



General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/43/PV.16
5 October 1988

ENGLISH

Forty-third session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 4 October 1988, at 10 a.m.

<p><u>President:</u> later: later:</p>	<p>Mr. CAPUTO Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Vice-President) Mr. BRANCO (Vice-President)</p>	<p>(Argentina) (Malta) (Sao Tome and Principe)</p>
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- Address by His Excellency General Moussa Traoré, President of the Republic of Mali
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Talhi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)
Mr. Hameed (Sri Lanka)
Mr. Varkonyi (Hungary)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

ADDRESS BY GENERAL MOUSSA TRAORE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALI

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

General Moussa Traoré, President of the Republic of Mali, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Mali, His Excellency General Moussa Traoré, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President TRAORE (interpretation from French): I take pleasure in greeting the members of the Assembly on behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and of the Republic of Mali.

It is also a pleasure, Sir, to congratulate you warmly on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-third session. Your personal qualities and the wealth of experience that has won the confidence of the Assembly guarantee the success of the work of this session.

I take this opportunity to extend my warmest congratulations to your predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, on his effectiveness in guiding the work of the Assembly at its forty-second session.

I wish also to express to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, our great appreciation of his untiring efforts to promote the ideals of the United Nations and of his bold initiatives designed to improve the performance of the United Nations and find appropriate solutions to some of the political and economic problems that afflict mankind.

(President Traoré)

The recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces is a confirmation of the relevance of the ideals of our Organization and a recognition of its merits.

The United Nations is the embodiment of our common will to unite our forces and harmonize our efforts to fulfil man's profound aspiration to peace, freedom and well-being. The Charter contains the rules of conduct that should enable us to achieve those ideals, namely: the non-use of force, good neighbourliness, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, respect for fundamental human rights and solidarity and mutual assistance among peoples.

A quick look at the international scene shows that we are still far from achieving those ideals. The Charter is continually violated. Hotbeds of tension and wars persist on the planet. Material, moral and intellectual poverty continue to be the lot of millions of persons throughout the world. Fundamental human rights are still flouted as a result of colonialism and racism.

The most flagrant violation of the Charter is taking place in the southern part of Africa. In South Africa 21 million blacks, who make up the overwhelming majority of the population, are denied their most basic rights by a white minority. Treated as foreigners in their own country, 15 million of them have been shunted off to bantustans, those reservations where the aridity of the soil is matched only by the rigours of the climate. To keep them in a state of subjection, an avalanche of savagely repressive acts assails them every day. That is the meaning of apartheid, a policy of hatred and denial of human dignity.

Pushed to the limit by barbaric acts of repression, the black community as a whole has rebelled. It no longer fears death; with bare hands it confronts one of the best equipped police forces and armies in the world. In panic, the racist

(President Traoré)

minority in Pretoria has declared a state of emergency and stepped up acts of repression, torture, arrest, deportation and assassination.

Yet, in spite of all this, the black population is continuing its struggle. The heroic resistance of the blacks of South Africa to the armed forces of the Pretoria racists is the best proof that a people struggling for its freedom is an invincible people.

The crystallization of antagonisms in South Africa is creating a situation that threatens a blood bath of terrifying dimensions, which must be prevented in the interest of all South Africans. In this regard, the minority régime of Pretoria should, on the one hand, refrain from any action likely to exacerbate this explosive situation and, on the other, immediately take the following necessary measures: end the state of emergency; liberate all political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela; and put into effect democratic processes designed to achieve a multiracial, egalitarian society in South Africa.

I take this opportunity to urge States which are in a position to bring the Pretoria Government to reason to use their influence to induce it to implement Security Council resolution 615 (1988), which requests a stay of execution for the Sharpeville Six and the commuting of the death sentence imposed on them.

The racist Pretoria Government is carrying out the same inhuman policy of blind repression in Namibia which it has illegally occupied for more than 40 years. Namibia is the only Territory under a mandate to which the relevant provisions of the Charter relating to the freedom of peoples have not been applied. The Security Council and the General Assembly have adopted an impressive number of resolutions and decisions, but their implementation has continually been impeded by the intransigence of the Pretoria Government. The best-known case is that of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

(President Traoré)

The Organization of African Unity is following with particular interest the diplomatic efforts now under way to bring about a definitive solution to the question of Namibia. It supports all sincere efforts whose objective is to enable the Namibian people to regain its independence and to establish peace and security in southern Africa.

Last August the international community in the context of the Oslo Conference, devoted attention to one of the tragedies resulting from the policy of apartheid of the South African Government - the situation of refugees, repatriated persons and displaced persons in southern Africa. The Conference adopted a plan of action for the provision of assistance to affected peoples and countries in southern Africa and the establishment of lasting peace in the region. We hope that at this session the General Assembly will endorse that plan of action.

We take this opportunity to express our most sincere gratitude to the international community for its demonstration of solidarity with Africa during that international Conference and to appeal to it to commit itself to the implementation of that plan of action.

There are other conflicts on the African continent, including those concerning the Western Sahara and the Chad-Libya question.

With regard to Western Sahara there have been notable developments. With the normalization of relations between the States of the subregion, we hope that efforts already made and those that will be undertaken by the Secretary-General and the Acting Chairman of the Organization of African Unity will result in the near future in the organization in that Territory of an orderly, free and general referendum on self-determination.

Concerning the Chad-Libya dispute, a new dynamism has fortunately been given to the peace process worked out by the ad hoc committee of the Organization of

(President Traoré)

African Unity following the important initiatives announced by Colonel Mu'Ammar Qaddafi on the twenty-fifth anniversary of our continental organization, and by the very positive reaction of President Hissein Habré to this situation.

In the Middle East, the spontaneous and continuing popular uprising of the Palestinians in the occupied territories to put an end to the Israeli occupation is testimony to the indisputable Palestinian reality.

(President Traoré)

No lasting peace can be established in this region without restoring the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.

The Organization of African Unity is convinced that the solution to the Middle East crisis depends on the convening of an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

With respect to the conflict in the Gulf, we welcome the crowning of the efforts of the Secretary-General and all those other efforts of good will which culminated in the acceptance of a cease-fire by Iran and Iraq, thus putting an end to eight years of fratricidal war.

It is equally gratifying to note the important progress made in the search for a solution to the Afghan problem, following upon the signing of the Geneva agreements on 14 April last.

In Asia, we hope that a lasting, negotiated solution to the problem of Kampuchea will soon be found and that the resumption of talks between the North and South of the Korean peninsula will also achieve positive results. In this connection, the proposal for the convening of a joint North-South peace conference on the peaceful reunification of an independent Korea deserves the attention and support of the international community.

In Central America, we invite the Support Group to pursue efforts at establishing an atmosphere of peace and harmony in the region.

Given the threat of nuclear destruction hanging over the world, the most urgent task for mankind is to promote nuclear disarmament. No people in the world is unaware of this imperative need. That is why the entire international community welcomed the signing, on 8 December 1987, of the Treaty on the Elimination of Medium-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. There cannot be genuine progress in the

(President Traoré)

disarmament process as long as the world continues to live in a cold-war atmosphere. This fundamental truth was highlighted by the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which, owing to the lack of consensus on essential issues, was unable to adopt a final document.

Hence, only by translating our sense of common destiny into action will we be able to resolve the paradox of spending \$1,000 billion each year in the production of lethal weapons, while only a fraction of that sum would make our planet a land of prosperity for millions of people who today suffer from illness, hunger, thirst and ignorance.

For its part, the Organization of African Unity, at its very first regular session, held in Cairo in June 1964, adopted the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. That decision was reaffirmed in several resolutions of our continental Organization.

However, while the States members of the Organization of African Unity have been firmly committed to excluding nuclear weapons from our continent, the racist régime in Pretoria has engaged in a frenzied effort to acquire nuclear weapons. The acquisition of a nuclear strike force by the champions of apartheid would dangerously jeopardize security on our continent. The Security Council must take effective measures to ensure respect for the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

Another factor threatening the security of Africa is the flooding of our continent with industrial toxic wastes. This activity, a crime against the peoples of Africa, is an outrage to international morality. We hope that this issue, which we have asked to have inscribed as an item on the agenda, will be seriously discussed and that strong measures will be adopted with a view to freeing our young countries of the grave dangers inherent in the dumping of the wastes produced as the result of the development of the industrialized countries.

(President Traoré)

From the time of its birth the Organization of African Unity enshrined in its charter the will of its member States to co-ordinate and harmonize their cultural policies. That decision has been most outstandingly reflected in the adoption of a Cultural Charter for Africa, in which we affirm that, for our peoples, African culture is the surest way to implement harmonious social and economic development and safeguard our great virtues. Indeed, African culture remains an inexhaustible source of our strength and our resistance. Its true significance can be seen in our struggle for political, economic and social liberation, in our struggle for development.

The time has come for the international community to grasp the meaning and scope of this concept of development based on values other than simply quantitative and material growth. Several years ago we ardently called for the proclamation of a Decade for Cultural Development. Our request was granted at the forty-first session of the Assembly; and now we need to act so as to ensure that this Decade will not become merely one more decade that does not produce the results expected of it.

