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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 27 September 1988, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia)
(Vice-President)
later: Mr. MEZA (El Salvador)
(Vice-President)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Papoulias (Greece)
Mr. Andersson (Sweden)
Mr. Palm (Burkina Faso)
Mr. Cordovez (Ecuador)
Mr. Escheikh (Tunisia)
Mr. Yaqub-Khan (Pakistan)
Mr. Ellemann-Jensen (Denmark)

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Pejic (Yugoslavia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. PAPOULIAS (Greece) (spoke in Greek; English text furnished by the delegation): On behalf of the European Community and its member States I should like first to express my most sincere congratulations to the President on his election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

I should also like to express the Community's profound appreciation to the outgoing President for the way in which he conducted the deliberations of the forty-second session of the General Assembly.

The 12 member States of the European Community wish to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, for his tenacious and constant efforts to find solutions to the problems facing the international community. We are delighted to see that in a number of cases his efforts have led to positive results.

The forty-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations opens in a climate marked by positive and encouraging developments. East-West relations have undergone a favourable evolution, highlighted by the summit meetings between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union.

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An important and significant agreement on arms limitation and control which involves the destruction of nuclear weapons has been concluded. The Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States of America on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - which brings about for the first time the destruction of a whole category of weapons, is a milestone in the history of East-West relations and has opened the way for further progress in other areas of arms control and disarmament. It is an initiative fully supported by the Twelve. Considerable progress has been made towards the peaceful solution of some of the major conflicts affecting the world community. Soviet troops are in the process of withdrawing from Afghanistan; there is a cease-fire in the Gulf; the conflicts in Cambodia and Angola look less intractable than they did a year ago. The Twelve, which have actively contributed towards bringing about this climate, cannot but rejoice.

However, there are still serious problems to which no solution has been found and new challenges are looming on the horizon which will require persistent efforts on the part of all members of the international community. It is therefore essential that we pursue our efforts, convinced that it is in a growing spirit of realism, co-operation and dialogue that the problems that preoccupy us may find suitable solutions. The United Nations is and must remain the advocate of this spirit.

It is with great satisfaction that the Twelve have welcomed the Organization's growing role as well as its accomplishments in recent months. It is an encouraging sign of the strengthening of respect for the principles enshrined in the Charter, which constitute the best basis for ensuring world peace, as well as for promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms and economic, cultural and social progress, especially this year when we are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the

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Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We are therefore determined to support every effort in order to enhance the authority of the United Nations and render its existing mechanisms and activities more effective.

I must lay emphasis here on a problem of particular concern to us, that of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Need I recall the priority which the Twelve give to them and the importance they attach to the promotion of and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in all countries? In this field, the Twelve's activities are guided by the principles which were set out in their Declaration of 21 July 1986, principles which were initially enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two Covenants. We expect all Members of the United Nations to live up to the obligations they have freely assumed. We welcome any efforts aimed at strengthening the existing mechanisms established to ensure that nations' words are matched by deeds.

This year in which we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, let us all recommit ourselves to its principles and their implementation for a better, humane world.

The recent political events have enhanced the role of the United Nations in the process of settling international conflicts. It is, however, ironic that our Organization and, not least, its peace-keeping operations face a most serious financial crisis at a time when confidence in its usefulness is growing. The Twelve have made efforts to fulfil their financial obligations to the United Nations and are determined to do so in the future. We strongly urge all Member States to show their support for the Organization by fulfilling their financial obligations in full and on time, according to the Charter. We hope that our commitment to a strong and effective United Nations will be shared by all Member States.

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We live in an increasingly interdependent world in which very few problems can be solved by any one country alone. The very existence of the European Community reflects acknowledgement of this fact. A year ago my colleague the Foreign Minister of Denmark, which held the presidency of the European Community, stated that with the entry into force of the Single European Act the Community had entered into a new phase of close collaboration. I can add today that, in fact, the Community has embarked upon a stage of its development that is characterized by new momentum for integration combined with renewed confidence in our common future. We have made headway towards the objective of advancing European unity and contributed together to making concrete progress towards a European union. We have increased our efforts jointly to formulate and implement a European foreign policy, thus striving to promote peace and stability in Europe and the world. The Community is not, however, an inward-looking organization. It is inspired by an open spirit of co-operation and active participation in solving the political, economic and social problems affecting the international community.

The Twelve have long supported and actively contributed to the process of improvement in East-West relations and are determined to continue to work in this direction in a realistic and constructive manner. They welcome not only the developments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe which have led to the opening of the political systems and economies of those countries but also the developments in the way those countries approach certain international issues. The changes contribute to consolidating and intensifying East-West relations. It is only between open societies which get to know one another and communicate without barriers that real trust can be created, this being the only reliable basis for lasting security.

In this context, efforts regarding arms control and disarmament are of great importance. Since our last session of the General Assembly we have witnessed very

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positive developments in this field, above all the signature and ratification of the INF Agreement, which the Twelve fully supported. Many of the Treaty's provisions set an important precedent for future agreements on arms control, in particular asymmetrical reductions and intrusive verification procedures.

The Twelve fully support efforts to bring about a 50-per-cent reduction in the strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as an agreement on space issues which would be a significant contribution to world-wide stability in this field.

We also strongly support the efforts made within the United Nations to tackle the problems of nuclear and conventional disarmament, verification, confidence-building measures and military transparency in the military field.

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The Twelve strongly advocate the early establishment of a global and effectively verifiable ban on chemical weapons and reaffirm their commitment to the total elimination of those weapons. Joint efforts at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva can bring closer the resolution of pending problems, including the complex but fundamental verification issues, in a way acceptable to all. Those of the Twelve who are participants in the Conference will continue vigorously to pursue this goal at the negotiations.

The adoption of Security Council resolutions 612 (1988) and 620 (1988) was a notable further milestone. The Twelve consequently reiterate their support for action which could be undertaken to establish impartially the facts relating to alleged use of chemical weapons against the Kurdish population.

The Twelve regret that the third special session devoted to disarmament was not brought to a close with an agreed concluding document. However, important constructive work was done during the session and it is hoped that the First Committee will profit from this experience.

It is not surprising that in the framework of arms control and disarmament the Twelve attach particular importance to problems concerning security in Europe, where serious imbalances persist, in particular in the conventional field. Therefore, the need for conventional arms control - the key issue of European security - is especially urgent in this area also. The Twelve have long advocated the establishment of a stable and secure balance of conventional forces at lower levels; within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process, the elimination of disparities prejudicial to security, stringent verification and the elimination of the capability for launching surprise attacks and for initiating large-scale offensive action in the whole of Europe. We have noted with interest that certain ideas put forward recently by the Warsaw Pact

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countries reflect, in part, our concerns. We also favour an agreement on a new set of enhanced confidence- and security-building measures aimed at promoting more openness and transparency in the military field. The Twelve accordingly consider that the negotiations on conventional stability and new confidence- and security-building measures should begin as soon as possible in a constructive spirit after the satisfactory conclusion of the current CSCE follow-up meeting at Vienna.

Progress in the field of conventional arms control in Europe thus depends on the conclusion of the Vienna CSCE meeting, with a substantial result in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The CSCE process shows the way to overcome the barriers of distrust which divide the continent. Military security agreements alone cannot bear the full weight of East-West relations.

The Twelve note with satisfaction the progress being made in the resolution of the issues before the Vienna follow-up meeting. We hope that the present sixth round of negotiations will bring that meeting to a prompt and successful end. In this respect the Twelve recall their recent appeal to the other participating States of the CSCE to settle the remaining issues, particularly those relating to the human rights and human contacts provisions of the Helsinki Final Act. The Community's aim remains an agreement on a balanced and substantial concluding document, permitting progress in all baskets and in particular in the fields of human rights and fundamental freedoms, co-operation and security.

As far as human rights and fundamental freedoms are concerned, the Twelve insist on a better implementation of all commitments entered into by the States participating in the CSCE process.

We believe that progress in the human dimension of the CSCE will make a substantial contribution to the creation of a real climate of confidence in Europe

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and in particular will give East-West relations the stability and continuity which they must have. The Twelve are determined to continue to strive for a dynamic development of East-West relations.

A successful and balanced outcome of the Vienna meeting would secure the opening of negotiations on conventional stability in Europe, aiming at the establishment of a stable and secure balance of conventional forces in Europe at a lower level, on a further set of confidence- and security-building measures, and the convening of a conference on the human dimension.

Turning now to the question of Cyprus, a member of the European family, I cannot disregard the fact that the tragic division of the island remains unchanged. The Twelve attach great importance to a just and viable solution of this problem. To this effect we reaffirm our strong support for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions. We stand fully by our previous statements and reject any action which purports to establish an independent State within Cyprus.

We also express our satisfaction with the successful efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General to bring about a resumption of the intercommunal dialogue in the search for a settlement in Cyprus, based on the above principles, and we call upon the parties concerned to co-operate fully towards the achievement of that objective.

The improvement in the international climate should render the task of finding just solutions to the regional crises, which continue to affect our age, more promising. The Twelve firmly believe that an important element for the implementation of arrangements or agreements to settle these conflicts will be the present and future United Nations peace-keeping operations. Some of the peace settlements we fervently hope to see materialize in a not too distant future will

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require peace-keeping and observer forces. Member States of the European Community have contributed Blue Helmets in the past and some of us are doing so right now. In view of the considerable peace-keeping tasks which may lie ahead, the Twelve will continue to attach great importance to the matter and are giving active consideration to its various aspects. They also wish to assure the Secretary-General that he can count on their full support.

We emphasize our view that the costs related to peace-keeping operations based on decisions of the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, are to be regarded as mandatory expenses, unless it is decided otherwise by the Security Council, to be borne by all Members of the United Nations, having been carefully examined in the appropriate way. We should be prepared to pay the price of peace.

The Twelve call upon all States Members of this Organization, and especially the two super-Powers, to render their full support to these operations. It is only with this support that the encouraging developments we have recently witnessed will lead to positive results.

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The European Community and its member States have important ties with the countries and peoples of the Middle East, and they cannot be passive about or indifferent to the serious problems affecting a region which is so close to them. Today the conflicts in that region continue. The Arab-Israeli conflict remains an issue of deep concern to all of us. The status quo in the occupied territories is not sustainable. The situation in those territories remains tense. We have repeatedly deplored the Israeli repressive measures, which make a peaceful settlement harder to find. We urgently renew our call on Israel, pending its withdrawal, to fulfil scrupulously its obligations as an occupying Power, in accordance with the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949.

The Twelve's views on the key elements which must make up a solution to that conflict are well known. In accordance with the Venice Declaration and other, subsequent declarations, two principles are fundamental: the right of all States in the area, including Israel, to exist within secure, recognized and guaranteed borders and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, with all that that implies. These principles continue to be the basis of the policy of the Twelve. For the implementation of this policy, we have on several occasions reaffirmed our support for the International Peace Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, as the suitable framework for the indispensable negotiations between the parties directly concerned.

After so much suffering, so much tragic loss of human life, the time has come to break the vicious circle of repression and hatred. There can be no real security, nor any real peace, for any of the peoples in the region without a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement. All parties concerned should recognize each other's rights. We therefore address from this rostrum an urgent appeal to all the parties concerned to make the necessary efforts to achieve that aim. At this particular moment it seems especially important for all parties concerned to show

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political responsibility in order to permit the peace process to move forward. For our part, we remain ready to play our role fully in that effort.

In Lebanon also, after 13 years of war and suffering, it is vital that a political solution be found. The proper functioning and strengthening of Lebanon's constitutional bodies is a pre-condition for such a solution. We regret that the mandate of President Gemayel expired without a new President's being elected. We strongly appeal to all parties to favour the election, in all freedom and without external pressures, of a President capable of carrying out the task of national reconciliation and safeguarding unity, independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty in Lebanon. We emphasize our support for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and appeal to all parties to ensure that that Force is allowed to fulfil its mandate without hindrance.

The Twelve have been following with great satisfaction recent developments in the Iran-Iraq conflict. We have welcomed the announcement of a cease-fire and the decision of the Governments of Iraq and Iran to accept that cease-fire, to be followed by direct talks under the auspices of the Secretary-General. The Twelve remain determined to support the efforts of the Secretary-General, and they call upon both parties to co-operate intensively with him in order to achieve a comprehensive, just, honourable and durable settlement of the conflict, in full compliance with Security Council resolution 598 (1987), so that peace and security may be restored to the region.

In this connection, the Twelve pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for his untiring efforts and dedication. The success of his endeavours enhances the prestige of the United Nations and paves the way for the Organization to play an increasing role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Twelve note with satisfaction the improvement in relations among the countries of the Maghreb. That development creates new prospects for co-operation

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between the two shores of the Mediterranean Sea and for regional stability. We also welcome the positive reactions by the parties concerned to the peace plan on Western Sahara which has been put forward by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the Security Council and which is aimed at the holding of a referendum on self-determination under the auspices of the United Nations. We believe that all parties will demonstrate their willingness to restore a just and lasting peace to the region.

In southern Africa there have been some encouraging signs of progress after years of South African aggression and destabilizing acts against neighbouring States.

The Twelve have, both individually and collectively, declared their support for the efforts currently under way aimed at securing peace for Angola and independence for Namibia on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). They have also welcomed, as recently as 26 August in their statement on the occasion of Namibia Day, the encouraging agreements reached in the quadripartite talks for the implementation of that resolution. The Twelve are looking forward to the rapid and successful conclusion of the ongoing negotiations, leading to Namibia's independence. They express the hope that the dialogue that has been initiated will ease the existing tensions and pave the way for peace, security, stability and social and economic development, based on respect for human rights in the entire region. In this connection, they welcome the prospect of a bilateral agreement between Angola and Cuba which will include a timetable acceptable to all parties for the phased and total withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

The Twelve reiterate their strong support for the efforts of the front-line States and other countries of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) to achieve security and economic stability. Furthermore, the Twelve reaffirm their willingness to contribute to the implementation of the Oslo

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Declaration and Plan on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa.

Yet the abhorrent system of apartheid remains entrenched in South Africa. This year has again been marked by serious and disturbing developments, like the adoption in February of new restrictive measures against a number of organizations peacefully opposing apartheid and several of their leaders, the arrests of church and trade-union leaders, the detention without charge of men, women and even young children and the maltreatment and torture inflicted on a number of detainees, the uncertain fate of the Sharpeville Six, and the bill threatening to deprive peaceful anti-apartheid organizations of external funding. All those developments point to the fact that Pretoria is still unwilling to commit itself to real and significant change, and we fear that that will worsen even further the relations between the Twelve and South Africa.

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The Twelve once more stress that apartheid must be totally abolished by peaceful means and the vicious circle of repression and violence that it provokes must be replaced by a constructive national dialogue. Only negotiations involving the genuine representatives of the black community and all other components of the South African population can bring about a future of peace and prosperity in a free, democratic and united South Africa with no racial discrimination.

