



General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/43/PV.14
4 October 1988

ENGLISH

Forty-third session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 3 October 1988, at 10 a.m.

<p><u>President:</u> later: later:</p>	<p>Mr. CAPUTO Mr. MORTENSEN (Vice-President) Mr. CAPUTO</p>	<p>(Argentina) (Denmark) (Argentina)</p>
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- General debate [9] (continued)

Address by Dr. Yassin Saeed Noman, Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

Statement made by:

Mr. Fall (Senegal)

Address by Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis

Statements made by:

Mr. Manglapus (Philippines)
Mr. Velayati (Islamic Republic of Iran)

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

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS BY MR. YASSIN SAEED NOMAN, PRIME MINISTER OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Mr. Yassin Saeed Noman, Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Mr. Yassin Saeed Noman, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. NOMAN (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): It is a pleasure for me to participate in a session held amidst such special international circumstances, in which concerted efforts are being made in the quest for peace, and tireless, unrelenting work is being done in addressing the countless international and regional issues and laying the foundations for constructive and fruitful co-operation among the peoples and countries of the world.

Such circumstances have become possible thanks to the new international climate based on conciliation and deriving from the improvement in Soviet-American relations and the positive results of summit meetings, particularly the recent Moscow summit. That summit created a climate of détente, opened new horizons for a just and comprehensive peace and provided the conditions necessary for tackling numerous regional and international questions.

In these special circumstances, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on the confidence placed in you and on your well-deserved election to the

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presidency of this session of the General Assembly. We are confident that you are amply qualified to lead us to success in handling the issues under consideration during this session.

This is a good opportunity to convey our deep gratitude to Mr. Peter Florin, Deputy Foreign Minister of the German Democratic Republic, who conducted the deliberations of the forty-second session of the General Assembly with competence and ability that showed how deserving he was of the confidence of the international community.

It would be remiss of me not to express to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, our deep appreciation of his continuing efforts to consolidate the role of the United Nations in addressing many regional and international questions. These efforts translate the will of the international community, which defines the ways and means for finding just solutions to those questions. We take note with great pleasure of the tangible progress achieved in this direction.

Our participation in this session of the General Assembly coincides with the celebration by our people in Yemen of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the National Liberation Revolution of 14 October, under the leadership of the National Front for the Liberation of Southern Yemen. This part of the Yemeni homeland remained under British occupation for 129 years, years of backwardness, throughout which it was divided into more than 23 sultanates, emirates and sheikhdoms, which separated our citizens and impeded our growth and development.

Ever since we won our independence 21 years ago, we have been trying to achieve balanced urban and rural development and build an independent national economy free from foreign hegemony. We wanted to build an economy that catered to the material and spiritual needs of our citizens, after the unification of all emirates and sheikhdoms under the administration of one central Government.

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Despite the scarcity of resources, the backwardness of the infrastructures of the national economy that we inherited, and the acute internal and external difficulties that we faced from the very day of our independence, our country was able to stand on its own two feet. We were able to endure our plight thanks to the steadfastness and solidarity of our people, who believed in the justice of their national and social cause, under the leadership of the Yemeni Socialist Party. As a result, we have succeeded in consolidating our political independence and have come a long way along the road of our independent social and economic development. We have sought to improve the standards of living of our people, increase their participation in the practical political life of the country and enhance their contribution to building their new society.

Within the national Yemeni framework we have worked tirelessly with our brethren in the northern part of the homeland to create the objective bases on which the desired state of unity of a unified Yemen will be built. We have achieved tangible progress in this direction following the signature of the historic agreement of San'a on 4 May 1988. Under this agreement we agreed to joint oil investment in the border area between north and south Yemen, namely, in the area between the governorates of Shabwa and Ma'reb. We have also agreed to freedom of movement for all citizens of the Yemeni homeland with identity cards. We believe that the San'a agreement has opened wide horizons for further tangible practical steps which can lay the bases for the reunification of the Yemeni homeland through peaceful and democratic means.

On the regional level, we are working to develop brotherly relations with the countries of the region on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty and independence, and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. We are seeking to expand the spheres of co-operation among us in a manner that serves the

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common interests of our peoples, promotes peace and stability in the area and helps to avert present risks so that our peoples can at last enjoy prosperity and progress.

We have achieved auspicious progress in this direction by creating the best conditions for building the economy internally and contributing to the promotion of joint Arab endeavours, side by side with our brothers in the Arab countries. By so doing we hope to serve our national causes, foremost among which ranks the recovery of the national inalienable rights of the Arab Palestinian people. This common approach will also enable us to face challenges to and frustrate the conspiracies hatched against our peoples.

Within the framework, principles and objectives of our foreign policy we continue to promote and develop our relations with other countries of the world in the political, economic and social fields. Through continuing efforts we are trying to expand the activities of our country in international forums, particularly within the framework of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which is the common denominator for us and the majority of the countries of the world.

This year has witnessed many salient events and developments, including the cease-fire recently agreed to between the two neighbouring countries, Iraq and Iran. We support that decision whole-heartedly, just as we have always supported Security Council resolution 598 (1987).

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The war, it is known, did not pose a danger for the belligerent parties alone; it threatened our region in its entirety. The continued hostilities exacerbated tension and presaged disasters, inflicting instability on the region and bringing turmoil to the international situation. Now that the war is over, everyone is called upon to strive for the success of the negotiations, and to build a solid foundation for a permanent peace. We want this call to be construed as a call to the peoples and countries of the region, which bear full responsibility for the maintenance of its peace and security. We hope that the direct negotiations between Iran and Iraq will lead to a just and comprehensive peace agreement, and end the conflict between them by addressing its underlying causes through constructive meaningful dialogue. That would eliminate the dangers facing our entire region and spare the two neighbouring peoples further losses in life and property. It would also frustrate the sinister plans hatched against our people to undermine the peace and stability of the region, and ultimately pave the way to the rebuilding of what the war has destroyed.

While we commend the climate of détente on the international scene which has created conditions favourable for the reaching of agreements on many regional and international problems, we appeal to the international community to concentrate on the dangers that would result from any further exacerbation of the situation in the Middle East region. The continued Israeli occupation of the Arab Palestinian territories is a time bomb that may explode at any minute, and as such it is a threat to security and stability locally, regionally and internationally. Responsibility for this state of affairs rests with Israel's arrogance, its continued policy of aggression, its defiance of international law, norms and humanitarian principles, and its rejection of all international efforts aimed at achieving permanent, just and comprehensive peace in the region. There is no need

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to recall that peace in the region can be reached only by addressing the crux of the problem - that is the need for realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

In saluting the Arab Palestinian masses in their heroic uprising in the face of the brutal acts of oppression perpetrated by the Israeli occupation authorities, we renew our commitment to stand side by side with our Palestinian brothers in their struggle under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), their sole, legitimate representative. We reiterate our continued support for the courageous and heroic popular uprising. Furthermore, we believe that a just solution of the Palestinian question can be brought about only on the basis set forth by the international community, namely, recovery of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which are their rights to return, to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent State on their national soil.

In order to find a just, permanent and comprehensive solution of the Middle East question, we believe we must undertake urgent and necessary steps to convene the International Conference on Peace in the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the permanent members of the Security Council.

While speaking of the Middle East, I find it opportune to renew our appeal to our brothers in Lebanon to resort to reason and reach an immediate agreement that will end the political vacuum there, guarantee Lebanon's unity, independence and sovereignty, provide security and stability to the Lebanese people, and pool all efforts to put an end to the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon.*

* Mr. Mortensen (Denmark), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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There are also indications on the horizon of the success of international efforts aimed at finding a political solution to the problem of Western Sahara in conformity with United Nations resolutions. Similar efforts are being made to solve the question of Cyprus in a way that will guarantee its territorial integrity, independence and non-aligned status. We welcome and support all such efforts.

We also welcome what has been achieved in the context of the Geneva agreement on the political settlement in Afghanistan, and the steps so far taken in that direction. We call upon all parties concerned to redouble their efforts to implement this agreement, to overcome all attempts to obstruct it, and to give impetus to the process of national reconciliation in Afghanistan so that the Afghan people can start enjoying stability and prosperity.

Furthermore, we applaud the efforts to reach a just political settlement on the situation in Kampuchea so that peace and stability can be achieved in South-East Asia. We also welcome all serious attempts to reunify the two Koreas by peaceful and democratic means, and we support the efforts made by the Democratic Republic of Korea to this end. We also call for concerted international efforts to support the Central American peace plan. We deem it necessary to eliminate all obstacles being put in its way. We also believe it necessary to end all designs and acts of aggression aimed at undermining the sovereignty of Nicaragua and its national Government, which is the only way to guarantee the promotion of peace and stability in the region.

With respect to southern Africa, we hope that the agreement reached in Geneva will prove to be a step towards the independence of Namibia. In this regard, we believe that responsibility for Namibia and its people lies with the United Nations. Hence, we renew the call to implement Security Council resolution

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435 (1978), since it represents the internationally agreed framework for the independence of the Territory, and we confirm the need for the full participation of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in any endeavour to that end.

We believe that the international community must impose mandatory sanctions on the South African racist régime to deter it and to ensure that it will respect and comply with the international will. The international community must bring more pressure to bear on the racist régime to obtain the release of Nelson Mandela, the prominent African hero.