At the beginning of the 1970s, the objective of "health for all in the year 2000" was proclaimed by the general assembly of the World Health Organization. That ambitious goal was both commendable and within the reach of mankind.

The results of the actions undertaken by the African States are significant, but a great deal remains to be done. In order to step up the development process for primary health care and to meet that goal in the year 2000, a new approach known as the Bamako Initiative was set at the 37th meeting of the Committee of African Health Ministers, held in Bamako in September 1987, and adopted by the member States of the Organization of African Unity last May. This is an African strategy within the context of a generalized economic crisis; it calls for the effective commitment of peoples to define and administer their own health problems.

(President Traoré)

On behalf of the women and children of Africa, I should like urgently to appeal to the international community for financial, material and technical support for this bold initiative, whose impact will be of the greatest benefit for all mankind.

The international economic situation continues to be of concern. The crisis affects the developing countries in particular; and it is the African continent that has been affected the most. Given this situation, the African countries have firmly committed themselves and mobilized in the search the most appropriate ways and means to overcome the crisis. Thus, the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity adopted Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery of Africa, with the objective of setting the basis for sustained growth and self-maintained and self-based development at the national and continental levels.

(President Traoré)

This Programme was the subject of special consideration by the General Assembly at its thirteenth special session, which culminated in the adoption of the United Nations Programme for African Recovery and Development for the period 1986-1990.

The present session provides us with an opportunity to consider the implementation of this Programme during the past two years and to evaluate efforts to be undertaken to ensure its full implementation.

In conformity with the commitment they made within the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development, the African countries have worked out important programmes for economic reform and structural adjustment.

In their plans for economic and social development, the majority of the African States have given absolute priority to agricultural development, food security, increased levels of agricultural productivity and production and therefore to food self-sufficiency. The African countries have also begun reforms in the support sectors of agriculture, namely, agro-industry, trade, finance, transportation and communication.

Despite all these considerable efforts, agricultural production has not increased to the extent we expected. The rates of growth during the period 1985-1986 for the entire African continent were for the most part below those for the period 1984-1985, nor did the situation improve in 1987.

In particular, regarding transportation and communication, actions dealt especially with projects designed to step up the implementation of the Decade for Transportation and Communication for Africa, 1978-1988. Evaluation of this Decade, which has just been completed, showed that the objectives of the physical integration of the continent were not fully achieved because of a lack of resources.

(President Traoré)

In the light of the situation the African Governments, in order to complete those efforts begun during the first decade, have proposed to the international community the launching of a second decade of transportation and communication for Africa for the period 1991-2000. It would be desirable for this proposal to be adopted by all and for the development of Africa to serve as a springboard for a contract of international solidarity.

Regarding trade and finances, actions have been taken to provide good prices for agricultural products. A number of African countries are now guaranteeing minimum prices to producers for foodstuffs and for most agricultural exports. Similarly concrete action has been undertaken to identify and eliminate obstacles to an expansion of trade.

Another high priority area of the United Nations Programme is the struggle against drought and desertification. To stop these phenomena, which have created a profound imbalance in our continent between man, crops, cattle and the international environment, resort to appropriate technology is indispensable, which none of our countries can manage alone.

Moreover, during the last two years, many African countries, already victims of drought, have been stricken by that terrible scourge: the invasion of locusts. Various operations, with international assistance, have been carried out to combat these predators. Despite all these factors, in several parts of the continent great swarms of these locusts, whose reproduction was promoted by an exceptionally heavy rainy season, continue to represent a serious threat to future harvests. The international community should pursue and step up its assistance to Africa in its struggle against this scourge.

In the context of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development, the international community has committed itself to giving Africa the necessary financial resources for the implementation of this Programme.

(President Traoré)

We are obliged to note that, during the period 1986-1988, despite certain efforts on the part of the international community, the financial flows towards Africa were clearly insufficient. There was an unprecedented decline in public assistance. The international economic environment did not improve as expected. Thus, given the lack of concrete and timely measures to support the efforts made by African countries to restore their economies, the results achieved by African foreign trade during the first two years of the implementation of the United Nations Programme had been disappointing.

A decline in export earnings has forced the majority of African countries to reduce their imports, in particular those production factors which are indispensable for development projects.

The problem of external debt is still a topic of the greatest concern. We will recall that at the end of 1987 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) deemed it necessary to convene a special Conference of Heads of State and Government to consider this pressing problem. At the close of that Conference, which was held in Addis Ababa, a declaration was adopted reflecting the joint position of Africa. This document spelt out the development, magnitude, structure and economic consequences of the continent's external debt; it defined a strategy aimed at reducing the burden of the African debt.

The Conference expressed the hope that the creditor countries and institutions of Africa would take concrete measures to alleviate the burden of Africa's external debt. In addition, it asked the international community to take into consideration the will clearly expressed by Africa to convene an international conference on the external debt. This international conference should promote the establishment of a constructive dialogue based on the proposals put forward in the joint position on the crisis of Africa's external debt.

(President Traoré)

I should like here to reaffirm that the African countries will honour the commitments undertaken under that debt and to insist that our creditors respond to our wish for concerted action and for more harmonious relations.

In the search for solutions to the economic problems of Africa, it is important to be aware of the relationship between factors such as financial flows, the level of commodity rates and the foreign debt. Thus it is imperative that integrated measures be adopted to reverse the present tendency which makes the African continent a net exporter of capital.

To allow our country to maintain an import rate that meets the needs for economic recovery and development, the flow of resources towards Africa must, according to the estimates of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), significantly increase to achieve the level of \$US 29.7 billion in 1990.

I should like to take the opportunity provided here to hail the initiatives of the member countries of the Committee for Aid to Development aimed at cancelling part of the debt of the African countries. The international community can and must do better. It must, in particular, demonstrate the necessary political will to implement the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) which deal with alleviating the burden of the external debt and transfer of resources.

(President Traoré)

While recognizing that it bears the main responsibility for its development, Africa is aware that its destiny is closely linked to that of the rest of the world. It is in that spirit of interdependence that I appeal to the international community to provide appropriate, effective support for the efforts now being made by Africa to achieve economic recovery.

The year 1988 is the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In a few weeks' time we shall be celebrating this historic event, which marks a significant stage in our inspiring progress towards that great ideal put forward in the United Nations Charter, proclaiming our faith in fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of the human person and the equality of rights of men and women, and nations large and small. This fortieth anniversary, therefore, will provide a unique opportunity for reaffirming our confidence and faith in this shared ideal and our firm determination to encourage and ensure universal respect for human rights.

Forty years after the adoption of the Declaration it is high time for the international community to direct its attention to new prospects of creating an environment favourable to the liberation and development of man. The mission assigned to us by the Charter is that of building a radiant future for all peoples and for all men: a future of peace, harmony and co-operation.

I assure Members of the total readiness and full commitment of Africa and all African peoples in the march of the United Nations towards that objective.

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

General Moussa Traoré, President of the Republic of Mali, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. TALHI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset, I should like to convey to you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation, my most sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of this session. I am confident that your experience and competence will enable us to achieve the best possible results. Our pleasure at your election is all the greater because you belong to a friendly country which maintains strong relations with ours. In wishing you every success in your difficult task I assure you that my delegation intends to co-operate closely with you in order to contribute to the success of the session.

I take this opportunity to express also our appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Peter Florin for his competent, indeed superb, handling of the work of the forty-second session.

We wish, too, to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, who has made strenuous efforts to strengthen the role of the Organization and played a prominent part in the international efforts which led to the solution of some of the most complex political questions.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The forty-third session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time when the world is beset with crises and new conflicts are added to the old ones. Thanks to the work of our Organization, we are witnessing some positive indications and developments which make us hope for true détente in international relations.

In spite of this optimism, we have, as an international gathering, to admit that the actual capability of the Organization suffers from numerous limitations because of the pressures exerted by certain States. Accordingly, it is incumbent on us strongly to support the existence and continuation of the Organization. We should all support its noble purposes, because we believe that it is still the only forum through which the hopes of peace-loving peoples and international peace and security can be realized.

We live in an era in which anxiety about our destiny combines with hope for the future. The continuation and viability of the Organization, in spite of difficulties and conspiracies throughout its existence, together with its success in maintaining some level of efficiency and independence, augur well and justify our optimism.

On the other hand, the persistence of colonialism and apartheid in Palestine and South Africa, exploitation, oppression, dominance, hegemony and occupation are causes for anxiety and trepidation. Worse still, poverty, hunger, backwardness and illiteracy have been sources of suffering for most human beings. The cries of the oppressed, tortured and displaced ring out on high, showering curses on imperialists, racists, opportunists and warmongers. That some régimes based on occupation, usurpation, genocide and apartheid have their place in the world community today and enjoy support clearly proves that some Powers treat the Charter of the Organization with contempt. Moreover, these régimes are given political support and unlimited material support by certain super-Powers.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

There is no doubt that during the life of the Organization great historic achievements have been accomplished in the fields of decolonization and resisting fascism and racism, but hotbeds of tension still abound in many parts of the world; as new wars and conflicts have broken out, the freedom and sovereignty of many States have been threatened, and many peoples have suffered from the scourge of occupation, injustice, hegemony and dependence.