In our view, there can be no dialogue as long as the state of emergency is still in force and the African National Congress, the Pan-Africanist Congress and other political parties are banned and while Nelson Mandela, now seriously ill, and other political prisoners are not released.

In pursuit of their stated objectives, the Twelve follow a policy of persuasion and pressure. Apart from declarations and pressing démarches to the South African Government, the European Community and its member States have adopted a number of restrictive measures as well as positive programmes of assistance to the victims of apartheid.

As regards the Horn of Africa, the Twelve have noted with satisfaction that normal relations have been established between Ethiopia and Somalia, which represents a step towards achieving lasting peace in the region. However, the serious tensions in both Ethiopia and Somalia, which have caused loss of life and an exodus of civilian population as well as economic and material damage, continue to be a cause of great concern. The conflict in northern Ethiopia still endangers the distribution of food to millions of people threatened by famine and starvation. The Twelve appeal to all concerned to make serious efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the region.

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The Twelve express their deep concern about the dramatic events in Burundi and the resulting flood of refugees at the Rwandese border. They hope that the situation will soon be normalized and that a satisfactory and lasting solution will be worked out in order to prevent further outbursts of violence in Burundi.

Nearly 14 months ago the international community warmly welcomed the historic decision by the five Presidents in Central America to sign the Esquipulas II Agreement in order to bring about stable and lasting peace in their region, a process to which the European Community and its member States have given their unremitting support.

We have on several occasions appealed to all the parties directly or indirectly involved to give effect to the agreement in letter and spirit by fully implementing all the commitments they have assumed and to contribute towards the region's efforts for peace, democracy, economic development and social justice.

Today we wish to express our concern that the momentum of the peace process should be maintained. Although progress has been achieved in some fields, the Twelve note that the principal conditions for a stable and lasting peace in Central America have not yet been met.

Our view concerning the solution of the region's problems is based on the principle that responsibility for peace and democracy rests with each country individually and with all of them collectively. The arrangements provided for in the Esquipulas II Agreement represent an indivisible entity and should be implemented as a whole.

I must stress once again that there will be no authentic democratic process without pluralism, involving respect for human rights and promotion of social justice. There will be no peace and democracy unless the sovereignty and

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territorial integrity of States and the right of all nations to choose their economic, political and social models freely and without external interference of any kind are respected.

We urge the Central American countries to make every effort to give new impetus to the peace process. For their part, the European Community and its member States wish to reaffirm, once again, that they are committed to contributing, to the best of their ability, to the process set up in Esquipulas, including the creation and the functioning of the Central American Parliament, and to the economic and social development of the region. We call on other countries to do likewise.

We have followed with particular interest the efforts initiated last November in Acapulco by the Heads of State of eight Latin American countries to establish a permanent mechanism for consultation and concerted political action. We welcome this initiative, which has opened up new paths for regional concertation, and we intend to pursue our dialogue with these countries aimed at promoting peace, development, democracy and stability in Latin America.

The Twelve are encouraged by the progress made in the process of democratization throughout Latin America. We appeal to the Governments of those few countries that have not yet seen the re-establishment of full pluralistic democracy to engage in a process of genuine democratization that will enable their peoples to express themselves freely and to build a future worthy of them.

The Twelve welcomed the signing of the Geneva agreements on Afghanistan, which constitute an important step towards the settlement of the crisis. They now call on all parties involved to spare no effort in pursuing the peace process. An overall political settlement of the Afghan problem involves the withdrawal of all Soviet troops in accordance with the agreed timetable, the unimpeded return of

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refugees in safety and honour, the establishment of a fully representative government through a genuine act of self-determination, and the re-establishment of a genuinely independent and non-aligned Afghanistan. It is essential that the resistance be fully involved in this process. Also in this forum I wish to reiterate the readiness of the European Community and its member States to contribute, when the time comes, to the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons as well as to the reconstruction of the country in accordance with the priorities laid down by the United Nations Co-ordinator for Humanitarian and Economic Assistance to Afghanistan.

Concerning the question of East Timor, the Twelve reiterate their support for the contacts between Portugal and Indonesia under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. They express the hope that it will soon be possible to achieve progress, thus paving the way to a just, comprehensive and internationally accepted settlement of the question, with full respect for the interests of the people of East Timor.

A return to peace and stability in South-East Asia is still contingent upon a solution being found to the problem of Cambodia. This conflict is the result of a foreign military occupation in violation of the fundamental principles of the United Nations and international law and must be brought to an end. In this connection, the Jakarta informal meeting was an encouraging step towards a political solution of the conflict resulting in an independent, democratic, neutral and non-aligned Cambodia. We express our firm support for the constructive efforts made by the Association of South-East Asian Nations for the promotion of a political solution to the Cambodian problem that would ease tension in the region and enable the Cambodian people freely to decide their own future.

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We stress the essential role that Prince Norodom Sihanouk can play in a new Cambodia that must be free from any prospect of return to the universally condemned policies and practices of the recent past. The Twelve renew their appeal to Viet Nam to withdraw all its troops from Cambodia. We call upon all concerned to pursue their efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive solution in accordance with repeated United Nations resolutions. There is no doubt that the full withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops and the re-establishment of a genuine peace in Cambodia would open the way to international co-operation for the reconstruction of the region.

Furthermore, the dramatic increase in the number of boat people from Viet Nam is a source of serious concern for the Twelve. In co-operation with the countries in the region and with international organizations, we have been trying to alleviate the suffering of these people and to help them. We believe that Viet Nam must assume urgently its responsibilities according to international law and internationally accepted practice.

The Twelve express their deep concern at the renewed violence and loss of life in Burma. They are firmly convinced that the Burmese people's clear desire to enjoy the benefits of peace, prosperity, the full protection of human rights and a multi-party democracy should be met. As we recently declared, we are ready to assist, to the best of our ability, a fully representative democratic Government in Burma to secure the social and economic recovery of the country.

As to the division of the Korean Peninsula and the continuing tension there, we welcome efforts to resume the suspended direct dialogue between North and South as the only way to reach a solution by peaceful means. As in the past, we express again our hope that, on the basis of the principle of universality, the people of Korea may soon gain full membership of this Organization. It is encouraging to note the progress made towards democratic reforms in the Republic of Korea.

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Turning now to the Olympic Games in Seoul, we express our appreciation that they are taking place in an atmosphere consistent with the classical ideal that gave birth to them.

The Twelve have repeatedly and firmly condemned terrorism in all its forms. We reaffirm the principles adopted by the Council of Europe in 1986 - in particular, the principle that there should be no concessions under duress to terrorists or their sponsors. We have never left any doubt about collective determination to fight terrorism by all means.

Unfortunately, terrorism has continued to take innocent lives and to bring bloodshed to our countries. We are determined to continue our efforts and to strengthen international co-operation to fight this scourge of our age, for terrorist attacks can never be justified and do not serve whatever political cause the perpetrators claim to be assisting. In this context, we support the initiatives undertaken in multilateral organizations, both to strengthen international protection of civil aviation and to enhance maritime security. We reiterate our appeal to all the countries which have not yet signed the international conventions on this matter to examine the possibility of acceding to these important instruments.

The Twelve, considering that drug abuse and trafficking have become a terrible scourge for the whole of mankind, make an appeal for wider and strengthened international co-operation in this field. In this spirit, they call for a successful outcome of the plenipotentiary conference in November-December in Vienna, with a view to the adoption of the United Nations convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs. Moreover, specific initiatives are needed in the area of supply reduction, demand reduction and the rehabilitation of drug addicts. It is, therefore, extremely important that the role of the United Nations

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and its institution in this field, especially the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, be strengthened and increased.

Recent weeks have seen a succession of natural disasters that have taken a heavy toll and caused much suffering. The European Community and its member States wish to express their sympathy and support for the Governments and peoples of all the affected countries, and their willingness to continue to provide, to the best of their ability, humanitarian assistance as well as, where appropriate, longer-term support for economic recovery.

Allow me now to turn to another very important issue. Two years ago all States Members of the United Nations undertook the difficult but essential task of improving the Organization and making it more efficient and effective in dealing with the complex problems of contemporary reality. At this point I would like to reiterate the full support of the Twelve for the Secretary-General, who has demonstrated his determination to follow up seriously the reform process initiated by General Assembly resolution 41/213.

The Twelve believe that the Secretary-General, in implementing the part of the reform that was entrusted to him, has performed his duties with flexibility and political judgement. The matter is now at the hands of Member States, which must show the same kind of political perspicacity and determination. In this respect we cannot fail to note with regret that the Special Commission undertaking the in-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields has not been able, so far, to achieve concrete results. Concerted action during the summer session of the Economic and Social Council led to a consensus resolution concerning the rationalization of the work of the Council. However, no considerable progress was made on other issues. Our commitment to reforms remains strong, and we consider the reform of the Economic

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and Social Council to be another significant part of this exercise. We expect that other Member States will not lack the political will to engage in fruitful consultations with a view to reaching a substantive reform that would undoubtedly enhance the ability of our Organization to deal effectively with the current economic and social problems.

The improvement in the political climate coincides with encouraging developments in the general economic situation. The European Community, through the achievement, by 1992, of an economic space without internal frontiers, is determined to make its full contribution to enhancing world-wide economic growth for the benefit of all.

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The upturn in economic activity in the industrialized countries in 1987 was greater than expected. Moreover, it is encouraging to note that the stock market crisis in October 1987 did not unduly upset the growing climate of confidence in the economies of the industrialized countries. For this year the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts a further increase in the growth rate to almost 4 per cent. Whether this growth performance is sustained will depend, inter alia, on how the international community deals with problems such as renewed inflationary pressures, rising interest rates and continued large external imbalances. Moreover, the level of unemployment in many industrialized countries is high and the state of the international financial markets remains unsettled.

To turn to more specific matters, the economic situation of the European Community in 1988 has been characterized, so far, as in 1987, by a growth performance of 2.5 per cent to 3 per cent. Average inflation is scarcely a quarter of what it was in 1980, despite certain deviations. However, vigilance is needed to prevent its re-acceleration. There has been an increase in productive investment in industry and services. Trade, both within the Community and with the rest of the world, forms the corner-stone of internal recovery. On the other hand, unemployment, which affects 11 per cent of the active population, is a grave economic and social problem for the Community of 12 and afflicts 16 million Europeans, particularly young people and women.

The developing countries, for their part, are expected to show an average growth rate of some 4 per cent, but that figure conceals considerable differences between the various regional groupings. While economic growth remains strong in certain Asian countries, many other developing States, for example in sub-Saharan Africa, continue to experience low economic growth and falling standards of living.

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Above all there is the problem of the external debt of many developing countries, a problem which concerns the whole international community. The burden of debt servicing is compromising prospects for growth and political stability, particularly in African and South American countries, and in the case of some countries it is a constant threat to the international financial system. Economic maladjustments, aggravated by adverse external developments, have affected the growth performance of these countries negatively and undermined confidence in their economic prospects.

As a result there continues to be cause for concern. It is essential, therefore, to strengthen international co-operation and increase individual and collective efforts in a number of areas. The European Community and its member States are fully aware of their weight in the world economy and their responsibilities with regard to future economic growth and development and the international trading system. They have taken, and will continue to take, specific actions to achieve balanced, non-inflationary growth and a strong, liberal, multilateral trading system. No effort is spared to assist developing countries in dealing with such obstacles to rapid, sustainable growth as debt problems, excessive economic dependence on raw materials, trade protectionism and structural bottlenecks, and in protecting their environment.

The European Community and its member States believe that the evolving debt management strategy, which is based on a co-operative approach by all the parties concerned, remains the only viable response to the developing countries' debt problems. They continue actively to support attempts in all competent forums to find suitable growth-oriented solutions to the debt problems. Major initiatives have been taken since the last session of the General Assembly to strengthen and update the implementation of the debt strategy. In particular, the financial

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resources of the IMF, notably through the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility, the World Bank and the African Development Fund have been extended significantly. Following the conclusions of the recent Toronto economic summit, the poorest indebted developing countries should continue to benefit on a case-by-case basis from debt-service relief through the Paris Club.

The Twelve are participating actively in the co-financing of internationally approved programmes. Moreover, the Community has also taken action on its own part. In December 1987 the Council of Ministers adopted a Community programme to aid certain highly indebted low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Under that programme, 500 million ECUs were made available, of which 300 million ECUs were additional to existing commitments under the Lomé Convention. This facility was rapidly put into effect. It is intended that these resources be fully disbursed by 1990. This initiative is tied in with the relevant measures being taken by the World Bank to help the indebted countries in Africa, measures with which most of the member States are also closely associated.

The Community believes in the effective and efficient functioning of the economic and social sectors in the United Nations system. We stress our readiness to explore with other parties any initiatives aimed at improving their operation.

The Community has always shown a special interest in the problems of sub-Saharan Africa. I think that the mid-term review of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 at the present session will give us the chance to evaluate together the results achieved and the progress made in this sector. But more needs to be done. Additional financial resources are needed to give that continent a chance to develop - a view that is supported in the report on financing African development.

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

It is a fact that the majority of developing countries derive a large proportion of their revenue from the export of raw materials and first-stage processed products. They have therefore been adversely affected by the generally low level of commodity prices during the last few years. However, there are now signs of an increase in the prices for some commodities. There is a clear need to seek ways and means of bringing about a diversification of commodity-based economies and an approach to trade in commodities that takes into account market conditions. In this context, the Community and its member States operate a system of stabilization of export earnings.

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

The Community and its member States are ready to play a constructive role in the proceedings of the Governing Council of the Common Fund for Commodities and expect other countries to do their part to enable the Fund, when it is brought into operation, to function with maximum efficiency consistent with the altered economic environment of the late 1980s.

For all countries as a whole, another important development, one that calls for even greater attention than it commands today, is the depletion of natural resources, along with the degradation of the environment, to the detriment of future generations. It is becoming increasingly clear that progress depends not only on growth rates but also on the quality of such growth. The concept of sustainable development must - as was done by the participants of the Toronto economic summit - become endorsed by all countries. The Community is prepared to contribute to international environmental co-operation as mentioned at Toronto. We urge that similar resolve be demonstrated in all regions and organizations. We wholly support the action set in motion within the United Nations to promote sustainable development.

With a view to the further improvement and expansion of international economic relations, the Community supports the development of a more open, viable and durable multilateral system of trade within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) through the negotiations under the Uruguay Round.

It is imperative that in order to preserve a favourable negotiating climate, participants in the Uruguay Round should implement the commitments to standstill and rollback undertaken at Punta del Este.

