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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 6 October 1989, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. MUDENGE (Zimbabwe)  
(Vice-President)

later: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)  
(Vice-President)

later: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)  
(President)

- General debate [9] (continued)Statements made by

Mr. Serrano Caldera (Nicaragua)  
Mr. Al-Attiah (Qatar)  
Mr. Gyaw (Myanmar)  
Mr. Musa (Belize)

- Question of Palestine [39]: draft resolution

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Mudenge (Zimbabwe), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. SERRANO CALDERA (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): Let me begin by congratulating Ambassador Garba on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. I should like also to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his devoted and productive work as head of this Organization. Furthermore, I take this opportunity to express to Mr. Dante Caputo our appreciation for the work he did as President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

To a country like Nicaragua - attacked, impoverished and drained of blood by almost a decade of illegal, unjust and immoral war - it is encouraging to hear voices of peace, democracy and détente. Let us hope that these encouraging signs will shortly be translated into reality - a reality in which peace is, as it must be, synonymous with respect for individual and collective human rights and with strict observance of the civil and political as well as the economic, social and cultural rights of individuals and peoples.

A people such as mine, which has honourably and courageously defended its dignity and has turned the hitherto abstract concepts of self-determination and sovereignty into reality, has every right to expect a better world for all. We have every right to dream and to believe that our dreams can come true; we have every right to believe and to feel that there is a dream at the root of every possibility, and a utopia at the origin of every reality.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

Just as regional conflicts can carry the terrifying seed of a new and final world-wide conflagration, each one of them - no matter what its causes or intentions - contains sufficient universal ingredients and elements for the whole to be seen in any one of its parts. Our times and their principal tendencies and expressions demonstrate that the centre of the world can be located anywhere.

If that is so in the case of the painful experience of war, it is equally true of other expressions: culture, art, philosophy, literature - all of which are flourishing today in places that were considered, until now, to be peripheral, and all of which have acquired undeniable universal value. It would seem - and here, inevitably, history recalls Hegel and the phenomenology of the spirit - that the universal realizes itself only in the particular.

In that sense, the world is becoming excentric, and unity - that is, the fullest expression of the loftiest values of the spirit and of the highest human qualities - can be attained only through the co-ordination and harmonious articulation of each and every one of its component parts.

The mass media have made the world a smaller place, the universe more provincial, and the provincial more universal. No matter how far away they may occur, all developments become part of our province. At the same time, nothing that happens on our soil fails to affect the entire world community. The United Nations is at the high point of this ebb and flow of human events. That is why it is of such extraordinary importance, in this effort, to co-ordinate and harmoniously articulate the political life of our times.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

If the usefulness of the United Nations since the end of the Second World War need not be demonstrated since it is self-evident, its usefulness or rather its necessity is all the more inevitable in this contemporary world moving forward at a blinding speed, a world in which the technological revolution coexists with processes of decolonization and national liberation wars, one in which, judging by current symptoms, seems to be passing from confrontation to coexistence and, perhaps, to co-operation.

We have heard a great deal of talk, from this very rostrum, from some of the world's most important leaders about an easing of tensions and dialogue between the super-Powers, about disarmament proposals, the beginning of solutions to regional conflicts, and of the possible emergence of a multipolar world.

We naturally welcome the reshaping of international relations, but on the other hand political détente must be accompanied by economic co-operation. If that does not come about, the contradiction between North and South will sooner or later explode into conflicts not unlike current ones, or they may take on different forms.

It must also be understood that international co-operation is an objective necessity, and should not be seen as charity or a gracious concession. Planetary co-development is imperative for human survival. Development can no longer bypass, or take place at the expense of, the poor nations. Peace will never coexist with misery, injustice and exploitation.

The wretched of the Earth, as Franz Fanon so rightly called them, also inhabit our planet, and they live and dream. They are the owners of a past rich in history, culture and values, and they have every right to a future compatible with human dignity.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

Filled with hope, we welcome the new climate of dialogue and understanding.

But at the same time we must point out the gaps and loopholes whose negative significance is more qualitative than quantitative.

We believe that the moment has come to take into account each and every aspect of our complex modern world. Not to do so would be a mistake, as would interpreting the easing of tensions and the possible end of the cold war as the disappearance of all contradictions and the end of history itself.

Consensus does not mean sanctifying a given ideology, but rather the coexistence of different forms of thought and political systems. Universality is not homogeneity; universality is unity in diversity. Those who rush to proclaim the end of ideology are in no way neutral. In fact, they are proclaiming their own ideology in disguise. Those who explicitly or implicitly try to portray the changes taking place in today's world and the new climate of détente as the universal consacration of capitalist economics and political liberalism are committing a basic conceptual error that could lead, in short order, to misguided political practices.

