



## General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/43/PV.12  
3 October 1988

ENGLISH

Forty-third session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWELFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 30 September 1988, at 10 a.m.

President:  
later:

Mr. CAPUTO  
Mr. MEZA

(Argentina)  
(El Salvador)

Address by Major-General Joseph S. Momoh, President of the Republic of  
Sierra Leone

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Wakil (Afghanistan)  
Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt)  
Mr. Malile (Albania)  
Mr. Yilmaz (Turkey)

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

ADDRESS BY MAJOR-GENERAL JOSEPH S. MOMOH, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will hear an address by the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Major-General Joseph S. Momoh, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Major-General Joseph S. Momoh, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President MOMOH: There is an awesome power that pervades this Hall and the universe. It is a power that instils courage in the weak and humility in the strong. It is the timeless compassion and mercy of that ultimate and unseen authority that inspired universal existence. It is to that eternal authority that I now raise my voice in silent thanksgiving and gratitude, for the glorious opportunity to address this dignified audience for the first time of my presidency.

Let me register my personal and my country's sincere congratulations to you, Sir, as President of this forty-third session. Your election is a testimony of your acknowledged ability and extensive diplomatic experience as representative of your friendly country, Argentina. We are assured that as you succeed the distinguished and dedicated Foreign Minister of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. Peter Florin, the work of this Assembly will be further enhanced.

Permit me also to pay warm tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who has shown tremendous courage in defending the Charter of the United Nations and unwavering tenacity in pursuing the Charter goals of peace and human dignity in all parts of the world. He will surely be remembered as the

(President Momoh)

man who rescued the United Nations from imminent collapse in the face of impossible odds, and quickly transformed it into the most effective universal instrument for neutralizing international tensions and promoting social, political and human rights.

There was a time in human history when war was pursued as an affirmation of the strength, courage and honour of men and nations. For others, it was a mechanism for the gratification of personal or territorial ambitions. It produced with traumatic regularity an array of fearsome leaders throughout the centuries. This tale of devastation, carnage and ferocity is catalogued in the pages of history. Today, in our world of the late twentieth century, minor traumas still exist, blemishing the intellectual, artistic and technological achievements of our age. From Kampuchea to southern Africa, from Western Sahara to Central America, the history is painfully familiar, and while the justification may be refined or righteous, the prosecution of war still bears many of the hallmarks of conflicts of distant ages.

Yet, somehow, amid the chaos and devastation, man's ingenuity, underlying his constant struggle for survival, has established a mechanism for the resolution of the enduring problem of war - the United Nations. It has for over 40 years endeavoured to transform much of the energy of nations from actual and potential violence into discussion, debate, negotiation and peace.

For 27 years of my country's history, Sierra Leone has had the opportunity to participate in the intercourse among nations in this dignified arena. It has been our pride to do so in the expectation that our young Republic has a contribution to make within the scope of its capabilities. Today, I wish to restate and reaffirm my country's faith and commitment to our Organization and to those noble ideals that inspire its existence.

(President Momoh)

I am a simple man, imbued with those traditional values of family, community, religion, liberty and freedom of conscience that nurtured me. My country, Sierra Leone, so named after the lion-like configuration of its coastal mountains, has had a long relationship with the world. Situated almost inconspicuously in the bulge of Africa's west coast, it is a land of diversity moulded into a State and a nation in peace and harmony.

For 40 years, the United States and the Soviet Union, backed by massive nuclear and conventional arsenals, have faced each other across an ideological divide that has constantly threatened peace. The language that has fostered their interaction has occasionally been uncompromising. But somehow the balance of terror and mutually assured destruction has maintained a nervous peace and stability for four decades. Now, more than ever before, we have the opportunity for establishing appropriate and acceptable criteria, for a comprehensive and durable peace. The citizens of the world cannot forever depend on the threat of mutually assured destruction as a guarantee of peace, stability and an orderly world.

The recent series of remarkable successes achieved by the United Nations, especially in the mediation of major regional conflicts, and the generally improved climate of relations among Members of this Organization, particularly between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, provide a much needed departure from the gloom and tension that pervaded the international political climate over the last few years. We appreciate that this significant development has not occurred accidentally, but through the sincere and sustained collective efforts of all the members of the international community.

(President Momoh)

While the significant achievements made recently are a fitting cause for celebration, they should be seen first and foremost as a catalyst for greater efforts at consolidating those gains and for the mobilization of resources to confront new problems.

We therefore urge that greater encouragement be given to the Secretary-General in his efforts to advance the progress already achieved in the resolution of the Iran-Iraq conflict. We appeal directly to Iran and Iraq to continue to show maximum good will and co-operation. It is hoped that nothing will be done by outside forces to disturb the delicate negotiations that are currently under way. The chaos and economic devastation this war has produced must be an object lesson, not only for the two combatants, but for all those who contemplate military force as a primary option.

The Jakarta informal meeting was one of the most significant diplomatic steps taken so far in the search for a resolution of the Kampuchean problem. For the first time ever it brought together most of the parties to the conflict, including Vietnam. It is important that the momentum created by those diplomatic initiatives should not be allowed to dissipate, and that even as this diplomatic momentum is maintained, the international community should continue to exert other pressures for the withdrawal of occupation troops from Kampuchea and allow the Kampuchean people to establish a government of their choice. As we renew our support for the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea, we commend China and the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for their unwavering dedication to the cause of lasting peace in the region.

The steady progress made so far in the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan is to be acknowledged and commended. The restoration of normality in that country should be facilitated by a deep and sincere commitment on the part

(President Momoh)

of all parties in the region, to promote genuine national political reconciliation and rapid economic rehabilitation. Efforts should be made to remove any obstruction to the process of complete troop withdrawal.

In Western Sahara, the useful collaboration between the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) constitutes a welcome and effective diplomatic effort, one which has sustained the momentum in the search for a durable settlement of that dispute. In the face of those developments, we express satisfaction at the improvement in relations among countries of the region, in the hope that this will be a significant contribution towards a resolution of the conflict. The fact must however be restated and reaffirmed that only a recognition of the endeavours and decisions of the United Nations will produce a durable foundation for peace.

We are gratified that in spite of the occasional difficulties with the implementation of specific aspects of the Arias Plan for the political stabilization of Central America, adherence to its general principles has brought noticeable order into political and diplomatic conduct in the region. I pay a tribute to all the leaders of the Contadora Group of countries, whose collective determination to bring peace and prosperity to that region enjoys my country's admiration and support.

Recent developments in southern Africa, leading to apartheid South Africa's uncharacteristic eagerness to facilitate Namibian independence, have been truly remarkable. While there are sufficient grounds for cynicism over South Africa's sudden apparent conversion to reason, our awareness of the delicate nature of the negotiations and the need for restrained comment will limit us to merely extending deep gratitude to all parties who are currently working to bring about the early implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

(President Momoh)

In marked contrast to the apparent signs of its flexibility over Namibian independence, the racist South African régime continues to resist pressures for the orderly transformation of South Africa into a genuine democracy. In its desperate attempt to maintain itself against overwhelming international rejection, this régime has intensified its aggression against neighbouring African States. In those circumstances, it is important that material assistance to the front-line States be intensified to strengthen their capacity to withstand and resist South Africa's aggression.

We renew our support and admiration for the courage of Nelson Mandela, the fight for whose release from illegal imprisonment. Should continue to be a priority for all those with a conscience and a sense of justice. We also acknowledge the sacrifice and dedication of the freedom fighters, and the remarkable courage and dedication of Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

It is with a tremendous sense of hope that I express satisfaction and optimism that someday the very foundations of apartheid will be dashed to pieces. The signs are potent. David Bruce is a young, white South African, a conscientious objector, gaoled for refusing to be drafted into the South African army, which is a racist military machine devoted to the defence of apartheid. Many like David Bruce, have registered their repugnance and resistance.

Recent attempts at resolving the Korean question, though significant, need to be further intensified. While we congratulate the two Koreas on their fortieth anniversary, we have great faith in the ability of their people to strive and overcome existing obstacles to the achievement of durable peace in the peninsula. The international community and, indeed, the United Nations have a responsibility to contribute to this effort and help release the enormous potential of the Korean people to contribute to the well-being of the world.

(President Momoh)

The situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel represents a disturbing contrast to the general climate of relaxation of tension in all parts of the world. The great and sustained impact of the intifada, or protests by the Palestinian people, in the face of continued repression, clearly underlines the high cost and futility of attempts to perpetuate an unjust situation.

It will be tragic if we fail to learn an important lesson that has emerged from the intifada - that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is indeed the authentic and sole representative of the Palestinian people and that to continue to pretend otherwise can only further complicate the suffering and the instability in the occupied lands.

We therefore see great merit in the convening, under the auspices of the United Nations, of an international conference on the Middle East, at which all parties involved, including the PLO, will participate on an equal footing. In the meantime, my country renews its support of the Palestinian people and to the leadership of the PLO.

The diminishing of regional conflicts is only one of the many steps necessary to ensure a stable and peaceful world. Another important step is to ensure predictability in the relationship between the super-Powers. In this regard, we should acknowledge the leading role played by President Ronald Reagan of the United States of America and General Secretary Mikhael Gorbachev of the Soviet Union in fostering a climate of cordiality in the relations between their countries, particularly the recent signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty. We express the hope that this climate will be improved with further wide-ranging disarmament actions, particularly in the area of multilateral disarmament negotiations.

