive tendencies in some important areas of international co-operation, multiple crises and armed conflicts remain unsolved.

The war between Iraq and Iran has caused immense suffering. Yet the fighting goes on unabated in defiance of numerous calls to end hostilities. The unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) expresses clearly the demand of the world community for an immediate cease-fire. Austria fully associates itself with that resolution. The efforts of the Secretary-General to bring about a just and honourable end to this war deserve our full support. The Austrian Government considers his role in this regard to be of particular relevance. We join those who have called on both parties to show the greatest flexibility in the search for a negotiated solution of the conflict.

The situation in the Middle East continues to pose one of the most serious threats to global peace and security. We note with satisfaction that the idea of convening an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

of the United Nations is gaining increased international support. The proposal to hold such a conference has been consistently supported by Austria from the beginning. In view of this broadening support, the convening of such a conference should not be further delayed.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

We consider the following elements essential to a solution of the Middle East conflict:

Observance of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which still provide the most widely accepted basis for a solution; withdrawal from occupied territories; respect for the right of all States to exist within secure and internationally recognized boundaries; and recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people and participation by its representative, the PLO, in the entire negotiating process.

We remain deeply concerned about the continuing occupation of Afghanistan and the violation of its sovereignty. The tremendous suffering of the Afghan population, whether inside the country or in refugee camps, must not be forgotten. We have taken note of certain steps of the recent policy of national reconciliation, as well as the invitation of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Ermacora, on the question of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Afghanistan. These first signs should be followed by more decisive measures leading to a full and free exercise of the right to self-determination of the Afghan people as a whole.

The foreign occupation of Kampuchea is also a cause for continuous and serious concern for my country. Recently a number of diplomatic moves have been undertaken with a view to breaking the present deadlock. Austria has followed these developments with keen interest. We will carefully examine all ideas and proposals aimed at promoting a peaceful solution with a view to identifying possible Austrian contributions.

I sincerely hope that a negotiated political settlement, which should be based on the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the International Conference on Kampuchea and which has to be acceptable to all sides, can be reached and that the suffering of the Kampuchean people can come, at long last, to an end.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Austria calls upon all parties concerned to demonstrate the necessary political will to overcome remaining obstacles in order to engage in a genuine process of negotiation.

Central America has been a hotbed of tension for a number of years. We welcome the signing of the Arias Plan by five Central American countries as a useful step towards peace and stability in this region. Austria supports this regional plan for peace and democracy, based on respect for human rights, internal political dialogue, national reconciliation and non-intervention. Only pluralistic democratic societies closely co-operating in the spirit of good-neighbourliness can successfully address the underlying social and economic problems of the region. There is an historic chance for the nations of Central America. This chance must be seized.

Austria remains fully committed to the cause of freedom and dignity for the people of southern Africa. Austria strongly rejects and firmly condemns apartheid, a policy that negates the very foundation of civilization: dignity of man. We are convinced that only the eradication of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic, united and non-racist society, based on the free exercise of universal suffrage, can lead to a peaceful solution of the deeply rooted problems of South Africa and bring peace to the whole region. This means, of course, also the realization of independence for Namibia on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

Austria started to contribute actively to the aims of the United Nations immediately after being admitted as a Member State in 1955. In his first statement before this Organization, the then Austrian Foreign Minister, Leopold Figl, stated that:

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Neutrality would keep us free from military alliances and that intensive co-operation in the framework of the international community of nations, with all means at our disposal, would contribute to maintain international peace.

In practice these guiding principles represent the corner-stone of our permanent neutrality and at the same time the expression of our active participation in international co-operation based on the principles of the United Nations Charter.

One of the most respected applications of these principles are the peace-keeping operations. Peace-keeping operations have proved to be an effective instrument for the stabilization of dangerous conflicts, a service to which Austria contributes in the interest of the international community as a whole. Since 1964 well over 20,000 Austrian soldiers have served in United Nations peace-keeping operations. At present more than 850 Austrian soldiers are serving on the Golan Heights, in Cyprus and at various locations in the Middle East. I am pleased to be able to inform the General Assembly that the Austrian Government has only recently decided to respond favourably to a request by the Secretary-General to increase its contingent in the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) by another 100 soldiers at the end of October.