While reviewing the important achievements of 1988, we cannot but give due credit to the results of the Moscow summit meeting between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union. That summit meeting has made it possible to exchange the instruments of ratification of the most important bilateral agreement ever reached in the field of disarmament. There is no doubt that this agreement, together with other bilateral accords concluded between the two countries on various levels, has had extremely favourable results on their bilateral relations and on the international situation and co-operation in general. We are confident that the results of the Moscow summit meeting will be the beginning of a continuing process of giving priority to dialogue and co-operation in international relations and enhancing spheres of mutual co-operation and common interests. Here we should like to pay a tribute to the positive initiatives of the Soviet Union and to express our hope that what has been achieved thus far will contribute to the adoption of fruitful and effective measures to curb the arms race - particularly the nuclear arms race - and ultimately end it. It is our sincere hope that it will prove possible to reach an early agreement on a 50 per cent reduction in the strategic nuclear armaments of both countries, prevent the arms race in outer space, eliminate all weapons of mass destruction and conclude a convention to ban

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the production and use of chemical weapons. We cannot overemphasize the importance of reaching an agreement on a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

On the regional level, we believe that urgent measures must be taken to eliminate the dangers posed by Israeli nuclear armaments and the nuclear capability of the racist South African régime. We deem it extremely urgent to oppose in no uncertain terms the dumping of nuclear waste in developing countries and to call on the international community to address this problem and the dangerous risks inherent therein.

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We also hope that the recent improvement in international relations will spill over to give impetus to the international efforts aimed at the convening of the international conference on the Indian Ocean as a necessary step towards the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

It is natural that we should pin our hopes on the improvement of international relations which has created favourable conditions in which to address the numerous regional and international political problems. We for our part will spare no effort to contribute, side by side with other members of the international community, to the creation of favourable circumstances for further conciliation and co-operation among the peoples of the world so as to improve and enhance the quality of life for all. We whole-heartedly support the sincere efforts made to strengthen the role of the United Nations and its various bodies, thus enabling it to fulfil its task and realize our peoples' aspirations to stability and security.

We likewise hope that adequate attention will be given to international economic problems and to finding just solutions to them, thus supporting our countries' development efforts and fulfilling our peoples' aspirations to independent economic and social progress. Failing to address the trend of international economic, fiscal and monetary relations and make them more just and equitable by recognizing the developing countries as active partners in the international arena will exacerbate the crisis in the international economic order and widen the gap between the developed industrial countries and the developing ones. This gap is bound to widen further and further as a result of the restrictive attitude of some developed countries in the trading, monetary, financing and developmental spheres. The unfair conditions imposed by the international financial institutions add insult to injury, thus causing political and social instability in the developing countries, exacerbating the stagnation of

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their economies or the decrease of their growth rates. This becomes commonplace in the majority of developing countries, in particular the least developed among them which already suffer from scarce natural and financial resources,

It is not strange then that the exacerbation of the suffering of the developing countries and their inability to pay their foreign debt have created a real crisis that has become known as the foreign debt crisis. This crisis should be addressed by finding objective and comprehensive solutions that take into consideration the interests of all parties concerned free from narrow, selfish concerns.

This grim picture of the international economic situation requires, first and foremost, the revitalization of international negotiations for the establishment of a new international economic order.

The international community, which is enjoying the breeze of international political détente, can reflect the same atmosphere in the field of international economic relations. This does not require planning strategies and new instruments inasmuch as it requires a sincere desire and definite resolve to implement economic strategies and instruments in the economic field that have already been agreed upon. More important still is our co-operation for the realization of the desired objectives of our peoples. Will we not proceed in the march of prevailing optimism? We hope so. Otherwise all that we have so far achieved will remain incomplete.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Yassin Saeed Noman, Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. FALL (Senegal) (interpretation from French): The delegation of Senegal is pleased to extend to the President, through me, its warmest congratulations, to wish him every success in the important task conferred upon him and to assure him, in this context, of its complete co-operation and total support. His election to the presidency of the forty-third session of our Assembly is an eloquent tribute solemnly paid by the Members of the United Nations to his great country as well as to him on the outstanding intellectual and moral qualities he possesses. His high sense of responsibility, his faith in the United Nations and his vast experience in the field of international affairs undoubtedly guarantee that the work of the present session will meet with success.

Mr. Peter Florin, who preceded him in his office, conducted our debates successfully throughout his term of office, so rich in events. We should like here to reiterate our gratitude to him.

I should like also to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, a man of courage and conviction, a staunch fighter for peace and co-operation among peoples, who deserves our appreciation and our support for the continuation and completion of the remarkable task to which he has totally dedicated himself and whose encouraging results in many ways demonstrate the timeliness and impact of the noble ideals of our Organization, as well as a positive perception of his role in the field of international peace, security and co-operation.

In the history of nations as well as of institutions, there are critical times when the future of mankind is decided. The present period seems to us to be one of those crucial moments which call upon our conscience, invite us to reflect anew, and encourage us to redouble our political will, determination, lucidity and courage in our endeavours.

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It is in this spirit that my delegation would like to make its modest contribution to this joint reflection, the primary objective of which must be the safeguarding and strengthening of international peace and security as well as the development of a space for active solidarity within our global village.

Four themes will serve as points of reference with regard to our contribution: human rights on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; peace in the world in connection with the positive work done by the United Nations for the settlement of certain regional conflicts; development in a spirit of solidarity, in connection with the mid-term review of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development 1986-1990; and the strengthening of our United Nations through implementation of the recently adopted reforms.

The celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights certainly gives us an opportunity to rejoice at the important successes achieved by the United Nations in the promotion and protection of human rights and freedoms, and above all to consider what remains to be done in order to free mankind from all oppression.

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Concerning the balance sheet, suffice it to say that by proclaiming the Universal Declaration in 1948 and continuing to make appropriate efforts since then to transform the principles in that document into internationally binding obligations within the framework of legal instruments at the global level for which it attempts to ensure respect by States, the United Nations has accomplished remarkable work, in keeping with the basic aspirations of our peoples. The historical importance of that work must be recognized.

As a State that has made respect for human rights a cardinal principle of its politics both within its constitutional system and in its foreign policy, and a country whose resolute commitment to the principles and objectives of the 1948 Declaration have won it many tributes, Senegal takes this opportunity to reaffirm its resolute support for the work of the United Nations to safeguard human rights.

Just as at the domestic level it established a multipartisan democracy whose multifaceted expression is a sign of its vitality and its deep roots in the thinking of the people; just as it contributed to the achievement of this in the African continent by playing an important part in developing and ratifying the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights; and just as it is attempting to do in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, in which the unanimous and consistent confidence of the international community has won it a continued presence over many decades and the active presidency of that Commission on the occasion of its fortieth anniversary, so my country will spare no effort in the continued quest for greater justice and equity in human relations at all levels.

The quest continues because it is an effort that can know no respite until the total eradication of all vestiges of arbitrary rule and brute force such as exist, in particular, in southern Africa and in Palestine, has been achieved. The situation in these regions and many others is a clear indication of the efforts

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that remain to be made so that our world may come closer to the ideals for the attainment of which in inter-State relations the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be the instrument.

This struggle for the universal enjoyment of human rights is continuing today in the sphere of the protection of a sound global environment. As a Sahelian country attacked by desertification, Senegal is particularly sensitive to new threats that alter the quality of life on our planet and dangerously affect the fate of present and future generations. That is why my country, like other African States, has asked the international community to draw up provisions without delay to prevent the developing countries from becoming dumping grounds for industrial waste from the developed countries. Such action would be an important, practical contribution to the defence of the rights of the weak and deprived and to the struggle against the degradation of the ecology, which we sincerely believe must be a global struggle.

The hopes aroused by the improved relations between the super-Powers - which we welcome as it could bring about the strengthening of international peace and security - have not yet been translated into a new order in keeping with our expectations: in other words, a real democratization of international relations based on justice, equality of rights and the safeguarding of the interests of all the peoples of the world. Of course, the promise of the beginning of healthier international relations exists, and with that promise the will has been expressed in different regions to seek solutions to the various tensions, sources of friction and crises that exist.

Thus, the doors of peace have begun to open in Afghanistan, in Kampuchea, in the Gulf region, in Western Sahara and in South-West Africa. This process must be encouraged and supported. But we must also work to promote the emergence of

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conditions that can lead to the extension of this process to other areas of regional conflict, beginning with the Middle East.

That is, in our humble opinion, the sense of the message that the Norwegian Parliament addressed to our Assembly by awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces. In the name of President Abdou Diouf and the Senegalese Government and people, I welcome this well-deserved tribute to the persevering efforts of our Organization to eliminate hotbeds of tension, encourage the solution of conflicts by peaceful means and promote international peace and security. For Senegal, this award is of special significance. My country has always supported the peace-keeping operations decided upon by the Organization and has endeavoured to make a practical contribution to their success by sending contingents on many occasions. We sincerely hope that this great distinction will encourage all the members of the international community to give their effective support to the United Nations peace-keeping forces, which have new, urgent and important tasks ahead of them.

Deeply concerned by the vital issue of maintaining peace and security in the world, the Non-Aligned Movement, a few days ago in Nicosia, assessed what had been accomplished and what remains to be accomplished and took decisions on how the major problems of our day could be evaluated and tackled. By reiterating their commitment to the establishment of genuine collective security, by demanding the strict rule of law and of justice and the cessation of policies of oppression and domination, by proclaiming their will to stop being the arena and the prize of global confrontation, the countries of the Movement made it a protagonist in the new, changing international relations.

The Non-Aligned Movement has had to call for increased respect for the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, because among its

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ranks are peoples still dominated and oppressed and regions where there are hotbeds of conflict and tension. Thus, in southern Africa, after four decades, the question of apartheid still arises in the same terms: the legitimate aspirations of a people are still stifled and its right to freedom and dignity violated. In that region a system survives under which every day people die under barbarous repression; a system under which a people is subjected with impunity to the arbitrariness of racist repression; a system under which the peoples of southern Africa are the victims of the outrageous belligerence of a racist totalitarian order.