It would be far better to understand things as they are, objectively and without braggadocio. Pragmatism and tolerance are needed in order to accept differences and to make sure that they coexist.

In our judgement, it is imperative that those philosophical and political premises be understood and accepted in order for there to be hope for an end to the cold war and regional conflicts, and for there to be a possibility of entering a new era of peace, development and co-operation in a world in which inevitable differences of opinion not only coexist but stimulate understanding, solidarity and justice among all the peoples of the Earth.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

Nicaragua, a nation of 3.5 million inhabitants located in the middle of Central America, has had close to 60,000 victims in a war of aggression that has lasted almost a decade.

Ours is a country that has endured three foreign military occupations in this century and one in the last. It has carried out a revolution whose essence and reason for being is, first and foremost, the recovery of identity and the restructuring of the nation. Against that background, and taking into account that Nicaragua is part of a region - Central America - that has been the scene of one of the most intense conflicts of our time, it is understandable that we are interested in seeing historical events interpreted fairly and precisely, even in matters seemingly of no concern to small countries, matters traditionally the exclusive province of the great Powers. That is why we demand the right to participate, from the perspective of our own conditions, as subjects and beneficiaries of contemporary history.

We believe that the attainment of full democracy continues to be the most important foundation upon which to build a more just and human world. We believe that democracy is the best system of human co-operation and the best form of social and political organization. We believe in democracy in its juridical and formal sense, in representative democracy based on universal suffrage, the rule of law and the separation of powers. But we also know that a democracy limited to normative and institutional forms is a partial and relative democracy.

That is why it is necessary to round out the concept and practice of participatory democracy, in which all members of society, and not just the privileged classes, have access to the material and spiritual assets of the community.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

Moreover, taking into account the interdependence of the world in which we live, full democracy can be achieved in a country only when it is also a reality in the system of international relations. In order for full democracy to be possible, it is necessary to eliminate the use of force to attack others. The principles of self-determination and sovereignty of peoples must be respected. The norms of international law must be observed, and the rulings of the International Court of Justice obeyed, so that conflicts can be resolved peacefully and peace and equilibrium reign world-wide.

Democracy is hurt by the current system of international economic relations, by unfair terms of trade, by the prices paid on world markets for goods produced by the poor nations, by trade embargos, and other coercive economic measures used as instruments of political pressure.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

It is dishonest to set oneself up as an immaculate judge of the faults of others, while poor peoples are being exploited in international trade and economic relations and foreign debt and usurious interest rates choke off our peoples' possibilities of survival, depriving them of their destinies and their futures. We cannot successfully bring our struggle for democracy to an end until there is a new ethical system in the world.

For us, democracy equals human rights, both individual and collective: they are a concept and a practice in which the dignity of each human being and of each people must be fully reconciled and realized. The two, necessarily, go hand in hand; we cannot conceive of any real possibility of one existing without the other, still less of one being against the other. Nor do we accept that one can be used as a pretext for evading the other, as there is no reason of State, however weighty, that can justify degrading a human being physically or morally or for not respecting his dignity and integrity. Nor is there any possible justification for attacking a people in the name of democracy and attempting to violate its sovereignty and its right to self-determination. Nor is there any justification for speculating with poverty and trafficking in necessities in the name of the free market. We do not believe in freedom founded on the oppression and exploitation of others. We do not accept the freedom of the fox given the run of the henhouse.

Nicaragua has proposed that international agencies specializing in human rights should be made responsible for verifying that human rights are being observed in each of the countries in Central America. We believe that this approach is much more appropriate than any self-monitoring procedure.

Central America is still experiencing the most serious crisis in its history. The Central American crisis, which began to take shape several decades ago, has its roots in poverty, underdevelopment and exploitation, and in the fact that its



(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

peoples - like the peoples of other regions - have been relegated to the sidelines of history. The role of the region as a provider of raw materials in conditions of exploitation and destitution, as a banana plantation and a zone of strategic and geopolitical interest determined its fate for many years. The local oligarchies had on their side the military - who had the mentality and functions more of occupiers than defenders of sovereignty - and served as the tools of ruthless exploitation from abroad. Given that the contradictions are more or less marked and that the situations of each country in the region are specific and particular to them, the basis, origins and general characteristics are one and the same. Crude and brutal military dictatorships was for decades the dominant political system in almost all the countries in the area. Everyone is aware of the most visible and explosive stage in our history. It is unfortunate that problems only become known about when they explode.