(President Momoh)

The economic difficulties of the developing countries, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa, continue to pose the most immediate challenge to the Organization and to the entire international community. Since the beginning of this decade, the economies of those countries have stumbled from one economic crisis to another, leaving behind them widespread human misery and damage to the foundations of those societies.

While it is noted that the international community has responded generously to emergency requirements, support for long-term development programmes has generally not been quite so impressive.

(President Momoh)

Our efforts to mobilize our internal resources to tackle the economic difficulties facing us have been undermined by a host of intractable obstacles, among which are the steep and continuous decline in our export earnings, the shortage of appropriate human resources and a heavy debt burden. We are therefore encouraged that the Secretary-General has emphasized in his report that debt, trade and commodities and human resource development are three main areas in the economic field where the international community needs to act urgently. It is in that context that we acknowledge the important initiative taken by some creditor countries to cancel the debts of low-income developing countries, including Sierra Leone. It is also highly significant that leaders of the major industrial countries are now considering the possibility of debt cancellation as a serious idea. We hope that this climate of unprecedented consensus on the approaches to solving the debt problem will quickly lead to concrete action by the international community to lighten the debt burden of developing countries.

We would also welcome a review of World Bank and International Monetary Fund conditionalities to enable low-income countries to gain access to funds specially reserved for assistance to those countries by those institutions.

We also believe that there is an urgent need to create a climate of absolute understanding and trust among donor countries, the financial institutions and recipient countries in the area of implementation of economic reform programmes. This area has been a source of great and painful friction between the donor community on the one hand and the recipient countries on the other.

While the necessity for economic reform is widely accepted by developing countries, it has been observed that the reform process is a delicate activity that could cause great suffering in society and harm to the economy, particularly if it

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is pursued too vigorously without sufficient supporting measures. Indeed, some time ago, when my country adopted a wide-ranging reform programme agreed with the International Monetary Fund, we were forced to suspend its implementation when the mounting toll of human misery could no longer be justified. Many basic commodities became unaffordable to the ordinary members of society, as prices rocketed with the sudden removal of subsidies, exacerbated by a general wage freeze and a series of massive currency devaluations which left our currency greatly weakened.

Reform of our economy continues to be a major national priority. The loss of financial support from the international financial institutions which followed our suspension of aspects of the original programme has however weakened our strength to pursue this priority. We therefore appeal particularly to the international institutions for understanding and support to enable us to carry out reforms in an orderly and effective manner.

It is appropriate at this juncture to express deep appreciation to friendly Governments whose bilateral assistance has helped to sustain us during our period of difficulty. In the same vein we acknowledge the important contribution of the various United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In particular our commitment to ensure the survival and healthy development of our children has drawn great strength from the efforts of UNICEF.

The purposes and principles of the United Nations, proclaimed in its Charter 43 years ago, set a high moral tone and the values and concepts enshrined in that Charter are certainly ennobling. As we understand it, the insistence of the Charter on encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms also implied a

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commitment by Governments to accept culpability, or at least moral responsibility, for violations of the human rights of their citizens. When the United Nations proclaimed its principles in the wake of the radioactive contamination of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the torment, torture and guilt of that best forgotten era were still fresh in the minds of the founding fathers. Culpability may be moral, legal or religious, depending on one's cultural background and perception. It is an embarrassing fact, however, that some States which are parties to the Charter and which have stringent laws to protect their own environment allow their citizens to effect toxic pollution on defenceless developing countries. If it is an offence for someone in one country to dispose of toxic wastes without adhering to stipulated legal guidelines or fulfilling mandatory requirements, it should be equally essential for the laws of that country to make it reprehensible for any adventurer to deposit such wastes in any other country of the world.

The magnitude and complexity of this problem demand effective supportive action by the countries of origin of toxic waste as well as by the international community collectively. The initiative by the United Nations Development Programme to draft a convention on trans-frontier movements of waste is a welcome response. We believe countries of origin of hazardous waste have an obligation to extend their domestic legislation on hazardous waste disposal to regulate the disposal of such wastes abroad.

It has been with profound joy and satisfaction that I have been able to take part in this session, and as I go back home to Sierra Leone I take with me a message of hope and optimism for the future of the human family, within the scope of the United Nations. Those who preceded us in the formative years of this Organization have spoken eloquently about two issues - peace and development. Those

(President Momoh)

terms carry grave implications for all men, for peace does not refer only to an absence of war; neither does development refer only to the presence of material progress. They are central today in the interactions among States, as they have always been, and they hold the key to the solutions of many of the world's critical issues. Peace is the abiding desire of mankind the world over. It is a condition deeper in conception, interpretation and realization. The search for it has moved statesmen throughout history and produced agreements, pacts and treaties; equally so has the breach of it spawned a multitude of aggressions and violence that span generations.

For the small and weak nations of the third world the United Nations is the ultimate platform for the search for peace. It is the arena that ennobles the instincts and precludes the realization of the dreams of evil men.

In a world of competing national interests and jealously guarded sovereignties only the platform of the United Nations can assure humanity of a credible and durable peace. Support for the Organization, therefore, must be total and devoid of the secret manipulations and routine subversions that have characterized its relationship with some of its Members.

The Organization's role in development - human and national - is equally critical. The calamities of hunger, drought, flood and social misery produce much the same threats to the human condition as war. The programmes of development initiated by the United Nations have been laudable ventures. They proclaim the common purpose and destiny of humanity in its constant search for peace, progress and concord. The achievement of those aims requires a collective sensitivity and the will and energies of nations to mobilize an agreed consensus on development. The United Nations still constitutes the universal platform for its achievement.

(President Momoh)

While we deliberate the great issues of our day, let our hearts reach out to those members of our human community whose concerns we seek to articulate and realize. They need and deserve our attention in our collective search for an organized and beautiful world.

(President Momoh)

Nowhere is that more vividly expressed at this moment than in the peaceful artistic and physical quest for excellence in Seoul, Republic of Korea. Those athletes individually and collectively have a common message - one human family linked in the search for peace and development. That is in sharp contrast to the terrorist, the drug addict, the hijacker, whose constant ambition is to frustrate the designs of noble men.

As I close this address, let me also take the opportunity to register my congratulations to those courageous men who in today's human conflicts have become true symbols of peace. They are the men of the United Nations peace-keeping forces. Indeed, there can be no accolade more appropriate for the work of the United Nations than the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the peace-keeping forces. In the name of the Government and people of Sierra Leone I salute them - and I thank the General Assembly for its kind attention.

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

Mr. Joseph S. Momoh, President of Sierra Leone, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.\*

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. WAKIL (Afghanistan) (spoke in Farsi; English text furnished by the delegation): It gives me great pleasure to express to Mr. Dante Caputo my sincere congratulations on his well-deserved election as President of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. We are confident that his wisdom and experience

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\* Mr. Meza (El Salvador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

will ensure constructive and fruitful deliberations on the very important, indeed vital, issues before the Assembly. I assure him of the full co-operation of my delegation to that end.

May I also express our deep appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, for the exemplary manner in which he presided over the deliberations of both the Assembly's forty-second session and its third special session devoted to Disarmament.

I should also like to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his competent and excellent management of the affairs of the Secretariat of our Organization. We are particularly gratified at his devotion to the cause of international peace and security, demonstrated in his relentless efforts to ensure the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts in different parts of the world. We congratulate him on the outstanding success he has scored in these efforts. That success testifies to the enhancement of the role of the United Nations.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

The General Assembly is in session at a time when the world seems to have reached a critical juncture in history. Recently, we have witnessed a number of promising developments in different spheres of international relations which, if sustained, will have far-reaching positive consequences for the future of humankind. The general relaxation in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, progress so far achieved in disarmament negotiations, the intensification of efforts in seeking peaceful solutions to regional conflicts, and greater awareness of the need for multilateral co-operation in solving the common political, security, economic and ecological ills afflicting our world are all manifestations of a general improvement in the international climate.

It is regrettable, however, that the atmosphere of international relations is still plagued with various unresolved problems and conflicts. If not solved in the interests of regional and international peace and security, these problems could seriously jeopardize the progress achieved so far. The danger of war and, worse, of nuclear holocaust still looms large, while the upward spiral of the arms race continues unchecked. The tendency to resort to the threat or actual use of force, interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States and various forms of political and economic coercion is strong in international relations. Old concepts, attitudes, policies and doctrines continue to govern the behaviour of States towards their neighbours and other countries of the world. This is a situation which is of grave concern to the international community.

The world community has welcomed with joy and relief the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. The destruction of an entire class of nuclear weapons is, indeed, a historic achievement and a turning point. Men and women in every corner of the world are awaiting with great hope the successful conclusion of ongoing negotiations on a 50 per cent reduction of the strategic nuclear arsenals of the two great nuclear

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Powers. Their hope is that this will prove a happy prelude to the achievement of the long-cherished objective of general and complete disarmament.

A comprehensive nuclear-test ban is obviously the most significant step towards building the confidence necessary for the further reduction and total elimination of nuclear weapons. Pending total elimination, a treaty on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, coupled with acknowledgment of the universally accepted dictum that a nuclear war cannot be won, and a solemn pledge by all nuclear Powers not to be the first to resort to the use of such weapons, constitutes an essential first step towards assuring man that the macabre vision of total annihilation may indeed be avoided. The establishment of nuclear-free zones and measures for enhancing nuclear non-proliferation will also serve this purpose.

While nuclear disarmament is indeed of prime importance, considerable attention should also be paid to conventional disarmament. Newly emerging technologies capable of producing new generations of conventional weapons of mass destruction have highlighted the need for the urgent adoption of measures towards the limitation, reduction and total elimination of conventional weapons. In this context, a radical reduction in the strength of standing armies is also of prime importance.