A quick look at the current international situation and the agenda for this session shows that what has been accomplished so far is not enough, and that what has to be done requires a collective international will to address vigorously the prejudices of the few who refuse to uphold the principles of justice and peace, those imperialists who adopt a policy of force, threats, hegemony and terrorism to achieve their own ends, using all unlawful means, such as war, terrorism, interference in the internal affairs of States, invasion, aggression, occupation and economic blockade.

A large number of States represented here have been subjected to these practices. I remind the Assembly of the flagrant barbaric aggression perpetrated by the United States of America against my country in the spring of 1986. That aggression was condemned by world public opinion at the time and by the Assembly unanimously in its resolution 41/38 of 20 November 1986, which recognized the right of our people to receive appropriate compensation for the great losses incurred.

It gives me pleasure to commend all those States which sponsored or supported that resolution. We take it that their positive and honourable stand not only strengthens our valid position, but also represents a victory for the principles of justice, righteousness and peace enshrined in the Charter of our Organization.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

As the American attack against Libya is one of the items on the agenda this session, we call upon all peace-loving States to reiterate their condemnation of that aggression and to support the lawful demands of our people to receive immediate and appropriate compensation for the human and material losses incurred.

In this connection, we emphasize that the attack should not be regarded as a purely Libyan affair, for it affects the entire international community, inasmuch as it encroaches upon the spirit and principles of the Charter. If Libya fell victim to the aggression then, it was not the first victim, and it will not be the last. That aggression is a link in the chain of persistent American practices against peoples fighting for their freedom, independence and sovereignty. It is also a component of the imperialist scheme that I have just mentioned. It is even a component of the approach of the foreign policy of the United States of America. What is happening in Central America, where the peoples of Panama and Nicaragua are subjected to the vilest kinds of blackmail and threats, provides irrefutable evidence of what I am saying.

The Organization's role can be truly strengthened only by a review of provisions of the Charter which have crippled some of the main organs responsible for maintaining international peace and security. Some of those provisions have not kept pace with the profound global changes which have taken place since 1945. The international situation in 1945 was completely different from today's. The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization should be aware of this fact. Its recommendations should be bold with regard to those provisions whose application has hampered the most important role of the Organization.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

I refer, in particular, to the right of veto enjoyed by a few States, which some of them have exploited to foster aggression, occupation, invasion and terrorism. My country took the initiative in calling for a thorough review of that privilege. It reaffirms its position and calls upon all Member States to consider the issue in an objective manner.

The question of Palestine - of the Arab people of Palestine - has absolute priority among my country's concerns. It is the question of an entire people who have been displaced, from their homeland, whose land has been usurped and who are subjected to the worst forms of discrimination, oppression, torture and genocide by a clique that has been assembled, financed armed and supported for that purpose.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

We share the belief of the Palestinian people, and all peace-loving nations, that the main question in the world today is that of progress and peace - but this cannot be achieved without freedom and justice. There can be no progress without freedom, and no peace without justice.

How can we think of progress and peace in a world where the largest State does not hesitate to finance the steady extermination of a tiny people in order to implant an alien in its land, its fields and houses?

In the past 40 years this distinguished Assembly, the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations have adopted hundreds of resolutions recognizing the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their country, and to achieve self-determination. In spite of this confirmed international recognition, the Arab Palestinian people are still deprived of all their human and political rights because of the obduracy and arrogance of the occupying racist Zionist entity and those who created and foster it, disregarding all values and treating all instruments with blatant contempt.

The persistence of the United States, in particular, in providing unlimited support to this racist régime is the main reason for the continued plight of the Palestinian people.

The United States, which is a permanent member of the Security Council and is thus presumed to take the lead in establishing and maintaining international peace and security, is the same Power that protects the Zionist entity and defends its membership of the United Nations, in the knowledge that that entity is defending aggression, occupation and falsehood. Accordingly, from our point of view, it remains the main, indeed the only, obstacle in the way of all international efforts to find a just solution to the question of Palestine.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The great patience of the Palestinian people should not be regarded as gradual recognition of a fait accompli or of submission to it, or as a sign that they have forgotten four decades of injustice and oppression. People have good memories, and falsehood is destined to vanish, however long it may last. Allah, the Almighty, says, in the Glorious Koran:

"And Allah will wipe out the lie and vindicate the truth by his words,"
and

"Nay, but we hurl the true against the false, and it doth break its head and lo! it vanishes." (The Holy Koran, XLII:24 and XXI:18)

We have lived to see falsehood armed to the teeth with the most up-to-date and devastating weapons, staggering under the blows of the unarmed Palestinian people, who have nothing with which to fight except the stones of their land, covered with their blood and mixed with the bones of their women and children. It looks as if solid stones long subjected to the injustice of the usurper have risen to acquire the power of bombs and rockets, and the atoms of these stones have come to life. Thus, the uprising of this brave people has shown that deeds speak louder than words. It has stressed to us all that right endows the weak with strength, that the technology of injustice cannot subdue. The Arab poet says:

"Right at the hands of the just is elevated,

As a sword acts when brandished.

Whatever lies are used to tarnish right,

It must one day be seen shining bright."

This uprising has stunned the occupying Power and its supporters. It has reminded everyone of the human tragedy and the grave injustice. It has also underlined the fact that all deals up to now - peace initiatives as well as unilateral agreements - have been unable to provide any basis either for peace or for a just solution.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

We applaud our Arab people in Palestine for their heroic and honourable stand and their magnificent struggle. We reiterate our complete support for their blessed uprising and place all our capabilities at their disposal. The United Nations, which, nearly 40 years ago, was manipulated by imperialists in an attempt to confer legality on the racist Zionist entity, is called upon today to take concrete measures to remedy its historic blunder.

What is taking place in occupied Palestine cannot be considered in isolation from what is happening in southern Africa. The Powers that firmly implanted the racist entity in Palestine are the same ones that created the racist régime in southern Africa. The daily racist practices from which the peoples of South Africa and Namibia suffer are the same as those experienced by the Palestinian people. The two régimes are identical. Could it be said, indeed, that they differ in any way? The establishment of the apartheid régime in South Africa is yet another example of the historical hardships and tragedies to which peoples have been subjected by the colonialist and imperialist movement. The United Nations should shoulder the historic responsibility of combating the evils of apartheid.

The problems of Namibia cannot be resolved except by enabling the Namibian people to exercise self-determination and achieve complete independence under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), pursuant to United Nations resolutions, especially Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which represents the legal basis of international consensus on Namibian independence.

The Pretoria régime has colonized South Africa and Namibia, oppressed the black majority and striven to exterminate it. It also threatens the security and integrity of neighbouring African States. It is emulated by its twin régime in occupied Palestine, but it cannot be compelled to yield to the will of the

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

international community except through the application of immediate and comprehensive sanctions. We regard the refusal of certain Powers, and the reluctance of others, to apply sanctions as the main obstacle facing international efforts to put an end to the most abhorrent racist régime in modern history.

We in Libya support the just struggle of the peoples of South Africa and Namibia for independence and human dignity. We commend the brave steadfastness of the front-line African States and declare our complete solidarity with them in their efforts to achieve the common goal of putting an end to the apartheid régime in Pretoria.

The collaboration between the colonial régimes in Palestine and Pretoria is an undeniable fact of great significance. As this international Assembly condemned the apartheid policy in South Africa as the most odious form of racial discrimination, so it condemned Zionism, regarding it as a form of racism and racial discrimination. This condemnation and this judgement are embodied in the historic General Assembly resolution 3379 (XXX), which has been a prominent landmark and an honourable and brave utterance by the United Nations in combating racism and racial discrimination. I refer to that resolution in order to refresh memories in this international assemblage, appeal to its conscience, and urge it to be wide awake so that it may address attempts to obscure the truth and confer justice and goodness on falsehood.

Strengthening security and co-operation in the Mediterranean Sea zone ranks high among the concerns of my country, which has always supported all regional and international efforts to this end. Our interest in this issue is based on our conviction that the security of the region is related not only to peace, security and co-operation in Europe and Africa, but also to international peace and security.

(Mr. Talhi, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

This region has become one of the most dangerous areas of tension in the world, owing to its occupation by certain imperialist Powers which are determined to change it into a permanent base for foreign naval fleets, an arena for provocative military manoeuvres, acts of naval and air piracy and a launching pad for direct aggression against some States bordering on the Mediterranean Sea.

True security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region can be brought about only through the intensification and co-ordination of the efforts by all States bordering on the Sea, through collective measures on their part to call for the immediate withdrawal of foreign fleets and the dismantling of military bases, and through the promotion of dialogue and understanding among all the parties with a view to achieving this end. In this context, we should like to endorse the final communiqué of the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries at their special meeting held in Havana in May 1988. We welcome anew the agreements at Beriouni on the continuation of contacts between the non-aligned countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea and the European States in that region.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), to which we are proud to belong and which is considered one of the largest and most important regional entities in the world, plays an active part in strengthening international peace and security. The peoples of that organization have long-standing historical links to one another and have also been subjected to long and continuous suffering from imperialism, occupation and foreign interference.