The crisis in Central America has not been only a political and military one: it was and still is an economic and social one also. For that reason, the solution should be global and should not be restricted to political bodies, which - although absolutely essential and indispensable - are not capable of dealing with the problem as a whole. This conclusion fits perfectly within the global analysis of the world situation we attempted earlier. This is why all necessary support must be given, together with the application and development of political agreements, to solve the serious economic problems and the even more serious social problems. Economic assistance for Central America must be provided immediately, without waiting for the political problem to be completely solved. Both aspects, the political and the economic, are closely and dialectically related, and must therefore must be dealt with together in the search for the necessary solution.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

At the political level, the progress we have made has been extremely important and provides a grounding for realistic optimism that there is a possibility that the conflict can be settled in the not-too-distant future. Participation by the Latin American countries through the Contadora and Contadora Support Groups has been very important.

Action by the Central American countries was decisive at the Esquipulas meetings and very particularly so at the last two summits at Costa del Sol, in El Salvador, and at Tela, in Honduras. The commitment made by the five Central American countries to have their electoral processes verified by observers from the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS), the agreements to demobilize the counter-revolutionary forces - which should be completed by December 5 this year at the latest, according to the agreed timetable - and for them to be relocated and voluntarily repatriated, and the commitment by each State not to use its territory to attack other countries undoubtedly constitute the essential points of the political accords agreed by the five Central American Presidents, and, in general terms, of the whole peace process in the region.

Nicaragua, in compliance with these agreements, has invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the OAS to appoint commissions to verify the whole electoral process in Nicaragua, which is to be completed on 25 February 1990. Both commissions have been carrying out their work in Nicaragua for some time now. In addition, my country has invited observers from the European Parliament and also ex-Presidents Jimmy Carter of the United States and Raul Alfonsin of Argentina. We hope that the other Central American countries, in compliance with the agreements, will invite the United Nations and the OAS to observe their electoral processes.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

As my Government has said, the transparency and scope of the current electoral process in Nicaragua strengthens democracy in the country and contributes to the stability of the region. All countries must respect the sovereign nature of this process and desist from any policy of electoral interference or manipulation. The international community should immediately provide support for the economic effort required by this democratic exercise.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

In addition to the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission now functioning in Nicaragua, the United Nations is participating in the Central American peace process through the United Nations Observers in Central America (ONUCA), the body entrusted with verifying that irregular forces do not use cross-border operations and that the territories of Central American countries are not used to attack other nations. Then there is the International Support and Verification Commission (CIAV), which is to demobilize the counter-revolutionaries and oversee their repatriation and resettlement.

The participation of Spain, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany and a Latin American country in the work of ONUCA will be an additional guarantee of compliance with the relevant part of the peace agreements.

As stated in the declaration issued by the Nicaraguan Government on the occasion of the visit of the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Eduard Sheverdnadze:

"The Esquipulas II and Tela Agreements are the framework and methodology for resolving the principal political, military and security problems facing the region.

"A prompt solution to the security problems among the Central American States - that is, use of territory and support for irregular groups - will pave the way for an agreement with specific deadlines, for the attainment of a reasonable balance of forces.

"Toward that end, the Government of Nicaragua proposes the drawing up of an agreement between the Central American Governments - setting specific deadlines - for the establishment of a reasonable balance of forces in the region.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

"The United Nations contingent in Central America entrusted with observing the non-use of territory and ensuring that no support is given to irregular groups should not only observe the situation but contribute in a concrete way to accelerating solutions to the specific problems regarding the use of territory and support for irregular groups.

"All countries should back compliance with the deadlines agreed to by the five Central American Presidents in the Tela Agreement.

"The current forms of so-called humanitarian aid to the contras must cease, inasmuch as they serve as logistical support and prolong the conflict.

"The International Support and Verification Commission should immediately establish machinery for administering these funds for the purposes of demobilization and repatriation."

These agreements must be respected strictly, since they embody the will of the five Heads of State of Central America and hold out the concrete possibility that peace may soon shine on Central American soil.

In regard to other regional conflicts, Nicaragua vigorously supports the principles of independence, self-determination and sovereignty.

We endorse the convening and holding of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation on an equal footing, of all parties including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We support the right of the Palestinian people to establish their State on their own soil and we applaud their valiant intifadah.

With respect to Namibia, we support the progress made on the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) through the participation of the United Nations in the supervision of the elections. At the same time, we fully support

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

that resolution, whose full implementation in its original and definitive form can ensure the cessation of existing irregularities which if allowed to continue would prevent the Namibian people from exercising self-determination and from fully exercising their sovereign rights.