The conclusion of a treaty banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of all types of chemical weapons, including binary weapons, is also of paramount importance. We welcome the progress made in the Conference on Disarmament towards a chemical-weapons-ban treaty and the successful review of the Convention on biological weapons.

The global economic situation is of particular concern to all the developing countries. While the scientific and technological revolution has provided mankind with the know-how and tools to deal successfully with the problems of underdevelopment, such as hunger, poverty, disease and illiteracy, the prospects

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

for the steady progress of the developing countries remain bleak. Inequitable conditions for participation in international trade, coupled with the burden of foreign debt and debt servicing, are frustrating their efforts towards development and progress.

The sharp decline in commodity prices, the deterioration in the terms of trade, high interest rates, the protectionist measures adopted by developed countries and the reverse flow of financial resources have deepened the economic crisis that threatens the future of the developing countries. The least developed countries in particular are in a very precarious economic situation.

In view of this reality, the need for the establishment of a new international economic order on a just and equitable basis acquires greater urgency. It is also important to recognize the relationship between disarmament and development. Only the additional human, technological and financial resources released through disarmament can successfully cope with the development needs of the world.

Without any doubt one significant manifestation of the general improvement of the international climate is the positive trend towards solving regional conflicts through political means. In the Geneva talks between Iran and Iraq, in Angola, Kampuchea, Nicaragua, Cyprus and Western Sahara dialogue and negotiations have raised high hopes for lasting peace and tranquillity for the people of the various regions. These noble efforts deserve full support by the international community.

In the Middle East, the situation remains tense owing to the policy of aggression, military occupation and expansionism pursued by Israel. Total and unconditional withdrawal by Israel from all occupied Palestinian and other Arab lands, including the Golan Heights and Jerusalem, is the key to a lasting peace in the Middle East. It has been universally recognized that the question of Palestine constitutes the core of the Middle East problem. Without full restoration of the

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

undeniable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to statehood, no just and lasting solution to the Middle East problem is conceivable.

We whole-heartedly welcome the cessation of hostilities and the commencement of the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war. We wish both sides every success in the Geneva talks, under the auspices of the United Nations, in establishing lasting peace and normal relations between the two neighbouring Islamic countries.

In South Africa, the abhorrent policy of apartheid continues unabated, depriving millions of human beings of their elementary human rights and freedoms. The Pretoria régime also poses a grave threat to international peace and security through constant acts of aggression against the front-line States, particularly Angola and Mozambique. The negotiations between the interlocutors aimed at resolving the problems of southern Africa by peaceful means are to be commended. The cessation of aggression against Angola and of interference in its internal affairs is the key to normalization of the situation in that country.

We support the immediate independence of Namibia, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the sole and legitimate representative of the Namibian people, through the full implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia endorsed in Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan also warmly welcomes the dialogue among the Kampuchean. It is our hope that this dialogue will soon result in peace and tranquillity in Kampuchea and co-operation between the countries of Indo-China and members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The talks in Nicaragua have also raised high hopes of the restoration of peace and normal life in that country. If this is to be achieved, it is essential that outside interference in its internal affairs be ended.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

The dialogue in Cyprus is also encouraging. We reaffirm our support for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Cyprus.

My Government also supports the independence, peaceful reunification and national unity of Korea through dialogue and reconciliation.

We welcome and support Security Council resolution 621 (1988), on preparations for holding a referendum in Western Sahara, under the supervision of the United Nations in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

It is our firm conviction that constant renewal of our faith in the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter is the only firm guarantee of an improved international climate. The role of the United Nations in safeguarding international peace and security and promoting global co-operation is indeed vital. The Organization has played a unique and outstanding role in codifying the norms of international conduct, with the aim of making the world an orderly place in which to live. It has also demonstrated its vast potential for the peaceful settlement of conflicts. We believe that it is time for the United Nations to play a central, primary role in the field of disarmament as well.

The Republic of Afghanistan, as a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement, is firmly committed to the purposes and principles of the Movement. The Movement's recent ministerial Conference at Nicosia demonstrated once again the validity and relevance of the principles of non-alignment in the contemporary world and their positive impact on positive trends in international relations. The Republic of Afghanistan will continue to play a positive and constructive role in the Movement.

The signing of the Geneva Agreements on the situation relating to Afghanistan has been welcomed by the international community as a historic achievement. Statements made so far in the general debate at the forty-third session of the General Assembly have clearly indicated that international support, for which we are grateful. We are particularly grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, for their all-round efforts in the Geneva process. Based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly those of non-interference and non-intervention, the Agreements map out a comprehensive political settlement which is in the interest not only of the people of Afghanistan but also of the peoples of the entire region and the cause of international peace and security.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

The Republic of Afghanistan signed the Geneva Agreements in good faith and with a firm resolve to implement all its provisions in letter and in spirit.

True to our good intentions, the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have strictly abided by the provisions of the Agreements. The return of Soviet troops from Afghanistan commenced on 15 May 1988, and 50 per cent of the troops had been withdrawn by 15 August, as provided for in the Agreements. The Republic of Afghanistan has given every assistance to the United Nations Good Offices Mission for Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) in the performance of its duties.

Much to our regret, however, four and a half months after the entry into force of the Agreements the hope of the people of Afghanistan - indeed, the hope of the entire international community - for the restoration of peace in our country has not yet been fulfilled. War and bloodshed have not subsided. People are being killed, public and private property destroyed and acts of terror perpetrated by armed extremist opposition. Kabul and a number of other cities have come under a constant barrage of rockets with a range of from 20 to 36 kilometres; 136 such rockets were fired on the city of Kabul in the course of a single day. These blind rocket attacks have claimed 760 innocent victims, including women and children, while 346 houses and 45 public buildings have been destroyed. Only two days ago 25 rockets were fired on Kabul. One of them hit a bus station in front of the Ministry of Education, claiming the lives of 35 persons and injuring 163.

Why does this situation continue after the signing of the Geneva Agreements? From where are all these lethal weapons pouring into Afghanistan? The sole reason for this situation is the non-implementation of the Geneva Agreements and their open violation by the other main signatory.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

In contravention of the explicit provisions of the instrument on mutual relations, particularly those relating to non-interference and non-intervention, centres on its territory for training, arming and equipping extremist groups have not been dismantled. The earmarking of modern weapons, including Stinger missiles, long-range artillery and mortars and ground-to-ground rockets for the extremist opposition groups and their transfer to Afghanistan are continuing. A guarantor of the instrument on non-interference and non-intervention is continuing to send weapons and equipment to armed extremist groups. The events at Spin Boldak demonstrated that Pakistani militia even participated in the attack carried out by the extremists. At the present time similar situations exist in the provinces of Kandahar and the Kunars.

At the same time I should like to point out clearly that the Government of Afghanistan is directing all its efforts to the implementation of the Geneva Agreements and the settlement of the internal situation through dialogue and the establishment of a broad-based Government, with the participation of the seven groups commanders inside Afghanistan and other influential personalities within and outside the country. With this in view, Afghanistan is firmly in favour of improving its relations with all its neighbours and strongly opposed to any action that could heighten tension in its relations with them. Afghanistan has never resorted to small- or large-scale border violations either on land or from the air, and has nothing to do with the internal incidents occurring in neighbouring countries. We firmly believe that such actions not only are contrary to the Geneva Agreements but will delay and complicate the solution of existing problems.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

On the other hand, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has so far brought to the attention of the Government of Pakistan 547 cases of open violations, by means of 87 notes presented to UNGOMAP. However, the other side has created serious obstacles to UNGOMAP's investigation of these violations. On the pretext of the existence of tribal conflicts and a lack of security, UNGOMAP is prevented from visiting areas which are used for the transfer of weapons to Afghanistan and where large depots of such weapons are located. Contrary to clear provisions of the Geneva Agreements, UNGOMAP has not been granted freedom of movement in the territory of Pakistan. On the contrary, UNGOMAP has to request prior permission from the Pakistan authorities before it can visit areas where violations are taking place. While the Agreements provide that inspections should be completed within 48 hours, it takes two to three weeks to get permission for UNGOMAP visits. Obviously, that is time enough to transfer weapons depots to other areas or to transform a military training centre into a school.

This being the case, can it still be claimed that violations have in fact been investigated in accordance with the provisions of the Agreements? In such circumstances no one can really talk about investigations, because the fact is that violations are taking place and the Agreements are not being implemented. Furthermore, in spite of our continued requests, meetings between the two sides to review violations have yet to take place, although the Agreements provide that such meetings should take place within 48 hours.

We recently proposed a meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the two main signatories and the two guarantors to review the process of the implementation of the Agreements. Regrettably, however, Pakistan and the United States have not responded positively to this practical request.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

In accordance with the Geneva Agreements, mixed commissions for facilitating the return of Afghan refugees should have been established a long time ago. However, four and a half months after the entry into force of the Agreements, the other side has shown no readiness to implement this important provision. If the Afghan refugees are such a heavy burden, then why have such commissions not been established on the basis of the provisions of the third instrument of the Geneva Agreements, as is the wish of the Republic of Afghanistan and of the Afghan refugees? On the contrary, conditions and prerequisites are being created with respect to their return.