Troop contributors to UNFICYP are bearing a heavy and disproportionate financial burden. I hope very much that the proposal of the Secretary-General for a partial solution of this problem, namely the financing of UNFICYP through assessed contributions, will be accepted by the members of the Security Council at the earliest possible date. Pending such a decision, we appeal to all Member States to increase their voluntary contributions to this important peace-keeping operation.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Developing and strengthening contacts and co-operation with all its neighbouring countries regardless of their political system is a central element of Austria's foreign policy. Close ties, not only between Governments but also between individuals, are the best guarantee for fruitful and stable relations. Austria therefore continues to diversify co-operation with all neighbouring countries regardless of their political system.

Allow me to add a few words on our relations with Italy. The good and friendly relations with this important neighbouring country were developed even further in recent years. This has been fully confirmed to me at an unofficial meeting by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs Giulio Andreotti in June 1987. I should like to stress that in this context the question of South Tyrol is of special importance.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

In 1960 and 1961 the General Assembly adopted resolutions which, in 1969, led to an agreement between Austria and Italy on a new framework for the autonomy of South Tyrol. Notwithstanding the important progress realized since then, some essential provisions of the autonomy measures have yet to be implemented. This holds true especially for a centerpiece of autonomy, the use of the German language in court as well as before police and administrative authorities. We regret that, in spite of a basic agreement reached in May 1983 between representatives of the Italian Government and the German-speaking minority, and in spite of a political compromise arrived at in September 1986, this very important provision has not yet been enacted.

Austria shares the ongoing and justified concern of the population of South Tyrol. We believe that any further delay in the implementation of the Autonomy Statute agreed on in 1969 carries the danger of increasing radical tendencies and ethnic tensions in South Tyrol, as has been reflected in recent election results. We hold that it is high time for a speedy completion of the implementation of the Autonomy Statute in order fully to implement the rights of the ethnic minorities and to guarantee that the ethnic groups in South Tyrol live together peacefully.

The world economic situation in recent years has been characterized by a continuing debt burden for many developing countries, increasing protectionist tendencies, a decline in real-commodity prices and slow growth in general, although a number of countries have achieved remarkable performances. On the other hand, several of the poorest countries suffered further losses in their per capita income.

The present weak international economic environment hardly promotes innovative and liberal tendencies, but, rather, protectionism and structural immobility. Multilateral economic co-operation is thus endangered by bilateralist forces or unilateral action.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Last year a successful special session of the General Assembly devoted to the economic crisis in Africa, the first ever to focus on problems of a whole continent, adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. Determined efforts to speed up that Programme are essential to alleviate the economic plight of many sub-Saharan African countries.

Even after the encouraging results of the special session on Africa and the successful launching of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) last year, there was still widespread doubt and scepticism about the outcome of the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). However, the adoption by consensus of the final act of UNCTAD VII within an atmosphere of pragmatism and constructive co-operation heralds a major achievement.

Economic progress is not an end in itself. It has to serve the individual. Improving the quality of life and allowing man the pursuit of happiness is not only a matter of growth rates. It is equally important to solve our pressing environmental problems.

Serious incidents and shocking research results have induced growing public awareness that the ongoing degradation of our environment affects all nations. International co-operation to counteract this danger is urgently called for.

The depletion of the ozone layer poses an increasing threat of global climatic change. Austria has taken a leading role in endeavours to achieve international countermeasures in this regard. The early entry into force of the Vienna convention on the protection of the ozone layer and the further development of international environmental law must be pursued with high priority.

Nuclear radiation, like other forms of pollution, does not stop at national borders. Therefore, Austria firmly believes that the legitimate interests of countries that could be affected by the transboundary effects of the use of nuclear

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

energy have to be taken into account. Accordingly, Austria attributes particular importance to the conclusion of bilateral agreements with all its neighbouring countries in this field. We recognize the achievements in the process of multilateral codification realized within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Austria none the less advocates the elaboration of additional international rules in such areas as State liability and binding international safety standards for nuclear-power plants.

Some environmental problems, like long-range transboundary air pollution, can be successfully addressed on a regional level. For my region, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has become the most important framework in that respect. Austria, together with countries from different regional groups, has submitted proposals in the context of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) with a view to enlarging and deepening the relevant activities of the ECE.