We back the deep aspirations to national unity of the people and Government of Cyprus, and we reaffirm our support for their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We uphold the thesis of direct negotiations between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front for the organization of the referendum on the Western Sahara and the structuring of the decolonization process.

We are concerned that the Iran-Iraq conflict has not yet been finally resolved. We appeal to both parties to reach a rapid, total and lasting solution, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, in full compliance with Security Council resolution 598 (1987).

As for Afghanistan, we uphold the right of that people to self-determination, and we consider it vitally important to strengthen the role of the Security Council in the implementation of the Geneva Agreements.

We support the reunification of the Korean people.

With respect to Lebanon, we express our support for the resolution adopted at the extraordinary Arab summit held in Casablanca last May, as well as for the efforts made by the Tripartite Arab Committee to fulfil the mandate it has received.

We unreservedly support the peace forces in Angola and hope for the prompt resolution of the conflict. We likewise support the efforts by the international community to obtain peace for Cambodia.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

We also fully support the negotiations between the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Government of El Salvador. As the Nicaraguan Government recently stated, we

"recognize the importance that both the FMLN and the Salvadorian Government have attached to the necessary participation of El Salvador's parties and social forces in the current dialogue and negotiations taking place within the framework of the Tela Agreements, signed by the Central American Presidents".

As the Government of Nicaragua has stated publicly, we

"support the right of the Panamanian people to demand compliance with the Torrijos-Carter Treaties on the agreed-upon dates. Nicaragua supports the Panamanian people's right to non-interference in their internal affairs and a peaceful negotiated solution to the conflict".

Although, historically speaking, law has served as an instrument for legitimating power, it is important to recognize that it has also been much more than that. It has been the mediating factor between the civil society and the political society. If laws arose in order to legitimate reigning political and economic relations, they nevertheless have since become the expression of the consensus of the social community. That is their destiny, their calling.

The same thing has occurred in international law. If it is indeed true that it originated as the expression of a given set of international relations, the changes these relations have undergone must be reflected in the body of international law through its evolution and development, so that it may ever more faithfully guarantee peace and stability in the world.

Now, fortunately, it would seem that the time is approaching when the positions of force that have determined international relations in the past must make way for the policies of disarmament and concerted action. International law,

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

together with direct negotiation between parties, is becoming an exceptionally important tool for the attainment of peace and harmonious relations between nations.

Just as in the history of national communities the organization of society and the State is based on the rational foundation of the social pact or contract, in the history of the international community the existence of prevailing norms and traditions also presumes such a pact. However, history has taught us that law, whether national or international, arises as a result of and in response to an initial hegemonic act which generates a given structure of domination in political, economic and social relations. The social contract comes later.

We believe that in the field of international law this is a moment of consensus, of tacit contract, inasmuch as it is a time in which all - but first and foremost the most powerful States - are searching for means of understanding, for points of equilibrium and stability, for a minimum common ground.



(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

From this perspective and in this spirit, Nicaragua, together with 14 other countries, presented to the Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Nicosia in September 1988 a draft resolution, which was approved unanimously, calling for the convening in 1989 of a special ministerial conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, with the objective of proclaiming the last decade of this century and the millennium as the Decade for Peace and International Law.

The Conference was held in The Hague, where the International Court of Justice is located, from 26 to 29 June of this year. In addition to proclaiming the Decade of International Law, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, The Hague Declaration calls on the plenary Assembly of the United Nations to adopt it for the entire world community.

More recently, at the Belgrade summit meeting held from 4 to 7 September, the Heads of State of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries ratified the Declaration of The Hague ministerial statement and requested that at the forty-fourth session the United Nations General Assembly proclaim the next decade as the Decade of Peace and International Law. In this respect, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries will soon be presenting for the consideration of this session of the General Assembly a draft resolution for the proclamation of the Decade.

We hope that an era of peace and harmony among nations is approaching. We hope that the irrationality of the system of international economic relations will give way to reason and morality. There will be no peace and development, however, until the problem of foreign debt is resolved globally by means of a restructuring of the system which gave rise to the debt in the first place. Bilateral solutions are partial and fictitious because they leave the underlying cause of the crisis intact.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

We know that there will be no peace without development and until there is full observance of the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. Peace, democracy and development are three complementary, inseparable categories of social existence.

Ecological destruction must be halted. This will involve a re-examination of indiscriminate and unwise industrial production policies. The planet's flora and fauna are dying; pollution is making the air unbreatheable in some parts of the world, and a climatic catastrophe seems inevitable.