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In southern Africa we see the survival of a system that the international community has declared to be a crime against mankind. Therefore, the international community has the historic responsibility of ending that system.

The only way to do that is through comprehensive, mandatory sanctions that measure up to the magnitude of the crime. To delay such action in southern Africa can only result in the sacrifice of millions more lives that could be saved. The outcome of the struggle being waged by the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the front-line countries will be linked in history with the picture of the past 30 years, in which many peoples who were previously oppressed have become free and independent.

The same law of oppression, aggression, occupation and plunder continues to apply in Palestine and the Middle East, where injustice must be redressed and national rights must be restored. The lessons to be learned from the historic resistance of the Palestinian people to occupation and oppression are unambiguous: there can be no lasting peace in the Middle East without the involvement of the Palestinian people and its vanguard organization, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) - no peace without them, nor, a fortiori, against them.

The promotion of peace in the Middle East requires, first, working for the convening of an international conference under United Nations auspices. The representatives that the Palestinian people have chosen to express their views and aspirations must participate on an equal footing with all the other parties to the conflict. I am referring, of course, to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

As guarantor of the right of peoples to decide their own destiny, a right that it has made a universal principle, the international community must shoulder its full responsibilities in southern Africa and in Palestine. By clearly assuming its

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obligations and taking the decisions that the situation requires, it would meet the expectations of the peoples of those regions. There is overwhelming international solidarity in condemning oppression and denouncing occupation, but it is sometimes difficult to organize it into the collective response that such challenges demand.

I have said that the doors of peace are beginning to open in a number of conflicts, where hope of a speedy solution is emerging and becoming stronger. In most cases the principles applicable and the framework for a settlement have been unambiguously defined. In the process of applying those principles we must avoid viewing the problems through the distorting prism of ideologies and partisan politics and must ensure that they are not narrowly dealt with in the restricted ambit of East-West relations.

However, there are other hot-beds of tension that have defied our Organization's peace-making efforts for many years. One is Cyprus, where the de facto situation continues to jeopardize its unity and territorial integrity. Senegal very much hopes for the prompt success of the Secretary-General's efforts for the restoration of sovereignty to that friendly country.

Another example is another friendly country, Lebanon, wounded by a combination of civil war, occupation of part of its territory and numerous acts of interference in its affairs, threatening its very existence. Senegal calls for dialogue to begin soon to preserve its identity, territorial integrity, unity and independence.

The Korean peninsula provides another example. We desire peaceful reunification through sincere, fraternal talks, taking into account the free will of the whole Korean people.

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Despite some hopes of peace, I cannot fail to mention again this year the occupation, aggression and oppression experienced by Cambodia, and I must repeat Senegal's appeal for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia and the restoration of a genuine Cambodian Government led by Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

My final example is Central America, where my country will continue to support the peace efforts of the Contadora Group to bring about a political settlement with absolute respect for the sovereignty of all the States of the region.

Alongside the political challenges of preserving human rights and struggling for peace, which require the efforts of most of our States, we face the harmful effects of a continuing economic crisis, especially in the developing countries, which I do not need to elaborate now.

Among the main problems that our countries still confront is the heavy burden of foreign debt and the intolerable pressure of all kinds that results from it.

The debt constitutes a major obstacle to lasting growth and development in our countries because of its negative influence on our ability to import, invest and achieve our economic and social development goals. So far only partial, short-term and medium-term measures have been taken with regard to the debt, in a climate characterized above all by a decrease in flows of resources towards the developing countries, high interest rates and an unprecedented decline in commodity prices.

Faced with such a situation, the international community must urgently adopt a new strategy based on growth and a sharing of responsibilities in order to achieve a lasting, comprehensive solution of the debt problem of the third-world countries, taking into account the guiding principles established in resolution 42/198 and the results of the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VII).

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In this regard, the Governments of the developed countries are becoming increasingly aware of the need to integrate dealing with the tragic economic situation of the developing countries into the strategy for global economic recovery. We commend unilateral decisions to alleviate or partially reduce the debt burden of the least favoured countries, proposals to refinance the debt in the form of bonds and to create multilateral funds for the debt and so on. However, important as those measures may be as symbols of solidarity, they are not in themselves enough to improve the economic situation of the developing countries. More general measures must also be taken.

In particular, the access of developing countries' exports to international markets must be facilitated by the elimination of protectionist barriers in the developed countries; equitable, remunerative prices must be fixed for the exports of developing countries; and there must be established a direct and clear link between payment of the foreign debt and factors that influence debt-servicing, such as export income, terms of trade, imports and the growth of gross national product.

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Another problem is that of the adjustment efforts by the developing countries. These adjustment programmes, which everyone believes are useful, have begun, in certain countries, to have positive results. None the less, the programmes, because they focus on major macro-economic balances, have given rise to very difficult situations - situations that are sometimes unacceptable from a social standpoint. So that adjustment efforts can go on, it is important for the international community to support the measures taken by the developing countries in order to alleviate the social consequences of recovery programmes.

The situation in Africa remains critical, especially because of the combined effects of natural disasters, the decline in the prices of export commodities, the heavy debt-servicing burden and the stagnation of financial flows. It is true that the Advisory Group on Financial Flows for Africa, which our dynamic Secretary-General established, recognized that the additional financial support requested of the international community in the framework of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development was far from excessive vis-à-vis the GNP of the developed world and State expenditures in these countries.

What is needed, and what is at stake, is less the importance of the effort than the political will of certain industrialized States, as has been shown in the mid-term review of the Programme at the meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, held in Dakar last June, and by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole on the United Nations Programme of Action, whose work was completed just a few days ago in New York.

Having made specific proposals here a year ago with regard to the mid-term review of the United Nations Programme of Action, my country will at this point confine itself to that statement and a reference to the many suggestions that

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have already been made with a view to ensuring the success of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development within its five-year term - 1986-1990 - and for the conclusions of the special session of the General Assembly on the critical economic situation in Africa to be implemented effectively.

Let me repeat the appeal that His Excellency President Abdou Diouf made to our Assembly just a little over two years ago when, as current Chairman of the OAU, he participated in the opening of the special session on the critical situation in Africa: we must always bear in mind that, having overcome so many major challenges in the past, mankind should certainly be able to overcome the challenge of solidarity with Africa in order to implement, with the support of the international community, its Priority Programme for Economic Recovery.

Before concluding I should like to say a few words about the financial crisis of the United Nations and the need to enhance the Organization's effectiveness. For years now it has been confronting an increasingly worrying financial crisis. The causes of this situation have been debated at length here, so it is not necessary for me to repeat them. At its fortieth session the General Assembly decided, in resolution 40/237, dated 18 December 1985, to give a mandate to a group of 18 high-level intergovernmental experts to study ways and means of making the United Nations more effective, more flexible and more orderly, and thus demonstrated its fervent wish to remedy the crisis. The report of that Group was studied thoroughly in the course of the forty-first session of the Assembly, and recommendations were made concerning the administrative, financial and technical aspects of the Organization.

Resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, on the effectiveness of administrative and technical functions, endorsed the report of the Group of 18 with a view to

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making the multilateral system more dynamic through the implementation of reforms by the Secretary-General. What has been achieved from implementation of the resolution confirms our impression that important progress has been made in improving the management of the United Nations. While my delegation is justly pleased, it is, on the other hand, concerned that, because of the situation of financial instability that is constantly faced by the Organization, the process of reform may not be completed.

Financial stability is all the more essential at a time when the United Nations is committing itself, on many fronts, to restoring peace in the world and to strengthening its role as the principal framework and instrument for the development of peaceful co-operation in the closing years of this century. Thus, my country wishes to make an appeal to all Member States to support the Secretary-General in his efforts to implement the necessary reforms of the multilateral system, and to do so, first and foremost, by meeting their financial obligations rapidly and on a regular basis.

Our peoples are wondering about the political will and real capacity of this universal Organization to take full advantage of the current international climate, which is conducive to the dynamics of peace. A glimmer of hope has been rekindled in the hearts of millions of long-suffering men, women and children, whose dignity has long been trampled underfoot, whose hopes have long been disappointed, and whose legitimate ambitions have long been obstructed.

So that we may progress securely on the path of peace, justice and freedom, we must rally our energies and channel them towards our higher shared goals. We must quiet our differences in order to devote to the fundamentals that unite us our full resources and our full potential, for what unites us is priceless since it is the very destiny of mankind that is at issue.

ADDRESS BY MR. KENNEDY A. SIMMONDS, PRIME MINISTER OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, was escorted to the rostrum.*

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

* The President returned to the Chair.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Saint Kitts and Nevis): I warmly welcome this opportunity to extend to you, Sir, the congratulations of the delegation of St. Kitts and Nevis on your election to the eminent post of President of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. For the Government and peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean it is always a source of immense satisfaction to witness the presidency entrusted to one chosen from among us - and all the more to one as able as you. My delegation places absolute confidence in your abilities successfully to guide the deliberations of this body and pledges its full co-operation.

May I also heartily congratulate the outgoing President, Mr. Peter Florin, on his skilful guidance of the work of the General Assembly during the past year. The task was undoubtedly challenging, but he met every challenge with competence, renewed spirit and dexterity.

It is with a profound sense of admiration that, at this point, I pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his untiring efforts exerted in the pursuit of peaceful resolutions of the persistent and sometimes escalating conflicts that continue to beset the world community.