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

As to the Government of Afghanistan, it has taken all the necessary steps to receive the refugees. A ministry has been established for this purpose, which has so far welcomed 152,000 returnees. To assure the refugees, and with due respect to the traditions of our people, border areas have been proclaimed non-military zones. An agreement has been concluded with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and its office has been opened in Afghanistan. A similar agreement has been concluded with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

In this connection, we sincerely appreciate the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to launch an appeal for international relief assistance to the people of Afghanistan. We warmly welcome the designation of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, an internationally renowned personality with rich experience in international humanitarian efforts, as the co-ordinator of such assistance. I should also like to express our gratitude to all those countries which have shown readiness to assist in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Although in the present circumstances internal efforts for peace and tranquillity inside Afghanistan are adversely affected by continued interference from outside, the policy of national reconciliation has opened its way in the minds and hearts of the Afghan people, inside and outside the country. After an interval of 15 years, an elected parliament, in which different parties are represented, is functioning in the country. A new coalition Government, including 18 non-party members out of a total of 31 members, has received a vote of confidence from the parliament.

In this connection, let me reiterate that we deeply believe in negotiations and reconciliation and it is our conviction that, through dialogue, agreement on the mechanism for the formation of a broad-based coalition government could be achieved. The fact is that if the Geneva agreements are implemented and

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

interference from outside is thereby stopped, the Government and people of Afghanistan, through the continuation of the policy of national reconciliation, can establish peace and national accord in their country. Tired of years of fratricidal war, the people of Afghanistan, both inside and outside the country, will join hands in a coalition government to reconstruct their land, which has suffered through 10 long years of war and destruction.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan is making every effort to ensure that, on the one hand, the situation relating to Afghanistan is settled through strict implementation of the Geneva Agreements and, on the other, that on the basis of the establishment of a genuine coalition inside, Afghanistan, as a non-aligned and neutral country, will pursue a policy with regard to the improvement of regional and international relations that will correspond to the balance of interest of all the other countries of the world, including the Soviet Union, the United States, Pakistan, India, China, Iran, the Islamic countries and members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

At the same time, we hope that the new leadership in Pakistan, taking into consideration the existing realities, will adopt a constructive position towards the elimination of the existing tense situation, and will play its part in improving the relations between the two countries and the situation in the region through the strict implementation of the Geneva Agreements. These Agreements constitute a firm basis for this purpose, which is in the interest of all the peoples of the region and the cause of international peace and security.

It is profoundly clear that it was in the light of increasing interference from abroad that the Government of Afghanistan had called for Soviet assistance to enable the people of Afghanistan to repulse the threat from outside. At present, the withdrawal of Soviet troops is taking place in accordance with the time-frame

(Mr. Wakil, Afghanistan)

envisaged in the Geneva Agreements, but, at the same time, interference has not ceased. If this situation is not corrected in time, South West Asia will continue to remain a region of conflict, tension and a threat to international peace and security. In such cases, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union reserve the right to adopt co-ordinated measures as called for by the situation.

In the light of the signing of the Geneva Agreements and the continued implementation of the policy of national reconciliation, we do not see any need for the discussion of item 30 on the agenda of this Assembly. It is our conviction, however, that any such discussion should focus on the need for the strict implementation of the Geneva Agreements. We are ready to work towards a consensus resolution, taking into consideration the concerns of all the sides. Nicosia proved that, given the political will and the existence of a genuine resolve to make a constructive contribution to the restoration of peace, stability and security in our region, it should not prove difficult to reach such a consensus.

Recently, our world has arrived at the threshold of a new era of understanding, of mutual efforts for peacefully resolving conflicts and for promoting peace and disarmament. It is the great hope of the world community that this trend will not prove ephemeral but acquire a permanent character. We are ready to co-operate towards this noble end. We are particularly willing to co-operate in turning our own part of the world into a region of peace, stability, co-operation, understanding and good-neighbourliness in the interest of all our peoples and of the cause of international peace and security.

Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure that Mr. Dante Caputo has been elected President of the forty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are all the more pleased to see as President a person who comes from a friendly country, Argentina, and from a sisterly continent, Latin America. His renowned wisdom and vast experience will certainly enrich the performance of the General Assembly. We are confident that the current session will constitute an important landmark on the path of international progress. By the same token, I wish to pay a tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, Deputy Foreign Minister of the friendly German Democratic Republic, for his wise guidance of the proceedings of the forty-second session and the third special session devoted to disarmament.

A few weeks ago, the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries met in Cyprus to review and assess developments in the international situation, particularly the recent indications of the advent of a new era of détente between the two super-Powers, a new era different from that which had prevailed in the 1970s. This new era represents a more advanced phase towards positive peaceful co-existence. If allowed to maintain its momentum and to expand its scope, it would create a favourable political climate conducive to general and complete disarmament, both of nuclear weapons and of other weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Such a new era could also be conducive to strengthening co-operation between countries with different social and political régimes and to enhancing the opportunities for their contribution to the world economy. It would further assist the approach towards the peaceful settlement of several international problems.

There are a number of indications which testify to the importance of this positive development, as is evident from the encouraging signs that several international and regional problems may be resolved. However, other problems are still in abeyance.

In the Middle East, the resolution of the Palestinian problem still faces persistent obstacles as a result of the intransigence of some parties and the rigidity of their positions. This state of affairs has led the Middle East region to lag behind other regions which have begun to proceed steadily towards just and lasting solutions.

In recent years the Palestine question has witnessed attempts to impose a fait accompli and to entrench the Israeli occupation. Nevertheless, the Palestinian uprising - the intifadah - has defied all forms of suppression and coercion. The heroic Palestinian people, in their firm belief in their just cause, have succeeded in imposing recognition of their existence and in gaining world-wide support for their legitimate national rights.

The Palestinian people have thus made it impossible to return to the pre-uprising conditions. So the escalating acts of repression perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces are futile. These acts include expatriation, administrative detention without trial, imprisonment, confiscation of property, the blowing up of houses, torture, the closing down of schools and universities and the freezing of labour unions' activities. They further contravene the rules of international law and the Geneva conventions and human rights. Such acts are

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

strongly condemned by Egypt, as they have been by the entire international community.

The decision of King Hussein of Jordan last July to sever legal and administrative links with the West Bank was aimed at fostering the representative status of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in implementation of the decisions of the Arab summit meeting. In its capacity as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO has consequently assumed the prime responsibility for the occupied Palestinian territories.

Both the Jordanian and the Palestinian parties have reiterated their determination and commitment to pursue their co-operation and intensify their consultations. Such a decision is triggered by the exigencies of the situation and by the unity of their objective, namely, the ending of the Israeli occupation within the framework of a comprehensive, lasting and just settlement based on the norms and principles of international legitimacy.

Guided by this noble goal, Egypt has called for the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. All parties concerned, including the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the permanent members of the Security Council, are to participate at that conference, thus allowing direct negotiations between the parties, with the aim of reaching a lasting settlement of the Palestinian problem and putting an end to the regional tension in the Middle East, which threatens international peace and security.

International support for the convening of the international conference has undoubtedly become one of the basic tenets on which Arab and international political and diplomatic action to resolve the Palestinian problem is based. There is also a general international consensus on holding such a conference at the earliest possible time.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

In this context, we welcome the United States approach based on the political rights of the Palestinian people and on the principle of "land for peace", both of which were reaffirmed in the initiative of the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Shultz, in April 1988 and again at the tripartite meeting attended by President Reagan of the United States on the 26th of the current month. These principles conform to the provisions of the United Nations Charter and to the Security Council resolutions, foremost among which is resolution 242 (1967), which confirms the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory through war. We believe that this principle is a sine qua non for the whole resolution and is central to ensuring its implementation and to the establishment of a comprehensive and lasting peace which would not entail a recurrence of the dispute in future.

Refusal to face the facts, failure to admit the inherent nature of the conflict, persistent disregard of the Palestinian people and their legitimate representatives and disregard of the national rights of those people, foremost among which is their right to self-determination - all these will keep this conflict unresolved and will lead to far-reaching consequences in the region. It is high time the various parties took historic and courageous decisions in order to overcome the obstacles to peace. In this respect, I wish to welcome the statements of Palestinian officials at the highest level which emphasize the willingness of the PLO to negotiate a peaceful and lasting solution of the Palestinian problem, as well as the willingness for a mutual and simultaneous recognition of Israel. This development, which reflects a sound understanding of the situation and its exigencies, deserves every encouragement. I also wish to take this opportunity to commend the peace-loving forces in Israel on their efforts for the achievement of a lasting and just settlement.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

If our strategic goal, as I have mentioned, is to reach a lasting and just settlement of the Palestinian problem, which would ensure security and stability in the Middle East, we are equally aware that the introduction of nuclear weapons or the threat of their introduction into the Middle East would create serious imbalances with grave consequences to security and stability in the region.

Therefore we call on Israel once again from this rostrum to renounce the nuclear-weapon option, to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to subject all its nuclear facilities to the safeguard system of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Such a decision would certainly boost confidence and advance the drive towards peace.

In this regard, Egypt has been working persistently for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We hope that this objective will be achieved at the earliest possible date.

Turning to the situation in the Gulf, we observe that the Iraq-Iran conflict, after eight years of war, has entered a new phase in which all parties recognize that political settlement and serious negotiations are the only means of achieving security and justice in that region.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

The mere acceptance of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) by the parties and the halt to military operations do not in themselves mean the end of conflict and the advent of peace. Rather, good faith and serious efforts are necessary requirements.