As for the environmental problem in Central America, the interest of Nicaragua and the other countries of the region in this subject is reflected in the creation of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, which held its first meeting only days ago.

We feel it appropriate to mention here that the phenomenon of drug trafficking must not be considered exclusively from the perspective of production but must inevitably be viewed from all angles, taking into account production, distribution, consumption and financial mechanisms.

Drugs became a world-wide problem when they entered the market-place and became the object of financial speculation. Therefore, it should not be overlooked that the drug problem is part of the structural situation affecting relations between poor and highly developed countries, that we have addressed throughout this statement. For the same reason emphasis should be placed on drug consumption and distribution in the highly developed countries, as well as on its production in the poor countries. It should never be forgotten that there will be drugs for sale so long as there is a demand for them.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

On this subject, Nicaragua has presented for consideration by the Central American Governments a draft agreement containing proposals for machinery and action for the combating of drug trafficking in the Central American region. Similarly, in December 1988 Nicaragua signed the Vienna Treaty on this subject, and in Managua the legislative process is already under way that will lead to its ratification in the shortest possible time.

After I had finished preparing this statement, in which we have omitted any reference to individual or specific responsibilities, though they do exist, we unfortunately heard discordant voices from our Central American neighbours. Above all, one among them, claiming to be above good and evil, has pontificated and presented himself as a universal spokesman for democracy and a counsellor and adviser to the entire human race.

Such attitudes do not foster the climate of consensus that seems to prevail today in Central America. Unfortunately those who preach urbi et orbi in this way forget that in their own country and elsewhere in the area there are serious problems of drug trafficking and human rights violations. We hope that our sister nations of the region overcome these grave situations as soon as possible so that democracy, instead of being a myth, can in fact become a reality.

Political co-operation, the easing of tensions and the end of the cold war are steps of exceptional importance for the future of mankind; but they are not enough; they are just first steps. Therefore it is necessary to take full advantage of the lucidity that seems to be prevailing at present in order to deal with all problems - political, social, economic and ecological - in a far-reaching way, that would address mankind as a whole, as a system that co-ordinates and harmonizes those differences which must be seen, nevertheless, as coming from a basic interest

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

and a common platform: the need to live with dignity and in freedom. For that to happen, solidarity and co-operation must become the basis of a new morality in relations between the peoples and among all men. Only then - and here we quote the great Nicaraguan poet, Ruben Dario - can the "sun of burning gold" shine on the future and destiny of all mankind.

Mr. AL-ATTIYAH (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): I take pleasure in congratulating Mr. Garba on his election to preside over the current session of the General Assembly. His election is an expression both of appreciation for his expertise and of recognition of the important role his country, Nigeria, plays in the international community. I am completely confident that he will conduct the business of the session in the best possible manner, which will help in dealing with the vitally important international issues on our agenda.

I also wish to express our thanks to his predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, for the objective manner in which he conducted the business of the previous session.

Every year we meet in this international forum to reaffirm our commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and to review the urgent problems and crises which afflict the world. We exchange views and adopt positions on those problems in order to reach decisions which we consider appropriate in dealing with them. In all our efforts we aim at establishing conditions for an international community that will enjoy stability, justice, security and peace. I should like to express our appreciation of the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, on the work of the Organization during the previous year. We express our full satisfaction at the new orientation that is becoming more and more prevalent in the international community, foremost among which is the desire to strengthen the role and enhance the prestige of the United Nations. We support this orientation, in particular, and will work together with all Member States towards reaffirming and consolidating it. The Secretary-General has indicated in his report that the Organization has, in fact, proven both its authority in assuming the role that it was entrusted with and its ability to contribute in an effective manner to the resolution of a number of problems through active peace efforts as it did in Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, South-East Asia,

(Mr. Al-Attiah, Qatar)

Namibia and Cyprus and with respect to other issues that are of concern to us all. While expressing our appreciation for these efforts, we must underline the fact that progress in discharging our responsibilities in dealing with these - and other - issues depends on our action, that of all of us, as Members of this Organization, on our commitment to peaceful settlements, non-use of force and full co-operation with the efforts undertaken by the United Nations.

The question of Palestine is the most important and foremost challenge that continues to confront the international community. From the very inception of the United Nations the General Assembly has had the question of Palestine on its agenda and, indeed, the Organization assumes a particularly heavy responsibility for that issue. Two ongoing developments of unquestionable importance are currently taking place regarding this question, developments which must be taken into consideration in any discussion of the issue. They are the Palestinian peoples' uprising in the occupied territories, on the one hand, and the proclamation of the independent State of Palestine, on the other hand.