My country has played a leading role in defending the unity and cohesion of that organization, and has championed the slogan "Africa for Africans". Some imperialist Powers, however, were not happy about this, and worked constantly to cripple the organization and disrupt the ranks of its members. But the African

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peoples have risen above these manoeuvres, which ultimately failed despite their occasional limited and ephemeral successes.

Out of this spirit, and from the belief of Libya and its Revolutionary Command that all the problems of the African continent should be solved within it and through its own organization, and out of his awareness of its responsibility for solving internal African problems, Colonel Mu'Ammar Qaddafi, the leader of the Revolution, took the initiative of declaring, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the OAU, Libya's recognition of the present Government of Chad, and expressed Libya's readiness to offer all aid and support to the Chadian people and the restoration of full diplomatic relations between the two countries. This was an indication of our good will and firm determination to forestall all imperialist attempts to escalate the crisis.

We would like to assure the General Assembly, and our African brothers in particular, that we abide by what we have already communicated and that a joint communiqué was issued yesterday to restore diplomatic relations with Chad, confirming our willingness to restore peace and co-operation and to settle disputes by peaceful means.

For a long time, my country was subjected to abhorrent fascist invasion, occupation and colonization, which cost hundreds of thousands of our inhabitants their lives. It was also an arena for major military operations in the Second World War, during which Libya lost large numbers of innocent civilians. My country still faces the problems of the aftermath of this war as a result of the surplus matériel and mines left by the warring parties on Libyan soil. My country took the initiative of raising this question at the international level a few years ago. Many resolutions were adopted concerning this problem, in which States responsible

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for deploying this débris were called upon to provide necessary information, help in its removal, and pay for the material and human losses inflicted. Nevertheless, the States concerned have not co-operated in any positive way and are still reluctant to implement the relevant decisions of international forums. We therefore renew our appeal to the international community to take appropriate measures to ensure that an urgent solution to this problem will be found.

We are aware of the international community's growing concern at terrorist acts that result in loss of life, and we share its conviction that specific international criteria must be developed to ensure a clear distinction between outright terrorism, which must be eradicated, and the lawful and just struggles of peoples fighting against imperialism, racism and foreign domination and for self-determination and the defence of their freedom, their sovereignty, and their very existence.

Certain Powers prefer to see legitimate struggle as terrorism, whereas these same Powers are the sources of terrorism unleashed upon peoples as a main ingredient in the imperialistic policies and designs of these Powers. My country, which has constantly and as a matter of principle supported the cause of national liberation throughout the world, has itself fallen victim to State terrorism. Accordingly, we reaffirm our support for the convening of an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to define the concept of terrorism.

Within the framework of our concern for human rights, and out of our belief in the importance of human freedom and dignity as the main ingredients of progress and development in any society, my country took historic and concrete steps in this field. These steps were crowned by the principal popular conferences in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya with the proclamation of the Human Rights

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Document legalizing the true enjoyment of all civil, economic, social and cultural rights in the Jamahiriya community.

We sincerely hope that these actions will contribute to the strengthening of human rights at the international level, especially as we shall be celebrating during this session of the General Assembly, here in this Hall, the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, an enormous international assemblage encompassing the great majority of the members of the international community, is still a prominent and influential component in international relations. This Movement plays a prominent part in reducing tension and strengthening international peace and security. It is also a symbol of resistance on the part of peoples to their polarization by the super-Powers and their policies of hegemony, dominance and dependence. As a member of that Movement and one which has great faith in its role and objectives, Libya commends anew the approach and achievements of the Movement and asserts its adherence to its principles. Libya hopes that the spirit of solidarity and integration will flourish among the members of the Movement, helping them to confront all expansionist, imperialist schemes.

Having followed the recent developments in the Gulf region with great concern, my country welcomes the cease-fire and the agreement reached between the two war-weary Muslim States, Iraq and Iran, for the peaceful settlement of their problems. Libya, which has sincerely striven to stop this war ever since it began, is pleased to witness its imminent end and to see the Gulf area turn into a tranquil lake enjoying peace, security and stability, with the potential strengths of these two States channelled to face the real enemy that threatens our entire Arab and Muslim peoples, the Zionist enemy. We believe that true peace and

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security can be achieved in the area only with the withdrawal of all foreign military fleets from the Arabian Gulf.

In this connection, I should like to commend the sincere efforts made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to put an end to that war.

My country, which has actively contributed to the efforts to solve the Cyprus question, would like to stress that a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of this problem must be based on the unity, sovereignty and non-aligned status of Cyprus, and must guarantee the rights of both the Greek and the Turkish communities.*

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

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In supporting the endeavours of the United Nations in this respect, we stress the need to dismantle foreign imperialistic bases in the area, for they threaten the security and integrity not only of the island, but also of the entire Mediterranean Sea basin.

My country also expresses its satisfaction at the conclusion in Geneva, under the auspices of the United Nations, of the agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan to settle the question of the brother people of Afghanistan.

My country reiterates its support for the hopes and aspirations of the Korean people to reunify the two parts of Korea, and calls for the creation of a favourable climate for this reunification without any foreign interference.

The situation in Central America and the Caribbean has become more volatile and dangerous as the peoples of Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, Grenada and Panama have been subjected to a series of blatant imperialist provocations and interventions. In emphasizing our support for the efforts of the Contadora Group and the Guatemala agreement as the appropriate basis for the solution of the problems in the area, we proclaim our solidarity with those peoples in their honourable struggle for freedom and sovereignty.

This session is being held less than three months after the conclusion of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Although that session was held at a time of international détente, especially in the area of negotiations on complex and intricate disarmament issues, and coincided with the Moscow summit meeting between the two super-Powers, it failed to achieve any tangible results, in spite of the world-wide interest shown and the hopes that mankind placed in it. We believe, however, that the convening of the discussion at

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that session can be regarded as one more moderate step on the thorny path to disarmament.

It seems that the whole world agrees that nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction represent the main threat to mankind. The complexity of this issue is increased by the determination of certain nuclear super-Powers to engage in the abhorrent race to develop new types of these weapons, devoting vast material resources to finance research and other programmes related to them. While mankind welcomes some aspects of détente and looks forward to more and better agreements on the reduction of stockpiles devastating nuclear weapons on our planet, it sees at the same time the development of terrifying programmes and plans to militarize outer space. In this context, we should like to refer in particular to the so-called Star Wars programme - the strategic defence initiative. The American Administration is determined to pursue this and to persuade the largest possible number of States to adopt it.

As a signatory of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, my country supports all regional and international efforts to curb the nuclear-arms race. As we welcome the recent agreement between the two super-Powers on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, despite its serious limitations, we hope that the results of the Moscow summit will lead to enhanced détente, to further reductions of nuclear weapons and, ultimately, to their destruction. Until this goal is reached, we stress the need, pending attainment of this goal, for guarantees for non-nuclear States against the use or threat of use of these weapons. In this context, we affirm the right of these States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Nevertheless, the fact that the two racist régimes in occupied Palestine and South Africa have acquired nuclear capability

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confirms the belief in Africa and the Arab region in general that imbalance and instability will continue in these two important regions.

We support the principle of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones anywhere in the world, including Africa, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, although we believe that this goal will remain out of reach because circumstances favourable to its attainment have not been created.

As for Africa, the racist régime in Pretoria, with its collaboration with certain major Western States, represents a stumbling-block to relieving the continent from the threat of the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons, which is the nightmare of African countries.

In the Middle East, the presence of the racist Zionist entity in the occupied territories of Palestine, its involvement in the Star Wars programme and its strategic collaboration with the United States represent a constant threat not only to the States of the region, but also to the States of the Mediterranean and African regions, especially if one takes into account the continuous nuclear collaboration between that entity and the racist régime in Pretoria. We reiterate in this respect that the persistence of certain Powers in supporting these two racist régimes intensifies tensions in both regions and represents a threat to international peace and security.

Another phenomenon that causes grave concern in Africa, in particular, and merits high priority today is the marked increase in the dumping of nuclear and toxic wastes in Africa by certain States, industrial concerns and transnational corporations. In strongly condemning these immoral practices, which are a crime against Africa and its peoples, we endorse the relevant resolution adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its forty-eighth session.

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My country will always reaffirm the central role and major responsibility of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and the great importance of the World Disarmament Campaign and other United Nations initiatives to sensitize world public opinion and keep it informed about disarmament issues and the relationship between disarmament and development.

The current international economic situation is another important issue that could threaten international peace and security. The worsening of the economic crisis is shown by, inter alia, the sharp decline in the prices of commodities, the doubling of the external debt-burden of developing countries and the depletion of their financial resources, the prevalence of poverty, disease and famine as a result of drought and conflict and the policies of economic coercion adopted by certain developed countries which apply economic blockades and embargoes and impose unfair terms of trade.

There is no doubt that the main reason for this crisis is the imbalance inherent in the existing international economic order. All efforts to reform this unjust order have failed because they have been mere formalities with the aim of alleviating the crisis, but not at improving the order. The only way to reform it is by restructuring it in line with the realities of the current international economic and political circumstances, which are completely different from those at its inception.