While appreciating the efforts of the United Nations to bring about a peaceful settlement of this dispute, we express the hope that Iran will substantiate its good faith. It's appreciation of the exigencies of the present situation, as has already been demonstrated by Iraq, would accelerate efforts towards a just and honourable settlement of the dispute and an early establishment of peace and stability, thus allowing the States and peoples of the region to live in peace and to harness their human and economic resources for reconstruction and development in the interest of all peoples of the region.

As for the plight of the brotherly Lebanese people, the regional parties interfering in their affairs still refuse to admit that regional ambitions, the narrow political outlook and attempts by alien parties to impose control over Lebanon will not achieve genuine peace for any party. Eventually it will be the Lebanese people themselves who will pay the price and sustain the loss.

We appeal to all our brothers in Lebanon, irrespective of their creeds, confessions or positions, to place the interest of the people and the unity, integrity and security of their country above any other consideration.

The situation in Afghanistan has passed through positive developments during the present year. The United Nations and its Secretary-General have played an effective role in bridging the gap between the viewpoints of the different parties, thus facilitating the signing of the Geneva Accords relating to the situation in Afghanistan. These Accords have moved the problem into a new and brighter perspective after all the untold suffering sustained by the valiant Afghan people who had engaged in an historic struggle.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

In this context we wish to welcome the Soviet decision to withdraw from Afghanistan and its declared intention of complying fully with this decision. However, these positive developments should not distract us from the fact that a genuine and definitive solution to the problem of Afghanistan will not be forthcoming unless its people are enabled to choose their government freely and independently and unless its refugees are repatriated and a halt to foreign intervention is achieved.

The African continent has recently observed the silver jubilee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which has been rich in accomplishments despite all the difficulties. Positive developments have recently taken place, giving a glimmer of hope that the heroic people of Namibia would soon be able to gain their independence under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), their sole, legitimate representative and that the territorial integrity of Angola would be preserved and respected.

We wish to reiterate our support for the heroic people of South Africa under the leadership of their national liberation movements and their leader, Nelson Mandela. We also call on the international community to continue shouldering its responsibilities for eliminating the abominable policy of apartheid.

As regards north-west Africa, we welcome the developments towards peace on the question of Western Sahara in the past few weeks. We believe that the proposals of the Secretary-General and his constructive efforts towards a settlement - so long as they are accepted by the parties - represent a great advance. We look forward to the implementation of those proposals and to the achievement of further progress towards the resolution of this question, which has long been causing concern for the international community, the Arab world and the African countries.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

At the same time, a number of other regional problems have been benefiting from this positive climate. The problem of Kampuchea is witnessing genuine endeavours to achieve its independence and territorial integrity and sovereignty as well as a just solution that would ensure self-determination for its people, free from foreign intervention.

There is also a forward movement on the issue of Cyprus under the aegis of the United Nations. This positive development leads us to look forward to a future in which agreement is reached on preserving the unity and territorial integrity of Cyprus within a federal non-aligned State, where all people and all communities enjoy equal rights. We hope that the emerging dialogue between the President of Cyprus and the leader of the Turkish Cypriot community will constitute a positive step in that direction.

We also hope that the prevailing spirit of settlement will include the Korean problem in accordance with the desire of the Korean people for the unification of the Korean peninsula.

The recent positive developments in respect of a number of regional problems have demonstrated that the United Nations can play an important and efficient role in the settlement of regional disputes if enabled to do so. We therefore appeal to Member States to help extricate this Organization from its financial crisis so that it may be able to continue assuming its role as an effective tool for the realization of justice, solidarity and peace in accordance with the provisions of its Charter. I am pleased to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate the United Nations on the occasion of the conferring of the Nobel Peace Prize on the United Nations peace-keeping operations in recognition of the growing and effective role of those operations in various parts of the world.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Since the international community has expressed satisfaction at the increasing role of the United Nations in the settlement of regional problems, it is necessary to emphasize once again that that role emanates from one of the fundamental principles of its Charter, namely, the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes. This principle is one of the most firmly established methods for the establishment of peace. The extent of commitment to this principle reflects the level of international maturity in the practice and organization of relations between States through breaking stalemates and seeking solutions to such disputes.

In this regard I wish to refer particularly to the agreement between Egypt and Israel on 11 September 1986 to resort to international obligatory arbitration in order to resolve the dispute that came up regarding some international boundary posts between Egypt and Palestine - under the Mandate - in what came to be known as "the Taba problem". The two parties had agreed on the terms of arbitration in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, in particular Article 33, which urges the parties to a dispute to seek its resolution through one of the methods mentioned therein.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Thus, the ruling by the international arbitration panel in Geneva on the Taba problem on 29 September 1988 - that is, yesterday - encourages resort to the principles of international law and commitment to the noble principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We are gratified that the ruling of the arbitration panel has confirmed that Taba is an Egyptian territory that falls under Egyptian sovereignty and that the legal and historical documents and evidence provided by Egypt have been proved authentic. I am confident that speedy implementation, in good faith, of that ruling would lead to results that would transcend the disputed issue and improve the political climate in the region, thereby facilitating more positive developments.

As we approach the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it behoves us to recall that Egypt has been at the forefront in signing or acceding to most international conventions and instruments relating to human rights and in honouring the obligations arising therefrom. This attitude echoes our conviction that the human being is the target of peace, stability and development, which cannot be attained without his efforts and which enhance his feeling of dignity and his sense of freedom.

Egypt also attaches great importance to the issues of childhood and maternity and has therefore set up the National Council for Childhood and Maternity, which will hold a national congress at Alexandria in November 1988 in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and a number of its regional offices. A number of Egyptians and others involved in the various aspects of child medical care and legal protection will participate in that congress, so that the widest support of public opinion may be mustered for the draft United Nations convention on the rights of the child.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

I should like to refer here to the establishment of the Arab Council for Childhood and Development, which makes every effort to create better conditions for the bringing up of Arab children and to develop methods of control over the implementation of laws relating to children in the Arab world. Egypt has been elected vice-president of that Council. Egypt calls for the early preparation of the international convention on the rights of the child so that it may be adopted next year on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

Referring to social development, I must express our appreciation of the constructive contribution of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the field of cultural development and the preservation of the ancient historical heritage of Egypt, in particular the revival of the library of Alexandria as an Egyptian and international cultural edifice.

The current world economic situation remains a source of deep concern, in view of the difficult conditions through which most countries are passing. However, because of their special conditions, the effects of that situation have been more adverse to and painful for the developing countries. The increasing debt and debt-service burdens and the unfavourable external and internal conditions resulting from the decline in commodity prices, together with the burdens of tackling problems of underdevelopment, have led many developing countries to cut their imports and suspend some development programmes. Consequently, living standards have deteriorated and austerity measures have had to be adopted, with increasing social and economic risks and consequences that threaten social and political stability in most of those countries.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

I wish to refer in particular to the critical economic situation in Africa. The impact of the adverse international economic environment on the efforts of African countries to achieve economic recovery and development has been shattering. African countries have made tremendous efforts to implement the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. Despite those efforts the economic situation has not appreciably improved, for reasons beyond Africa's control.

In view of the internationalization of economic life, the interrelation of interests and the increasing interdependence of the countries of the world, both rich and poor, economic issues and the problems of the developing countries make it necessary for the industrialized countries to view the problems of developing countries from a different perspective. Such perspective should be based on the concept of mutual interests, equity and collective responsibility, thus allowing for a healthy development of economic relations in the interest of all parties. The destiny of the future world will be a common one: progress for all retrogression for all. There is a dire need for all countries to engage in serious and comprehensive negotiations aimed at improving world economic conditions. Serious dialogue through multilateral co-operation has proved its usefulness, and the results of the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) testify to that.

In this connection, the Egyptian delegation to the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council last July took the initiative of calling for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to be devoted to discussion of the world economic and social situation and the means of promoting development and international economic co-operation. The formulation of a co-ordinated plan of action for the international community in the 1990s aimed at resolving the economic and social problems facing the peoples of the world is needed.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Power is not the best means of establishing peace and security. The best means is, rather, removal of the motives that lead to war, the supremacy of political rationality; making peace a life-style for our peoples.

For this reason we should step up our support for the United Nations to enable it to increase its positive contributions. We should act together in solidarity and shared responsibility - politically, economically and socially - so that we can come closer to a more humanitarian world that would instil in mankind faith in itself and its creative power to forge a better future and a brighter tomorrow.

Mr. MALILE (Albania) (interpretation from French): Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, to congratulate Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina on his election to the post of President of the Assembly and to convey to him our best wishes for the successful discharge of his important duties. We also congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, on his efforts to enhance the role of the United Nations in the cause of peace.

For more than four decades now, each year, at each of its sessions, the General Assembly has discussed major problems of concern to the international community. These deliberations have sought to strengthen the role of the United Nations in finding solutions to problems relating to the aspirations of peoples for freedom, independence, national sovereignty and independent development. If the United Nations has not always been able to discharge its functions, it is because the super-Powers have tried, in various ways, to use it to promote their own policies and interests. So many times the United Nations machinery has been misused to stifle the criticisms of Member States. Doubtless these attitudes run counter to the interests of the overwhelming majority of States, which wish to see the United Nations make sincere efforts to carry out its mission as a universal Organization in keeping with the Charter.

At present we are seeing signs of détente. We cannot but welcome this trend. Nevertheless, the fact is that we are living in a world fraught with contradictions and confrontations. We are far from a real, lasting peace. Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States have entered a period of adjustment based on their political, economic and military interests. Indeed, recent decades have shown that confrontations and arrangements between them have become cyclical.

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

Their policy has not really changed its basic trend towards hegemony. One of the most important and constant parameters of this policy is the accelerating arms race.