We have listened year after year as increasing numbers of disputes between nations and aggravating world problems have been brought to the attention of this body. Indeed, over the past 43 years of its existence the United Nations has had its lofty principles challenged by intense local, regional and international disputes that have increased sorrow to mankind and threatened to annihilate whole peoples; by deep-seated ideological differences that have compartmentalized the world and vitiated against international co-operation in solving international problems; by persistent underdevelopment, abject poverty and acts of inhumanity that have made a mockery of human dignity, the right to freedom and a better standard of life.

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and Nevis)

Often Member States express disappointment in the United Nations when solutions to our problems appear unattainable. But perhaps such disappointment results from unrealistic expectations from the Organization. For it can achieve only as much as its Member States permit it to achieve. The success of our concerted efforts to resolve global disputes is highly dependent on international dialogue and conciliation. It is the role of this body to foster such dialogue and such conciliation. However, the responsibility for good-neighbourliness and international peace and security remains that of each nation State.

My delegation is particularly encouraged by the noticeably improved international political climate, which has provided a favourable ambience for the conduct of fruitful negotiations this year. Certain recent developments identify 1988 as a diplomatic and political watershed year, heralding long-awaited compliance with United Nations resolutions on prolonged conflicts.

Within the category of world events that respond to dialogue fits the recent agreement on arms limitation and disarmament. The ratification of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, which calls for a 50 per cent reduction of the strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the USSR signifies a major achievement for the entire world in the process of arms limitation and disarmament. We are all aware that divergent positions plagued the agreement, but we are heartened by the display of political will between the two major military Powers to reach an agreement. This movement in disarmament could augur well for the long-range goal of comprehensive disarmament called for by the General Assembly. Its prospects no longer seem as remote as they were a few years ago. My delegation continues to agitate for comprehensive disarmament, which includes not only nuclear weapons but conventional and chemical weapons as well.

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and Nevis)

Let us be conscious that the survival and well-being of future generations is the responsibility of us all - nuclear and non-nuclear States alike.

Similarly, the situation in the Persian Gulf gives us cause to be optimistic about the prospects for peace in that troubled region. Just a few months ago the Islamic Republic of Iran announced its formal acceptance of Security Council resolution 598 (1987). That decision was welcomed by Member States as it signified that a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq could now be effected and negotiations to bring about lasting peace in the region could be set in motion. My delegation reflects sadly on the thousands of lives lost and the millions of dollars' worth of damage that resulted from the nine-year conflict, and remains grieved at the fact that the suffering and loss were allowed to escalate to such proportions. I trust that the decision of both Iraq and Iran to abide by the Security Council resolution is now reflective of a desire to coexist peacefully.

The role of the Secretary-General in this initiative must be lauded. He drew on his vast and proved diplomatic skills and displayed tenacity and endurance while mediating the complex negotiations that led to acceptance by both nations. My delegation would like to encourage him in his efforts to pursue this initiative to the desired goal of a stable and lasting peace.

The situation in Afghanistan also shows signs of responding to international dialogue. For some eight years the General Assembly and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights adopted strongly worded resolutions condemning the foreign occupation of Afghanistan. For eight years the international community kept the pressure on the occupying country by calling for the withdrawal from Afghanistan of all foreign troops. Those actions were supplemented by the efforts of former Under-Secretary-General Diego Cordovez. At last, this year, the Geneva accord was signed by all parties involved, and today troops are being withdrawn

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from Afghanistan. My delegation is only too aware that the real settlement of the problem lies in the hands of the Afghan people. Theirs is the task of establishing the Government of their choice and undertaking the restructuring of their country.

We regard with optimism the prospects for resolution of the status of Western Sahara. St. Kitts and Nevis notes with satisfaction the manifestation by both POLISARIO and the Kingdom of Morocco of the political will and co-operation required in order to bring a peaceful end to this conflict which has persisted for more than a decade. The combined efforts of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations must be recognized as practical arrangements for a referendum by the Sahraoui people are formulated. My delegation urges both parties to intensify the negotiation process and bring a speedy settlement to the conflict.

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By the same token, my delegation regards with cautious optimism the talks between the Governments concerned to bring an end to the illegal occupation of Namibia by South African troops. We have always supported the United Nations Plan for the Independence of Namibia under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization and take this opportunity to reaffirm that support. We must remain firm in our resolve to bring about a liberated and an independent Namibia and take bold initiatives to make it a reality.

We renew our call for the United Nations to play a positive role in bringing about reconciliation between South Korea and North Korea. We support membership in the United Nations for both countries on the Korean peninsula, as a positive step to enhancing their dialogue towards reunification within this Organization's structured and sympathetic framework.

While we can see rays of hope in several of the areas of conflict, that is not at present the case in the Middle East. Hope for an end to the conflict can lie only in solutions which recognize the rights of the protagonists: the right of the Palestinian people to a well-defined homeland must co-exist with the right of the people of Israel to live within secure borders. A first step to peace would be for all parties to adhere to the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the issue.

My Government also shares the view that the convening of the international peace conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and at the invitation of the Secretary-General and all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, would be another appropriate step towards achieving a peaceful, comprehensive and just settlement of the conflict. The Secretary-General is therefore urged to continue his attempts to make the convening of this conference a reality.

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and Nevis)

Another area of continued concern to the international community is the situation in Kampuchea. Hostilities have entered a tenth year and there seems to be no foreseeable end. My delegation stands firmly behind the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on this question since its thirty-fourth session and awaits their implementation. The restoration and preservation of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Kampuchean people, as well as their right to determine their own destiny, should continue to be the goal, supported most assuredly by the international community.

In our own region, conflicts in Central America have set back the process of economic development. It is commendable that the Governments of Central America have mapped out a plan of action to restore peace and stability to their countries. We applaud the persistent efforts of the Contadora Group. We believe its efforts and those of others in the region deserve the full support of the international community, so that the United Nations objective of turning swords into ploughshares may be achieved.

We are deeply concerned about the unstable situation which exists in Haiti. Clearly, political events have made it difficult for meaningful economic development to proceed. We in the region stand ready to assist the people of Haiti as far as is practically possible, and we also invite the attention of the international community.

We must recognize the basic truth that social and economic problems have become both a cause and an effect of aggravated political tensions. Peace and development are inextricably intertwined objectives and we cannot achieve the one without the other. In May this year the United Nations approved a special economic plan for Central America which will assist the peoples of that region in

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restructuring and stabilizing their economies. This is clearly a step in the right direction.

My delegation notes the willingness of Belize and Guatemala to enter into dialogue. We call for early ratification of the Cartagena Protocol as a contribution to the lowering of tensions.

International political issues constitute but a fraction of our common preoccupations. Continued human rights violations and worsening economic conditions provide equal cause for perplexity and consternation. Chief among our human rights concerns is the total eradication of the evil system of apartheid perpetuated in South Africa. My delegation reiterates its abhorrence of that inhumane system and continues to support the call for comprehensive sanctions to be taken against South Africa.

With the many sanctions already imposed, and with the perpetuation of apartheid in the face of them all, countries are prone to question the effectiveness of those measures. We are assured that comprehensive sanctions are working. According to an analysis done by the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers, trade and financial sanctions are having a debilitating impact on South Africa's economy and this impact would be even more far-reaching were the sanctions themselves more widely adopted and their application tightened and intensified. Further disinvestment programmes must be pursued.

On a more positive note, however, in preparation for a free and democratic South Africa the international community needs to address the stabilization and security needs of the front-line States and to offer training to the black people of South Africa so that they may be adequately equipped to accept the task of rebuilding their country.

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The world's economic situation is another problem of enormous proportions for developing countries. We appear to be caught in a quagmire. A total restructuring of the world economic order is imperative if our goal of world development is to be achieved. We in the developing countries continue to experience relatively slow or negative growth in our economies. Sharp commodity-price declines, unavailability of external sources of finance, adverse terms of trade, debt-reservicing problems - all still frustrate our economic ambitions. Clearly there is a pressing need to reassess the present international economic order to create greater opportunities for the developing countries to share equally in the world's resources.

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We must concede that the international achievements of development strategies for the First, Second and Third United Nations Development Decades have been limited. We can only hope that the development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade will be more fruitful.

In the developing countries, however, we must do more than hope. We must seize the opportunity of the current wave of peace initiatives, first, to divert our own energies and resources away from areas of conflict to confront the challenges of development on our own terms and on the basis of our own realities. Then we must challenge the developed countries to engage immediately in meaningful dialogue with us so that significant resources can be diverted from the battlefields and from the silos to improve the housing, the education, the employment opportunities, the infrastructure and the social and economic fabric of the developing countries.

Peace must not become an international vacuum signifying only the absence of war. Peace must be a well-spring of opportunity and hope for the young, the elderly, the sick, the handicapped and the poor. Peace must be a powerful force that moves us forward, upward and onward. Peace must inspire us to achieve the greatest heights of humanitarian excellence of which we are capable. I send out a clarion call for peace between East and West to become a harbinger of a new era of co-operation between North and South.

In this context, I must issue an appeal for special consideration to be given to the unique problems of island developing countries. A number of highly reputable studies have shown that island developing countries have characteristics distinct from those of developing countries in general. It is essential, therefore, that there be flexibility in designing and supporting development strategies which are appropriate for addressing our special needs.