The present economic order has become a major obstacle to developing countries, which did not take part in determining its nature, since most of them were subjected to imperialistic hegemony in its economic and political forms. The dilemma facing these countries following independence arises from the fact that the economic order does not respond to their just demand for equality and participation in international economic decision-making.

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The international community has recognized the need to change the international economic order. This was stated clearly in the resolution on the new international economic order adopted at the seventh special session of the General Assembly. Regrettably, it is clear now that recognizing reality is one thing, but having the will to change it is an entirely different matter. Many years have passed since the adoption of that resolution, but the intransigence of developed countries has hampered efforts aimed at changing the international economic order and implementing the United Nations resolutions on the new international economic order.

The developing countries are convinced that their economic and social development cannot be attained under the old order, so they are determined to change it. They have made strenuous efforts to this end since the late 1960s. To these efforts we owe the establishment of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the holding of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and the adoption of the proposals for the global round of negotiations and on the International Development Strategy.

Despite all these efforts, the hopes of the developing countries have not been fulfilled, because of the failure of developed countries to honour their commitments in the field of development assistance.

The developing countries have realized that co-operation among themselves is the right way to bring about political and economic solidarity. This co-operation is also an important means of attaining economic and social development in those States. This co-operation acquired greater significance when the dialogue with developed States floundered, for the developed States wanted the dialogue to further their own interests, regardless of the critical needs of developing countries.

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Co-operation among developing countries has made considerable progress. My country, which has consistently supported this co-operation as a sound basis for the achievement of its development objectives, strives to consolidate this co-operation. It has concluded economic and technical co-operation agreements with a large number of developing countries, and has also provided them with long-term loans and assistance.

We believe that the developing countries should not be over-optimistic concerning the outcome of the North-South dialogue, but should begin laying a sound foundation of co-operation among themselves, so as to enter upon these talks from a position of strength.

In conclusion, we express the hope that the results of this session will measure up to the aspirations of mankind for a better world in which peace, prosperity and justice prevail.

Mr. HAMEED (Sri Lanka): Let me at the outset, on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, extend to Mr. Caputo of Argentina, our sincere congratulations on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at the forty-third session. My delegation would like to assure him of our support and full co-operation in the tasks ahead.

Our appreciation is also due to Mr. Peter Florin, who discharged his duties as President of the forty-second session with skill, devotion and responsibility.

We applaud the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces as richly deserved recognition of the impressive record of the United Nations in keeping peace throughout the world. We congratulate the Secretary-General and his dedicated team on this fitting tribute.

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Three years ago, with considerable enthusiasm, we commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. A year later, hardly had the euphoria of that celebration evaporated than we were confronted with the prospect that the United Nations might not even be able to survive, because of budgetary constraints. International diplomacy, never at a loss for words, diagnosed this situation and described it as a crisis for multilateralism, a crisis brought about by unilateralism. Unilateralism seemed to be prevailing over multilateralism.

Most dramatically, bilateralism, involving principally the Soviet Union and the United States, led to the conclusion of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - widely accepted as the first real measure of disarmament, as distinct from the mere control or limitation of arms. The Moscow summit meeting also brought forth agreement that further bilateral efforts would be exerted towards the reduction by half of the super-Power strategic nuclear arsenals and towards a step-by-step halting of nuclear testing. The international community has welcomed these developments with enthusiasm.

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, a few months ago, offered the first major international forum for an assessment of international security and disarmament issues in the light of these new developments. Despite a greatly improved context of international relations in comparison with the first and second special sessions on disarmament, the third special session belied our expectations. The nexus between bilateral progress and multilateral advance did not prove to be automatic. The third special session's failure to produce a consensus final document seemed contrary to the hopeful developments of the time. In a sense, we have witnessed an encounter between bilateral approaches and multilateral demands, but the encounter has not been as discouraging as in the past.*

* Mr. Branco (Sao Tome and Principe), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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Nevertheless, the session recognized, but failed to document, the interdependent nature of the broad spectrum of global issues and the need for multilateral co-operation in their solution. If time ran out before a consensus document could be finalized, it must only mean that the exercise must continue on the basis of the many valuable proposals and ideas presented during the session.

In the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body of which Sri Lanka is a member, the hope of multilateral negotiations on a range of nuclear items has been frustrated. No progress is recorded in the report of the Conference, for example, on the priority issue of negotiating a total ban on nuclear testing. The purpose envisaged in the 1963 Partial Test-Ban Treaty is not to regulate and thereby condone testing below a certain threshold but to eliminate decisively all testing. As a parallel measure to discussions in the Conference on Disarmament Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and Yugoslavia have requested an amendment conference of States parties to the 1963 Treaty to consider its conversion into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The Foreign Ministers of the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement who met at Nicosia last month have endorsed that initiative.

A collective approach has been sought in the Conference on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, the common heritage of mankind, which should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. The existing legal régime now applicable to outer space has played a significant role, but, given the rapidity of technological and strategic developments, it is insufficient to prevent the emplacement of weapons in outer space. My delegation will make every effort at this session of the General Assembly to continue with our initiatives to build the necessary consensus and move forward in this vital area.

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The recent use of chemical weapons has been universally condemned. Sustained negotiations have been pursued in the Conference on Disarmament towards the conclusion of a treaty banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons. Some important issues remain unresolved, while the settlement of others has been delayed unduly. Considerable achievements have also been made in work between the two major chemical-weapons possessors, and we have noted the initiatives announced in this forum last week.

This session of the General Assembly will consider the question of preparing for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons scheduled for 1990. As a State party to the Treaty, Sri Lanka naturally has a keen interest in facilitating a successful review of the obligations under that Treaty in all their aspects. We hope that agreement could be reached at this session to formulate a smooth preparatory process.

A disarmament exercise that began as a Sri Lankan initiative with the support of non-aligned countries has long since acquired both regional and international dimensions. Following the 1971 Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, States of the region held a conference in 1979 that adopted seven principles of agreement for the implementation of the Declaration. Those included the non-use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the freedom of peaceful navigation. Considerable work on issues of substance relating to the conference has already been accomplished by the Ad Hoc Committee. A consensus has been patiently built up now for the conference to be convened at Colombo at a date not later than 1990. Sri Lanka, particularly given the vastly improved international climate, expects that the concerned States will abide by the consensus.

Since we last met the United Nations has succeeded in its negotiations in respect of Afghanistan, with the conclusion in April of this year of the Geneva

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Agreement. Sri Lanka congratulates the statesmanship displayed by all parties that made the agreement possible and hopes that that will remain in evidence during the implementation. We look forward to the conclusion of a comprehensive settlement of all issues to the satisfaction of all the people of the Afghan nation.

Similarly, in the Gulf conflict too the conciliatory mechanisms of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, have proved their efficacy. It has been Sri Lanka's consistent position that that wasteful war should be ended, and a solution acceptable to both parties must be found. Therefore, Sri Lanka welcomes the decision of the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq to co-operate with the Secretary-General's representative to reach a comprehensive, honourable and enduring solution to that tragic conflict.

There are positive indications to be seen in the question of Cyprus as well, for which the United Nations once more can claim some credit. An essentially domestic intercommunal issue in Cyprus has been aggravated by the foreign occupation of part of its territory and by illegal unilateral actions towards separatism. However, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, talks have been resumed between the President of the Republic of Cyprus and the representative of the Turkish Cypriot community with a view to resolving the Cyprus problem in all its aspects.

In respect of Kampuchea, direct negotiations have brought hopes for an abatement of tensions infecting the entire region. The Djakarta meeting held in July this year brought together all parties concerned. Sri Lanka is pledged to support and reinforce the Djakarta initiative.

In the Middle East the continued denial of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people persists as the root cause of the unrest in the region. The uprising in Israeli-occupied territory has acquired heroic proportions, and brutal attempts to suppress it have only strengthened the resistance to the occupation. A

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just, durable peace that guarantees security for all States and peoples in the region, including the Palestinians, can only be ensured by the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied Palestinian and Arab territories. It is Sri Lanka's position that settlements illegally established must be dismantled and demographic changes thrust upon the occupied territories must be rendered null and void. Sri Lanka supports the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East called by the General Assembly in resolution 35/58 C as a means of achieving a just and comprehensive solution to the complex of issues that is called the Middle East question.

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It is essential that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, participate in the Conference on an equal footing with all other parties directly concerned in the Israeli-Arab conflict.

The path to Namibian independence has long since been charted by Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Sri Lanka salutes the Namibian people's struggle for self-determination and national independence in a united and undivided Namibia. It is our sincere hope that independent Namibia will occupy its seat in the community of nations in the near future. The recent developments, which have led to talks involving Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the United States are welcome in that they seek a negotiated and peaceful settlement of some issues of conflict in the region.

As in Namibia, so also in the entire southern African region, the apartheid policies of the Government of South Africa foster violence and conflict. Within South Africa the situation has deteriorated, with inhuman racist laws continuing to violate all norms of civilized behaviour, and with the ruthless security forces indulging in mass arrests and detention and causing injury and death to innocent civilians. Outside its borders, South African forces have committed acts of aggression against independent neighbouring African States whose only offence has been the defence of their sovereignty and freedom and the championing of the anti-apartheid cause. International pressure on the apartheid régime must continue to be increased. Comprehensive mandatory sanctions, to be imposed by the Security Council, have been declared the most effective peaceful means of dismantling apartheid.