The intifadah is a liberation movement against Zionist occupation and its plans for the settlement of the territories and its continuing violation of the sanctity of the holy lands in Palestine. The intifadah has forced itself on the attention of the world and has become a daily news item for the international media. It has clarified the nature of the conflict in a manner that will doom to failure any attempts at misinformation and deceit. What we have here is a people defending their dignity and struggling for their right to self-determination and national statehood, and accepting every sacrifice in the process. This is the bright and honourable side of the picture. On the other side of the conflict, we see the ugly face of the Israeli practices of oppression which include the murder of children, women and the elderly, deportation, incarceration and torture.

(Mr. Al-Attiah, Qatar)

Furthermore, we see the bulldozing or dynamiting of homes, the confiscation of land and property and the establishment of new settler colonies. In the name of my country, I salute the blessed intifadah of the Palestinian people and reaffirm our continued support for it. We call upon all international institutions and organizations to assume their responsibilities and to awaken the consciousness of the world so that an end may be put to attempts by the occupation authorities at genocide by removing the Palestinians from their homeland. Last year we witnessed new proof of the desire of the Palestinians to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the problem based on international legitimacy. I am referring to the courageous initiative taken by the Palestine National Council. Despite world-wide appreciation of the Palestinian initiative and recognition by a majority of the countries of the world of the State of Palestine, Israel - impelled by its expansionist policy and its racist philosophy - still persists in its obduracy and its rejection of all initiatives of good will. In this, it is encouraged by the political and military support that it still receives from certain quarters and countries.

The dialogue between the United States and the Palestine Liberation Organization is a positive development and a step in the right direction. But dialogue is not an end in itself. What is required is that the dialogue result in a clear and explicit position recognizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, foremost of which is its right to self-determination. We believe that an international conference attended by all the parties concerned, including the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and also including the permanent members of the Security Council, is the most direct way of solving this crucial question in a comprehensive and just manner.

(Mr. Al-Attiah, Qatar)

We view with profound satisfaction the halt of the war between Iran and Iraq, that destructive war which squandered the human and material resources of the two neighbouring countries and hindered development in the region. It also jeopardized the security and peace of the whole world. But our satisfaction will not be complete until full understanding is reached by the parties and a formal end put to the state of war, until clear, solid foundations of a just and durable peace between them are established in such a way as to preclude any recourse to the use of force in the future. We believe that co-operation with the Secretary-General and his endeavours and the implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) constitute a guarantee for achievement of the desired peace.

With regard to the tragic situation in fraternal Lebanon, we are pleased to take note of the resumption of work by the Arab Tripartite Committee. We commend the noble efforts undertaken by that Committee and the positive results that have thus far been achieved. We call upon the parties to continue to co-operate with the Committee as the only available means to extract Lebanon from the vicious circle of infighting and to bring to that country, embattled for so long, the overdue peace and security which it deserves. We also look to the representatives of all the fraternal Lebanese people, meeting in Taif, with the hope that they will reach an agreement on appropriate foundations for building the Lebanon of the future, foundations that represent civilization and a spirit of giving.

My country can only condemn the continued Israeli occupation of south Lebanon and of the Syrian Golan. We salute the heroic resistance of the people against that occupation. We call upon the international community to meet its duties in securing full implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council calling for an end to the Israeli occupation of those territories.



(Mr. Al-Attiyah, Qatar)

With regard to Afghanistan, my country has always supported the Afghan people's right to self-determination and to the free choice of its political system, without external interference. We call upon all the parties to implement the Geneva Agreements on the subject and to co-operate with the sincere efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in this regard.

With respect to the question of Cyprus, my country believes that a just and durable settlement ensuring the coexistence of the two Cypriot communities can be reached through participation in good faith in the ongoing efforts of the United Nations.

My country also salutes the endeavours of the leaders of Central America to deal with the problems confronting that region through negotiations and other peaceful means with a view to achieving stability and enabling the peoples of the region to devote their efforts and resources to the development process.

The State of Qatar considers the elimination of apartheid in South Africa to be a lofty goal for all mankind. That evil régime is a challenge to the values and sentiments of mankind and a violation of the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. The elimination of that régime is a prime responsibility of our Organization and of the international community. We consider that the limited measures enacted by the authorities in Pretoria in an effort to deal with world public opinion can only mean the perpetuation of that evil régime and impede the final objective, namely, the total elimination of apartheid.