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One of our major handicaps is vulnerability to natural disasters, such as hurricanes, from which islands in the Caribbean are especially at risk. Jamaica's devastation by hurricane Gilbert is graphic testimony to this fact. Other problems include: small internal markets, lack of natural resources, heavy dependence on imports and the high per capita cost of building and maintaining economic and social infrastructure. Small islands lack the critical mass to provide basic services economically for their populations. However, if island people are to enjoy an acceptable quality of life, these services must be provided. Certainly this community of nations cannot accept that the right to basic amenities, to life, to liberty and to the pursuit of happiness is to be enjoyed only by people in large metropolitan societies.

Many resolutions have been passed in the General Assembly on island developing countries in the last decade. Let us seize the opportunity of the day and translate these laudable resolutions into effective action.

While we have temporized and failed to address seriously the grave economic problems of developing countries, new crises have arisen which threaten to destroy the social and economic fabric of our societies and take a heavy toll on human lives. I refer to the problems of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking, and the dumping of hazardous waste in third-world countries.

The widespread increase in drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking has created a world awareness that the problem transcends national and regional boundaries. It menaces the fabric of all our societies and destroys our young people. Countries of the Caribbean are particularly vulnerable as by the nature of our geography we are used as transit points for drug trafficking, with the possibility of also becoming points of consumption. It is time for a co-ordinated global effort aimed

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at eliminating production, interdicting trafficking and eradicating consumption, especially where the market is greatest.

Similarly, the increasing reported incidents of dumping of hazardous waste in third-world countries indicate that a matter has arisen that requires urgent international attention. Recent investigations carried out by governmental and non-governmental environmental groups reveal that in the past few months there has been a proliferation of proposals and actual attempts to ship hazardous industrial and nuclear waste from industrialized countries to third-world countries. The developed countries must keep their waste. They have the resources to devote to its safe disposal.

Caribbean countries are among the targeted dump sites. For us, this phenomenon has serious implications. First, we lack the adequate legislative and administrative mechanisms to control the management and proper disposal of the waste. Exposure to the environment will result in irreversible damage to ecosystems and human lives. Secondly, conditions in the Caribbean, and indeed in many third-world countries, are almost perfect for the spread of the harmful heavy metals and toxic chemicals found in the waste - for example, porous soils, wind and water erosion and tropical temperatures. Dependent as we are on our environment, our marine life and our human resources for development, this trend is a very serious threat to our survival, a menace to relations between States and a threat to international peace.

My delegation supports the request that an item addressing the problem be placed on the agenda of this session of the General Assembly. It is a problem that demands international co-operation and immediate attention.

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and Nevis)

It seems to be true that the world is weary of war. The world has decided, in the words of a famous song, to "give peace a chance". However, we must return to war. Indeed I am calling for a new declaration of war, a war to be fought with an intensity hitherto unknown, on the most violent of battlefields; a war to be fought to the finish; a war on poverty; a war on drug production, drug trafficking and drug consumption; a war against the destruction of the world's resources; a war on economic slavery. This must be a true world war, fought with the present resources and the creative ingenuity of all mankind; a war in which the North fights alongside the South, the East alongside the West; a war that is waged till all mankind is truly free to realize its vast potential and to live with dignity and an uplifting quality of life.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. MANGLAPUS (Philippines): The Philippines greets you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. It is not only the votes of the membership of this body, but your own erudition, experience and diplomatic skills and your country's brilliant contributions to this Organization that have elevated you to that exalted office. My delegation awaits the impact of your shining leadership on the labours of the Assembly.

You succeed Mr. Peter Florin, the President at the forty-second session of the General Assembly, and the Philippines appreciates his performance in that capacity. It was a performance that was at once vigorous and unselfish. We recall that he returned to New York several times to preside over our resumed sessions and at one special session, which attests to his commitment as well as to his diplomacy.

I bring the General Assembly a message from the poor of my country.

Why are many Filipinos poor?

They are not poor because they come from an indolent race. Our countrymen now cover the earth - two million of us in the Americas, half a million in the Middle East, a quarter of a million in Europe, half a million in Asia and the Pacific - seekers all of toil and of life, teachers of nations, physicians of men, builders of industry, designers of modules that challenge the stars and settle on the moon, men and women of skill and diligence, like those of Europe who settled America and here built a new world.

They are not poor because they do not know how to fight for their rights. They were the first in Asia to shed their blood against Western colonialism and produce their own republic. Ninety years later, they were the first nation in the world to mass by the millions, to confront guns with rosaries and bring down a dictator without the shedding of blood. In those four bloodless, spectacular days of February, under the leadership of Corazon C. Aquino, they raised the new

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peaceful rallying cry of "People power!" which even now resonates in the streets of nations in transition on more than one continent of this earth.

They are not poor because they multiply too fast. They try not to, against their own human instincts. And they know that in rich nations it is the building of cities and industries, not the extermination of human instincts, that has reduced this multiplication.

They are not poor because their nation does not grow. For our country does grow. Now that we are free again, although we remain harassed by the extremes of left and right, we have kept to our democratic course and our economy is growing again, last year by 5.6 per cent, this year by 6.8.

Why, then, do so many of us remain poor?

Thirty years ago, our country was second in East Asia in economic development, next only to Japan. Twenty years ago, along with those developing countries you now call the South, we were growing faster than the developed countries of the North.

Then one day the countries that produce oil decided to form a cartel. And why not? Other countries more powerful than they had deprived them of their just profits and it was time that they stood up, joined forces and assumed control of the wealth that God had given them.

We in the South who do not produce oil waited for the new oil alliance to share their profits with us. But they did not. The South was not ready with the mechanism to attract and absorb these profits.

Therefore, the oil producers chose instead to store their gains in the bank vaults of the North. The petrodollar was born, and the bankers of the North opened their doors wide to the money-famished financial planners of the South, including those of my country. We started to borrow, borrow, borrow, enticed by abundant funds and low interest rates.

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Some countries learned to control themselves, to borrow just enough, to use their borrowed money wisely and begin to grow.

But for our leaders the lure of more and easy borrowing was too strong.

Then one day a dictator seized power in our country. There was no more legal opposition, no free press to question enormous, hasty loans. Absolute power produced absolute corruption. The petrodollar was recycled back to the North in the bank deposits of the dictator and his friends.

No one warned us of the cataclysm that had to follow. Instead, a banker of the North said to us: "Do not worry. Sovereign countries never go bankrupt."

And so, indeed, they lent us more and more. These debts were at that time guaranteed by the Governments of the debtors. And sovereign Governments never disappear. They just change hands.

Thus it was that in 1970, our country and those of the South owed only \$100 billion dollars to the North. Ten years later we owed \$500 billion. Now we owe \$1 trillion.

It was our Mexican friends who were first to realize it could go no further. They produced oil but its value went down when the cartel collapsed and industry decided on other ways of fuelling itself. Mexico said: "We have no money. We cannot pay." And the South woke up to the realities of borrowing.

The banks of the North began to say: "We have been lending too much, even more than 20 times our capital." And so now we must pay more for every dollar we borrow, and there are less of those dollars to borrow. And so, after we were titillated into a borrowing pattern - nay, a borrowing spree - the spigot is turned off.

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Up to 1981 the money was coming into our countries: now it is going out. Now we of the South must together send out \$20 billion more than we are receiving every year from our international creditors. Last year alone our country sent out \$1.7 billion more than it received.

Our country must now export much more and import much less just to earn the money with which to pay our debt. Yet, what do some of our friends of the North do? They make it harder for us to export. When they decide that we are exporting enough, they want us to restrain ourselves. When our exports displease their labour, they cut them down. When we export the fruits of our soil, they demand health certificates. When we export what we manufacture, they decide that our products are not good enough. When they cannot say that our products are not good enough, they say it is our packaging that is no good. And when we have done everything to please them, they inundate us with customs documentation.

When the countries of the North want to export their service industries to us - their insurance, their banking, their finance - they ask us for market access, national treatment, right of establishment. Yet, are the market services of the North open to the South? If it is their services, they call it export. If it is our services, they call it immigration.

So many of our factories, unable to export more, to import enough of the raw material that they needed for their products, shut down many of their machines. By 1985, 600,000 in our country had lost their jobs this way. In despair many were tempted to join the rebels in the mountains; many who understood and who saw that death by bullet could be less painful than death by debt. But, though many are starving, they have faith in the ways of peace, which are the ways of the nations united in this Assembly.

(Mr. Manglapus, Philippines)

This then is the message I bring to the Assembly from the poor of my country. It is the same message from the poor of the world, the poor who suffer, but who want peace, not violence. It is a message of hope, not of despair. How do we respond?

As Polonius advised his son Laertes:

"Neither a borrower, nor a lender be,

For loan oft loses both itself and friend,

And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry." (Hamlet, I: iii)

Shakespeare's admonition may have its relevance for an adolescent who is about to set out on his own, but it has no appeal for a young nation that must grow, must build, must stoke its furnaces with the resources of other nations.

Yet borrowing can be heady stuff for eager nations and avid lending houses, and the point of crisis is not difficult to reach. Debt crises are not new in this century, and they have not been beyond solution. In fact, when the crisis is bilateral and horizontal, between North and North, lessons have been learned in time and new disasters averted.

At Versailles in 1919 the victorious Allies of the First World War refused to condone the enervating obligations of the defeated Germans, and Germany went to the radical right for a solution. That solution produced the Second World War. The Allies, again victorious in 1945, remembered Versailles, and in London, forgave 70 per cent of the German debt. The same bold visionary leadership that executed that condonation also conceived the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

But when it is a multilateral and vertical crisis, between North and South, the condonations come much more slowly and painfully. There was one such crisis in the 1930s. At that time the creditor countries refused condonation and most debtor countries responded quickly and simply. They refused to pay their debts. A few

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did pay, like Argentina, where British leverage could administer sanctions. But for the rest of the debtors no sanction was to be feared. There was no hegemonic Power to enforce international contracts. When most of the debtors refused to pay, the world economy did not collapse. The debtors could not pay and the creditor Governments chose to look the other way. There was only the impulse to create the institutions that would provide the framework for international economic relations.