The most recent testimony to this was the third special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament, which was held in June this year and ended without any result - even without the adoption of a final document. Outside the United Nations, as Members are aware, the two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, have reached an agreement on missiles which they hailed as a new stage in the process of disarmament, whereas here at the United Nations at a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the voices of reason of Member States on the problem were ignored. This shows that the super-Powers consider questions of disarmament as matters exclusively within their competence and interests and that they minimize the role of other States in this area, deeming it negligible. This tendency to monopolize world affairs and to exercise diktat over international relations is a real danger for sovereign peoples and States. However important their role may be in view of their economic and military potential, it cannot in any way replace the role of the international community, in which all States must have an opportunity to state their views and to decide jointly on questions relating to the destinies of peoples and humanity and to international peace and security.

The world economic situation is a source of real concern and cannot be divorced from the political situation.

Unbalanced international relations continue to penalize primarily the developing countries, as a result of which most of them become increasingly impoverished and experience grave and widespread backwardness. Therefore the establishment of international economic relations on the basis of equality has now become a matter of great urgency.

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

The economic situation and at the same time the political situation are indicators of the fragility of current international security.

Without underestimating the value of any initiative taken to lessen tension, in the opinion of my delegation, the Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on Euro-missiles does not yet mean that peace in Europe and the world has become more secure. As long as there is still confrontation between the two political and military blocs on the continent of Europe and as long as the concept of security is based on the balance of power, it will be difficult to talk about true security. Life has shown us that the policy of blocs - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact - and the military presence of the super-Powers limit the national sovereignty of other States that are members of them and kindles and increases the spirit of mistrust and confrontation. By its totally independent policy outside of blocs, Albania has, in its own way, made its modest contribution to the cause of peace in the Balkans and in Europe.

Peace, international security and co-operation are one and indivisible. There can be no peace on one continent while there are tensions and conflicts in other parts of the world. There can be no true security in Europe if the Middle East or other areas are in flames and in a state of insecurity.

Albania has always been against regional conflicts and in favour of a negotiated settlement of discords. These conflicts, which have brought suffering and poverty to the countries involved, have always been exploited by the imperialist Powers to the detriment of peoples and of peace.

The Albanian Government welcomes the steps taken recently by the parties directly involved in the conflicts to extinguish these hotbeds of tension. In our judgement, when it is a matter of putting an end to regional conflicts, it is important to define settlements that are acceptable to the parties involved, and

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

not short-term solutions imposed from above. Similarly, we believe that it is just as important that the main contributions to these settlements should come from the States of the region where the conflict is taking place since they are the ones most interested in having a cease-fire in seeing peace established.

We cannot disregard the fact that, frequently, conflicts are kindled or extinguished depending on relations between the United States and the Soviet Union - in most cases, even at their instigation. Therefore, to allow them then to become the arbiters of these conflicts would be to let the seed of discord and conflict remain. This can be seen very clearly from what is now taking place in Afghanistan. Those who committed aggression, as well as those who have constantly fanned its flames throughout the conflict, are now posing as the saviours of the situation, acting as guarantors of the Afghanistan agreement.

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

But what kind of guarantors can these two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, be, if even after the agreement they continue to support and encourage the adversaries, in order to impose on the Afghan people a government that would defend the interest of one or both of them? The Afghan people should be free to decide their own future without any foreign interference.

The Albanian people and its Government welcomed the cease-fire between Iraq and Iran, which was welcomed by freedom-loving people throughout the world. We appreciate the steps taken by the two countries to put an end to a war that has serious consequences for the two neighbouring peoples and which is fraught with danger for overall peace and security. We hope that this wisdom and this determination will characterize the negotiations now under way between the two countries. We cannot fail to stress that peace in this region is still threatened by the presence of foreign fleets in the Persian Gulf. Peace cannot be preserved by the gunboats of the super-Powers; it can be preserved only by the peoples of the Gulf States themselves. For all those who have sent warships into the region the question of the withdrawal of the fleets will be the real touchstone of their true devotion to international peace and security.

This year the Middle East has witnessed some very important events. The uprising of the Palestinian popular masses which broke out on the West Bank and Gaza against the Israeli occupiers and which has been resolutely carried on for more than a year now has created a new situation and the immediate task at hand is for the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate national aspiration for their own land. Doubtless, a lasting solution to the problems of the Middle East is impossible without a solution being found to the Palestinian problem. The Government and people of Albania, consistent in its support of the just cause of

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

the Arab peoples, will continue, as we have done in the past, to support unreservedly the struggle of the suffering people of Palestine and that of all fraternal Arab peoples, to oust Israeli aggressors from the occupied territories.

As a Mediterranean country, we cannot fail to be concerned about the persistent presence of the war fleets of the super-Powers in the Mediterranean and we cannot fail to stress the danger it involves. Their presence has not only made the sea one of those militarized zones in the world, but has also more than once created a dangerous situation.

The most recent proposals for the so-called demilitarization of the Mediterranean also seek to justify the balanced presence of the fleets of the super-Powers. In order for the Mediterranean to become a sea of peace and co-operation, the war fleets must be withdrawn and the bases and foreign troops eliminated.

The development of friendly relations between our States and the Balkan States is a basic, ongoing tenet of the foreign policy of Albania. Albania not only proclaims the advantages of, and the need for, a policy of good-neighbourliness, but by implementing it in practice has done its utmost to establish a political climate favouring understanding, trust and true co-operation among the countries of this area.

The Albanian Government has never sought conflict in the Balkans. It deems it its duty to work towards the establishment of stability in our region and the constant improvement of the situation. Destabilization of any Balkan country would harm the balance of that area and peace in general. We believe that those primarily concerned with the security and stability of the Balkans are the peoples and States of the region themselves. They cannot fail to appreciate the importance for them of keeping foreign elements at bay.

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

In our view, the existence of different political and social systems in the Gulf countries should not become an obstacle to the development of State relations. Recognition of this fact and respect for it constitute an important premise for Balkan co-operation. We welcome the meeting of the foreign ministers of the Balkan States as a positive development, one that is helping to establish a spirit of understanding, trust and co-operation in our region. We are convinced that joint efforts could lead to steady progress in this positive process.

Of course, the Balkans have problems. These are basically of a bilateral nature, but they also affect the region as a whole. However, common sense and realism should prevail over the sad past, dominated by heated emotion. They should prevail over a present that is sometimes full of prejudice and actions fraught with consequences. One of the most acute problems, one that continues to be of concern to the States of our region, is that of the nationalities and minorities living in the territories of various countries. In the treatment of this rather thorny problem, on which the level of relations between Balkan countries has often depended, it would be necessary to proceed without undue emotion, but with wisdom, political wisdom, in a spirit of justice, keeping in mind specific historical facts, free from any narrow spirit of nationalism. This policy would help to strengthen understanding and trust between neighbouring countries. It would help to lessen and eliminate tension and to pave the way towards bilateral and multilateral co-operation.

When minorities and nationalities enjoy all rights without discrimination, they become cohesive factors within a country, elements of rapprochement and friendship between peoples and countries of the region.

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

Just as the extension of multifaceted relations between States is to their advantage, the democratization of relations between various nationalities within each country, equality between nations, nationalities and minorities, their cultural and economic emancipation help to bring people closer together and to promote friendship between them. We believe that the peoples and States of the Balkans, which cannot fail to have learned from their past and present history, are capable of achieving that.

The economic situation in Africa is of concern to the United Nations, which in May of 1986 held a special session of the General Assembly devoted to this question. Quite rightly, Africa continues to be concerned with the gravity of this situation, which in many cases has amounted to destitution, and in which a disquieting shortage of food is threatening whole regions with real famine.

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

The causes of this situation must be sought in brutal colonial domination and in the present neo-colonial exploitation, which, in the most diverse forms and ways, devours the rich resources of the continent and its cheap commodities, guaranteeing ever-higher profits for the exploiters.

Similarly, the imperialist, racist policy of the South African régime, which imposes inhuman oppression and violence on the Azanian and Namibian peoples and is a permanent threat to the countries of southern Africa, is fraught with consequences for the peoples and countries of Africa.

The Government and people of Albania supports unreservedly, and will continue so to support, the struggle of the Azanian people for freedom, the struggle of the Namibian people for national and social liberation and the struggle of all African peoples against racism, apartheid and neo-colonialism. The People's Socialist Republic of Albania also supports the efforts of the Korean people to bring about the independent reunification of its homeland.

Humanity is at the threshold of the twenty-first century. The mind and intelligence of man have made possible unprecedented progress in discovering the secrets of nature, as reflected in discoveries that have become milestones in science and technology and open up great possibilities for progress in discovering new horizons. We are bound to state, however, that the achievements of science and technology, instead of fully serving the cause of progress for the betterment of mankind are often, because of imperialist policies, used to serve the arms race and preparation for war. It is inadmissible that the achievements of science, instead of being the priceless asset of the whole of mankind, should be made the monopolies or domains of those that use them not only as a source of super-profits but also as a method of exerting pressure on and dictating to others. On more than one occasion during the past decade the majority of Member States, in particular

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

developing countries, have forcefully raised the question of the transfer of technology as one of the goals of efforts to establish more just and equal international economic relations. Despite everything, these just demands have so far fallen on deaf ears.

At the present time we are facing another negative phenomenon. Although by its very nature this problem may seem to be purely ecological, which it is, there is also a marked political overtone. I refer to the covert or overt efforts of some States to rid their territories of industrial waste, including toxic and radioactive waste, and dump it in other countries, primarily the developing countries.