My country highly values the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, under the chairmanship of Norway's Prime Minister Brundtland. It is indeed impossible to separate environmental aspects from economic and development issues. We agree with the Commission's conclusion that, if we do not succeed in embarking on a policy of sustainable development, we do in fact erode the basis for our common future. The tragic effects of deforestation prove that once nature's balance is distorted the vicious circle can be broken only with difficulty.

Development strategies - and, indeed, any economic policy - have to take duly into account all possible environmental implications. The ecological dimensions have to be considered on an equal footing with strictly economic factors, from the formulation to the evaluation of every single project.

The Charter of the United Nations contains the obligation of all States to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Social policy must be among our central concerns during the coming decades. Clear policy guidelines will have to be established and the solution of economic and development problems seen in close relation to social policies and social welfare. Social progress, the advancement of women, questions relating to youth, the elderly or disabled, control of crime and drug abuse are among the most urgent topics in the area of social concern.

The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in June at Vienna constitutes a very promising start to combating drug abuse and solving related social and economic questions in a constructive and coherent manner. A well-co-ordinated follow-up on national and international levels, as well as within the United Nations system, is of utmost importance.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

The Interregional Consultations on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and programmes identified priorities for strengthening co-operation in social welfare identified procedures to facilitate international co-operation in the implementation of norms in this area. We welcome the growing awareness of global dimensions in the international community.

Recognizing the increasing importance of strengthening and consolidating the capacity of the United Nations in the social field, the Secretary-General has taken measures to concentrate all major activities on questions of broad social policy social development, including the co-ordination of illicit-drug control programmes, within the United Nations offices in Vienna. We warmly welcome this decision in the light of the recommendations of the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations.

In his annual report on the work of the Organization the Secretary-General has identified a "growing commonality factor in international affairs". (A/42/1, p.2)

My colleague the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, Genscher, has spoken in this context of "an age of global domestic policy". (A/42/PV.10, p.47)

The recognition of the increased level of interdependence in all fields calls for an improved capacity of the Organization to assure an efficient collective response to emerging world issues.

A reform process is thus not only necessary to improve the organizational response and global management capacity, but also to restore full confidence in the United Nations.

The reform process has started; the Secretary-General has taken the first steps. But reform is an ongoing and continuous process, for which the Member

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

States and the leadership of the individual organizations of the United Nations system are equally responsible.

We are encouraged by the fact that so far we have been able to proceed on the basis of consensus, a path that should be vigorously pursued in the interests of the Organization.

We welcome in this regard the proposal of the Secretary-General to revitalize the Economic and Social Council, to enable it to fulfil its original mandate. The proposal that the "Council might become, in practice, a Council of Ministers for Economic and Social Affairs" with authority to give "greater strength and coherence to the system as a whole" (A/42/1, p.15) is of great validity. We believe, however, that adequate organizational arrangements and preparations will have to be made to guarantee the maximum effectiveness of such high level meetings.

Austria equally welcomes contributions to the reform process from the outside. In this regard, the recent study by a panel of eminent personalities on United Nations reform, sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the United Nations Association of the United States, deserves our full attention. That and similar research work testify to the general growing interest and commitment to a strong United Nations.

Two years ago, in the context of International Youth Year, Austria launched an initiative to promote youth employment. We called it "HOPE '87". Austria, together with the United Nations, organized a world-wide competition of more than 500 original employment projects run by young people. During this session of the Assembly my country will present an exhibition and a film about this initiative and the intended follow-up. We very much count on the continued support of Members for the ideas and aims of this initiative, which have already given new hope to many young people from all over the world.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Hope should not only be given to youth, but to all those people suffering from violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this regard, over the last 40 years the United Nations has developed an impressive body of legal instruments. However, negative phenomena such as arbitrary executions, torture, the denial of fundamental rights, racism and intolerance still prevail in many parts of the world.

Let us intensify our co-operation to ensure that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are universally guaranteed and respected. We should support, in particular, all efforts to strengthen the implementation machinery of the numerous international instruments that already exist in the field of human rights. Only on the basis of the conviction that human rights are of truly universal concern will we be able to fulfil our duties in this regard, duties which have the individual human being, his rights and his dignity, at their very heart.