(Mr. Al-Attiah, Qatar)

We welcome the positive developments with regard to independence for Namibia and we hope that all the obstacles South Africa still raises will be overcome. The United Nations plan for Namibia's independence should be permitted to bear fruit so that the Namibian people may enjoy independence and regain its security and stability.

The international community is confronted with two major challenges that threaten its very structure and put at great peril the achievements of human civilization. I refer to the dangers posed to the environment, on the one hand, and the spread of drug use, on the other hand. The major industrialized countries and the developing or least developed countries are equally in jeopardy. Co-operation on a global scale is necessary to meet these challenges with all the determination they require. Although the responsibility falls upon us all, the industrialized countries bear a greater burden in this respect commensurate with their financial and technological resources, which may not be available to the developing countries.

In this regard my country supports the holding of the proposed 1992 international conference on environment and development. We hope this conference will provide solutions conducive to the protection of our planet in the interests of future generations. At the same time we call for intensified efforts to deal with the scourge of drugs, which threaten the achievements and the very foundations of our civilization.

We wish to express our satisfaction at the improvement in the international political climate and the détente in the relations between the Soviet Union and the United States as illustrated, among other things, by the conclusion of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, and the beginning of the destruction of some of them, which constitutes a first step

(Mr. Al-Attiyah, Qatar)

towards total disarmament. We also consider this achievement a first step on the long road towards the global and comprehensive end of the nuclear-arms race and a harbinger of better times to come for the human race in a world where peace and understanding prevail.

In this connection we attach particular importance to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. We feel great concern over Israel's possession of nuclear arms, especially if we take into account its aggressive characteristics and its dominant trait to embark on hazardous adventures. Our concern is heightened by Israel's refusal to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its refusal to subject its nuclear installations to international inspection, as well as its co-operation with the racist régime of Pretoria. We also support the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the cessation of all nuclear tests, as well as ensuring the diversion of the enormous resources spent on arms to the social and economic development of the developing countries, with an enhanced role for the United Nations.

Political détente cannot be consolidated without economic détente. Unfortunately the economic crisis is still with us; if anything, it is worsening. We feel deep concern at the widening economic and technological gap between the developing countries and the industrialized countries. While the economies of the majority of the developing countries are stagnant or in decline, the major concern of the industrialized countries is to achieve growth without inflation.

The debt problem still constitutes an impediment to the economic development of many developing countries. It is essential to arrive at a fair global understanding to find a solution to the problem of external indebtedness. We believe in the usefulness of the resumption of the broad North-South dialogue aimed at establishing forms of economic co-operation beneficial to all concerned. We hope the special session of the General Assembly scheduled to take place early next

(Mr. Al-Attiyah, Qatar)

year will provide a useful forum for the resumption of this dialogue. We are confident that that session will provide a strong impetus to international co-operation in the field of economic development. Here, we emphasize the importance of the role of the United Nations as a principal forum for dialogue and negotiations relative to such co-operation.

Past experience teaches us that we are able to deal effectively with most of our problems if we put our faith in our international Organization and in each other. The challenges confronting us are great indeed, but through seriousness of purpose and good faith we can meet them. Thus we shall achieve our objective of a world where justice and mutual respect prevail and where mankind enjoys the blessings of freedom, peace and stability.

Mr. GYAW (Myanmar): On behalf of the delegation of the Union of Myanmar and on my own behalf, I take pleasure in extending warmest congratulations to the President on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. His election to this high office reflects the confidence of all the States Members of the United Nations in his demonstrated diplomatic skills and leadership qualities, as well as in his commitment to the ideals of the Organization. It is also a fitting tribute to the great country he represents, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which has always been in the forefront in the quest for peace and security, in the fight against colonialism and racial discrimination and in the promotion of economic and social justice in the world. Let me assure him that in discharging his heavy responsibilities he can count on the full support and co-operation of my delegation.

I wish also to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina, for his valuable contribution to the success of the Assembly at its forty-third session.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

The current session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time of great expectations. In the past year we have witnessed a continuation and further consolidation of the positive and encouraging trends in international relations that have rekindled hopes for a better world.

As a result of these new trends the United Nations has regained much of its relevance, and the role of the Security Council as an instrument of international peace and security has been revitalized. Not only Governments, but millions of common people around the globe are beginning to feel that the trust they had continued to place in the Organization during its time of trials and tribulations has been vindicated. Nations large and small are demonstrating more willingness to co-operate and to work within the framework of the Organization. As a result, we are witnessing a far greater inclination on the part of nations to rely on the United Nations peace-keeping operations than to resort to unilateral action. Here, I wish to pay a special tribute to the men and women from different lands who, often at great personal peril, are keeping the peace in many troubled parts of the world under the United Nations banner. Many of those emissaries of peace have been the victims of terrorism.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

At this juncture, the effectiveness of the United Nations would surely be enhanced further if all States that qualify for membership in conformity with the provisions of the Charter were admitted to the Organization. We therefore welcome the desire expressed by the Republic of Korea to become a Member of the United Nations, while not losing sight of the need for the ultimate reunification of Korea.