It is therefore a paradox and unfair that the industrially advanced countries, instead of transferring to the developing countries the technology that would help them to make progress, are offering to transfer waste, including toxic waste. As if not content with the exploitation and other injustices they have imposed on those countries, the big Powers are now committing against them acts that are inadmissible even from the most elementary human standpoint.

It is true that the concern arising from ecological problems has now taken on regional, even world-wide, dimensions. The safeguarding of the environmental balance has now become a real concern for the Adriatic and Mediterranean countries. The dumping of industrial waste, particularly from the chemical industry, has caused intolerable pollution, especially in the northern Adriatic. This is a semi-closed sea and the consequences of this type of pollution are even more serious.

My country associates itself with the first steps towards co-operation in the ecological sphere on an approach to problems regarding the protection of the environment in the Balkan peninsula and in neighbouring areas.

(Mr. Malile, Albania)

The People's Republic of Albania pursues a totally independent foreign policy. Its centuries-long history, as well as the history of the past 40 years, has taught the people of Albania to place its freedom, independence and complete sovereignty, which are the basis of our State policy, above all else. Most important of all, it has not considered these assets apart from the context of what goes on outside our country, apart from the freedom and independence of other peoples. We therefore respect other people and, at the same time, ask for their respect. Accordingly, we are not afraid to co-operate with other States; we desire such co-operation. We see it as a way to promote our own development and to contribute to the development of international relations and co-operation. It is important also that this co-operation be based on equality and mutual advantage, and that it do no damage to the sovereignty or social system of any country.

The delegation of Albania has stated the views of its Government on some of the most basic questions relating to current developments with the sincere desire of making its modest contribution to the consideration of certain agenda items before the Assembly. It will spare no effort, together with other Member States, to help to ensure that the work of this session will be as fruitful and successful as possible.

Mr. YILMAZ (Turkey): It gives me great pleasure to extend warm congratulations to Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina on his election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. We are meeting at an auspicious time when there are encouraging developments on the world political scene. I am confident that under his guidance this session will contribute to the further improvement of the international atmosphere by addressing the issues before it with vision and wisdom.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

I should like also to pay a tribute to the President of the forty-second session, Mr. Peter Florin of the German Democratic Republic, who presided over a particularly busy session, as well as the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly.

This year we are witnessing a growing and more effective role for the United Nations in the peaceful settlement of regional problems. We hope that the momentum for peace-making efforts will be maintained, so as to contribute to the achievement of lasting solutions based on realism and justice.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

In this connection I should like to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, whose diplomatic skill, patience and resolve we admire. I should like to reaffirm our full support for his untiring efforts in the service of the United Nations. We rejoice at the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations in recognition of the contributions of the Organization to world peace.

The positive implications of the ongoing dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union underline the impact of East-West relations on the international atmosphere. The international setting today is much more favourable in comparison with the early 1980s for making progress on international issues. It is important to maintain and build on this trend.

In the past 12 months the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union have started to yield concrete results. The conclusion and ratification of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - has been a historic step resulting in the elimination of an entire class of nuclear weapons. An agreement on the substantial reduction of strategic arms between the United States and the Soviet Union would be another fundamental development in the process of nuclear arms control. We welcome the progress made during the Moscow summit meeting with respect to those issues and hope that the entire range of arms control and disarmament issues will continue to be seriously and effectively addressed.

The convening of the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament last June also provided a welcome opportunity for extensive consideration of the issues involved in the arms control field. This exercise has been useful in identifying various approaches to the disarmament process and the different perceptions, interests and priorities of Member States.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

It has confirmed the close relationship between disarmament and the security concerns of all States and the maintenance of international peace and security.

Arms control and disarmament constitute a comprehensive process, encompassing nuclear as well as conventional and chemical weapons. We hope that a convention banning chemical weapons on a global basis, accompanied by effective verification measures, will be finalized soon. We welcome President Reagan's constructive and timely proposal for the convening of an international conference on this question. It is imperative to keep in sight the integrated nature of the endeavours in the various fields of arms control. The asymmetries between the conventional forces of the two major alliance systems underline the need for addressing the question of the overall strategic relationship in a more comprehensive way. In this connection we hope that agreement will soon be reached on the mandate of the conventional stability talks to be held between the 23 members of the two military alliances.

The success of arms control initiatives depends in the first instance on the establishment of an environment of confidence among the parties concerned. I should like to underline in this connection the significance of the measures undertaken within the framework of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). Turkey attaches great importance to the confidence- and security-building measures adopted at the Stockholm Conference in 1986. We hope it will be possible to agree on the mandate of future negotiations among the 35 States participating in the CSCE in order to expand the results of the Stockholm Conference.

Considering the growing need to extend those efforts to other regions of the world, in order to reduce tensions and enhance stability, a resolution envisaging a similar process adapted to the special requirements of the Islamic countries was

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approved at the 17th session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held recently in Amman.

I would be remiss if I did not stress that arms control agreements and confidence-building measures will not suffice if they are not effectively complemented by respect for fundamental human rights on a global scale. Turkey is proud of its record in this respect and on the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights I am glad to say that Turkey has been the first country to ratify the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishments, of the Council of Europe. We have also ratified the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

We attach particular importance to cultivating peaceful and friendly relations with all our neighbours and the countries of our region. Fully aware of the interrelationship between security and prosperity, we wish to develop closer and better relations and mutually beneficial co-operation with all of them. We are fully committed to the peaceful settlement of existing differences through a process of substantive and meaningful negotiations.

For the first time in history, the Foreign Ministers of the six Balkan countries came together in Belgrade last February to consider the possibilities for developing lasting multilateral co-operation. Inter-Balkan friendship and co-operation have always been a priority foreign policy objective of Turkey since the early days of our Republic. We are therefore determined to continue to play a constructive and dynamic role in order to contribute to the creation of an atmosphere of confidence among the Balkan countries. As we stressed in Belgrade, respect for human rights is a prerequisite for the emergence of such an atmosphere.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

With this understanding we have initiated a dialogue with Bulgaria. The Protocol that the two parties signed sets out the prerequisites and the mechanism for the normalization of Turkish-Bulgarian relations. Our relations are heavily affected by the situation of the Turkish Muslim minority in Bulgaria, a humanitarian question also involving contractual obligations. Both Turkish and world public opinion await a prompt and satisfactory solution to this problem. The ongoing process has not yet brought about any concrete results. Improved prospects for the Turkish Muslim minority will certainly lead to a new era of friendly and co-operative relations between the two countries. We continue to hope that Bulgaria will take the necessary action to ensure the creation of an atmosphere conducive to this end.

During the past year important steps have been taken for bringing regional conflicts to an end.

The Afghanistan talks were successfully concluded with the signing of the Geneva Accords in April. Foremost among many factors, the perseverance and the sacrifices of the Afghan resistance and the patient efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative made that achievement possible.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

Pakistan has sheltered millions of Afghan refugees and has been instrumental in the shaping of international reaction to the situation in Afghanistan for the past eight years. The international community is greatly indebted to Pakistan for those efforts. The creation of the necessary objective conditions for the voluntary return of the Afghan refugees is another important task which has to be faced.

Grievous devastation has been inflicted upon Afghanistan. A major international effort will be required for the reconstruction of the country. We welcome the initiative taken by the international community to come to the assistance of Afghanistan, and salute the efforts made by Prince Sadruddin Agha Khan to co-ordinate international action that has been taken. Turkey intends to contribute substantively to the reconstruction and the economic revitalization of Afghanistan following the establishment of a representative Government.

The cease-fire which has put an end to eight years of suffering between Iran and Iraq came as a great relief to the whole world. A special tribute should be paid to the Secretary-General for his dedicated efforts, which have substantially contributed to bringing about the cease-fire between our two friends and neighbours. We welcome the holding of talks between Iran and Iraq and fully support diplomatic efforts aimed at restoring peace between them. We know that this will be a long and arduous process. As a country which maintains a sustained and continuous dialogue with both parties, we are ready to contribute to the best of our ability to the progress of the peace process and to the promotion of an atmosphere of understanding and mutual trust.

The effects of this conflict have not been limited to the warring parties but have been seriously felt in the whole area. In order to avoid the occurrence of similar conflicts, intensive efforts should be deployed to create an atmosphere of

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mutual trust in the region and to re-establish a climate of confidence among the countries there.

As a country respectful of fundamental human rights, Turkey has recently accepted, on purely humanitarian grounds, tens of thousands of persons coming from Iraq and has provided them with food, shelter and medical care. This is not the first time that we have welcomed large numbers of persons on our soil. Our history abounds with similar examples.

Since the end of last year Palestinian resistance in the occupied territories has dominated developments in the Middle East. We regard this continuing popular resistance to Israeli occupation as an expression of the long-standing frustration and suffering of the Palestinian people and of their desire to achieve their national aspirations.

We believe that the ongoing uprising is a constant reminder to all the parties concerned, including Israel, and to the world of the urgent need to find a just and lasting solution to the Middle East question. Turkey believes that such a solution can be brought about only on the basis of the withdrawal by Israel from the territories occupied since 1967 and the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, including their right to self-determination with all that this implies. Such a solution should also recognize the right of all States in the region to live within secure and recognized boundaries. We recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. For the peace process to be viable, Palestinian participation is indispensable.