We are convinced that greater liberalization of international trade, which is envisaged in the new Round, will bring major benefits for all the countries taking an active part in the negotiations, and in particular the developing countries,

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

which the Community is certainly not going to ask to take on obligations that are incompatible with their level of development. Indeed, the Community has accepted, in accordance with the commitments in the Punta del Este Declaration, that special attention should be given to the fullest liberalization of trade in tropical products which are of particular interest to developing countries, and has submitted concrete proposals in Geneva.

It is not, moreover, a matter of chance that despite its sensitive nature and the problems encountered in international trade, for which all countries bear some responsibility, the agricultural sector in general, which is of particular interest to the developing countries, has been included among the items under negotiation.

Having recognized this need, the Community has, for its part, since 1984, taken far-sighted measures with the aim of fundamentally restructuring its agriculture. In February 1988, we agreed upon a series of measures for a range of products which provide for automatic reductions of guaranteed support prices where production thresholds are exceeded, ensure that producers will bear a proportion of the costs of disposing of increased outputs, and facilitate the withdrawal of land from production. Clearly, these adaptations are helpful in the context of ongoing negotiations within the framework of the GATT Uruguay Round. As we indicated in our proposals, both short and long-term actions are needed to reduce support. All producing countries should contribute to this end with a view to the restoration of balance in the international markets.

In December, at the ministerial meeting in Montreal, there will be a review of the results of two years of negotiations in all sectors. The Community is looking forward to the meeting in the hope of a fresh political impetus that will help to further advance all aspects of the negotiations. On the basis of the progress that is seen to have been achieved, guidelines will be established for the next phase,

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

so that the entire effort will be in line with the principle of globality, that is, balanced results for all participants at the end of the negotiations.

The Assembly will also be well aware of the close relations between the Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group (ACP) which, within the framework of the Third Lomé Convention, are in many respects a model of relations between industrialized and developing countries.

Already, with a view to the renewal of this Convention, those concerned are giving intensive consideration to the problem involved in an effort to further improve and promote co-operation. In this context, it is in the first place important to safeguard what has already been achieved in the earlier Convention, and in particular the priority given to agricultural development and security of supplies. At the same time it is necessary to adapt, in agreement with our ACP partners, the next convention in order to be able to respond more effectively to the current situation in those countries. The Community is intent on widening the range of its support for ACP-partner countries pursuing structural adjustment and confronted with grave macro-economic difficulties.

The European Community has constantly supported the normalization, improvement and development of East-West relations at all levels and in all sectors.

On 25 June the European Community and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), signed a joint declaration establishing official relations between them. Such relations are being established between the European Community and most of the member States of COMECON. These are very important steps and will, it is hoped, lead to the further development of East-West relations in general and economic relations in particular. These relations with our European neighbours should pave the way for the rapid development of intra-European co-operation and its extension to all sectors of common interest which are of mutual advantage.

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

In this context, I should like to emphasize the importance of the European Community-Hungary Trade and Co-operation Agreement, which was signed yesterday. Agreements are also currently being negotiated with other COMECON member States and contacts are being maintained in order to define future relations with the remaining countries of the group. This is a clear indication of our desire to make substantive progress, where economic and political conditions allow, as opposed to the past when links between the Community and its Eastern European neighbours were either limited or non-existent.

The European Community has, moreover, wide-ranging bilateral agreements with individual Mediterranean countries. The purpose of these agreements is to guarantee continued favourable access of those countries' exports to the Community market, provide financial assistance to agricultural and industrial development, and promote large-scale co-operation.

The European Community has also developed, during the last few years, constructive relations with a number of Asian and Latin American countries. The wide-ranging co-operation agreement with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in particular registers very active progress.

Since the Community is itself the reflection of a strategy of regional integration, it is only natural that it encourages and supports similar efforts of other countries in a way compatible with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). For that reason, it has also signed co-operation agreements with the Andean Pact and the Central American countries.

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

Finally, the Community recently signed a co-operation Agreement with the Gulf Co-operation Council, which provides for the broadening and diversification of economic relations between the contracting parties and, in a second stage, should lead to the liberalization of bilateral trade.

The completion of the internal market of the Community by the end of 1992 means, on the one hand, that goods, services, capital and people will move freely within the European Community. This holds true for imported goods as well as for goods produced in the Community. Therefore, as far as goods are concerned, 1992 will mean better access for exports from third countries. All the European Community legislation regarding the removal of internal barriers will be consistent with GATT. The Community will seek to preserve the balance of advantages accorded, while respecting the unity and the identity of the internal market. As far as services are concerned, the Community will make sure that internal progress towards free circulation shall be translated into more free trade at the international level through progress in the Uruguay Round.

On the other hand, the completion of the Common Market, through the combination of economies of scale and increased competition, will improve the structural adjustment capacity of the community, increase its growth performance and thereby improve prospects for world economic growth and international trade. More specifically, we believe that through this challenge and the efforts made through the structural, regional and social funds there will be a further one-point increase in the rate of growth of the Twelve, which will in turn bring about a further increase of 1.2 per cent in third-country exports to the single market of 320 million consumers. In short, the creation of a single European market will help to achieve greater economic liberalization internationally.

Mr. ANDERSSON (Sweden): Forty years ago this month, my compatriot Count Folke Bernadotte was murdered during his mission as United Nations mediator on Palestine. His name reminds us of the planned political violence which, however meaningless, is still a reality. His name also reminds us that the practical work for peace and security has been a central task of the United Nations during its entire existence.

The world's expectations of the United Nations have varied over the years. The United Nations role in recent efforts for peace has once again raised expectations.

Last year we were many in this Assembly who discussed how the United Nations was to overcome the crisis that threatened its existence. The issue today is how the Organization can live up to the expectations, how the United Nations can best make use of the "window of opportunity" that has opened.

Under the skilful leadership of the Secretary-General, the United Nations has contributed to creating new opportunities for solving conflicts and restoring peace. Strong support for the United Nations work for peace is called for. Such support would also contribute to making the United Nations the strong and effective organization that is needed if we are to meet the global challenges of the 1990s: halting the arms race, protecting the environment, safeguarding our resources and promoting development.

The threats to our survival are coming from various directions. We are becoming increasingly dependent on global co-operation. It is the United Nations that must channel and organize this co-operation.

The cease-fire between Iran and Iraq has brought to an end eight years of war with immense human suffering and immeasurable material damage. Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and the Secretary-General's intensive work to implement the resolution have been important contributions.

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

The negotiations that have been initiated have Sweden's strong and active support. Consequently, Sweden has responded in a positive way to the Secretary-General's request for participation in the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group. The Swedish Government was honoured that the Secretary-General, in consultation with the parties, appointed Mr. Jan Eliasson, Sweden's Ambassador to the United Nations, to be his personal representative at the peace negotiations. It is our fervent hope that the parties will show goodwill and succeed in achieving a comprehensive, just and honourable settlement.

United Nations peace efforts have also made progress in the Afghanistan conflict. Sweden supports the endeavours to carry through the Geneva agreements, not least by participating in the United Nations Observer Group in the area.

Peace has not yet come to Afghanistan. Continued warfare is delaying the enormous work of reconstruction that needs to be carried out. The millions of refugees cannot yet return in safety. It is of utmost importance that the United Nations be given a central and co-ordinating role in the repatriation of refugees and in the reconstruction of the country. In the past years Sweden has given humanitarian assistance to the war victims in Afghanistan. We also intend to give strong support to the assistance programme being prepared through the United Nations Co-ordinator of Humanitarian and Economic Aid to Afghanistan.

In the Middle East, the uprising in the territories occupied by Israel has created a new situation. The people in the occupied territories have clearly shown that they no longer accept their plight. Israel's continued control over these areas rests on force. We condemn Israel's brutal oppression of the Palestinians. The occupation must cease and Israel withdraw from all the territories occupied since 1967. This is the path to the achievement of a lasting peace.

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

A heavy responsibility rests upon Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). They must recognize each other as negotiating parties. Israel must recognize the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, including the right to establish a State of their own. The Palestinians must recognize Israel's right to exist within secure boundaries. Both the PLO and Israel have to accept and implement resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Both sides must renounce terror. An international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all the parties directly concerned, is the path that should be taken as soon as possible. To oppose this is to oppose the quest for peace.

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

Progress has been made in the negotiations between Angola, Cuba and South Africa. The negotiations must lead to independence for Namibia based on Security Council resolution 435 (1978), and also to peace for Angola. Sweden confirms its undertaking to assist the United Nations in this process through, among other things, participation in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group. Sweden is also prepared to enter into extensive development co-operation with a free and independent Namibia, as we did with the frontline States.

Settlement of the questions of Angola and Namibia will not eliminate the root cause of conflict in southern Africa, which remains apartheid. South Africa's apartheid policy and its destabilization of neighbouring countries continue to constitute a massive violation of human rights and a threat to international peace and security. Pending a United Nations decision on effective sanctions against South Africa, Sweden has introduced a ban on both trade with and investments in South Africa and Namibia. This is in accordance with a Nordic programme of action. We hope that our measures and those of other countries are the embryo of massive pressure on South Africa to abolish the apartheid system.

The search for a peaceful settlement in Kampuchea is still at a preliminary stage. A peaceful solution requires that the Vietnamese troops be withdrawn and that the Kampuchean people be allowed to decide their own future. Also, guarantees must be given that atrocities of the kind that took place during the years 1975 to 1979 are not to be repeated.

The best foundation for peace in Central America continues to be the peace plan signed by five Presidents of the region a year ago. Great efforts have been made to implement the peace plan, but the breakthrough has yet to come. Renewed efforts must be made by the Central Americans themselves and by the international community. The peace plan's principles of democracy and of international law must be respected by all, both in and outside the region. With its great influence, the

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

United States bears a special responsibility. Development assistance is necessary if the countries in the region are to be capable of tackling the consequences of many years of economic and social injustice. Those are the primary causes of the conflict.

In Cyprus and in Western Sahara, the Secretary-General has contributed to renewed hopes for progress towards a peaceful settlement. We also hope that the contacts that recently took place on the Korean peninsula will lead to reconciliation and a peaceful solution.

While positive steps are being taken in several regional conflicts, human suffering has increased in the countries in and around the Horn of Africa. The United Nations has an important role to play in supplying aid to refugees and others in distress in that region. The political problems in the region are also in urgent need of a solution.

Sweden has a long tradition of participating in United Nations peace-keeping operations. The most recent United Nations operation in this field illustrates the Organization's capacity to meet new demands expeditiously. It is all the more disquieting that the financing of the peace-keeping operations remains a grave problem. It is in the interests of all Member States that these operations rest on a solid financial foundation.

Armed conflicts afflict people in a brutal and shockingly palpable way. There are, however, other kinds of threats, which develop slowly and less spectacularly, but which in time have come to constitute a danger to the entire planet. Among those are environmental degradation and its dramatic and large-scale effects. As a threat to our survival it is not inferior to the arms race.

Alarming research reports tell us that the climate has begun to change as a probable result of the greenhouse effect. Life-giving resources are being destroyed by erosion, desertification and the devastation of forests. People's

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

health is increasingly being affected by the poisoning of water and food chains and depletion of the ozone layer.

The causes of these threats to the environment lie in excessive exploitation of natural resources, brought on by poverty, and in industrial pollution and waste of resources, not least in the field of energy. The impact of man on the environment may have reached the threshold of unknown environmental disasters.

The United Nations is in a unique position to rally the world's Governments to action. Preparations should immediately be initiated for a global United Nations conference on environment and development in 1992. Such a conference must take concrete decisions on joint measures both to solve acute environmental problems and to achieve long-term changes in policy. This year's session of the General Assembly should decide on a conference and request the Secretary-General to present to its next session proposals on the aim and direction, organization and preparation of the conference. As I mentioned in the Assembly last year, Sweden is again prepared to act as host, if this is the general wish.

The agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on the elimination of land-based intermediate-range nuclear weapons is historic. But it is essential that results be rapidly achieved in the negotiations on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons and of conventional forces as well.

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament ended without agreement on a concluding document. However, we must now look ahead and take as a starting-point what was achieved during the special session.

We must quickly bring about negotiations on a comprehensive test ban within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. The time is also ripe to investigate the possibility of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, based on international law. Continued attention must be given to naval armaments. The United Nations must be given an increased role in monitoring compliance with

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

disarmament agreements. The nuclear powers must abandon their policy of neither confirming nor denying the existence of nuclear weapons on naval vessels visiting foreign ports. This would remove a cause of widespread anxiety among the general public.

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

The United Nations reports on the use of chemical weapons in the war between Iran and Iraq have once again reminded us of the terrible effects of these weapons. We have also been greatly concerned by allegations that they are still being used by Iraq against the Kurdish population. Sweden and a number of other countries have requested that those allegations be investigated. The cessation of hostilities between Iran and Iraq must not be exploited for the persecution of the Kurdish minority.

Chemical warfare is a violation of international law and must be condemned. The negotiations on a global convention banning chemical weapons must be concluded with urgency. Sweden looks favourably upon the initiative launched yesterday by the President of the United States on the convening of an international conference on the use of chemical weapons.

One of the most important contributions of the United Nations has been to draw up rules within the field of human rights. Several conventions have come into existence over the last 40 years, but rules are of little use if they are not observed. In all too many parts of the world the task remains to translate the rules into practical use. Respect for the rights and personal integrity of the individual must not remain just empty words.

The past decade has been a period of deepening crisis for many developing countries. The debt crisis, low domestic savings and falling investments are today among the most serious obstacles to development. The internal readjustments that have been necessary as a consequence of this have been distressing and have aggravated the social problems.

The international community has an obligation to mitigate this crisis. It is disheartening to have to say that only a few among the most affluent have reached the goal of 1 per cent of gross national product for development assistance.

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

Co-ordinated measures to alleviate the debt burden of the poorest developing countries are today an important task for international assistance.

All United Nations activities concern peace and security in one respect or another, and they require an efficiently functioning Organization. The work on reforming and revitalizing the United Nations continues, largely thanks to dedicated efforts by the Secretary-General and his staff. This process must be carried further.

Progress in the reform work depends on the loyalty of Member States to the world Organization. The United Nations must not be forced to struggle with an acute financial crisis at a time when great and urgent tasks require its attention. All Member States must fulfil their financial obligations laid down in the Charter. We are gratified to note that the United States intends to change its position on this matter, as did the Soviet Union some time ago.

It is imperative that Member States establish a sound and lasting financial basis for the world Organization's activities. Sweden has actively participated in discussions with the Secretary-General on solutions to both the short-term and the long-term problems. We are prepared to continue these discussions and accept our share of the responsibility in order to overcome the crisis.

Sweden earlier put forward ideas for a more even scale of assessment. This would be one way of making the Organization less vulnerable.