There is one hegemonic Power today that could crack the whip: the United States of America. But the crisis is enormous and there are rising economic Powers with which the enforcer must co-ordinate if order and resolution are to be reached. This is not happening. Today the fund well is dry and there have followed recession and inflation. The response of most creditor countries has been to tighten monetary policy and reduce trade deficits. And so the cost of debt has increased.

For its part, the United States has opted for supply-side economics, continuing budget deficits, reducing tax rates and expanding the economy. In the North there has followed turmoil in interest rates, as well as unemployment, which is now being blamed on imports from the South.

The South is now being asked to undertake structural reforms and to rely more on the market and the private sector. But the North with all its technology could solve its unemployment problem, not by blaming imports from the South, but by getting out of economic activities in which the North has no economic advantage: textiles, garments, shoes.

We repeat our salute last week to President Ronald Reagan's veto of the protectionist textile Bill. That masterful act of principled determination was a signal of hope for justice in international free trade and of faith in international negotiations and institutions.

(Mr. Manglapus, Philippines)

We also applaud Japan, which has offered to recycle \$30 billion of its annual surplus by supporting export industries in developing countries. But for this strategy to succeed the developing countries must know what it would be profitable to pursue; and to know this they must also know what structural transformations can take place in the North.

The debt crisis is not a problem only for the debtor; it is a problem for the creditor; it is a problem for the world. Therefore, the solution cannot be sectoral; it must be total. It cannot be regional; it must be global. It cannot be technocratic; it must be political.

Economic and finance ministers of the world must confer. That is vital. But that is not sufficient. The men and women who make political policy - it is these who must agree on the final resolution of this global tragedy.

(Mr. Manglapus, Philippines)

In this last year, in many capitals of the world, political policy-makers of this stature have met and called for valiant responses but have not yet found formal decisive consensus: in Manila last December at the summit of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN); in Toronto last June at the summit of the Seven; again in Manila last June at the International Conference of Newly Restored Democracies; in Cyprus last month at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement.

How shall we resolve debt? It is valuable to reschedule debt. But it is even more precious and human to forgive debt. The makers of policy must agree to resolve the question, who is entitled to debt relief and debt forgiveness? Is it possible to fix standards rather than leave the answer to the strengths and weaknesses of negotiators?

They must agree to alternative adjustment programmes to promote growth that will suit both planned and free economies. They must also develop new modes to carry out global solutions. For the present mechanisms are not equipped for such a momentous mission.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approaches short-term problems, like balance of payments, with an average span of 18 months. But the structural and financial horizons of transnational debt can span a generation.

The World Bank has primarily concerned itself with financing projects, and, more recently, with programmes. Yet, it is only in the context of an aggregate panorama that the financial obligations of nations can be amply appreciated.

It is now seven years that the debt crisis has been thundering across our planet. The assault is overwhelming us because our defences are isolated and our strategies fragmented. I propose a global counter-attack by forces that will transcend geography and ideology.

(Mr. Manglapus, Philippines)

I propose an international debt and development commission. I propose that this commission be constituted of men and women whom the world recognizes for their redoubtable seasoning in foreign policy, diplomacy, finance, political economy, trade and development. I propose that the Commission be provided not with a new bureaucracy but with a staff seconded from outstanding multilateral agencies. I propose that the commission be rendered a life-span of five years.

I propose that this commission be mandated to evaluate alternative schemes for global debt management, move to concrete action to rectify the trading system consistent with that global debt management, formulate institutional changes in international agencies so that they may discharge a more comprehensive role in the process, commend specific actions to member Governments to address alternative schemes, oversee and monitor its own output.

I propose that the commission conduct its own study, but look into recent proposals on global debt management, including the report on an international debt management authority made by the Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs of the United States House of Representatives, and the French plan announced by President François Mitterrand.

I propose that with this mandate the commission develop standards under which debtor countries may qualify for debt relief or debt forgiveness; formulate alternative adjustment programmes that promote sustainable growth among nations accompanied by an expansion of their capacity to pay their debts; specify actions, such as the amending of bank laws, necessary for this growth; offer policy practices for industrial countries, newly industrializing economies, middle-income and low-income nations; identify precise interactions between debt, trade and growth which require multilateral response.

I propose that this commission submit these measures to the United Nations for approval, proclamation and execution.

(Mr. Manglapus, Philippines)

The United Nations has been demonstrating an expanding genius for waging triumphant campaigns for disengagement - in Afghanistan, in the Middle East, even as it is now engaged in promising peaceful actions in Kampuchea, Western Sahara and Namibia.

It is a tribute to this General Assembly, to the Security Council, to the Headquarters and agencies, to the Secretariat, and perhaps above all to Javier Perez de Cuellar, that the United Nations has at last become validated in its avowed designation, not only as the forum, but indeed as the engine par excellence for peace.

Yet what is this debt crisis but a monstrous threat to peace? Pope Paul VI once stood on this very rostrum and proclaimed that development is another word for peace.

Debt, reasonable debt, even in the holy books, is sanctioned and is meant to develop man. But today the debt of nation to nation is not developing man. It is killing man.

The killing must be stopped, and only the nations of the world together can stop it. Stop it now or end the dream of peace in our time. Stop it now or answer to the generation of tomorrow for decimating the human numbers of the generation of today.

Mr. VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran) (spoke in Persian; English text furnished by the delegation): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement and as a non-aligned member of the Security Council, Argentina has consistently played a significant and constructive role in the international arena. I therefore sincerely hope that during the present deliberations your leadership will render effective and decisive contributions to international peace and security.

During the past year the world has witnessed some new developments which have shown a prospect for a new movement in the international arena. Preceding speakers have all expressed their satisfaction at seeing the course of international relations directed towards mutual understanding and finding peaceful solutions to regional and international conflicts and crises. This fresh atmosphere is imbued with new hopes for the future as well as new and more serious expectations among all nations.

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As a forum for the international community, virtually embracing all the countries in the world, the United Nations has now become the focus of attention. As such, it is now facing a momentous and valuable litmus test. Given the fresh hopes, however, it is too early now to pass a final judgement on the role of this massive and complex Organization. We are fully aware that political expediency has been and will continue to be a determining and often negative and destructive factor in the activities of the United Nations. Admittedly, these unfortunate considerations cannot be expected to disappear easily from the United Nations.

Should internationally recognized norms and principles guide our efforts, the ill effects of political expediency would of themselves subside, facilitating the promotion of understanding and the search for just solutions to complex international problems. Following this very guideline, the Secretary-General has admirably succeeded in providing the global community with a new perspective for substantial achievements by the United Nations. In dealing with complex international crises, such as the questions of Afghanistan, Namibia, Kampuchea, Cyprus and the war imposed by Iraq on the Islamic Republic of Iran, the constructive endeavours of the Secretary-General and his representatives are evident, endeavours inspired by realism, impartiality and integrity. These sincere efforts have deservedly met with global appreciation for the Secretary-General.

Given the extensive domain of the Organization's activities and the expectations aroused by its recent achievements in dealing with various international problems, the present session of the General Assembly is inevitably faced with some momentous tasks. Here, we cannot, and should not, fall back upon past practice and simply remain content with the mere adoption of a few resolutions. A slow, conservative pace at the United Nations will no longer be acceptable to the international community.

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The means and capabilities required for the shared responsibility of conducting international affairs with a view to the enhancement of peace and security are all available to us. Today, it has been demonstrated in practice that the era of a bipolar world, the era of dominance by super-Powers over the destinies of the third world and the oppressed nations is very much a closed chapter. A quite new era has been ushered in, an era in which peaceful coexistence and mutual respect for the rights of nations must inevitably replace the old policies of domination. The struggle of oppressed nations and the efforts exercised by non-aligned and neutral countries have significantly contributed to the inculcation of this new trend and attitude.

What is needed at present to guarantee the success of this new trend is to treat the root causes of regional crises which have distressingly turned into protracted, chronic diseases in many parts of the world, so as to preclude the resurgence of crisis and acts of aggression, or at least render them too costly for the potential perpetrators. This goal may be achieved only through the establishment of justice and the restoration of the principles stipulated in the United Nations Charter in dealing with international problems.

Undoubtedly one of the most sensitive crises which has put to the test the United Nations capability in dealing with international problems is the war imposed by Iraq against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The blatant aggression by Iraq on 22 September 1980 against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the newly established Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran - in the course of which even the most basic standards of human decency and universally recognized norms of international law have been violated by Iraq, sparing no one from atrocities ranging from massive bombardment of residential quarters, massacring innocent women

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and children to the deployment of chemical weapons against Iraqi civilians - provides international public opinion with a most obvious case of aggression and war crimes.

Unfortunately, the indifferent and unprincipled approach displayed during these eight years by international bodies vis-à-vis abhorrent acts of aggression and violations of recognized rules and norms of international law have set a dangerous precedent in political expediency, shaping responses to acts threatening international peace and security.

Notwithstanding this approach, the Islamic Republic of Iran, ever since the inception of the imposed war, has sincerely continued its co-operation with the Secretary-General in pursuing a political solution to the conflict. This was recently made quite evident in the implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), a resolution in whose adoption we had no role and which was even used as a lever of pressure by certain quarters against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Official acceptance of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) by the highest authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran virtually removed the last Iraqi pretexts aimed at obstructing the implementation of the Security Council resolution, thus providing a litmus test for the political will and capability of the international community, and particularly the Security Council, in contributing to the realization of a just, comprehensive and honourable peace.