The resolution of regional conflicts, the strengthening of international partnership, the reform of international institutions and the preservation of the environment all seem to have one particular element in common: the need for a comprehensive legal framework. The development of this framework could not have been possible without the United Nations. We must all continue to contribute actively to endeavours to find solutions based on international law for the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Among these challenges we find a particularly odious phenomenon: international terrorism. There can be no exculpation whatsoever for those who endanger and destroy human lives, irrespective of their motives. The international community took an important step to fight this scourge by adopting a resolution by consensus two years ago. We sincerely hope that that consensus will prevail also during the current session of the General Assembly. A further intensification of international co-operation to combat terrorism - including the

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

elaboration of new legal instruments - remains an absolute necessity. Austria is committed to join in this urgent and important task.

International relations must remain firmly based on international law. International law can only represent a foundation for the behaviour of States if it is scrupulously respected. In many cases, it is not an international legal instrument but its implementation which is lacking. One field where this gap between norm and reality seems particularly wide is the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Before concluding, I should like to share a few thoughts. My delegation was impressed by the statement of the President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Mr. Choudhury. Mindful of financial constraints, in his speech before this forum he concentrated on only a few thoughts, while distributing in writing Bangladesh's position on other important world matters.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Perhaps that example could be followed by all of us in the future. The distribution of the written texts would ensure that the positions of all Member States on the various subjects would still be made known and would receive due attention. Then, general debates in the plenary Assembly could be structured in such a way as to permit a genuine general debate among political leaders of Member States.

Austria believes in a strong United Nations; a United Nations that in the self-interest of its Member States will be able to bring about a greater consensus on the solution of existing and the definition of newly emerging problems. It is time to enter the age of global domestic policy. We are called upon to put our thoughts and imagination, our creativity and vision, our sense of pragmatism and realism, to this vital task.

Mr. YAN (Philippines): I wish, Sir, to convey to you the felicitations of the people and Government of the Philippines on your unanimous election as President of the forty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. You bring to that high office outstanding qualifications and long experience in diplomacy, particularly in the United Nations. It is therefore especially appropriate that you should be leading our deliberations in this critical period in the history of the United Nations, and it is with great confidence that we look forward to your stewardship of the General Assembly.

I should like, at the same time, to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, who provided able and effective leadership during the forty-first session.

I wish also to pay tribute to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his painstaking efforts on behalf of peace in the world. His annual report highlights the major issues before the Organization and contains important recommendations which should guide us in our deliberations.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

Throughout the more than 40 years of existence of the United Nations the Assembly's agenda has been focused on the quest of man for a world order based on peace, harmony, security and prosperity. Although the Assembly meets every year, the unique service of this forum is today more important than ever, for today the international community is confronted with a serious crisis of confidence in the collective ability of nations to move together towards a common goal. Despite the many approaches that have been tried in recent years, the causes of world conflicts have not disappeared. Indeed, these conflicts could become worse as the political will to solve them ebbs. At the same time, every effort to turn each crisis into opportunity generates the momentum towards the elusive goals of genuine peace and prosperity.

The Philippines comes to the forty-second session of the General Assembly under a new mandate and inspiration. The Filipino people have ratified a new Constitution by which they hope to build a just and humane society and pursue their ideals and aspirations under the rule of law in a régime of truth, justice, freedom, love, equality and peace. In our relations with the international community we give paramount consideration to safeguarding our national sovereignty and territorial integrity and to respecting the right to self-determination of all nations. We have renounced war as an instrument of national policy and adopted the generally accepted principles of international law as part of the law of the land.

In pursuit of our programme of national reconstruction we convened, following a general election, a new Congress of the Philippines that is truly representative of the people and committed to giving meaning and reality to their will.

My delegation is deeply touched by and grateful for the many expressions of sympathy and support for the Philippines and the Government of President Aquino which have been heard in this Assembly.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

With its new set of credentials, the Philippines seeks to fulfil its international responsibility and contribute to the common effort to build a better world for ourselves and our children. This universal aspiration is embodied in the objectives set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. Although the international community has committed itself to these objectives in the resonant language of repeated declarations, we remain fragmented and are often in conflict, independently pursuing our individual interests and preferring to rely on the security and comfort of our respective national shells.

The world is waking up to the erosion of many traditional premises, which are not being replaced by new principles upon which to base the resolution of our difficulties. As decision-makers faced with the responsibility of managing these challenges we must find, through discussion and by means of concerted action, new answers to age-old problems. It is our duty to construct a new system of international relations based on the reality of growing and genuine interdependence and on the principles of justice and equity that will both respond to our collective interests and permit us to achieve our respective national objectives.