No conflicts have been finally settled anywhere during 1988. We know how easily relapses into earlier conflict patterns occur and how quickly the international climate may change. But the global challenges we are facing are of such a scale that this time we cannot afford to return to the antagonisms that permeated and divided the world community for so long.

(Mr. Andersson, Sweden)

The utmost efforts are required of all United Nations members to strengthen and develop the positive trend that has characterized 1988. Let us all contribute to making this year a turning point in the aspirations both to live in peace and to build a United Nations capable of upholding respect for international law and coping with the threats to our survival. In these endeavours there is no alternative to a strong global organization.

In closing, I should like to quote the late Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme, who said:

"we look at our world today and remain convinced that the United Nations is only at the beginning of its history." (A/40/PV.43, p. 64)

Mr. PALM (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French): It gives me particular pleasure to welcome the election of Mr. Dante Caputo to preside over this forty-third session. I sincerely congratulate him and wish him every success. His qualities as a seasoned diplomat guarantee that our work will proceed smoothly. I also congratulate the other officers of the General Assembly and assure them, as well as the President, of my delegation's active support.

I should also like to express our satisfaction with the excellent work accomplished at the forty-second session under the presidency of Mr. Peter Florin.

I wish to pay a special tribute to our Secretary-General, both for his tireless devotion to promoting international co-operation and for his perseverance in the search for peace. We are all familiar with the personal part he played in the resolution of certain conflicts. I wish to express renewed appreciation of his exemplary faith in our Organization and of his courageous efforts to preserve its prestige and credibility, despite financial difficulties.

I have been instructed by our Head of State, Comrade Blaise Compaoré, to deliver to the Assembly on his behalf a message of friendship and peace from the Popular Front Government and the people of Burkina Faso.

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

It will be recalled that last year, during the forty-second session, the people of Burkina Faso were having to deal with one of the most serious crises in their history. We are a peaceful people; the world was not used to seeing bloodshed in our country, therefore the confusion felt by some people was understandable. What we did not understand, and are not prepared to accept, was that, because of the charisma of a man who knew how to look after his image, the régime that replaced his and the whole people were condemned in certain circles.

Burkina Faso has made great strides since during the past year; it has staunched its wounds and embarked resolutely, with the Popular Front, on the road to recovery.

On 15 October 1987 an era ended, an era of repeated deviations from our revolution. We had to restore the socio-political and economic balance nationally and re-establish a basis for co-operation at the international level. It was essential that our people, who had made great sacrifices in supporting our revolutionary construction, should be able to achieve their legitimate aspirations without being submitted to the terror of a police régime or the economic reverses that would inevitably result from the autocratic system imposed upon them.

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

It was high time our neighbours were reassured and our partners' fears allayed. To our neighbours above all, we had to give proof of our desire to practise with them the virtues of good neighbourliness and non-interference. Here I should like to say that we succeeded better than we had hoped in restoring confidence and the basis for subregional co-operation so necessary for our fragile and vulnerable economies.

Although I have stated this in other international bodies, I should like to restate here the desire of the Burkina Faso Government to live in peace with its neighbours and with all peoples of the world, to seek with them solutions to the innumerable scourges which overwhelm the international community and to build a world of justice and progress.

I should like to repeat our devotion to the principles and ideals of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and the United Nations.

Armed with this determination we shall participate in this general debate.

The excellent report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization gives a striking picture of our world in flux.

It is also a stark reminder of our responsibilities to future generations that we are in the last stretch of the twentieth century, which has been so eventful.

At this moment of truth there have been few successes, This is true in particular of the decades proclaimed by this Assembly, whether of disarmament or development.

With regard to development the third world countries have paid and continue to pay a steep price for the structural crisis of the world economy. Our countries have impotently witnessed an increasing deterioration year after year in their terms of trade with the rich countries.

It is regrettable that speculation has further distorted the normal conditions

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

of international trade which were at the outset certainly not satisfactory for any one. It is indeed difficult otherwise to explain the fact that the developed countries have succeeded in exercising their systematic control over the commodity markets. Neither the old capitalist law of supply and demand nor the accords of guarantee in the case of specific commodities are any longer reliable mechanisms. The only thing that now counts is the will of the cartel which has been established for a particular commodity or group of producers, and always pressure is exercised to lower prices.

One year after the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and despite the entry into force of the Commodities Funds there is little chance that the rules of the game will change so that the countries which produce these raw materials can derive income to finance their development projects. Far from it. They are trapped in machinery that will inevitably lead them to borrow more to make up for lost export earnings, to invest not in efforts at development but in efforts for sheer survival.

Therefore the North-South dialogue which was so encouraging has become a well-oiled machine designed to drain economic flows and cause a reverse transfer of resources.

Thus debt has become for all developing countries a nightmare, and its solution, the squaring of the circle - doubtless - a monstrous concept which neither the debtors nor their creditors want to tackle head on, still less together. Each side simply sizes up the situation and proposes solutions that are more or less realistic, more or less radical, all under the paternalistic eye of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Africa has an opportunity to speak with a single voice because States composing it have collectively confronted the monster. I refer here to the extraordinary summit conference of the OAU on African debt held last November.

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

But it is clear that the debt problem cannot be taken out of context. It should be considered from the standpoint of international economic relations. Together with Africa, we must tackle the question whether the developed countries want to have economic partners worthy of the name or simply zones of influence. I leave the question open.

In order to resolve the crisis, Africa has, in its Priority Programme, chosen discipline with sacrifice. The international community has responded by adopting the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. This Programme of Action, which is now at mid-point, and whose review has now been going on for a few weeks, is one of our major concerns. I wish to salute the meritorious efforts of the Secretary-General to ensure implementation of this plan by agencies of the United Nations system.

But it is no secret that implementation of the programme has fallen short of expectations and that everywhere Africa has been disappointed in its hopes and in its desire for co-operation.

The debates that took place in this forum a few days ago enabled us to take stock of what has been done and to comprehend what remains to be done. As long as some of our partners, States and international organizations alike, do not admit that the pressure exercised on our economies and societies by structural adjustment efforts may certainly have beneficial effects, but equally disastrous consequences, we will not transcend the bottle-necks and the present lack of understanding.

We hope that the international community will take a salutary initiative so that by 1990 the Programme of Action and the Priority Programme can be implemented in full. The survival of an entire continent is at stake and at the end of this twentieth century hunger, endemic diseases and despair are the daily lot of its peoples.

Africa needs, for its survival, assistance in its efforts to rehabilitate its

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

environment, sorely tested by drought and other natural disasters. Right now I refer to locust invasions which could, in particular in the Sahel region, wipe out the efforts of almost 15 years at reforestation and soil rehabilitation.

No individual country nor region acting in isolation can stop desertification or the invasion of locusts. Looking at Burkina Faso, although having a national environment safeguards programme, it has, with its partners in the Permanent Inter-State Committee to Combat Drought in the Sahel and other organizations in the subregion and with the assistance of the international community, been carrying out action on the basis of solidarity of an integrated kind. Here the United Nations Sahel Office has an irreplaceable role to play.

Our world may live to see the day when people with an acute awareness of the problems facing mankind and the intellectual and technological means to analyse them can resolve them. Safeguarding the environment is one of these problems. The outstanding work done by the Brundtland Commission two years ago, but whose conclusions are still valid, is one such analysis. Unfortunately, when we talk about mobilizing ourselves and fighting these scourges, even for our survival, our world seems to be impotent. We can only hope that humanity will soon find the collective means to confront adversity and mend its ways.

At this stage, I should like to voice the indignation of my country at the scorn shown by industrial societies for the lives of our peoples by transforming Africa into a cheap dumping ground for their refuse, whether radioactive or not, but certainly harmful. We appeal to the conscience of the rich States to consider with us those practices as being crimes bearing the seed of long-term genocide.

Already, uncontrolled nuclear tests have disrupted our ecosystems, attacked the ozone layer that protects our earth. Right now terrible and unnecessary numbers of weapons continue to be hurried under innocent feet, transported by air and sea, ready to take off into outer space.

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

The children of the twentieth century and the people of the twenty-first are condemned to experience the nightmares of the apocalypse unless the big Powers bring this to the inevitable end for which we have been waiting since Hiroshima.

The developments in the negotiations between the two super-Powers and the limited agreements they have reached are promising. Nevertheless, these negotiations must be pursued further and in other directions. At this stage and in this context we cannot but regret that the hopes of the international community were dashed by the failure of the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly, the third such session devoted to disarmament.

Burkina Faso, for its part, will welcome every bilateral or multilateral effort to bring about disarmament.

It is high time that our intellectual and material resources were used in a way more in keeping with the aspirations of the people of our time for development, greater well-being and a better quality of life.

Just as we welcomed the progress made in détente, so also we welcomed with relief the announcement of the signature of the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, the cease-fire between Iran and Iraq and the promise of a solution to the Kampuchean and southern African problems.

We reiterate our appeal to our friends in Afghanistan for national reconciliation, which is a prerequisite for any consistent effort at reconstruction.

The welcome development regarding the Iran-Iraq conflict is a tribute to the two belligerents, which have spared the world the holocaust to which the greater involvement of the foreign Powers in the Gulf region would inevitably have led. We hope that the cease-fire clauses will be respected and that negotiations on pending issues will be concluded, so that lasting peace may be established.

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

As an active member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, we exhort the two brother States, Iraq and Iran, to arrive without delay at a complete reconciliation.

We have been following with great interest negotiations at all levels aimed at putting an end, after more than a decade to the tragedy of Kampuchea. We hope that the Cambodian people will soon be reconciled and will rebuild their beautiful country amid the friendly interest of their neighbours and with the assistance of the international community as a whole.

For us, the situation in southern Africa arouses mixed feelings. Of course, we are pleased that quadripartite talks between Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the United States have taken place in the last few months without any major break. Similarly, we welcome the results that the protagonists have reached, because we are aware of the determination of our Angolan brothers to safeguard African interests in the region, in particular those of Namibia.

If we have mixed feelings, it is because we are thinking about the road that remains to be travelled to arrive at a final solution to the problem. South Africa, which seems to be responding to pressure by the international community to begin to accept Security Council resolution 435 (1978), on the independence of Namibia, continues to burn schools in that Territory, persists in its refusal to recognize the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), the authentic representative of the Namibian people, and practice the terrorism of apartheid against the people of South Africa.

I have been to southern Africa. A few months ago I had an opportunity to visit some of the front-line States. Already there, at the gates of the South African hell, one could not help doubting that the accursed régime of apartheid could ever reform itself - if, indeed, one was not certain that it could not. Only

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

the determination, courage and unselfishness of the front-line States and the faith of the South African people in their future and the inevitable victory of their struggle strengthened my feeling that all was not lost.

All is not lost if Pretoria's friends finally make possible the realization of the unanimous aspiration of the peoples that make up this Organization. Only those countries hold the key to the problem, which is to decide to impose on racist South Africa mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter. This would do them honour and allay doubts about violation of the cardinal principles of our Organization by the nations that are responsible for peace and security in the world and that defend human rights.

The General Assembly has decided that apartheid is a crime against humanity. It must be dealt with as such.

Apart from apartheid, the Palestinian tragedy is the major political question concerning the solution of which our Organization has already disappointed two generations of people.

The successive wars in the Middle East since the State of Israel was established, the gradual disintegration of Lebanon, and in particular the plunder of the Palestinian people and its reduction to statelessness, are a black mark against the United Nations.

We therefore welcome, as the last chance for the United Nations to play a decisive role in the settlement of this problem, the idea, which is gaining ground, regarding the convening, under United Nations auspices, of an international conference on the Middle East. The success of that Conference can be guaranteed only if the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole representative of the Palestinian people, is admitted as a fully-fledged participant on the same footing as Israel.

(Mr. Palm, Burkina Faso)

I cannot conclude without mentioning the concern that my country, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, feels about the problem of the reconciliation of the two communities in Cyprus, the independent and peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula, and the process of peace and integration in Central America.

All the peoples concerned wish to live free of foreign interference and hegemonistic designs; some to forge a national identity, others to forge a regional entity. The fulfilment of these noble aspirations can only benefit our Organization and the international community.

I think it is right to say that the international situation, despite the persistence of the economic crisis, seems better this year than it was at the same time last year. There has been a relaxation of the most acute tensions and nations are engaging resolutely in the search for peace and the building of a better future.

On the strength of this, I venture to hope that at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly the last guns will have been silenced on the last battlefields of the world, the Palestinians will be back in their land building a future together with the Israelis, the state of emergency will have been lifted in South Africa, Nelson Mandela will have been released from the apartheid gaol and, finally, Namibia will occupy in this Hall, somewhere between Mozambique and Nepal, the place that has been its by right for so long, and for which it has waited far too long.

Mr. CORDOVEZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): We are proud that Foreign Minister Dante Caputo of Argentina is presiding over the General Assembly. Argentina and Ecuador are States linked by brotherly ties in the past and by solidarity in the present. Apart from his great qualities as a statesman, he firmly believes in democracy and his presence here leading our debate is therefore a guarantee of success.

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

Through the Secretary-General, we wish to reaffirm our adherence to and support for the world Organization. It seems that at long last the value and usefulness of this visionary instrument of mankind are being understood.

A few weeks ago we Ecuadorians elected a new Government. We see this election as an important step in our effort to consolidate democracy. The Government proclaims social justice with freedom, and on this its first attendance at the highest international gathering, it wishes to express its determined support for the principles and commitments of the international community.

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

A legal order was established in San Francisco which is a guarantee for all nations, to the extent that all of us respect it and to the extent that all of us contribute to strengthening it. Our attitude and our foreign policy are consonant with that purpose. They were clearly defined by President Rodrigo Borja on his assumption of office. They are aimed at closer ties of friendship and co-operation with all the countries of the world. We shall seek peace, security and development in our foreign endeavours. Without peace there is no freedom nor can there be development. Without security and without development we cannot speak of co-operation or of international social justice.

We firmly believe, therefore, in the need to defend peace wherever it may be threatened. We have faith in the spirit of understanding and solidarity which is giving new hope to mankind.

We believe in the possibility of building a community of nations which in their domestic and international life will give practical and real effect to the vocation of free men.

We believe in the freedoms. We uphold them and advocate them as the framework and basis of all human rights. We link these rights to the possibilities and requirements of well-being and respect for man as an individual and for peoples as nations.

Our conviction leads us to seek fervently the development of our people: an integrated development which goes beyond mere growth and provides opportunities for all, justice with freedom and harmonious coexistence.

We feel confident that we can thus advance the national effort, appropriately uniting all interests. We are aware of the magnitude of our shortcomings and of the seriousness and urgency of the problems. We know that we must make a gigantic national effort. In order to do so we are counting on resolute action from all

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

sectors of the country and we shall ensure respect and security for their legitimate activities. We are counting also on co-operation from international bodies and friendly countries, which we invite to join in the crusade we are launching to create the well-being our people demand.