Let me now turn to the international economic scene. Global economic co-operation in real terms has been in a state of virtual atrophy. In most developing countries the development process has been seriously handicapped, and in

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some even reversed. Real interest rates have swung upwards. Exchange rates have been fluctuating. The prices of primary commodities have drastically slumped and protectionist measures in certain import markets have aggravated their overall impact in developing countries. Development assistance has been reduced. The debt burden has had a debilitating impact on the economies of developing countries. Only a rational concerted effort on the part of the entire global community can help re-order the prevailing insecure economic situation.

In respect of the debt issue, furthering the consensus achieved at the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), it was proposed in the Conference's trade and development report that the current inadequate strategy of domestic adjustment and new lending be complemented by a wider recourse to consensual, orderly and systematic reduction of interest charges and stock of debt, in particular by debt forgiveness. The assumption behind those proposals is that countries benefiting from debt reduction could strengthen policies to improve efficiency of investment and achieve a substantial improvement in the export performance of indebted countries.

Allied to this, and assuming great significance, are the complex trade negotiations of the Uruguay Round, which concern a variety of issues of crucial importance, particularly to developing countries. These include tropical and natural-resource-based products, tariffs, non-tariff barriers, and textiles and clothing. Unfortunately, the pursuit of unilateral trading gains has led to some trading entities callously bypassing the regulations and principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). In sectors most crucial to developing countries seeking export markets, for example in the field of textiles and clothing, deviations from GATT principles are clearly evident.

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The commitment of major import markets to promoting easier access for the exports of developing countries is one which needs to be fulfilled with greater devotion and sincerity. Specifically, a measure of true understanding would be a rollback of current non-tariff barriers coupled with other measures to improve market access. Strict compliance with the standstill and rollback commitments reaffirmed at Punta del Este is vital to the success of the Uruguay Round. Developing countries should also be given credit in the Uruguay Round for unilateral measures of trade liberalization taken under programmes of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. A challenge for international economic co-operation is before us at the mid-term review of the Uruguay Round in Montreal this December by the ministerial session of the GATT's Trade Negotiations Committee.

Concomitant with economic co-operation between developed and developing countries, economic co-operation among developing countries is also vital. The agreement on a global system of trade preferences reached recently is a step in the right direction, and could not only strengthen the base for economic development but also help reduce the existing overdependence on developed countries. The adoption of the agreement on the global system, signed by 48 countries, was a historic step, and it is important that those that have not yet signed and ratified the Belgrade agreement do so soon.

Permit me at this stage to refer to two initiatives in the area of development co-operation in which Sri Lanka is deeply involved.

Sri Lanka took an initiative in the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee in 1981 which called for a study of marine resources and their development potential in the Indian Ocean region. In January 1987, following careful study and preparation at expert level, the Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Conference was held at ministerial level in Sri Lanka to formulate a broad co-operative framework for

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developing the marine-affairs capabilities of the Indian Ocean States. A standing committee has since been established to guide its programme. We see this as an essential step in consolidating the benefits of the Convention on the Law of the Sea. We believe that this venture could benefit further from the infusion of material and technical support from all sources.

Last year the international community participated in observing the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, declared by the United Nations on the initiative of the Honourable R. Premadasa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. The proposal by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for a global strategy for shelter to the year 2000, formulated in response to a consensus call by this Assembly in resolution 42/191, is the next logical step in our collective endeavours to meet the shelter needs of deprived millions.

(Mr. Hameed, Sri Lanka)

The widespread support enjoyed at the Economic and Social Council this summer is indicative of the political will to forge ahead with necessary material support. We look forward to the transformation of this political will into concrete action through a genuinely global venture as an exemplary exercise in multilateral co-operation.

In Sri Lanka where we have over the past few years had to withstand and overcome grave threats to our sovereignty and territorial integrity and face violent challenges to our cherished democratic institutions, we have still to banish the ugly phenomenon of violence and terrorism. The 13th Constitutional Amendment devolving a substantial measure of power from the centre to the provincial councils will have been fully implemented when elections to the North-Eastern Provinces take place in November. Thus, the fundamental restructuring of our post-colonial policy to accommodate the aspirations of all sections of our people for direct and active participation in the governing of our multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious nation will have been completed.

In the last few months, we have, in the tradition of our parliamentary democracy, held elections to seven of the eight Provincial Councils: In July four by-elections to Parliament were held, and this month another; and in December of this year a new President will be elected to succeed His Excellency President J. R. Jayewardene, who completes his constitutionally stipulated two terms of office. The democratic process is therefore as active in our small country as it has been since 1931, 57 years ago, when universal adult franchise was introduced in Sri Lanka.

I am confident that with the innate wisdom of the people of Sri Lanka, enriched by a unique historical tradition of over 2,000 years and drawing on the religious philosophies flourishing in the country, Sri Lanka will press forward with the irreversible process of the healing of past wounds and the rehabilitation

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of the injury inflicted on our nation in human, political, social and economic terms. A period of peace and stability in which development can be accelerated is what our people richly deserve. And they will secure it for themselves through our democratic process, rejecting violence and anarchy.

The imperative of international co-operation, which is really what multilateralism is all about, applies to political and security issues, to economic and environmental issues and to social and humanitarian issues. Arguments and appeals based on justice, equity and human compassion have been advanced in this forum to bring peace where there is violence and conflict, security where there is tension and fear, development where there is deprivation and want. If then these arguments, backed as they are by the injunctions of the United Nations Charter, need further justification, there is the pragmatic logic of necessity - the compulsion of mutual interest. We are all links in a chain of human and national interdependence. The prospect for human survival and development will be only as strong as the weakest link in that chain.

When we speak of the United Nations or multilateral approaches, we must project our vision beyond this building, beyond the delegates' desks and national name plates, beyond the microphones and earphones and beyond the resolutions and speeches, and focus on the impact of our work on the millions of people we represent. The fact is that the fate of each nation is intrinsically fused with the fate of the entire planet. This is not so merely in the negative sense in that a common nuclear threat hangs over all of us. In a positive sense, the political, economic and ecological well-being and development of each nation has to be pursued in co-operation, rather than at variance, with others. Our planet's resources are finite and even the most economically developed State cannot pursue unilateral policies in isolation from the rest of the world.

Mr. VARKONYI (Hungary): I should like first of all to congratulate Mr. Dante Caputo on his election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the General Assembly and to assure him of the co-operation of the Hungarian delegation in his responsible activity for the success of our deliberations.

I believe that this session has good chances of success. The atmosphere and work of the forty-second session were favourably influenced by the positive change in East-West relations and the increasing momentum of the Soviet-American dialogue. The past year has seen this favourable process strengthened and enriched with new elements. Another Soviet-United States summit was held, and the dialogue has been extended to lower levels as well, with concrete results embodied in the accords reached. Those accords were concrete reflections of the efforts undertaken to curb the arms race and to eliminate hotbeds of tension, and they may give stimulus to further steps in this direction, both in the relationship between the two great Powers and on a wider scale. The dynamic development of Soviet-American and East-West relations has become a determinant factor of strengthening international security.

Other favourable events of international politics, among them a large number of high-level meetings and initiatives by different groups of countries to strengthen international co-operation and to achieve a peaceful settlement of international problems, have also made their effects felt during the past year.

There has been an intensification of efforts to resolve regional problems, including the elimination of hotbeds of crisis that have destabilizing effects and thus impede international co-operation. Tangible and pioneering accords have been reached and encouraging negotiations are under way.

No doubt world politics are still characterized by a great number of grave and pressing problems, but on the whole we have witnessed and acted to achieve a psychological breakthrough during the past year.

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Practice has proved that even the most complicated issues of world politics can be solved and that, given the political will of States, concrete results can be achieved which have a favourable influence on the international atmosphere and on the development of the international situation while giving impetus to the quest for solution of other problems. In this context, too, we attach decisive importance to the Soviet-United States agreement on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range nuclear missiles and to the Geneva accords on the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan.

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The intensification of diplomatic activities to eliminate various hotbeats of crisis and the initial encouraging results allow us to hope that these favourable developments will be a prelude to the longer-term process rather than a momentary phenomenon. The United Nations has given practical proof that its involvement in similar efforts can be successful, while contributing to an improvement of its international image, and that its continuing active participation can promote the renewal of the world Organization.

In this activity a leading role has been played by the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, to whom I wish to express my deep appreciation for his untiring efforts.

My Government is convinced that these favourable changes have resulted from the widening and the practical prevalence of the awareness that the mutual dependence or interdependence of States and peoples is a fact, a reality of our age. Consequently, it considers the strengthening of mutually advantageous international co-operation and of confidence among States and the peaceful settlement of emerging conflicts to be the only possible path of international coexistence. The Hungarian Government shapes the course of its foreign policy and participates in international relations in accordance with this spirit. It rejects the use of force or the threat of force; it regards security as a complex notion with closely interrelated military, political, economic, human rights and humanitarian aspects; and it maintains that no single State can establish its own security solely by military-technical means or to the detriment of other States and that security can only be built by political means, taking account of the interests of all States and by joint action resulting from dialogue.