The first element in this noble mission is the maintenance of international peace and security.

Modern history has recorded the failure of innumerable attempts to stabilize the level of armaments of the world Powers. Today, in an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion and in the face of an ever escalating arms race, the super-Powers wrangle in a tug-of-war of gambit and rejection, while the rest of the world watches in horror lest the hair-trigger situation explode into a holocaust. Worse still, the danger is being carried over to outer space, which, as mankind's common heritage, should be reserved exclusively for the uses of peace. Meanwhile, scarce resources that could be utilized for improving the lives of the peoples and fulfilling the potential of the nations of the world are being dissipated.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

It is ironic that the Powers involved in the arms race are the very same nations as are entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining peace and security within the United Nations system. In this context, the Philippines welcomes the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union have reached agreement in principle to eliminate intermediate-range missiles. We hope that this will be followed by an agreement to reduce, if not eliminate, intercontinental systems.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

We also encourage progress towards and agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union for the reduction of strategic arsenals at the levels which they set last year in Reykjavik. These are vital steps in the continuing effort towards the goal of ensuring a safer world for mankind.

Conflicts and disputes of various kinds rend the fabric of peace in some regions of the world. These conflicts result as much from a fundamental lack of respect for the rights of men and nations as from the prejudice, arrogance and greed that motivate the disregard of these rights.

In South-East Asia the hapless nation of Kampuchea is in the grip of a military occupation that continues to be a threat to the peace and stability of the region. The political sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kampuchea have been violated, and violence has been inflicted on the dignity of its people. Thousands of refugees have been driven across national borders and now live under the most difficult conditions.

The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), to which the Philippines belongs in solidarity of purpose, has worked tirelessly for a durable and comprehensive political settlement that will restore peace, freedom, independence and justice to the Kampuchean people and stability in the region. In this, ASEAN has received the support of the overwhelming majority of nations, support expressed in particular in resolutions approved by large majorities in the General Assembly.

Together with its ASEAN partners, the Philippines welcomes the recent agreement to hold an informal meeting, initially among Kampucheans and subsequently with the participation of Viet Nam. We hope that this meeting will be the beginning of a dialogue that will eventually lead to negotiations and ultimately to a solution to the problem of Kampuchea.

It will be a solution, we trust, from which will emerge a Kampuchea whose destiny is determined by its own people, free from outside interference, a Kampuchea

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

that is independent, neutral and non-aligned, headed by leaders of the Kampucheans' own choosing. At the same time the solution should take into account the security and other interests of all the countries concerned.

It is precisely such a solution that is envisioned in the draft resolution that is to be submitted under the agenda item, "The situation in Kampuchea". By again voting in favour of this resolution, therefore, Member States will be helping to hasten the settlement of the Kampuchean conflict. We must emphasize once again that an acceptable and enduring settlement must include the realization of this proposition: Viet Nam must leave Kampuchea.

In the same manner, the world expects from the Powers concerned a positive response in respect of Afghanistan. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan must be upheld and all foreign forces there must be withdrawn. Afghan refugees must be returned to their homes in safety and honour. The Afghan people must be left alone to determine their own form of government and their own economic, political and social system, free from outside intervention.

The Philippines has taken note of the efforts at national reconciliation in Afghanistan and of the pronouncements on the withdrawal of foreign troops from the country. However, we believe that these steps fall short of the principles embodied in General Assembly resolution 41/33, which calls for the immediate and total withdrawal of foreign troops.

Foreign troops must leave Afghanistan.

As great a tragedy on the contemporary scene is the plight of Namibia, captive of a racist régime that for the last 21 years has defied all calls from the Security Council and the General Assembly to withdraw from Namibia. South Africa continues to violate the human rights and dignity of the Namibians, plunders Namibia's natural resources, and denies the country its independence and rightful place in the family of nations.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

South Africa must leave Namibia. South Africa must set Namibia free.