The world we all want, therefore, is a world of peace, solidarity, justice and freedom. In that spirit, we advocate a climate of harmony and of trust in our relations and in those of all countries, so that our borders and all borders will be places to meet in friendship and co-operation and not places of misunderstanding and incidents. That is why we firmly support processes to disarm morally, to reduce military spending and to end the nuclear race; that is why we strongly support the Latin American processes of integration; and that is why we advocate a peaceful solution to conflicts and disputes which poison relations among peoples, forcing them to divert resources to defence by reducing investment in urgently needed development projects.

The stockpiling of weapons does not lead to greater security. Armed peace is not safe peace. It never was, nor will it ever be. World peace is indissolubly linked to general and complete disarmament. We welcome the fact, therefore, that the United States and the Soviet Union have concluded a treaty on the elimination of short- and intermediate-range nuclear missiles. It is important that the first true disarmament measure has been adopted, but new commitments in the same direction must also be adopted and resources that today are devoted to the construction of means of mass destruction must be released in order to meet urgent social needs in the third world.

It has also become imperative to ban immediately chemical weapons, nuclear-weapon tests, the use of outer space for warlike purposes and the illegal and covert transfer of conventional weapons. The enormous sums spent on the arms race are ethically wrong and morally condemnable.

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

The process of disarmament and arms limitation is closely linked with the duty of States to resolve their international disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, with equity and with the norms and principles of international law. Ecuador has traditionally complied with these cardinal rules of international relations. That is why we welcome the fact that the negotiating process which led to the signing of the Geneva accords on Afghanistan has initiated what we hope will be a step towards a different world, in which war, solutions based on force, indirect confrontation and mutual mistrust will be eliminated. It would appear that, thanks to the efforts of the United Nations and of the Secretary-General, in the Persian Gulf, in southern Africa, in Kampuchea, in Western Sahara and Cyprus we are reaching the stage of the triumph of diplomacy over intolerance, the victory of reason over force, the supremacy of dialogue and ideas over the lethal confrontation of the cannons.

We hope that this halo of hope will also surround the Middle East and Central America. We are particularly concerned about the conflict in the Central American region. We call upon all the parties involved to show the political will needed to implement and set in motion the formulas for a settlement which were so painstakingly drawn up and which are rightly based on respect for the sovereignty of States; on the right freely to elect a certain form of government without foreign interference; on the exercise of true expressions of democracy, pluralism, social justice, individual freedoms and human rights.

Ecuador supports the various initiatives and constructive proposals for a solution to the serious Central American crisis. In particular, we stress the need to preserve and carry forward the important negotiating process that has come from the valuable initiatives of President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica and that is enshrined in the Esquipulas II agreement. He took great care to recognize the

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

particular interests and situations of all the parties involved in the conflict. At this critical moment it has once again become urgent and necessary to remove immediately the obstacles which have arisen in the implementation of the Arias plan. Perhaps it can be reactivated by the holding of meetings between the parties in order to examine certain items or groups of items in a practical manner and with political foresight.

We must recall, furthermore, that the international community owes a debt to Central America. After the political settlement, an intensive development programme must be implemented with a high degree of international co-operation. Unfortunately, the positive aspects which can be discerned on the international political scene are not matched in economic, financial and monetary relations. We shall not have a harmonious and stable international order unless we devise an equitable international system which consolidates the best aspects of external trade, reverses the unfavourable terms of exchange, provides just and remunerative payment for the goods we export, facilitates the transfer of science and technology and contributes to a positive net flow of capital for development. The North-South dialogue is deadlocked. That is unacceptable, and the dialogue must therefore be resumed.

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

For Latin America the 1980s have been a period of economic stagnation and deterioration of the standard of living of its inhabitants.. The consensus at present is that external debt and the manner in which it has been handled are perhaps the main element of the crisis afflicting the region today. However, the external debt of the countries is not an isolated event which arose spontaneously during the previous decade. To a great extent it is a result of the unjust international economic order, which is detrimental to the poorest countries and has limited the possibility of financing the growth of their economies.

Therefore, the overcoming of the crisis in Latin America, which has lasted for almost a decade, depends, on the one hand, on the establishment of more just international economic relations and, on the other, on an understanding between debtors and creditors. For many years now the developing countries have called for acceptance of the conditions needed to achieve stable development of international economic activity for the benefit of both industrialized countries and developing countries.

We wish to reaffirm here that Ecuador recognizes the legitimacy of the debt incurred and will see to it that its commitments are honoured, without requiring, to that end, greater sacrifices from a people that has already suffered for almost seven years. We advocate an attitude favouring dialogue and not confrontation. I reiterate that we cannot continue to lay the the full costs upon the debtors alone, ignoring the responsibility incumbent upon those who at one time approached them and offered huge loans without stopping to assess the risks entailed in such operations.

In other words, it is essential and urgent to promote understanding between the parties on the basis of mutual respect, seeking equitable solutions on the basis of which costs are shared for the sake of the resumption of the growth of the

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

economies of the debtor countries. This would of course enable these countries to discharge their obligations more completely.

In this task, it is up to the multilateral credit organizations to increase financial flows to the developing countries - favouring the objective of social well-being and reducing conditionality on the basis of strict economic and financial criteria. In order to achieve this objective, the industrialized countries must honour their commitments with regard to the capitalization of these credit institutions.

These thoughts lead us to a conclusion that should be stated in this pre-eminent political forum. It is time for us to understand fully the close link between improving the standard of living of peoples and consolidating democratic régimes based on principles of freedom and justice.

The Government of Ecuador has chosen a serious, responsible and democratic path in order to overcome the economic crisis and place the country within sight of development. We have drawn up plans to stimulate the activities of all Ecuadorians and ensure the success of their efforts. We want a society based on respect for the law and inspired by broad solidarity on the basis of justice and with a strong social imprint. In this effort, we welcome international contributions, within rules governed by equity, realism and due regard for national interests, made in such a way that they will serve our purpose of overcoming underdevelopment, creating sources of employment and ensuring the prosperity of our people.

The delegation of Ecuador will indicate the position of my Government on the various agenda items in greater detail at the working sessions of this Assembly. I have mentioned the Government of Ecuador's concern and support for items of great importance such as disarmament and external debt. There are several other items, such as drug trafficking, that hold the special attention of my Government which,

(Mr. Cordovez, Ecuador)

along with other Governments of the Americas, has pledged its unshakeable support for the struggle to combat this scourge of mankind.

International co-operation and the political, economic, social and humanitarian work of this Organization are of prime importance to us. Our contribution will always be that of a country which looks with hope towards the changes taking place in the international community, which at the edge of the abyss and of a nuclear holocaust proved itself able to reflect and let the light of reason and common sense prevail. The new spirit that can be discerned in the super-Powers must open doors of understanding and comprehension, with vast possibilities for peace and friendship among peoples. It must also promote fulfilment of the just and heartfelt demands of the third world and those for the establishment of a true international legal order.

The relaxation of tension has been and must continue to be of invaluable importance for harmonious international coexistence. It is, without doubt, an essential factor in liberating minds from the spirit of confrontation and promoting dialogue and co-operation. The present economic crisis, with its tremendous weight of frustration for poor countries, has begun to awaken the world's conscience and its repercussions are becoming apparent in all countries. The United Nations has already shown its ability to adapt to new circumstances; the winds of change must lead to more adjustments and new approaches which will enable us all to respond to the new requirements of the time and of the peoples.

In this spirit and with this conviction, Ecuador pledges its support for the efforts required of us all to make this the world we want to pass on to our children.

Mr. ESCHEIKH (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): It is a great pleasure for me, speaking on behalf of the Tunisian delegation and on my own behalf, to congratulate the Ambassador of Argentina on his election as President of the General Assembly at the forty-third session. We are convinced that, with his experience and wisdom, he will preside successfully over the work of this session of the Assembly. In entrusting him with this responsibility, the Assembly has paid a tribute to his ability and also to the important role played by his country, Argentina, on the international scene. It is also my pleasure to be able to assure him of my delegation's whole-hearted willingness to co-operate closely with him.

I should like to take this opportunity also to express to his illustrious predecessor, Mr. Florin, our admiration and appreciation for the devotion, skill and patience with which he presided over the forty-second session, which underwent a period of intensive and continuous activity during the past 12 months.

(Mr. Escheikh, Tunisia)

I should also like to express to the Secretary General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, our deep appreciation of the noble work he continues to do to secure the influence of the Organization and its Charter. His determination and patience have earned him the trust and support of the international community, thus enabling the United Nations to play the pioneering role set out in the Charter for settling international problems and strengthening peace, security and co-operation among nations.

Tunisia has always demonstrated its devotion to the spirit and the letter of the United Nations Charter. This is one of the pillars of our foreign policy and is the principle governing our bilateral relations and determining the position we take on the international scene. Tunisia has always worked to support the United Nations; it has always respected the Organization's principles and defended the noble objectives it espouses, in the knowledge that the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter and the values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are among the most valuable achievements in modern history.

Guided by these principles, since the events of 7 November 1987 - the change of Government - we have totally redrawn Tunisia's political landscape, enabling our citizens to take part in the decision-making process and to exercise responsibilities under the Constitution. These changes are intended to meet the legitimate aspirations and the authentic civilizing values of the people.

Consequently, a whole series of legal and social measures have been enacted. These include an amendment to the Constitution to eliminate any provisions restricting the right of the citizen to exercise freedom of choice or his right to dissent; the promulgation of a new law governing political parties, to act as the legal basis for the creation of political organizations in a multi-party State; and the rehabilitation of the constitutional institutions - in particular, the Chamber of Deputies - so that they can properly carry out the tasks entrusted to them,

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with respect for democratic norms, under the aegis of the Constitutional Council that has been established to ensure constitutionality.

Likewise, we have adopted a series of bold measures relating to fundamental freedoms, intended to ensure freedom of opinion and expression, while safeguarding human rights. These measures include abolition of emergency courts, changes in the laws governing custody and preventive detention, and ratification of the international Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In taking that step, Tunisia withdrew the reservations it had expressed with respect to a number of articles in the Convention. Aware of the noble mission of human rights bodies, the Tunisia of the new age has granted those bodies full freedom of action. Similarly, it has confirmed the political and social gains of Tunisian women - these gains being considered as the fruit of a fundamental and an irreversible national choice.

At the international level, the new Tunisia has reiterated the fundamental tenets of its foreign policy - upholding law, justice and freedom - as well as its determination to honour its commitments, consistent with strict respect for its sovereignty and independence. In his statement of 7 November 1987 the President of the Tunisian Republic, His Excellency Mr. Zine Elabidine Ben Ali, stressed the importance Tunisia attaches to the strengthening of its Arab-Muslim identity and its determination to work resolutely to construct the Arab Greater Maghreb on a basis of commonality of interests and destiny. Together with its brother countries, Tunisia is continuing to make great efforts to improve and harmonize its relations with these countries, looking beyond past vicissitudes, in order to lend impetus to the process of constructing the Greater Maghreb and, thus, give concrete expression to the will of the peoples and the leaders of the countries in our region to bring about broad and varied co-operation with the ultimate goal of

(Mr. Escheikh, Tunisia)

attaining organic complementarity within the framework of a Maghrebi community without borders or obstacles, a community that is solid and coherent.

Thus we have managed to create a climate in which we can eliminate sources of tension and establish constructive dialogue. This has made it possible to meet the pre-conditions for launching the process towards constructing the Greater Maghreb in a spirit of understanding and concord.

Our age is one of blocs and regional groups, which necessitate integrated action by our countries - the prerequisite for our survival, for safeguarding our sovereignty, and for managing our affairs in such a way that the Arab Greater Maghreb can become a factor for stability, peace and security in the region. In this respect, we welcome the outline of a just and lasting settlement of the question of the Western Sahara, and it is our hope that the efforts the Secretary-General of the United Nations continues to make, will be crowned with success.*

The period since our last session has been marked by very positive developments in international relations. Hence this session is taking place in a more favourable climate, which augurs well for an age of understanding and détente. There have been clear signs of détente since the signing, on 8 December 1987, in Washington, of the Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, and the subsequent summit meetings between the leaders of the two countries. These developments have indeed contributed to a lessening of tensions and to containing the regional conflicts which had for a long time given rise to serious concern in the international community and caused instability in many parts of the world. We welcome this course of events, and it is our hope that efforts

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

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made in good will can help to resolve chronic, and heretofore insoluble, conflicts, dispel feelings of hate and bitterness, and open the road to peaceful coexistence and international understanding.

It is strange, and regrettable that, despite the climate of détente, the international community has said nothing about a policy based on continuous aggression, force, occupation, expansionism and domination that flouts all international laws and regulations, disregarding the strictures of morality. I refer to Israel's policy in the Middle East.

The situation prevailing in the occupied Palestinian territories as a result of the repressive campaigns waged by the Israeli occupation authorities against defenceless Palestinians since the beginning of the heroic uprising in December 1987 gets worse every day.

(Mr. Escheikh, Tunisia)

This is borne out by the number of dead and injured, the detainees and individuals deported, as well as by the arsenal of coercive measures which the occupying authorities resort to daily in violation of United Nations resolutions and international instruments, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 1949.

In recent months, the Security Council has repeatedly been called on to consider this dangerous situation, and has adopted resolutions condemning these practices. It has called on Israel to observe the Geneva Convention, and has emphasized the urgent need for a just and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The uprising by the Palestinian people has demonstrated to the whole world that this struggling people, this people aspiring to freedom and dignity, is more determined than ever, if necessary at the price of its own blood, to regain its rights and dignity, and even the most ferocious repression will be unable to dissuade it.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and all Arab countries have constantly reiterated their determination to work for a peaceful, just and comprehensive settlement based on international law, as set forth in United Nations resolutions, within the framework of an international conference on peace in the Middle East, organized under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation, on an equal footing, of all parties concerned, including the PLO, and the permanent members of the Security Council. The purpose of this would be to restore the Palestinian people's legitimate right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State, guaranteeing the withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Arab territories and the strengthening of international peace and security in the region.

(Mr. Escheikh, Tunisia)

In the same part of the world, our brothers in Lebanon are experiencing a tragic situation which is the direct result of the colonialist policy practised by Israel since its creation. After occupying a part of its territory, and repeatedly violating its sovereignty, Israel has set out to sow dissension and discord throughout the territory, reviving internal quarrels and provoking massacres and destruction.

We welcome the signing of the Geneva agreement on Afghanistan and its entry into force, especially since that outcome demonstrates the special role the United Nations has to play as the framework for dialogue and the settlement of conflicts on the basis of law; it has also rewarded the great efforts made by the Secretary-General and his assistants, as well as the efforts made by all peace-loving forces which have greatly contributed to the rapid conclusion of this agreement. In this regard, Tunisia has always called for respect for the sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan, and it has always called for the people of Afghanistan to be able to exercise their right to choose their own system of government. By noting with satisfaction the continuing withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, in keeping with the Agreements signed by the Government of the USSR, Tunisia also hopes that all the parties concerned will manage to find the best possible way to implement the Geneva Agreements under the best conditions.