A pioneering role in advocating, disseminating and asserting this approach is played by the Soviet Union, which has found partners in the leadership of the

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United States and other countries as well. At the same time, it is an equally noteworthy fact that the entire community of nations has also played a role in preparing and enhancing these changes: great Powers, medium-size and small countries, members of alliance systems, neutral and non-aligned nations alike. Hungary, as one of the small European countries, long ago recognized those opportunities which are at hand for a small country, and has been continuously and actively using them.

The favourable processes of world politics, the gaining ground of the ideas of international understanding and co-operation and the emergence of an atmosphere of confidence among States are fully in line with Hungary's national interests and foreign policy. My Government is therefore making great efforts towards the development of international co-operation. It is trying to make use of all possibilities, bilateral as well as multilateral, to expound its sincere endeavours and to strengthen confidence among States. It identifies itself fully with the new concept of international security and co-operation, and is convinced that this new approach is bound to prevail in world politics before long.

This approach is represented by the foreign policy statements and practical steps of Hungary at the Vienna follow-up meeting on European security and co-operation, among others. We deem it highly important for the Vienna follow-up meeting to conclude its work as early as possible by the adoption of a substantive and balanced concluding document and, while giving a new impulse to European co-operation, making a favourable contribution to the creation of a common European home and improving the international situation as a whole. Present-day Europe is bound to the other continents by many ties. Given the specific conditions of Europe, a special model of co-operation is now evolving. An indispensable and useful framework and instrument for the realization of a common European home is

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the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) with a past of 13 years, which embraces the major components of an all-European home, that is, a programme for the reduction of the risk of military confrontation and the building of political, economic and humanitarian co-operation.

For this reason, the successful conclusion of the Vienna follow-up meeting by the adoption of a substantive concluding document would mean a genuine step forward in comparison with the obligations undertaken in the Final Act of Helsinki and the Concluding Document of Madrid. Its most important result would be the integration of conventional disarmament into the process of European security and co-operation. After the conclusion of the follow-up meeting it would then be possible to start negotiations between the member States of the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on questions of conventional disarmament. These negotiations would be far-reaching in terms of scope, goals and potential effect alike. Parallel to them, the talks on confidence-building, started in Stockholm, could be continued with the participation of all the 35 States.

The concluding document of the follow-up meeting should place greater emphasis on questions of economic co-operation in Europe. It is gratifying to note that progress can be expected on questions of industrial, environmental and scientific-technical co-operation, but it is no less important to make headway in the human rights and humanitarian fields.

In our view, a real demand of our time is to set up a mechanism for consultations on human rights and humanitarian issues, one that would keep under review the status of implementation of the recommendations as formulated concerning the human dimension, envisaging compliance with agreements, respect for international expectations, a clearer definition of obligations already undertaken and creating guarantees for their fulfilment. The expert meetings, forums and

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other conferences, the convening of which can be expected to be mandated by the Vienna follow-up meeting, will serve a useful purpose in promoting substantive and balanced progress in the CSCE process and contributing to international security.

In promoting the favourable international political developments of the past period, a significant part has been played by the recognition that the establishment of international security is a task of enormous complexity affecting all spheres of life. Each concrete aspect of security is closely related to and bears upon all the others. The initiative concerning comprehensive international security, which is included in the agenda of the General Assembly, is based on this recognition. We earnestly hope that the appeal to Member States for the continuation of the dialogue, the joint elaboration of the elements of comprehensive security, and the determination of concrete practical measures deriving therefrom will meet the understanding and support of Member States. We all share the goal of ensuring that the gap often in evidence between the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the realities of the present-day international situation will be bridged as soon as possible.

A basic aspect of security, directly affecting the security of life itself, is that of disarmament or arms build-up. The first genuine disarmament accord between the Soviet Union and the United States on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles is of historic significance, even though it affects a small part of the total stockpiles of weapons. The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - has opened a new chapter of disarmament history by introducing a system of verification with a formerly inconceivable set of strict and widely regulated conditions for control of compliance. So far the experience of compliance has given proof in practice as well that the quest for security through disarmament is indeed possible.

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The representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States are working on an agreement on a 50-per-cent cut in strategic offensive weapons. We remain convinced that, if the parties continue to summon the necessary political will and remain ready for compromise, the political and technical obstacles to a treaty can be removed and another disarmament accord will be signed in the not-too-distant future, paving the way for building a world free from nuclear weapons.

An outstanding event of multilateral disarmament diplomacy last summer was the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Unfortunately the psychological breakthrough I mentioned did not take place in the field of multilateral disarmament. It remains a pressing task to ensure that multilateral disarmament strengthen its viability and produce results in the form of concrete accords similar to those in bilateral disarmament. Although the participants in the special session on disarmament could not draw up a final document based on consensus, the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic, along with many other countries, does not consider the session to have been a failure.

In the view of my Government, the significance of the special session lies mainly in the fact that the need for a multilateral approach to disarmament issues has been reconfirmed by the international community. Furthermore, the participating States agreed that in future the United Nations should be assigned a greater role in dealing with questions of disarmament. It is of particular importance that the outstanding role to be played by the United Nations in controlling the fulfilment of disarmament accords received wide attention during the special session. We believe that such a substantive role could, in the long run, be fulfilled by an international verification agency to be set up under the auspices of the United Nations. In this connection we attach great importance also to the efforts of the Delhi Six in this direction.

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During the special session a great number of concrete and important proposals were made which may serve as topics of future debate and negotiation at disarmament bodies or provide a basis for measures to be adopted by consensus. If we want to move forward in the field of multilateral disarmament those proposals should be considered on their merits at our present session as well.

The increased interest in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament was likewise felt during the special session. The renewed emphasis on that irreplaceable forum of disarmament was reflected in the high-level visits this year and in the major policy statements made on those occasions.

Among the agenda items of the Conference on Disarmament, special mention may be made of the intensification of work in the Ad Hoc Committee on the elaboration of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons. At the same time we deplore the fact that the Conference was unable to come any closer to finalizing a convention on the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons.

Starting substantive work on the complete prohibition of nuclear-test explosions remains a priority task for the Conference on Disarmament to accomplish in furtherance of nuclear disarmament. The setting up of an appropriate machinery brooks no further delay. We think that, in order to overcome the present stalemate, it would require States members of the Conference on Disarmament to accept the need for multilateral talks on this issue and to adhere to the principles of progressivity.

In recent years the Conference on Disarmament has discussed the situation with regard to the prevention of the arms race in outer space and has identified the related problems. The present task is to elaborate concrete measures aimed at preventing, even if by stages, the extension of the arms race to outer space. In order to secure progress it would also be advisable to agree on partial aspects of practical relevance which by their importance affect the obtaining of the ultimate

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goal. One such aspect is the establishment of a mechanism for international verification.

It is similarly desirable to speed up work on the prohibition of radiological weapons. Closely related to it is the complete prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities which should continue to be treated as a matter of urgency.

Also, in our days there is a growing international recognition that limitation and reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments at both global and regional levels are major factors in affecting nuclear disarmament as well. The emphasis on conventional disarmament is logically consequential on the fact that the accumulation of conventional armaments is assuming increasingly threatening dimensions and that a significant part of the destructive capacity of such armaments is growing closer and closer to that of weapons of mass destruction and that conventional disarmament is marking time in comparison to the growing momentum of nuclear disarmament. The first promising efforts exerted in Europe to promote conventional disarmament will, we hope, be followed in other regions of the world as well.

After the consultations of the 23, held parallel to the Vienna follow-up meeting, work is practically on the verge of being concluded on the mandate for the disarmament talks covering the area from the Urals to the Atlantic. My Government deems it important that the negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments get under way as soon as possible after the conclusion of the Vienna follow-up meeting. The measures likely to be adopted will affect the forward-based forces of the two great Powers as well as the forces of the small and medium-sized countries in the region and will call for the increased activity and involvement of the latter States too. Hungary is interested in an arrangement under which the forces in its territory will also be affected by the first stage of reductions. We expect the talks to result in a notable improvement in Europe's

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feeling of security in the foreseeable future and to create, by eliminating elements of threat causing concern to the parties, a stable situation characterized by a balance of mutual offensive incapability of the opposing forces.

Elimination of the regional hotbeds of crisis which pose a threat to international peace and security is an important element in establishing international security.

Collective efforts and, in particular, the emerging understanding of the parties directly concerned have, in several regional issues included in the agenda of the General Assembly, placed increased emphasis on the effective involvement of the United Nations in the practical solution of such problems as well as in the creation of frameworks and technical conditions for settlement. The extent to which the world Organization will be able to perform its mission in maintaining peace and in securing cease-fires and their supervision will perhaps be a touchstone of the United Nations capacity for renewal.