We are closely following the developments engendered by the recent statement of His Majesty King Hussein about the severance of the administrative and legal ties between Jordan and the West Bank. That is likely to have an important impact

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on the Middle East peace process. We shall continue to support all Middle East peace initiatives along the lines I have just mentioned. In this context, Turkey would welcome the convening, with the agreement of all the parties concerned, of the International Peace Conference. We are prepared to shoulder our responsibilities in that regard, if so requested.

The situation in Lebanon continues to be another source of instability and concern in the Middle East. We are particularly concerned about the difficulties encountered in the Lebanese presidential election. We are hoping that this latest crisis may be overcome by the Lebanese themselves, through legal means and without endangering the country's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty.

I should like to stress also the importance we attach to a prompt solution of the situation in Kampuchea. We are glad to note the positive developments which have taken place in the past few months. The Jakarta Informal Meeting is certainly an important beginning and a significant step aimed at putting an end to the armed conflict in Kampuchea through the complete withdrawal of foreign troops, so as to enable the people of Kampuchea to exercise their right to self-determination and achieve national reconciliation. Turkey supports diplomatic activities aimed at achieving that objective and pays a tribute to the members of the Association of South-East Nations (ASEAN) for their efforts; they have worked so hard for the reaching of a political settlement in Kampuchea.

In order to remove confrontation and reduce tensions in eastern Asia, we continue to attach importance to the ongoing search for a meaningful dialogue in the Korean peninsula. The humanitarian approach can be an excellent way to create the favourable climate necessary for achieving progress. Peaceful solutions to the questions between the two sides will, we hope, lead to their eventual representation as full Members of our Organization.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

The deteriorating situation in South Africa, resulting from the inhuman system of apartheid, continues to be a source of grave concern. Unfortunately, the political situation in South Africa has not improved during the past 12 months. Tensions and violence continue to cause widespread human suffering in that country.

We believe that so long as South Africa has not totally abolished its inadmissible racial policies, and has not embarked upon a real process of peaceful democratic change, the international community should maintain its efforts. More than ever before, the situation in South Africa requires firm conviction and resolute action on the part of the United Nations.

The continuation of the South African occupation of Namibia, an affront to the principle of self-determination, is another deplorable aspect of the situation in southern Africa. It is a matter of the deepest regret that the people of Namibia, 20 years after the adoption of the United Nations plan for the independence of that Territory, have not been able to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

My Government is encouraged by the progress reported in the quadripartite talks concerning this question. We welcomed the cease-fire on 10 August 1988 as a vital first step in the right direction. We earnestly hope that this development will lead in the near future to the long overdue settlement of the Namibian question through the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). As a founding member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, Turkey will continue to give its full support to the legitimate struggle of the people of Namibia for independence. In this regard, my Government subscribes to the main thrust of the Istanbul Declaration and Call for Action adopted at the end of the Seminar on the International Responsibility for Namibia's Independence, held last March in my country.

In Central America, the time that has elapsed since the signing of the peace plan put forward by Costa Rica, and the proposals by other Central American countries last year, demonstrate the difficulties and obstacles that exist in the search for peace. However, we must not lose heart. The search for a peaceful solution must go on. This search began with the Contadora process, the most comprehensive framework for addressing the political and economic problems of that region. We believe that a viable solution must emanate from the region, and I would like to reiterate our support for all the regional efforts towards peace in Central America.

We have always supported the search for a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question through direct negotiations between the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General. Following the agreement reached in August through the Secretary-General's mission of good offices, the two sides have embarked upon a new negotiating process. We welcome this development and express our hope that this new round of negotiations will be the beginning of the process of the achievement of a lasting settlement in Cyprus.

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through the establishment of a bicomunal, bizonal federation based on the political equality of the two peoples of the island. We shall pursue our consistent policy of supporting the efforts towards a just and lasting settlement. As we have previously, I wish to stress here also that it is important for all third parties to refrain from taking positions that may undermine the negotiating process in Cyprus.

The situation of refugees throughout the world has assumed alarming dimensions. The problem is especially severe in Africa and South-East Asia, and urgently needs attention. The plight of the Afghan refugees is still a sombre reality despite the Geneva Agreements. Other parts of the world are also plagued by similar calamities.

In dealing with this problem, a comprehensive approach should be adopted, taking into consideration the needs of both the refugees themselves and the countries of first refuge. Appropriate international mechanisms to this end should be devised immediately. In this context, I would like to pay a special tribute to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for his untiring efforts.

In view of the importance that Turkey attaches to effective international co-operation in action against illicit trafficking in and abuse of narcotic drugs, we welcome and support the initiatives undertaken by the United Nations in this crucial area, especially during the last year. In this connection, we subscribe to the proposal made by my colleague Sir Geoffrey Howe to the effect that the international community should consider adopting measures for the seizure of the assets of drug traffickers wherever they are, thus preventing the diversion of funds to the support of such other evils as international terrorism and arms trafficking.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

As an outcome of ongoing efforts in this field, a major step will be taken at the end of this year when the conference of plenipotentiaries adopts the new convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Turkey welcomes this development and expects the convention to be signed and ratified by a large number of Member States.

I have to state with profound regret that the threat posed by terrorism to every society and to all facets of international relations has not abated. On the contrary, acts, methods and practices of terrorism, which have been repeatedly and unequivocally condemned by this world body, have continued to claim human lives on an increasing scale. I feel obliged to remind the Assembly that Turkey has for many years stressed the necessity of effective international co-operation against terrorism in all its forms. I have to point out, however, that international co-operation is not yet satisfactory.

I also want to reiterate that there can be no double standard on terrorism. Attempts to differentiate between various forms of terrorism can only encourage the culprits and lead to new acts of outrage. Those who support or tolerate terrorism assume a grave responsibility, whatever their motives. History has shown that those who support, tolerate or provide a haven for terrorism are bound to regret their short-sighted policies eventually.

Let me now turn to international economic issues. As the decade of the 1980s draws to an end the time has come for us to concentrate our efforts on policies for the next decade. Careful planning for the 1990s stands out as a necessity for the international community if it is to fulfil the expectations of coming generations. Since the early 1980s the world economy has gone through very serious difficulties. The critical external debt problem, efforts towards structural adjustment, widespread protectionist practices and major economic imbalances have

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been the chief features of this period. The severe problems we have had to face in this decade remain essentially unchanged. However, this rather dismal situation should not cause us to give way to pessimism for the coming years. As economic indicators demonstrate, the international outlook is better on balance than it was in the early 1980s. The international community is more experienced and has better insight regarding the underlying causes of the current problems.

Regarding the external debt problem, which has acquired serious dimensions, the increased efforts on the part of debtor and creditor countries, multilateral institutions and banks to improve the situation are encouraging. On the other hand, the shortcomings in the structural adjustment policies of the developing countries, the social costs of such policies and the need to consider them in a more realistic manner are better understood. It is now evident that debtor countries are in need of adequate external financial support as well as easy access to international markets to boost their growth on a sustained basis. In this respect, the launching of the Uruguay Round and the ongoing endeavours to strengthen the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) are good opportunities that must be seized. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the fate of both the trade negotiations and indebtedness depends to a great extent on the expansionary nature of the global environment, and this, in turn, depends on the elimination of international imbalances and the restoration of higher growth in the industrialized countries.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

The erosion of multilateralism over the past decade has been highly noticeable, despite the growing need to make the international framework more effective. In view of the increasing interdependence that transforms national and regional economic issues into global issues, we believe that both North and South have much to gain from the rapid restoration of effective multilateral co-operation and dialogue on development questions.

We regret to see the divisions between North and South. Overcoming those divisions should be the major task of the international community. We know that every country has its own special circumstances as well as different priorities in the implementation of development policies. Many developing countries have a valuable accumulation of experience in the development process, which they can usefully share among themselves. In that respect, the middle-income countries deserve special attention. In our view, those countries are in a position to play a much more helpful role in contributing to the development process of others.

Since the beginning of this decade Turkey has been in the process of implementing measures of economic reform. This new course of action has meant a radical departure from previous economic policies away from inward-looking approaches, import substitution and excessive State intervention towards a greater play of market forces and increased liberalization of the economy. Despite the difficulties and costs inherent in such programmes, the outcome of this new policy orientation has been highly encouraging.

Within the framework of this new approach, while trying to expand our relations with the developed nations, we have also set a good example of increasing South-South co-operation. In that context, efforts have been made to enhance economic co-operation among the Islamic countries. There has been a substantial increase in our trade with the Middle Eastern and North African countries.

(Mr. Yilmaz, Turkey)

In that connection, we have allocated funds for financing technical co-operation with 12 African countries. We have also conducted in-plant group training programmes and provided undergraduate and graduate fellowships in Turkey. We are pleased to see a sharper global focus on African development problems, and we hope that the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 will bear tangible results. For its part, Turkey will continue to strengthen its co-operation and its economic ties with the African countries.

The protection and preservation of our environment is a major task facing the international community. It is not only an urgent and pressing problem confronting us now; it is also a heavy responsibility that we all bear towards future generations. I regret to say that, despite all official and voluntary efforts, the destruction of the environment continues.

Recently, another alarming development has become increasingly evident. Here I refer to the dumping of industrial wastes in developing countries. Various forms of waste, including toxic and chemical products and even nuclear waste, have been shipped through various channels to developing countries where public opinion is thought to be less sensitive to environmental questions. Illicit ways and means have frequently been resorted to in this deadly transfer.

Even the oceans have not been spared this modern plague. A new kind of piracy has developed, in the form of dumping waste in the high seas where coastal and international controls cannot easily be exercised.

We believe that international conventions with effective control and verification measures should be speedily adopted within the framework of the General Assembly and competent international organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.