As also confirmed by the high office of our honourable leader, the Islamic Republic of Iran has on many occasions declared its solid intention of securing a lasting and honourable peace in the region and has in practice proven its sincere commitment in this respect by displaying flexibility, good will and co-operation with the Secretary-General and his representatives.

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Members are certainly aware that during the interval spanning the acceptance of the resolution by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the official establishment of the cease-fire, the Iraqi régime, despite its past deceitful propaganda paying lip-service to peace, embarked upon a series of attacks against our industrial and economic centres, repeatedly committed acts of aggression deeply penetrating our territories and, in contravention of the letter and spirit of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and the Secretary-General's implementation plan, resorted to raising certain illogical and unacceptable pre-conditions which undoubtedly had a restraining impact on the Secretary-General's activities.

During the 10 rounds of official discussions with the Secretary-General in New York during July and August 1988, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, explicitly delineating its position and proving its good will, showed a clear perspective for securing a comprehensive and lasting peace, while the other party opted for seeking excuses and negativism in its politics.

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The precondition for direct talks before the cease-fire so seriously raised by Iraq in the first round of talks was in fact nothing but a ploy to continue the war and prevent implementation of the very resolution which Iraq had verbally accepted a year before. During the two weeks of talks in New York, the Iraqi delegation even refused to hold any substantive meeting with the Secretary-General, who plays the primary role in the implementation of resolution 598 (1987). However, since these Iraqi excuses received widespread international criticism and owing to the international pressure created against Iraq, the latter was finally compelled to give up this precondition.

The declaration of 20 August 1988 as the day for the cease-fire was in fact the result of the Iranian delegation's good will and the efforts exerted by the Secretary-General and his aides. As a result of Iraqi-instigated obstacles as well as the absence of a decisive approach by the international community, however, finalization of the timetable for implementing all the provisions of the resolution was postponed to take place in the course of talks in Geneva.

Reaffirming its good will by accepting direct talks, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a letter dated 7 August 1988 addressed to the Secretary-General, stated:

"It is our understanding that, in the agenda for direct talks, the procedure and items will be set in accordance with the provisions of your implementation plan. In this context, substantive negotiations between Iran and Iraq can only be entered into for the implementation of paragraph 4 of the resolution. The implementation of other paragraphs of the resolution will be carried out as planned by the Secretary-General." (S/20094, p. 1)

This position of the Islamic Republic of Iran fully corresponds with both section E in the Secretary-General's implementation plan dated 15 October 1987 and his public official positions taken in the course of discussions held in New York

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in July and August 1988. This position therefore constitutes the basis for any further endeavours in this regard. In his letter of 8 August 1988, addressed to the Foreign Ministers of Iran and Iraq, the Secretary-General stated that:

"In pursuance of the official contact I had with Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, I should like to inform you that both Governments have agreed to direct talks between their Foreign Ministers which shall be held under my auspices, immediately after the establishment of the cease-fire, in order to reach a common understanding of the other provisions of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and the procedures and timings for their implementation."

It was on the basis of this understanding that we entered into direct talks at Geneva, expecting to agree on the time-table for the implementation of the other provisions of the resolution, beginning with the immediate withdrawal of forces to the internationally recognized borders.

It is not my intention to reveal here the details of the direct talks held at Geneva. It is, however, necessary to express the views of my Government as related to the general aspects of these talks. At Geneva the Iraqi delegation unfortunately resumed its old negative methods from the very first session of the talks, as in New York. By raising certain issues outside the agenda, such as preconditions for the implementation of the remaining provisions of the resolution, it diverted the talks from the course set for them by the Secretary-General, dragging them into irrelevant discussions with no substantive results bearing on the implementation of the resolution.

For example, the fallacy involved in raising the argument of enjoying equally the fruits of cease-fire, geographical comparisons of Iran and Iraq and the consequences of the geographical differences between the two countries, was in fact

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a direct invitation to engage in lengthy economic, political, military and social comparisons, opening the Pandora Box of never-ending obvious inequalities between the two countries. Employing such false logic to achieve rights outside the norms of international law for Iraq in the Persian Gulf and Arvand Rood and extending the same logic to all paragraphs of the resolution has been a dangerous and destructive ploy, which if combined would inevitably direct the process of talks towards virtual futility and indefinite stalemate.

In the first round of direct talks in Geneva, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed its resolute conviction of the need to finalize the time and procedures for the implementation of the other provisions of the resolution, most significant among which are the immediate withdrawal of the forces to internationally recognized borders and the formation of an impartial body for the identification of the aggressor. It further emphasized that raising irrelevant issues would stall the process of the talks on secondary matters.

However, the Islamic Republic of Iran, continuing its co-operation with the Secretary-General in his discharge of the most crucial role assigned to him by the resolution and attempting to improve the atmosphere of talks, continued its co-operation with the personal representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Eliasson, and his colleagues so as to achieve an acceptable principled formula concerning shipping in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. In this context, a very positive attitude was displayed, without any attempt to divert the talks from their true objective, and the Iranian delegation considered and evaluated the suggestions made by the Secretary-General and presented its own constructive comments without the least ambiguity.

Regrettably, during the course of direct talks it was once again demonstrated that Iraq, rather than following the discussions within the established framework

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so as to reach an understanding, was attempting to seize the opportunity to use the talks as a means to achieve certain illegitimate political and military objectives, suffering from the illusion that whatever was not gained through the war of aggression and its use of inhuman and illegal resources would be secured through the peace talks. With such a goal in mind, the Iraqi delegation therefore spared no effort in obstructing the Secretary-General's activities and in manoeuvring to change the spirit of his proposals and the resolution.

In other words, Iraq's efforts all along the course of the Geneva talks were aimed at distorting the spirit of the resolution and the implementation plan, changing the limit and scope of relevant rules of international law, securing international approval for its expansionist designs and using the cease-fire to weaken its very foundations.

Iraq's insistence on its preconditions and its lack of preparedness to accept the Secretary-General's proposals and to evaluate them constructively all contributed to the failure at the Geneva talks to achieve their objective, which was to finalize the timing and procedures for the implementation of all remaining provisions of the resolution from the withdrawal of forces to internationally recognized boundaries to paragraph 8 of the resolution. Most typical of Iraq's intransigence and obstructionism is its objection to the Secretary-General's proposal for continuation of talks in New York which had already won the approval of all members of the Security Council. It is, however, necessary to point out here that the procrastinative attitudes originating in undue political expediencies, as displayed by certain members of the Security Council, lent encouragement to Iraq in its show of intransigence all through the talks.

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What, in effect, is needed for the success of the talks that are currently under way under the auspices of the Secretary-General is the immediate implementation of the remaining paragraphs of the resolution, which is binding under Articles 39 and 40 of the United Nations Charter. In the same vein, the text of the resolution and the Secretary-General's implementation plan should constitute the basis of talks, and the Council members' understanding of the spirit of the resolution could also contribute to its implementation.

Now that, despite Iraq's numerous violations, the cease-fire has been established, it is urgently necessary that the withdrawal of forces to internationally recognized boundaries be begun without further delay and completed within a short period, to be determined solely by technical considerations. A withdrawal of forces should have been effected immediately after the cease-fire, as stipulated in the resolution. It would constitute a significant step towards the decisive consolidation of the cease-fire.

Furthermore, in spite of the provisions of the Secretary-General's implementation plan, repeatedly reaffirmed by the Security Council, the formation of an impartial body for the identification of the aggressor has also been delayed. This body should begin its work with no further delay so as to pave the way for the achievement of a just peace.

We are fully prepared for the implementation of all the paragraphs in the resolution, within the framework of the Secretary-General's plan. While Iraq continues its obstructionist policies, we have even carried out unilaterally measures aimed at facilitating the implementation of other paragraphs of the resolution, as exemplified by the recent release of 72 Iraqi prisoners of war and 16 Egyptian prisoners. On the other hand, according to reports confirmed by the

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United Nations observer forces, Iraq, in violation of the cease-fire, has taken captive at least 700 Iranian military personnel and, more recently, it kidnapped two Iranian reporters in the presence of the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. These cases well suffice as a demonstration of the two countries' real intentions regarding the implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987).

We stress once again that the achievement of a comprehensive, just and honourable peace will not be possible without scrupulous observance of international law and, in particular, the legal instrument which governs the frontiers between the two countries, namely the 1975 Treaty of State Frontier and Neighbourly Relations between Iran and Iraq. Furthermore, the political will and practical goodwill of the two parties to the conflict is imperative for the achievement of peace. As before, the Islamic Republic of Iran will demonstrate its will for the establishment of lasting peace in the region. It will, however, resist with all its ability and strength any effort aimed at the emasculation of its indisputable, legitimate rights. It will never permit the Iraqi Government to achieve its aggressive designs by resorting to destructive manoeuvres in the peace talks, and as it attempted to do through its acts of aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran and its violations of all the rules of international law during the imposed war. Iraq must have learned its lesson from the eight-year-long heroic resistance of the Iranian Muslims well enough to have second thoughts about repeating whimsical, illegitimate aspirations.

It is also necessary to make a few remarks about paragraph 8 of the resolution, whose manner of implementation is to be drawn up by the Secretary-General in consultation with the two parties and other countries in the

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Persian Gulf region. Because of its strategic location and the possession of almost half the proved oil reserves in this part of the world, the Persian Gulf region is a critical and significant factor in international equations. Therefore developments in the region closely affect international peace and security.