The Geneva Accords relating to Afghanistan can be regarded as a highly significant precedent. The progress in the withdrawal of Soviet troops is clear evidence of the good will of the Soviet Union. We hope that the agreement will be fully observed by all the parties and that the advance of the process of national reconciliation will bring peace to Afghanistan. We deem it necessary that the present session of the General Assembly consider this problem in this spirit, under this approach.

The efforts of the United Nations or, more specifically, the Security Council and of the Secretary-General personally, have played an important part in achieving, after so many abortive attempts, a cease-fire in the Iraqi-Iranian war of nearly 10 years, which has claimed an enormous toll in human lives and material losses. Encouraging work is being done with the involvement of the United Nations to bring about peace.

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In the prevailing situation, particular importance is attached to the self-restraint of the parties concerned and their willingness to co-operate in the implementation of the relevant resolution of the Security Council.

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Our modest contribution to achieving lasting peace is the participation of 15 Hungarians in the contingent of the United Nations Observer Group to monitor the cease-fire. My Government is hopeful that the cease-fire will soon be followed by the conclusion of peace, putting an end to the hostilities and devastation.

Of course, United Nations efforts alone will be insufficient to secure success, because the political will and determination of the Governments of the countries involved are equally indispensable for the liquidation of a hotbed of crisis. The recent past has seen a promising sign of this in the search for a settlement of the question of Cyprus.

After many years the possibility seems to be opening up of progress in the settlement of the situation in the southern part of Africa. We support the efforts to bring about a negotiated solution, and hope that the ongoing talks will soon lead to the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the granting of independence to Namibia, and international guarantees of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Angola.

The positive turn in the quest for the peaceful solution of regional conflicts strengthens our conviction that intensification of United Nations activities would increase the chances of a just settlement of the Middle East crisis too. It is increasingly recognized that the road to a solution of the conflict satisfactory to all the parties concerned leads through an international conference, to be held under the auspices of the United Nations. The events taking place in the occupied territories similarly underline the pressing need for an early settlement of the crisis.

The entire international atmosphere would be favourably influenced by the early settlement of the conflict in Central America, which is a serious factor of

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destabilization, with the participation of all the countries concerned and on the basis of respect for the generally accepted norms of international law.

My Government is in agreement with and follows with confidence the efforts being made to solve the question of Kampuchea by peaceful means within national frameworks. It is highly appreciative of the moderation and sense of reality displayed by the countries and the political forces working for a settlement of this problem.

Hungary welcomes the proposals aimed at reducing and eliminating tensions in the Korean peninsula in an effort to find ways and means of creating the necessary conditions for solving the problem of Korea, keeping in view the strengthening of peace and security in the Asian region and having regard to the interests of the Korean people.

The subjects of the world economy and international economic relations occupy an increasingly important place in the activities of the United Nations. We find this only natural since international co-operation and the external environment of economic development have become of vital importance to all Member States. However, the economic, financial, trade, scientific-technical and environmental activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies still fail to reflect fully the actual conditions and priorities determined by the realities of the present-day world, although the 1970s and the 1980s have seen radical changes in the world economy.

On the threshold of the last decade of this century, Governments should seek to ensure that the United Nations and its specialized agencies are not simply passive followers of world economic developments, but act to meet economic challenges, thereby contributing, on the basis of the common will worked out by consensus and by reconciling national and regional interests, to the creation of

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conditions that will ensure to the fullest extent possible the sustainable growth of national economies and the steady expansion of international economic relations.

We have no doubt that this process will not be free from conflict. Efforts should therefore be concentrated on enhancing the role of the United Nations and its organs in forecasting developments and balances in the world economy, as well as their ability to manage economic, trade, financial, environmental and other conflicts and to promote their solution. We are convinced that harmonization of interests and development of conflict management abilities can create the conditions for international organizations to exert the most fruitful influence both on the development of national economies and on different areas of regional and global co-operation.

My Government proceeds from the assumption that national, regional and global objectives can be harmonized on the basis of openness and mutual respect for interests. However, the common will, or a common policy arrived at in international organizations, cannot be truly effective unless account is also taken of international realities and economic laws. The efforts to bring about regional integration constitute one such law at the present stage of development of the world economy. The regional integration organizations play an increasing role in the world economy and will act for a long time to come as a stimulus to economic growth. At the same time, certain trends of isolationism may also prevail at the stage of growing economic co-operation within integrated regions. We think that such trends, even though serving the interests of participants in such integration in the short run, work to impede the sustainable development of the entire world economy in the long run. Therefore we welcome the elevation of relations between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the European Economic Community (EEC) to an official level, together with the bilateral agreement already

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concluded between Hungary and the EEC and other future bilateral agreements between EEC and CMEA member States. This development fits well into the European process of co-operation and confidence-building and serves to promote its fuller development.

Work is to start soon on the elaboration of the programme for development and co-operation for the last decade of this century. We believe that in formulating this programme for the fourth development decade Governments should start from present-day realities in order to set the base for the future. I can assure members that my Government will take an active and constructive part in this highly important work.

International efforts to protect and ensure respect for human rights should serve the same purposes as the solution of world economic and financial problems through mutual compromise and joint action - namely, to promote the welfare of the society and the individual, to create conditions of life worthy even of the next century, and to bring about the full enjoyment of human freedoms. A corner-stone of the Hungarian Government's foreign policy is the encouragement and strengthening of international co-operation in the human rights and humanitarian fields, with the fullest possible use of the channels provided by the United Nations for that purpose.

Respect for and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the development of international co-operation with this end in view are important factors in increasing confidence among States. There is growing recognition that the enjoyment of human rights and the maintenance of international security are directly and closely interrelated. On the one hand, this linkage is manifest in that grave and systematic violations of human rights and disregard of internationally recognized norms have, as international experience shows, an

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adverse effect on inter-State relations and the international political atmosphere, and may jeopardize international security. On the other hand, the decades since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have provided a not insignificant lesson that promotion of the exercise of human rights is possible only under conditions of détente and peaceful coexistence. I recall that one of the first victims of the cold-war era was precisely the cause of human rights.

From this it follows that the proposition that the question of human rights is exclusively the internal affair of States has become a thing of the past, once and for all. By drawing up an international catalogue of human rights and establishing international organs and mechanisms to monitor and supervise compliance by States with their obligations in the human rights and humanitarian fields, the United Nations has given a new dimension to multilateral co-operation and focused the attention of the international community and international public opinion on the question of human rights.

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In this regard, as yet another sign of the Hungarian Government's readiness to co-operate, coupled with the openness of our policy, the Hungarian People's Republic earlier last month declared its recognition of the competence of the Human Rights Committee under Article 41 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and at the same time acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Covenant.

By that action we wished to confirm that we were ready and willing to participate - as an equal partner - in the domain of human rights, too, while supporting joint international efforts to implement related norms and control compliance with them in a common, international activity.

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic and public opinion in Hungary follow with particular attention the enjoyment by nationalities of their rights, and are sensitive to violations of the individual and collective rights of minorities. This is natural for the added reason that Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries constitute the largest national minorities in Europe. We advocate at every forum, as elementary demands, the preservation of diverse cultural traditions and the folklore of national minorities; protection of historic relics; and full enjoyment of the right to cultivate and use the mother tongue, including education in the mother tongue in schools at all levels. We are convinced that forced assimilation of national minorities, their cultural oppression and destruction of conditions for their independent intellectual and physical existence are unacceptable to the international community of our times.

Therefore, we deem it important that in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights we should embark upon the road of codifying those rights which were not covered by the Declaration. In our view these are: the right of peoples to self-determination and the preservation of national culture and

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the effective protection of the individual and collective rights of national minorities.

It is a basic requirement of our age to eliminate discrimination of any kind, including discrimination against nations and national minorities. In our belief such an international, legally binding regulation of norms would contribute to the deepening of human contacts, thereby making those contacts more substantial.

We highly appreciate the efforts, which we think cannot be replaced by anything else, made under the auspices of the United Nations to put an end to mass, grave violations of human rights. Humiliating practices and policies of discrimination on grounds of race, nationality, religion or any other basis, violation of the right to life, liberty and security of the person, torture and other cruel and inhuman punishment and treatment, physical coercion, forced resettlement, limitations on, or denial of, the fundamental economic, social and cultural rights of people are all phenomena whose elimination calls for effective and resolute action by the international community and the United Nations as its institution.

Solving the problems of our age and extending international co-operation in keeping with the interests of all States and peoples presuppose intensification of multilateral diplomacy. Forums for the multilateral accommodation of interests and the search for and adoption of arrangements acceptable to all parties concerned are provided by regional and multilateral organizations and conferences.

The improvement of the international situation during the past year and the more favourable conditions prevailing at present will certainly increase the role of the United Nations in, and its concrete possibilities of, performing the tasks laid down in the Charter.

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It is of importance to international co-operation and the settlement of outstanding pressing problems that the world Organization - and primarily we, representatives of Member States - make the most of the favourable conditions to renew the work of the United Nations, enhance its prestige and effectiveness, increase its capacity for practical action and ensure the smooth operation of the world Organization in accordance with the requirements of our time.

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic wishes to contribute to those efforts by pursuing a foreign policy fully in line with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and by the active and constructive participation of its delegation in the work of the forty-third session.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.