A state of genuine peace, harmony and stability is possible under conditions that recognize and respect the dignity of man. What evil force drives South Africa to defy the whole world bewilders the civilized mind. History does not have to pass judgement on South Africa. Humanity, confronted with the gravest of moral issues - that is, apartheid - has already judged it. The judgement must be executed. There must be an end to the attempt to shield South Africa from the world's anger on the basis of any excuse or rationalization. The imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter is the only peaceful means available to create the necessary environment of change. This is imperative and urgent.

The Security Council's unanimous call in resolution 598 (1987) of 20 July 1987 for a cease-fire in the eight-year-old war between Iran and Iraq must be upheld. No effort should be spared to prevent the worsening of a war nobody wants. My delegation supports the Secretary-General's efforts on behalf of peace in the Persian Gulf.

The Middle East conflict has remained a tinderbox for too long. A just, comprehensive and lasting settlement must be achieved if we are to eliminate a major cause of international instability. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization and to establish an independent State in Palestine must be recognized. At the same time, the right of all States in the region to live in peace and within secure boundaries, free from threats or acts of force, must be upheld. The convening under the auspices of the United Nations of an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned and the five permanent members of the Security Council would be a most appropriate means for the resolution of the conflict.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

We pay a tribute to the Central American countries for the historic agreement which they recently reached in Guatemala City. It augurs well for the peace, security and stability of that troubled region. It also speaks well of a political will founded on wisdom and statesmanship. We call on all the countries concerned to carry out this landmark agreement.

My delegation supports the resumption of negotiations on the Korean question at the earliest possible time. In keeping with the principle of universality and for the sake of international peace and stability, the Philippines supports the admission to membership of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the United Nations under Article 4 of the Charter.

The disputes in the Malvinas and in Western Sahara call for similar approaches. Efforts leading to their effective resolution, both direct negotiations and use of the good offices of the Secretary-General, must be encouraged.

The United Nations must take the lead in reversing the worsening global economic situation. Our hope for enduring global peace, harmony and security cannot be realized in a world beset with glaring economic inequity and injustice, which create serious instabilities in many areas of the world. What is required is for us to go beyond rhetoric and take action.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

We are, after all, not starting from scratch. There are principles and courses of action that have long been embodied in many declarations, joint communiqués, resolutions and decisions of the United Nations. We already have the Programme of Action for a New International Economic Order, the United Nations International Development Strategies, the Vienna Programme of Action for Science and Technology, and many more. However, there has been some unwillingness to give practical application to those instruments. If the international community had done what is called for in those instruments, we would be living in a better world than we have today.

We are aware of the obstacles that lie ahead of us. The reluctance of the industrialized nations to undertake appropriate industrial restructuring prevents world trade from regaining its buoyancy. The general slow-down in the flow of development resources from bilateral sources and international financial institutions deprives the developing countries, particularly the debt-ridden among them, of the means to achieve economic growth.

Trade protectionism constitutes a frustrating barrier to the developing nations' economic aspirations. Their foreign debt is a crushing burden on those countries, bringing about great social and political tensions in their societies. The ad hoc and piecemeal management of the debt problem has been anti-development, destabilizing and inequitable. While there is a growing recognition of the principle of shared responsibility of debtors and creditors, the actual burden has been borne primarily, if not entirely, by the debtor countries, for which the costs of adjustment are intolerably onerous.

My delegation believes that economic growth must take precedence over debt servicing. Developing countries must have a reasonable economic growth that will enable their peoples to enjoy adequate standards of living. The long-term

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

interests of the creditors are better served by the continued stability of the debtor countries and the viability of the global financial system. The Philippines therefore supports a proposal to convene an international conference on money and finance to discuss a just and lasting solution to the debt problem.

We are called upon to take bold steps and innovative approaches in the political and economic spheres to meet the challenges of today. We are also called upon to take concerted action and respond to the mandate in the Preamble of the United Nations Charter "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

No effort to improve the quality of life can have meaning apart from the general well-being of the human person. The impairment of social life, the threat of disease, poverty and malnutrition, and the outrages that injure or violate the dignity of the human person could render ineffective, even meaningless, whatever gains are made in other fields.

Last year the General Assembly adopted 68 resolutions on social, cultural and humanitarian matters. They encompass the promotion and protection of human rights; the International Campaign Against Abuse of and Illegal Trafficking in Drugs; women, youth, the disabled and the aging; crime prevention and criminal justice; racism, racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The resolutions provide the building blocks that have resulted in a number of United Nations treaties and conventions. Thus, the United Nations has done much in setting standards by which the Member countries can measure their performance. We, the Members of the United Nations, must match our zeal with concrete proposals, resolutions and decisions and place our collective determination and political will behind their implementation.