We find deep satisfaction in the fact that our Organization has been able to resume its proper role in establishing peace and settling regional conflicts. Indeed, after having contributed to the settlement of the Afghan question, the United Nations has succeeded, with great effort and imbued with the same spirit, in putting an end to the confrontation between Iran and Iraq. Tunisia has been saddened to see these two brotherly countries, with which it is linked by religion, tear themselves apart in that destructive war. Within the framework of the League

(Mr. Escheikh, Tunisia)

Arab States and its Committee of Seven, within the framework of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIS), of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the United Nations, Tunisia has constantly called upon of the two parties to resort to dialogue to settle the conflict with a view to a just and honourable peace, in keeping with international law and United Nations resolutions.

We welcomed with satisfaction the acceptance by Iran of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), a resolution which Iraq had accepted from the very time of its adoption. This is what we have constantly called for as a means to establish the necessary conditions to bring about peace and security and to preserve stability in the region. We hope that the two parties will succeed in overcoming all the obstacles so that they can turn a new page and build fraternal links and good-neighbourliness, while respecting each other's sovereignty and the political choices, thus restoring peace and security in the region, and thus opening up the way for sincere and fruitful co-operation, and eliminating the spectre of upheavals and the waste of energies.

We also observed with deep satisfaction the talks which the leaders of the two Cypriot communities held in Geneva under the auspices of the Secretary-General. We consider them a positive step, one which will strengthen confidence between the two parties and which will prompt them to redouble their efforts to succeed in bringing about a final settlement of the Cypriot problem. We welcome the fact that the leaders of the two communities have decided to undertake new negotiations in order to reach a negotiated settlement before 1 June 1989. We are convinced that the two parties are sincerely seeking to realize this goal while respecting legality and justice.

Similarly we have noted with hope and optimism the signs of détente resulting from the agreement among the Angolan, South African, Cuban and United States

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Governments to end the aggression of the racist régime of Pretoria against the countries of the region and to work for a settlement of the question of Namibia. We are very hopeful that this agreement will contribute effectively to facilitating Namibia's accession to independence.

The Security Council played a decisive role in the search for a settlement that would bring about an end to the occupation of Namibia when it adopted resolution 435 (1978), which remains a model of objectivity and fairness. The time has come for the Namibian people, who have suffered so much from colonialist occupation, oppression and aggression to rejoin the community of independent nations.

Faithful to its principles, and faithful to its sacred duty to give unfailing support to the just cause of peoples, to the cause of liberty and to everything that might contribute to preserving dignity and human rights throughout the world, Tunisia reaffirms today its unreserved support for the peoples of South Africa and Namibia in their struggle to regain their legitimate rights and to shake off the yoke of bondage and colonialism.

Tunisia calls upon the international community to redouble its efforts to eradicate this evil and to put an end to these practices, which are immoral and contrary to the rules of international law.

Proud of belonging to Africa, Tunisia, which itself had to fight fiercely for its independence, reaffirms its commitment to the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, which has spared no effort to carry out its role and its responsibility in the search for solutions to the problems facing the African continent.

(Mr. Escheikh, Tunisia)

We are persuaded that the United Nations has a pre-eminent role to play in strengthening the climate of confidence and détente between the two super-Powers. This is done by committing them to intensify their efforts to bring about disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, in order to create new possibilities for lessening the tensions created by certain international conflicts. This is also done by allowing other countries to commit their natural resources, human resources, and other resources, to the service of social progress, in response to the aspirations of people to live in dignity and in peace; and this is also done by promoting international co-operation in the areas of the economy, science and useful technologies.

Such has always been the noble mission which we have undertaken constantly to achieve, within the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, a movement which makes tireless efforts to build international relations on safe and fair principles. This Movement has spared no effort in undertaking initiatives to settle the main problems haunting the present and the future of mankind, so that the non-aligned countries have become an important partner, enjoying a weight and a prestige which are acknowledged on the international scene.

The success in the struggle on the part of peoples for their emancipation and liberty, and the signs of understanding and détente visible on the international scene would remain fragile and would be unable to bring about an irreversible process if there were not to be a complete restructuring of the international economic order. The situation with regard to international economic relations calls for a radical change in certain factors related to development, such as protectionist policies, the deterioration in the terms of trade, inflation and the debt burden. The road leading to the revival of our economies, therefore, is still filled with obstacles.

(Mr. Escheikh, Tunisia)

Tunisia has made a number of proposals as its contribution to the search for a solution to the crisis. Indeed, in a message which he addressed to the most recent summit held in Toronto, President Ben Ali proposed: first, the partial or complete cancellation of the public debt of the least advanced countries; secondly, limitation of the debt service of the other countries to 15 to 25 per cent of the export earnings; thirdly, the elimination or the reduction of the interest on all public loans; fourthly, the establishment, in favour of the most indebted African countries, of a system which would allow them to convert their medium-term loans into bonds payable over a period of 10 to 20 years. Furthermore, an in-depth study of the world situation should be undertaken, with a view to establishing a new international monetary order. While the structural adjustment programmes which the crisis has imposed upon us certainly strengthen our credibility, it none the less remains true that our people have been called upon to make enormous sacrifices.

The industrialized countries, which to a large extent are responsible for the occurrence and for the persistence of the crisis, must therefore seriously examine, along with us, the means for restructuring international economic relations, as well as restructuring their own economies. Those countries should not limit themselves to occasional interventions when the crisis worsens. Indeed, it is evident today, for everyone, that the future of the industrialized countries is to a large extent linked to the development and industrialization of the third world.

We still consider that the adoption of the final text of the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) demonstrated the willingness to pursue and to establish this dialogue seriously. In this regard, we also consider that the proposal made by the developing countries at the last summer

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session of the Economic and Social Council offers an excellent opportunity for beginning such a dialogue within the framework of a special session of the General Assembly at the highest level, in order to examine the world economic situation and to revitalize it by reactivating the economic growth and development of the developing countries. Such a session should, in our view, lead to a consensus which would serve as a basis for international economic relations. Moreover, the convening of such a conference in the near future would allow them to benefit from the trade negotiations which are to take place in December 1988 in Montreal as part of the Uruguay Round.

All the peoples of the world are looking to our Organization for the establishment of an international order based on law, justice and equality of opportunity, for, in the final analysis, the United Nations remains the last hope for a happy future for all of mankind.

Mr. YAQUB-KHAN (Pakistan): I consider it a great privilege to convey to the President, on behalf of the delegation of Pakistan, our sincere congratulations on his election as President of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. My delegation looks forward to working under his guidance to ensure the success of this session. The many complex issues on its agenda demand the qualities of leadership, diplomatic skill and experience which the President so indisputably commands.

May I also convey our deep appreciation, through the President, to his predecessor, Mr. Peter Florin, the Deputy Foreign Minister of the German Democratic Republic, who conducted the forty-second session of the General Assembly in an exemplary manner.

The delegation of Pakistan welcomes yet another occasion to extend heartiest congratulations to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his dedicated efforts and tireless endeavours, year after year, to promote the

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

aims and objectives of this Organization in strengthening the foundations of peace and security around the globe.

His faith in the role of this Organization as an instrument of international peace and security has never wavered. No challenge, howsoever grave or forbidding, has ever dimmed his resolve or led him to doubt the capacity of the United Nations to meet it. The fruits of his patience and perseverance are manifest. They bring the United Nations to the centre of the world stage, where it clearly belongs and where conflicts that appeared intractable are moving towards solutions through the direct or indirect efforts of its Secretary-General.

The forty-third session of the General Assembly promises to be more productive and more lively than those that preceded it. Profound changes have taken place in the world situation and we are keenly aware of the contribution which the United Nations has made to the improvement of the international climate.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

No one was more conscious of this welcome trend than our late President Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq. He had made up his mind to lead the Pakistan delegation himself to pay a personal tribute to the Secretary-General and to this Organization in a year when a wave of peace was steadily moving across the globe and controlling the fires of conflict and confrontation. Alas, we lost President Zia-ul-Haq in a tragic incident before he could fulfil his desire.

As we look around we see dramatic reversals of the proposition that political problems can be solved by the use of military force. Our international system itself offers the strongest disincentive to adventures of this kind. Indeed, the war weariness and attrition that attend protracted conflicts have provided a fresh impulse to the peace-keeping instruments of the United Nations. There is a resurgence of faith in this Organization and a new commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter. Welcome signs of support to the United Nations are emerging from those powerful sources that can either help to build it into a genuine instrument of international peace and security or to relegate it to the back water of a forum for rhetoric and sterile debate. It was the Secretary-General who said in one of his earlier reports that a modicum of co-operation between the super-Powers was indispensable for the smooth functioning of this world Organization.

It appears to us that a beginning has been made towards the kind of co-operation between the two super-Powers that the Secretary-General had in view. The world situation has greatly improved as a result of the four summit meetings between President Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev. The United Nations is already a beneficiary of the lowering of tensions between the two super-Powers.

The signing of the Treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and

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Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - is a historic achievement which needs to be celebrated and applauded by the international community. It marks the beginning of a great forward movement in the collective effort to rid our planet of the prospect of annihilation in a nuclear holocaust and to reduce, if not eliminate, conventional armaments, everywhere.

This could be a memorable year for the United Nations. All of us, and the Secretary-General in particular, can take legitimate pride in its crucial role in contributing to the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, in bringing about a truce between Iran and Iraq, in the emerging settlement in Namibia and in promising developments in Kampuchea, Western Sahara, Central America and Cyprus. We hope that the time is not far off when the seemingly intractable problems of the Middle East will also succumb to an irresistible process of peace which has been set afoot as a result of these achievements.

While we are entitled to welcome and celebrate the ascendancy of the spirit of peace over our globe, we must not forget that many of the peace processes in which our optimism is rooted need continuous and careful tending by this world body if the consummations we so devoutly desire are to be realized.

In our immediate neighbourhood, the signing of the Geneva Accord on Afghanistan has laid the foundations of peace in that war-torn land. The entire international community is anxiously awaiting the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops by 15 February next year. We hope that this withdrawal will be completed in accordance with the time-table laid down in the Geneva Agreement.

The Secretary-General has rightly observed in his annual report that:

"The conclusion of the Geneva Accords in April represented a major stride in the effort to secure a peaceful solution of the situation relating to Afghanistan and provide a basis for the exercise by all Afghans of their right to self-determination." (A/43/1, p. 2)

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

We must recognize the fact that the Geneva Accords, which address the external aspects of the Afghanistan issue, have not restored peace in that land. The internal conflict continues to rage. Millions of Afghans who took refuge in Pakistan and Iran will not return to their homeland until peace is restored. A comprehensive political settlement of the Afghanistan problem has yet to be achieved. Central to such a settlement is the exercise of the right of the Afghan people to self-determination.

Pakistan has been most profoundly affected by the consequences of the conflict in Afghanistan. It has been host to more than 3 million Afghans who have sought refuge on its soil from the cruel and protracted conflict in their own country. By accommodating these afflicted and courageous people and by providing them food and shelter with generous assistance from the international community, we have tried to fulfil a humanitarian obligation towards a neighbour in distress and agony. The conflict will not end for these refugees and, therefore, not for Pakistan, for their sufferings are our sufferings, until conditions inside Afghanistan permit them to return to their home safely and in dignity.

We await anxiously the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the beginning of the process of intra-Afghan dialogue for the establishment of a broad-based interim government. This alone will make it possible for peace to be restored, enabling the Afghan refugees to return, and the Afghan people to exercise their sacred right to self-determination.

After the loss of over a million Afghan lives and the exodus of more than 5 million Afghan refugees to Pakistan and Iran, a vast effort will be required for the repatriation and rehabilitation of the refugees and for the reconstruction of their war-torn country. We value the appointment of Prince Sadruddin as United Nations Special Co-ordinator for Economic and Humanitarian Assistance to the people

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of Afghanistan. We trust that this purely humanitarian endeavour will not be used by interested parties for political ends.

It is a matter of profound concern to us that our frontiers and airspace have been frequently violated. These violations have continued after the signing of the Geneva Agreements. On several occasions, the intruding aircraft have penetrated deeper than ever into our airspace. About 387 air and ground violations, causing 40 deaths and injuries to 114 persons, have been registered since the coming into effect of the Geneva Accords.

The armed incursions have been accompanied by widespread acts of subversion and terrorism. According to an annual survey entitled "Patterns of Global Terrorism 1987", incidents of international terrorism increased by 7 per cent last year, largely as a result of attacks in Pakistan by agents of the Soviet-backed Kabul régime. As many as 259 attacks were conducted inside Pakistan last year alone, killing 264 and wounding 1,069 people. Since the coming into effect of the Geneva Accords there have been nearly 70 further acts of sabotage and subversion, claiming 74 innocent lives and causing injuries to 55 persons.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

We have a vital stake in the restoration of peace and normalcy to Afghanistan. When peace finally returns, it will have been due to several causes, foremost among them the will and capacity of the people of Afghanistan to resist foreign aggression. The United Nations role in ending the conflict will have been equally important, as will the supportive role of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement and the staunch support of the United States under President Reagan's Administration. Let us also recognize and applaud, across the ravages of a cruel and searing conflict, the bold and constructive contribution of General Secretary Gorbachev to the successful conclusion of the Geneva Accords.

Pakistan signed the Accords in good faith and is committed to their implementation. The United Nations Good Offices Mission for Afghanistan and Pakistan, after a number of inspection visits, has established in its report that no evidence was found of any violations of the Geneva Accords by Pakistan.

The Geneva Accords pave the way for a comprehensive settlement of the complex situation inside Afghanistan. Therefore, the United Nations will have a continuing role to play in the unfolding situation until the Accords have been completely implemented, foreign forces have been withdrawn and an intra-Afghan dialogue has produced a broad-based interim Government. The Afghan refugees can then return to their homes and all the people of Afghanistan can freely determine their own future.

We are heartened by the fact that the call for the establishment of a broad-based Government in Afghanistan, which was made with the understanding of the four signatories to the Geneva Accords in April this year, was further endorsed by the conference of Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries which was held recently in Nicosia.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

I take this opportunity to convey to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, who is now the Foreign Minister of Ecuador, our gratitude for the contribution which they made in working out the Geneva instruments, and for the patience and skill which ensured the signing of the Accords by all the parties concerned last April.