The common religious, cultural and economic grounds shared by the countries in the Persian Gulf area constitute a firm basis for their solidarity and their gathering together within a single regional system to guarantee and safeguard their common interests. Nevertheless, the arrogant global Powers, which have fixed their greedy eyes upon the riches in this region and found a guarantee of their interests in the lack of unity and solidarity among these countries, continually sow the seeds of discord and hostility among them so as to preclude the fulfilment of their long cherished aspirations.

We have on many occasions declared our readiness to establish firm, friendly relations with the countries of the region in order to provide long-term strategic security for the area. In this context, the Secretary-General's eight-point plan of 21 March 1985 received our positive response, and on 8 May 1986 we proposed a plan for regional security based on the joint co-operation of all parties in the Persian Gulf region for all-inclusive security.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that failure to gather within a coherent regional system, and the void created by the absence of such a system, would entail grave consequences for the regional States in terms of their sovereignty and inalienable rights.

It is worth emphasizing in this connection that the presence of United States naval forces in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, which contravenes the

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purposes and principles set out in Articles 1 and 2 of the United Nations Charter, concerning respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence and the sovereign equality of States - has seriously jeopardized the peace and security process in the region. The most vicious consequence of the presence of foreign forces in the Persian Gulf was the criminal shooting down by the United States of the Iranian airliner flying along an internationally recognized air corridor on 3 July 1988, which cost the lives of 290 innocent people, including 100 women and children. That act was a blatant violation not only of the rule about refraining from aggression but also of the territorial integrity of a United Nations Member State.

After the acceptance of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and the measures undertaken by the Secretary-General towards the attainment of a lasting peace in the region, there remains no further excuse for the continued presence of the United States Navy. Therefore it must leave this region as soon as possible so that peace and tranquillity may be restored to the Persian Gulf nations, with no further foreign intervention.

The war waged by Iraq against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the longest conventional war in the twentieth century, has provided some significant and noteworthy experiences that can be used in the further development and codification of international rules on the conduct of war.

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In the course of this imposed war Iraq not only blatantly violated the norms and principles of the conduct of war on numerous occasions, including the use of chemical weapons and attacks against residential quarters, but also resorted to other measures totally alien to the spirit and objective of such rules of war. These fresh cases include threats to civilian airliners, attacks on commercial shipping in international waters and attacks on oil platforms. Such practices have in the past been condemned by the international community and international organizations.

Such attacks, made possible by recent developments in military technology and methods of warfare, would not have been feasible in the past, since these inhumane measures were unheard of and were never raised when past conferences were convened for the codification of laws on the conduct of war. Therefore, no codes of conduct have been provided to deal with such war crimes as have been committed by Iraq, although those crimes have been explicitly rejected by international forums.

In view of its experiences during the imposed war, and in order to preclude any repetition of such crimes in the future, the Islamic Republic of Iran proposes that the United Nations, on behalf of the international community, enact at an appropriate time certain restrictive legal measures to curtail the future commission of such crimes and thus contribute to the codification of a new set of international rules on the conduct of war.

Undeniably, the most significant incident deserving the utmost international attention, since it poses the most serious threat to the international community, is the extensive and unsparing deployment of chemical weapons by Iraq against both the Iranians and its own people, in contravention of all humanitarian rules of international law.

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The use of those evil, dreadful weapons, which sporadically began from 13 January 1981 against our military forces, gradually grew to such extensive and indiscriminate dimensions, mostly owing to the silence of international organizations, that they were not only used against Iranian civilians, but also claimed the lives of thousands of Kurdish women and children in Iraq. The United Nations has on five different occasions dispatched to the area expert missions, which have documented the extensive use of chemical weapons by Iraq.

I should like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the everlasting memories of all the innocent victims of those horrific weapons, and to reiterate my proposal that 18 March - the day when Iraqi chemical attacks against the city of Halabja claimed the lives of 5,000 innocent Iraqi civilians and left thousands of others critically injured - be designated the international day of the campaign against chemical weapons.

While the Security Council dealt in two different resolutions, 612 (1988) and 620 (1988), with the Iraqi use of chemical weapons, the mild nature of those resolutions in fact encouraged Iraq to continue on a massive scale its horrifying use of chemical weapons.

Iraq's audacity in the use of those weapons is such that even after the commencement of the cease-fire between the two countries Iraq used chemical weapons on a large scale against its own Kurds in the northern part of the country. Only the extreme nature of this incident led to the breaking of the long-standing silence observed by many, who now declared the extent of the tragedy of the use of chemical weapons and even demanded an investigation into the matter.

In view of the massive international outrage against those horrific crimes by Iraq, as well as the related positions of different countries and international organizations condemning such inhuman acts against the innocent Iraqi Kurds, it is not sufficient now merely to issue statements and pass resolutions reprimanding the

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perpetrator. It is absolutely essential that international organizations take serious preventive measures immediately to halt this trend of genocide and seriously punish the perpetrator.

During the current year the international community has witnessed the old scar on the heart of the Middle East, which has created moral and material turbulence and difficulties, once again, as it has hundreds of times before, greatly disturb the very spirit of the Muslim and Arab communities by becoming further infected. The régime occupying Quds has for years been expelling Palestinian residents from the occupied territories, but when the Palestinian people intensified their struggle to free themselves from the oppression of the occupiers, the occupying régime, in an unprecedented manner, enacted the most oppressive and savage measures to curtail the Palestinians. Those measures continue to this day.

The savagery of the occupying zionist régime in repressing the people of the occupied territories, who fight with empty hands and resist the occupiers with no weapons, and the régime's confrontations with the Islamic combatants in southern Lebanon undoubtedly demonstrate its anxiety about the growth and further expansion of such deep-rooted resistance movements.

Today the régime occupying Quds, supported by global imperialism and having continued its occupation of the whole Palestinian homeland and part of the other Islamic and Arab lands, resorts to new acts of savagery at whim. The repeated crimes perpetrated by the régime against southern Lebanon and the massacre of innocent civilians and Palestinian refugees once again prove the claim that the crisis in the Middle East will not be resolved unless this racist régime is eradicated and the rights of Palestinians to self-determination and the establishment of an independent government within their own territory are restored.

Dangerous global and reactionary conspiracies consistently attempt to

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compromise the Palestinian objectives. Today the Palestinian people face another such attempt to confront and undermine their heroic uprising against the régime occupying their territories.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, on the basis of historical precedents and experience, is of the opinion that any flexibility and retreat vis-à-vis the occupying régime will simply carry within itself the seed for future acts of aggression by the régime. We therefore warn against conspiracies currently in the making, and, while supporting the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people, we ask other Islamic, progressive and non-aligned countries fully to support this epic uprising and thus discharge their responsibilities and duties relating to the sacred goals of this oppressed people.

In another part of the Islamic world, Afghanistan, which bears the heavy burden of aggression and occupation, the struggles of its peoples once again prove that struggles against foreign aggression do not fade with time. More particularly, Islamic liberationist ideology lends greater intensity to the struggle against aggression in Afghanistan.

The withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghan territories, which commenced in mid-May 1988, is an initial step in solving the problems in Afghanistan. The Islamic Republic of Iran, while welcoming the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Islamic territory of Afghanistan, reiterates its long-standing conviction that the right to choose its own destiny and its future government is an inalienable right of the people of that country. We further emphasize that no régime can survive there without the full support of the Afghan people and the Muslim Mujahidin. The only final solution of the problem of Afghanistan lies in non-intervention by foreign forces in the nation's domestic affairs and allowing the indigenous population to manage affairs. The substitution of one foreign element by another presents no solution.

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The Islamic Republic of Iran hopes that, as socio-political conditions in Afghanistan improve, the way will be paved for the voluntary and honourable repatriation of the Afghan refugees who, driven from hearth and home, have for a number of years now been the respected guests of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It is with the utmost chagrin that I have to point once again to an unsolved problem that constitutes a protracted crime against humanity and an insult to its common conscience. The international community still suffers from the disgrace of racism and the ensuing discrimination. Since the Second World War, the most blatant institutionalized racism has been practised by the régime in Pretoria. This régime, in total disregard of the most basic principles of humanity and international law, continues to this day its racist policies and its illegal occupation of Namibia, and in so doing enjoys the support of Western countries and the full co-operation of the Zionist régime.

We have always insisted that support for the righteous struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa, and those of Namibia, led by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), together with a serious effort by the international community to bring all-round pressure to bear upon the Pretoria régime and its supporters, constitutes the sole means of ridding the world of the very roots of this régime - this shameful product of human failures. In this context, we hope that the efforts of the Secretary-General, which have gained a new momentum recently, will succeed in paving the way for the independence of Namibia and the removal of this dark page of racial supremacy from the history of the contemporary world.

With regard to Western Sahara, we have reached a stage at which, by supporting the efforts of the Secretary-General to resolve the question, we may be optimistic

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about a peaceful future for that region, based on respect for the legitimate rights and desires of the people.

The positive developments in the international community, a number of which have been referred to, and the role of the United Nations and its Secretariat in the betterment of the international political atmosphere - which has been acknowledged by the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize for the Organization's activities in the maintenance of peace - have placed United Nations organs in a position to discharge its most crucial and historic duty. This is the duty to prepare the way for securing lasting, not piecemeal, peace and stability by ensuring observance of the principles and rules of international law and of the United Nations Charter, and respect for the rights and wishes of nations in areas where the achievement of such peace has always been sacrificed to the unwholesome expansionist rivalries of imperialist Powers.

The Islamic Republic of Iran wishes the Secretary-General and his colleagues the utmost success in discharging their important duties in this critical domain.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.