The Philippine Government remains steadfast in its adherence to human rights and social justice and in the commitment of the new Constitution to giving the

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

"... highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good."

We place the highest value on those United Nations instruments which promote and protect human dignity and the worth of the individual.

To the extent that the United Nations has become the guardian of the highest moral values of humanity, the promotion and protection of human rights must keep its place high on the United Nations agenda. And, even as we keep vigilant watch over the conduct of individual Governments, we must constantly urge one another to renew our commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the other instruments in this field.

To signify the Philippine Government's unwavering support of the international struggle against apartheid, President Aquino recently signed, in the presence of General Joseph Garba, Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the instrument of ratification of the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports.

The United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment entered into force on 26 June of this year. The Convention represents a major step forward towards the world-wide proscription of torture. However, our intent to promote and protect human rights must be accompanied by an earnest effort to carry out our corresponding obligations.

We are encouraged by the efforts of the United Nations system to integrate women into the mainstream of national life by emphasizing that women are active participants in development as well as prime beneficiaries of its rewards. My country strongly supports the work of the United Nations on behalf of the

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

advancement of women. We take pride in the fact that the Nairobi forward-looking strategies for the advancement of women to the year 2000 have been included in the Philippines' medium-term development plan for 1987-1992.

During this session the United Nations will observe the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). UNIFEM has contributed much to the improvement of the situation of the poor in more than 100 countries around the world. We must therefore continue to support it fully.

The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, under the presidency of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, which was held in Vienna in June, was a landmark development in international co-operation in meeting the grave challenge of the drug problem. The Declaration and the comprehensive multi-disciplinary outline should lay the groundwork for further co-operation. The Philippines will continue to pursue the fight against that scourge, both at home and on the international front, particularly in collaboration with its partners in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

In its latest compilation, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported 58,880 cases of AIDS. The Philippines views with concern the ever-increasing number of victims of that dreaded disease and is therefore prepared to support concerted joint efforts aimed at combating it.

One of the most important documents that will be discussed by the General Assembly this year is the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, entitled "Our common future". The Philippines was privileged to attend the presentational meeting to launch the report, which was held in New Delhi in July 1987.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

The realities of living on one Earth make us realize the constraints of the interdependency of our environments and economies. Unfortunately, the international community has not effectively addressed our urgent ecological concerns. Scientists throughout the world have brought to our attention the urgent but complex environmental problems threatening our survival. A warming globe, threats to the ozone layer, desertification, deforestation, pollution and environmental degradation are eroding the potential for development and have become a survival issue for developing countries.

Let us recall with relief and gratitude that the forty-first session of the General Assembly ended with a renewed awareness of the need to overcome a looming crisis of confidence in the United Nations and to keep it moving forward despite a serious challenge to its very existence.

(Mr. Yan, Philippines)

The difficult situation created by the financial crisis in the United Nations system last year resulted in an unexpected bonus; it gave rise to a pervasive spirit of moderation and sobriety, which culminated in an earnest search for compromise and accommodation.

It is imperative for the entire membership to accept joint responsibility for keeping the United Nations not only alive and well but strong enough to face the tasks that have been entrusted to it. Obligations under the Charter must be met under the mandated arrangement of equitable burden-sharing based on capacity. The financial problem will remain and perhaps grow worse for as long as commitments are not honoured.

The administrative reforms directed by this Assembly and carried out by the Secretary-General should meet the requirements of rationalization and the need to streamline management. There is encouraging progress in the effort to review the Charter so as to strengthen the United Nations and make it a more effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The vision that emerged for all mankind in 1945 in San Francisco will remain as a beacon in our quest for a better life in a world at peace. It is less important to know whether in the interval we have moved an inch closer to our goal than it is to make certain that our sense of commitment and responsibility has not diminished. The important thing is not to falter and not to surrender to cynicism and despair, for if we are today a community of nations risen from the scourge of wars and deprivation it is because of our awareness that we can gather strength from a sense of solidarity and are nourished by a real faith in the vision of a bright future for mankind as we bestride the short distance into the twenty-first century.