Pakistan was also closely involved, through the Organization of the Islamic Conference, in the promotion of the peace process between Iran and Iraq in the long-drawn-out war which brought so much death and destruction. That is why we join in celebrating today the great success achieved by the Secretary-General in bringing about a cease-fire that will, it is hoped, pave the way for a comprehensive peace settlement, so that a new chapter of peace, friendship and fraternal co-operation between these two countries can be opened. There was deep anguish in Pakistan while this conflict lasted. As with Afghanistan, so with Iran and Iraq, not only are we close neighbours in a geographical sense, but historically, spiritually and culturally we are tied to them by the strongest bonds.

The role of the Secretary-General and the Security Council in bringing about the cessation of hostilities in the Iran-Iraq war was a critical factor. It demonstrated that concerted action by its members could enable the Council to fulfil effectively its primary responsibility under the Charter. We agree with the Secretary-General's observation in his annual report that there are two essentials for continuing success in implementing Security Council resolution 598 (1987); namely, a conviction on the part of the belligerents that genuine peace will provide the opportunity for reconstruction and progress that an uneasy truce cannot; and the continued exertion of its influence by the international community, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, to bring about a just and lasting solution.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

The eight-year-old Iran-Iraq conflict, which is mercifully coming to an end, was a comparatively short-lived calamity, as against the Arab-Israel conflict that has ravaged the Middle East for more than 40 years. Throughout this period women and children of Palestine have demonstrated extraordinary courage and resilience in keeping alight the flame of freedom. The most ruthless use of force by Israel has not extinguished that flame. The people of Palestine are in a state of constant ferment and for as long as their legitimate aspirations have not been fulfilled Israel cannot hope to live in peace.

The latest phase of the Palestinian uprising, which began last December, continues unabated. Unless the relevant United Nations resolutions are honoured in letter and spirit, peace in the Middle East will be as elusive in the future as it has been in the past. The people of Pakistan have a deep commitment to the cause of Palestine's freedom - a commitment that is as old as Pakistan itself. We shall continue to uphold the Palestine cause, and we shall work unrelentingly for the restitution of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and nationhood under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), their sole and legitimate representative.

The withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Al Quds Al Sharif, is indispensable to the restoration of peace in that ancient land. We urge the early convening of an international conference, with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO, for the realization of a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

It is our fervent hope that the forty-third session of the General Assembly, which is witnessing the resolution of many a regional conflict, will also witness accelerated progress in the resolution of the Middle East question, the oldest unresolved item on the Assembly's agenda.

(Mr. Yacub-Khan, Pakistan)

There is a discernable movement towards the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts from Kampuchea to Western Sahara and Namibia.

We hope that the Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea will be withdrawn immediately and that the people of that afflicted country, like the people of Afghanistan, will be left to decide their own destiny, without any interference or pressure from external sources. We also hope that this vital question will be resolved by the United Nations in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and with the collective effort and support of all freedom-loving countries.

We welcome the signs of progress towards the resolution of festering political problems in Namibia and other parts of southern Africa. Pakistan is committed to the independence of Namibia under the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the sole and authentic voice of the Namibian people, and we will continue to give whole-hearted support to the Namibian people until they have achieved their sovereignty and independence.

Pakistan is equally committed to the eradication of the abominable system of apartheid in South Africa. In our adherence to the Charter of the United Nations lies our commitment to uphold "the dignity and worth of the human person". The inhuman policies and practices of the Pretoria régime and its aggression against the front-line States cannot be tolerated.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

We salute Nelson Mandela, that redoubtable fighter against apartheid, and demand an immediate end to his long incarceration, which has failed to break his spirit or to weaken his resolve.

We also welcome the signs of movement towards a peaceful settlement of the problems in the Central American region. The Guatemala peace accord of last year, initiated by President Oscar Arias Sanchez of Costa Rica, together with the on-going efforts of the Contadora Group and the Support Group, holds hopeful prospects for peace and stability in that region.

We hope that the return of peace in our own part of the world and in the Gulf region will be conducive to improvements in our relations with India. We give special importance to this, while we work for peace and friendly co-operation with all our neighbours, bilaterally as well as in the framework of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). We have taken a number of initiatives to demonstrate our desire for a good-neighbourly and co-operative relationship with India, on the basis of mutual advantage and sovereign equality.

The development of friendly relations between Pakistan and India would be greatly facilitated by the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, which continues to hinder the process of normalization of our bilateral relations. We shall continue to seek a peaceful settlement of this problem, in accordance with the Simla Agreement and on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation holds great promise for our region. Peace and prosperity can best be ensured through planned co-operation by all its members acting together. Co-operation and joint action would be particularly efficacious in such situations of natural calamity as unfortunately have befallen Bangladesh in the recent past.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

We feel the deepest sympathy with, and most profound concern for, our brethren in Bangladesh for the grave loss of life and property resulting from the recent inundations, which submerged most of its countryside and agricultural land. Indeed, at the third SAARC Summit in Katmandu it was decided to undertake a study of regional measures to preserve our environment and prevent natural disasters. We are convinced that timely action and co-ordinated efforts by the member countries in pursuance of this decision can effectively contribute towards preventing the recurrence of such natural disasters.

The on-going super-Power dialogue on arms control and disarmament has produced significant results. We hope that a treaty on reducing strategic nuclear weapons will soon be concluded. We also welcome the current efforts for confidence-building measures between the two major military alliances and for the reduction of their conventional forces.

The super-Power bilateral negotiations on disarmament, though important, cannot be a substitute for the multilateral disarmament process. Three months ago the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament debated issues affecting not only the question of peace and security, but also the threat of nuclear annihilation which hangs over mankind. Nearly all the participants underlined the close relationship between disarmament, security and development, and urged the reinvigoration of the multilateral disarmament process. While there were divergences on certain issues, the debate revealed the existence of agreement on many important subjects and an emerging consensus on others.

It is now up to the international community to preserve the gains emerging from that special session and to build upon them in order to promote the objectives of general and complete disarmament. In this context, there is a pressing need for such measures as a convention banning chemical weapons, a comprehensive nuclear

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test ban and the extension of security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States, a halt to the development of nuclear weapons, the prohibition of the introduction of new weapon systems, either on land or in the oceans, and the prevention of the arms race in outer space.

Pakistan is deeply concerned by the prospect of nuclear proliferation in South Asia and the introduction of sophisticated weapons and delivery systems in our region. These matters include the stockpiling of fissionable material and the acquisition of nuclear submarines as well as the indigenous production of lethal weapons, such as long-range surface-to-surface missiles, which will upset the regional equilibrium.

Pakistan has made several proposals in the field of nuclear and conventional disarmament in order to avert the dangers of nuclear proliferation and a disastrous arms race in our region. We are convinced that in our quest for general and complete disarmament regional approaches to disarmament hold increasing promise and can contribute effectively to this objective. Pakistan is fully committed to this approach, which we believe is the only viable one in a region that has a long history of tension and conflict. Our proposals, in both the bilateral and the regional contexts, aim at allaying the mistrust and suspicion about each other's intentions and capabilities and at fostering a climate of good will and understanding, so necessary for the promotion of the well-being of our peoples.

The international economic situation, particularly for the developing countries, remains a cause of concern. The 1980s are shaping up as a lost development decade. Hunger, disease and poverty continue to stalk entire continents. The living standards of many poor countries have dramatically declined. Their debt problem is increasing with the passage of time.

It is important to seek concerted solutions to the international economic

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problems. The results of the United Nations efforts in this direction need to be carefully assessed so as to evolve a fresh agreed approach at the multilateral level, revive growth and development and address the problems of the developing countries, including the issues of trade, finance and debt, and monetary reform.

The growing interdependence of the global economy underscores the paramount need to establish a long-term perspective for international economic collaboration. My delegation fully supports the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council calling for the initiation of a comprehensive process for the preparation of an international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, and the proposal of the Group of 77 to convene a special session of the General Assembly by 1990 to revive growth and development in the developing countries.

The co-operation between the two super-Powers, which has been instrumental in laying the foundation of a significant process of disarmament, will, no doubt, have an impact on the roles they play at the United Nations. In a refreshing approach to the United Nations, General Secretary Gorbachev has singled it out for praise, and the Soviet Union has decided to pay the arrears in its contribution to the Organization's peace-keeping forces. There are signs of a similar revision of the United States policy towards the payment of the arrears to the United Nations budget.

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Financial support to the United Nations in this critical year is indispensable. It would indeed be tragic if, at a moment when the Organization is poised to accomplish important missions for peace which would restore humanity's faith in it, the denial of resources should cripple its efforts and deprive it of the opportunity of achieving its purposes and goals.

It is a good augury that both super-Powers as well as other permanent members of the Security Council and the general membership of the United Nations wish to see the United Nations strengthened, at the end of a lean period induced by super-Power rivalry. The recent successes of the United Nations in dealing with regional conflicts owe a great deal to the process of dialogue, and even a degree of convergence on certain issues, which has developed between the two super-Powers

The prospects for peace in many parts of the world - most conspicuously in Afghanistan, southern Africa, Western Sahara, Kampuchea and the Gulf region - have brought unprecedented credibility to the United Nations system and to the future role of the United Nations in promoting international peace and security.

There is a new consciousness that the United Nations is the best instrument for forging a sound international partnership for peace and progress. It is the only forum through which the moral, intellectual, political, cultural and scientific resources of all States can be combined for the benefit of mankind. As the Secretary-General says in his annual report:

"Multilateralism has proved itself far more capable of inspiring confidence and achieving results than any of its alternatives. Millions around the world have had a gratifying demonstration of the potential of the Organization and the validity of the hopes they place in it." (A/43/1, p. 2)

Towards the end of a decade marked by conflict and convulsion and often clouded by cynicism and despair, we have reason to look to the future with confidence and consolation.

Mr. ELLEMANN-JENSEN (Denmark): After a period in which the United Nations was seen by many as marginal to the great issues of the world, events during the past year have demonstrated quite the contrary. The Organization can play a key role in the solution of serious international conflicts. In particular, after years of tragic and bloody wars in Afghanistan and between Iraq and Iran, the United Nations has made crucial contributions, in co-operation with the various parties, towards bringing them to an end.

The painstaking and meticulous efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative with regard to Afghanistan were brought to fruition with the conclusion of the Geneva Accords in April; and in August, Iran and Iraq finally agreed to a cease-fire, on the basis of Security Council resolution 598 (1988), after years of careful diplomacy by the Secretary-General and the Council. Much remains to be done, of course, but firm bases for bringing these international conflicts to an early end have been formed.

Let me take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General for his skilful and quiet diplomacy, as well as to those military officers from various countries who have selflessly volunteered to serve as United Nations observers in the two areas.

The United Nations and its Secretary-General have also, in varying degrees, important roles to play in finding comprehensive, just and lasting solutions to other regional conflicts: Cyprus, Kampuchea, southern Africa, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Lebanon, Western Sahara, Central America. While the political will to find peaceful solutions on the part of the parties concerned is indispensable, impartial United Nations mediation provides an essential ingredient in helping these parties to overcome their differences and implement agreements reached. All Member States must support such efforts.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

My Government welcomes this resurgence of confidence in multilateralism. It is testimony to an increasing awareness that regional conflicts affect us all and that commonly agreed solutions are therefore called for.

With these substantial achievements in mind, one can hardly believe that the United Nations is at the same time struggling financially. The fact is, however, that the very existence of this Organization is at stake owing to withholdings of assessed contributions from Member States.

It is evident that it is time - indeed, more than time - for all Member States to live up to their financial commitments to this Organization. It is not only a Charter obligation, but also, as illustrated recently, in the clear interest of all Member States, both individually and collectively, to have a strong and effective United Nations. While statements of political support are important, they must now be followed by the necessary action from those Member States which have not paid their dues. In this connection we welcome the recent first steps taken by the United States Administration.

At the same time this Organization must be efficient and rational. The reform process decided upon two years ago has already shown much progress, in particular owing to the follow-up action undertaken by the Secretary-General.

However, with regard to the study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields undertaken by Member States, the results were highly disappointing. Denmark believes that renewed efforts towards achieving major reforms in the economic and social fields are necessary in order to make the United Nations more effective and thus to strengthen its work in these areas.

The international situation facing us today is filled with signs of hope and promise, and in some cases also with remarkable achievements. It would be incorrect, however, if I tried to imply that all issues on which the East and the

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West do not see eye to eye have disappeared over the past year. That is still far from being the case. But even in this field we have witnessed developments and results which make us believe that the community of nations is on the right track in coming to grips with many of the outstanding problems.

The achievement of President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev at the summit meeting in Moscow, where for the first time in history agreement was finalized on the dismantling of a whole class of nuclear weapons, sent a message of hope to people all over the world.

Regular and constructive dialogue at the highest level is a positive factor in its own right and gives us great encouragement.

The agreed solution to end the tragic occupation of Afghanistan is another sign of improved international relations.

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Those are only examples, albeit very important ones. I venture to believe that developments will not stop here, that the process of improving East-West relations will go on, that both sides know the agenda ahead of us and that there is a willingness to move forward. We are aware that many of our partners in the East are deeply engaged in transforming their own societies in fundamental ways. We are following their efforts with interest and we are hopeful that these efforts, if successful, will in themselves serve to lessen tension and to promote understanding and co-operation among countries in both East and West. Still, we must get on with the work between us.

An early conclusion of the Vienna Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) follow-up meeting with a balanced and substantial result will be a major contribution to consolidating the improvement of East-West relations in Europe. A successful conclusion of the Vienna meeting will pave the way for East-West negotiations on conventional stability. It will also open up possibilities for major progress in the human rights field of direct relevance to ordinary human beings in all Europe.

Possibilities for achieving substantial progress in negotiations on disarmament are favoured by the prevailing political climate in the world. Against this background we regret that it did not prove possible to reach consensus on a final document from the third special session on disarmament. It would, however, be wrong to classify the session as a failure. The discussions and negotiations took place in a positive and co-operative atmosphere, and valuable work was done during the session. On many issues the session succeeded in narrowing differences and in reaching new grounds of consensus.

One of the tasks of this session of the General Assembly will be to recognize and affirm the progress made in individual areas and to continue the pressure and

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encouragement towards further agreement in the disarmament field. We must strive to maintain confidence in the multilateral negotiating system.

Many have been the calls over the years for a ban on chemical weapons. We appreciate the progress made at the Conference on Disarmament. The abhorrent use of chemical weapons has made even more urgent the task of reaching agreement on a global convention prohibiting such weapons. All sides must take an active part in the negotiations towards this end.

Denmark has signed the 1925 Protocol without conditions. We do not have any chemical weapons. We do not want any. This has always been our policy and we have declared it openly. It would be a sign of confidence and an important political signal if all countries declared their policy towards chemical weapons and whether or not they possessed those weapons.

We note the call made yesterday by the President of the United States in his statement for an international conference to consider actions which can contribute to prevent the use of chemical weapons as an important initiative, which is of particular attraction after the horrible use of chemical weapons which we have witnessed in the Gulf war - a use for which not even the slightest excuse can be found and which we strongly condemn.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains one of the most important arms control agreements reached to date. Since its entry into force 20 years ago, it has made a significant contribution to world stability. Reports of nuclear ambitions of certain countries in various parts of the world are extremely worrying. The nuclear option must never become an attractive solution to perceived security needs. Suspicion and mistrust must be countered by openness and trust. The non-proliferation régime is a crucial part of building that trust. We therefore urge all States at present outside the NPT to accede to the Treaty.

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Increased concern over the complex issue of conventional disarmament has been manifest over the last years. All States have a direct responsibility in this field, and the issue of conventional disarmament should also be kept at the forefront of the multilateral debate on disarmament in the United Nations. This would serve to stimulate and support efforts and negotiations at the regional level.

Among regional conflicts, one area which suffers from particular tension and armed violence is the Middle East. Lately, however, we have seen the beginning of a dialogue take the place of armed confrontation in perhaps the most brutal conflict of our times. Denmark has consistently supported the efforts of the United Nations to bring about an end to the war between Iran and Iraq, and we rejoiced when it became clear that a termination of the hostilities is no longer a distant hope but a reality at hand.

It is understandable that eight years of warfare does not create an atmosphere of mutual confidence conducive to a peaceful settlement of the dispute. The road to permanent stability may be long and arduous, but we must do whatever possible to ease and shorten it. Peace and security will not only bring immense benefit to the peoples of Iran and Iraq; it will make the world a safer place to live in.

I pledge our wholehearted support to the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Ambassador Eliasson, in their further efforts in this conflict. The Danish participation in the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) bears witness to our commitment to contribute to a peaceful solution.

It is a source of deep concern to the international community that, in the aftermath of the war, arms have been turned against Kurdish civilians. Not only is this brutality evidenced by the presence of a huge number of refugees in a neighbouring country, but we have even received reliable reports that chemical

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weapons have been applied. This is despicable. The use of illegal weapons and violations of human rights are not internal matters but a legitimate concern of the international community.

Dialogue has regrettably not replaced confrontation in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

An atmosphere of violence and mutual mistrust prevents the creation of an environment of mutual trust which is indispensable for getting negotiations between the parties off the ground. The tragic events in the territories occupied by Israel bear this out only too clearly. We appeal to all parties to exercise restraint. The repressive measures taken by the Israeli forces are not in conformity with international law and must stop.

The declaration of 31 July by His Majesty King Hussein to the effect that Jordan no longer claims sovereignty over the West Bank has created a new situation. I implore all parties to exercise moderation and take only steps which will further the cause of peace.

An international conference under the auspices of the United Nations seems at present the only way to bring about a just and lasting settlement of the conflict.

In Lebanon, mutual mistrust has had disastrous consequences in terms of disorder, civil strife and human suffering. The constitutional crisis over the election of a new President has highlighted the problems, and we appeal to all parties to exercise restraint and good will to save the very existence of Lebanon.

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It is obvious that the serious situation now existing in southern Africa is to a very large extent the result of South Africa's policy. Through acts of destabilization in the form of military aggression, economic pressure and direct support to armed rebel movements in the neighbouring countries, South Africa has severely undermined social and economic development in the region, thereby adversely affecting the daily lives of millions of persons.

In South Africa itself the abhorrent apartheid system continues without major changes in sight. Apartheid remains a flagrant violation of the fundamental human rights laid down in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Many thousands are gaoled for political offences. Others are forced to seek refuge abroad. For the millions of victims of apartheid that remain in South Africa the situation is constantly deteriorating. There is an urgent need for a genuine national dialogue in South Africa across lines of colour, politics and religion. It goes without saying that it is incumbent on the Organization to reflect and act upon the deep concern and indignation of the entire international community at the persistence of such serious violations of fundamental human rights as those being perpetrated by the apartheid régime. Apartheid cannot be reformed. It must be abolished.

In Namibia the South African illegal occupation and the oppression of the population continue. Namibia's independence is long overdue and should be pursued by all peaceful means. The ongoing negotiations between the United States, Angola, Cuba and South Africa have established the basis for some hope that the South African Government will withdraw its forces from Namibia and that Security Council resolution 435 (1978) will be implemented. Denmark hopes that the negotiations can stop armed interventions by South African troops inside Angola and lead to the establishment of peace in Angola.

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The Danish Government has for many years actively supported the struggle against apartheid and assisted the countries of southern Africa in their development efforts. Pending mandatory sanctions by the Security Council, the Danish Government has taken unilateral measures in order to terminate trade with South Africa and Namibia and to limit other relations with South Africa to an absolute minimum. Our diplomacy is engaged in a systematic effort to encourage other countries to increase their contribution to reinforced and more effective international pressure against apartheid.

In March this year Denmark and its Nordic partners adopted a revised Nordic Programme of Action against Apartheid. The Programme calls for increased assistance to South Africa's neighbouring countries in order to alleviate the effects of destabilization, to strengthen their power of resistance and to reduce their dependence on South Africa.

Many of the countries of southern Africa are major recipients of Danish development assistance bilaterally as well as regionally through the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). Our joint efforts are geared towards promoting economic, social and human-resources development. Such development is also of prime importance to enable these countries to handle the special problems of the region brought about by apartheid, political disturbance and natural catastrophes.

My Government welcomes the successful conclusion of the Afghanistan talks with the signing of the Geneva agreements on 14 April, paving the way for the withdrawal of Soviet forces after more than eight years of occupation. We congratulate the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative on the success of their untiring and skilful efforts; and we pay a tribute to Pakistan for its readiness to accept millions of Afghan refugees over the years. These agreements represent an

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important step towards a solution of the Afghanistan crisis. We hope this will lead to a comprehensive political settlement, including the voluntary return of the refugees, the opportunity for the Afghan people to exercise its right to self-determination, and the re-establishment of a sovereign, independent, neutral and non-aligned Afghanistan. Major aid efforts under United Nations auspices are under way, and Denmark will not fail to make its contribution in this regard.

The people of Kampuchea has suffered untold hardship, first at the hands of the notorious Pol Pot régime, then because of the Vietnamese occupation. Kampuchea must be free both from foreign troops and from any prospect of a return to the appalling brutality of the Khmer Rouge. The Jakarta Informal Meeting in July offers glimmerings of hope that all parties concerned now realize that a political solution is called for. We urge that the dialogue be vigorously pursued, and we hope that it will lead to the re-establishment of a sovereign, independent, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea in accordance with resolutions of the United Nations. The right to self-determination of the Kampuchean people must be fully respected.

With regard to the Korean peninsula my Government has been encouraged by initiatives in recent months, in particular President Roh's declaration of 7 July and his proposal for a meeting of the Presidents of the North and the South. A resumption of the suspended direct dialogue between the two parties is the only way to reach a solution by peaceful means. Denmark is on record as being a firm supporter of the principle of universality; it is our hope that, in keeping with that principle, the people of Korea may soon gain full membership of the Organization. My Government extends its best wishes for the success of the Olympic Games in Seoul.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

A year ago there was a feeling of satisfaction and relief in the Assembly after the conclusion of the Guatemala peace plan. During the autumn of 1987 we saw a number of measures taken by the Central American countries in implementation of that agreement. However, genuine peace and true democracy have not yet been achieved in the whole of Central America. And recent developments, unfortunately, point in the wrong direction. Respect for freedom of information and opinion and other fundamental liberties, intended by the Guatemala accord to be the corner-stone of the process, are again being gravely infringed. Violence and disrespect for basic human rights go hand in hand with attempted coups and other disturbances. Genuine peace and true democracy again seem a distant hope.

The Danish Government continues to believe that without democracy, allowing for full public participation in the political systems, and without respect for basic human rights no lasting solutions to the manifold problems of the region can be found. Thus we remain convinced that it is vitally important for the countries of Central America to continue their efforts in accordance with the agreement reached in Guatemala. At the same time, all countries with links to and interests in the region must co-operate constructively in that process. Together with our partners in the European Community, we are ready to continue our active support for these efforts.

Denmark's support of United Nations peace-keeping operations has always been an important part of our United Nations policy. We have actively demonstrated our support by participating in peace-keeping operations and observer missions in the Middle East, Kashmir and Cyprus, as well as in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Most recently, Denmark has placed officers at the disposal of the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group. We have also reiterated our willingness, in principle, to participate in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

Denmark has time and again stressed that all United Nations Member States carry a joint responsibility for the peace-keeping activities of the United Nations and for the financing of these activities. Regrettably, some peace-keeping operations are still faced with serious financial problems, especially the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Force in Cyprus.

In these two cases the financial burden is carried by the troop-contributing countries to an unreasonable degree. If the United Nations Transition Assistance Group is decided upon as planned, it will no doubt add a new and even more difficult dimension to the already existing problems.

Against this background we find it imperative that agreement among Member States be found on the financing of ongoing and forthcoming peace-keeping operations in order that the financial burden will no longer be carried by the troop-contributing countries alone. Should efforts to this effect, however, prove fruitless, Denmark might feel compelled to reconsider how best to allocate its contributions to peace-keeping operations.

Turning to international economic questions, I wish to emphasize the crucial importance of a common understanding of the challenges confronting us. Improved macro-economic co-ordination is necessary in order to correct the major imbalances. Another important element is the successful outcome of the Uruguay Round. We all share the responsibility for securing and strengthening the open, liberal, multilateral trading system. Protectionist tendencies must be curtailed, and solutions must be balanced with increased benefits to all participants, including the developing countries. While respecting the principle of differential and more favourable treatment, the newly industrialized countries should gradually and in accordance with their ability be encouraged to integrate themselves more

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

fully into the open, multilateral systems of international trade and monetary and financial matters.

It is hardly possible to speak on a number of economic development problems without also underlining the necessity of such development being sustainable. Short-term solutions which undermine the environment and the natural resource base upon which longer-term economic and social development must build are - where at all avoidable - cynical and an affront to coming generations, which do not have a voice to speak out against today's decision-makers.

Recent incidents of illegal exports of dangerous waste to other countries are but one of many examples of practices that have to be corrected. It is to be hoped that the ongoing process of study, review and implementation of recommendations set forth in the report of the World Commission for Environment and Development and in the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond will gradually take us a large step in the right direction.

There is a need to strengthen the concessional assistance to the low-income countries in support of the efforts to revive social and economic development. Resources, however, remain scarce. It is of serious concern that the level of official development assistance lags far behind the internationally agreed targets. In fact the ratio of official development assistance to gross national product is declining, and I therefore urge all industrialized countries to increase their official development assistance.

A few years ago Denmark decided on the basis of a broad political consensus to increase the development assistance gradually so that it will reach 1 per cent of the Danish gross national product in 1992. In 1988 our development assistance has reached 0.88 per cent of our gross national product.

Many of the economically and socially strained developing countries are facing

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

serious environmental disruption. The problems have assumed such dimensions that often they are beyond the financial and administrative capacity of those countries. Therefore it is important through multilateral and bilateral assistance to strengthen their capacity to solve the environmental problems so as to support sound and sustainable development. The United Nations system has a leading role to play in these efforts. Politically the need for action has been acknowledged. This understanding must be transferred into operational and concrete action.

Women play a decisive role in the development process. Therefore it is imperative to continue and to strengthen development efforts for the advancement of women economically, socially and legally.

The consensus adoption in 1986 of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development was a recognition of the need for strengthened and concerted efforts in tackling the problems of the sub-Saharan countries. The Programme has proved its success by the concrete initiatives which have been taken during recent years by the African countries themselves and by the international community. The outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Review of the Programme of Action underlines the continued mutual commitment to the Programme of Action and clearly demonstrates the need for further action by all parties.

We are on the eve of a fourth United Nations development decade. Unforeseen changes in the international environment have drastically altered the realities of the present decade. We have learned that a strategy cannot address all development problems in general. A new development strategy for the fourth development decade should be flexible in its targets. A fresh approach is necessary. It must be pragmatic and realistic, committing developing as well as developed countries.

The fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which we shall all celebrate on 10 December this year, reminds us that one of the basic

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

duties of this Organization is to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. After 40 years this duty is, unfortunately, still relevant.

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration this Organization has been engaged in intensive work of standard-setting. One of the important tasks for us in the years to come is to implement these standards. My Government is therefore concerned that the implementation of various instruments is weakened by the fact that some Governments do not fulfil their financial obligations under these instruments, thereby hampering the monitoring systems. If the United Nations is to be more effective in combating human rights violations, it is necessary that all States adhere to these instruments and meet their financial obligations.

A sad consequence of the many abuses of human rights is that millions of people have been forced into fleeing their countries out of fear for their life or liberty. Although we have witnessed some encouraging developments in the world refugee situation over the past year, the international community is still faced with the enormous challenge of finding durable solutions to the plight of these millions of refugees.

We recognize and commend the efforts carried out by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), but at the same time we realize that these efforts will succeed only if his Office can count on the full support of all members of this Assembly.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

Over the years my Government has been a staunch supporter of the Office and would like to see its role further strengthened and developed. To this end my Government launched two years ago in this Assembly some ideas aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, inter alia through a global scheme of resettlement places at the disposal of the Office and through additional financial resources to countries of first asylum. In Europe the outline of a structure to deal in a humanitarian spirit with this problem is beginning to emerge. My Government feels confident that only through such concrete action, and with the active involvement of the UNHCR, shall we be able to work towards a comprehensive approach to the international refugee problem.

It is my hope that the elements contained in this undertaking can be further developed and employed in other regions where the refugee situation is presenting an equally distressing picture.

This session of the General Assembly will have to deal with numerous complex issues of peace and human progress. Bearing in mind the important progress made on several questions over the past year, it is my earnest hope that further headway will be made in the months to come.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. GHAREKHAN (India): My delegation fully reciprocates the sentiments expressed by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan about desiring good-neighbourly relations between our two countries. My Prime Minister has repeatedly declared

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

that it is the highest priority of the Government of India to live in peace and friendship with all our neighbours, including Pakistan. It is therefore with some reluctance that my delegation feels compelled to speak in exercise of the right of reply to the statement made earlier this afternoon by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

The Simla agreement, signed by the Governments of India and Pakistan in 1972, provides the basis for resolving all outstanding issues between the two countries through bilateral negotiations and by peaceful means. My delegation therefore regrets the reference in this forum by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan to the so-called question of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. CHOHAN (Pakistan): With regard to the observation that has just been made by the representative of India, my delegation would like to state the position of the Government of Pakistan on the question of Jammu and Kashmir. This position is well known and needs no reiteration.

The question of Jammu and Kashmir remains unresolved and must be settled in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and in the spirit of the Simla agreement.

The meeting rose at 7.40 p.m.