The enhanced prestige and renewed credibility of the United Nations are attributable not only to the marked improvement in international relations but also in large measure to the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization. Even during its darkest days he never despaired or wavered. Instead, with a single-minded dedication and an unflinching faith in the essential soundness of the idea of the United Nations, and ably assisted by his senior advisers and a corps of dedicated international civil servants, he ably defended everything the United Nations stood for. On behalf of the Government of the Union of Myanmar, I should like to place on record our sincere gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar for a very difficult job very well done.

The perceptible improvement in the international climate, particularly in the pattern of the relationship between the two super-Powers, is having a favourable impact on the solution of a variety of long-standing problems bearing on the maintenance of international peace and security. Nowhere is that impact felt more profoundly than in the field of arms control and disarmament.

The conclusion of the Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - and its effective implementation in good faith by both parties, which has resulted in the destruction of over half their stockpiles, have generated greater mutual confidence between them. That is bound to provide a stronger impetus to bilateral and multilateral negotiations on disarmament, an issue of vital importance

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

for the survival of mankind. That impetus has already led to the resumption in June 1989 of the strategic arms reduction talks - START - with the stated goal of a 50 per cent reduction. A successful conclusion of these negotiations would bring about a qualitative change in the power relationship between the two major military alliances and set the disarmament process well on course. It would also usher in a new era of enhanced international peace and security and thus be a historic achievement of immense significance for the future of mankind.

While the conclusion of the INF Treaty and the prospective reductions in offensive strategic weapons are indeed laudable, it bears repeating that the elimination of all nuclear weapons must remain the ultimate goal of mankind. In this connection we welcome the convergent view of both super-Powers that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. We welcome this as an expression of their political will to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race. The first necessary step to that end is the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

In the field of chemical weapons, the Paris Conference held in January 1989 expressed with one voice the collective will of the international community to see a world totally free from these inhuman weapons. Following years of seemingly irreconcilable differences on the principal issues involved, particularly the question of verification, significant forward movement was made this year when the Soviet Union and the United States reached agreement on key elements of a treaty banning those weapons.

The memorandum of understanding between them on chemical weapons, signed on 23 September and providing for verification and data exchanges, represents further progress towards that goal. We have been further heartened by the important concrete proposals announced by the President of the United States in the Assembly

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

on 25 September and by the positive response given to the proposals by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union on the following day. Timely action to eliminate the world's two largest chemical-weapon arsenals could serve as an effective bar to the spread of chemical weapons. It is therefore imperative that these bilateral efforts be redoubled in order that multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament can move forward expeditiously and a universal convention on the total prohibition of these weapons be concluded at an early date.

The past year has been particularly remarkable for the United Nations as the focus of action in the search for the peaceful settlement of regional disputes and conflicts. However, the degree of success attending these efforts has varied. We are happy to note that, thanks to the decisive action of the Security Council and the unremitting efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, the settlement plan for Namibia embodied in Security Council resolution 435 (1978) has progressed to a stage where we can look forward to the emergence of that Territory as an independent sovereign State. To ensure Namibia's transition to independence, we urge all countries concerned, particularly South Africa, to fulfil in good faith the obligations they have assumed under the relevant agreements and understandings. The attainment of statehood by Namibia will bring to an end the last vestiges of colonialism in Africa.

Nevertheless, the rebirth of that great continent cannot be considered complete so long as millions of black South Africans remain virtually enslaved in the land of their ancestors under the oppressive and evil régime of apartheid. Recent developments in South Africa seem to have opened a window of opportunity for the minority régime in that country to institute fundamental and meaningful reforms aimed at terminating that obnoxious system at an early date. We earnestly hope the régime will seize this opportunity to introduce such reforms urgently.



(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

At this critical juncture, the international community should exert greater pressure, including the enforcement of economic sanctions, on the South African authorities with a view to attaining the objective of racial equality and majority rule in that country on the basis of universal suffrage. At the same time, encouragement should be given to the rising tide of liberal white opinion in South Africa in favour of fundamental change, which was clearly evident in the recent elections.

One region where peace initiatives from within the region itself are bearing fruit is Central America. The continuing efforts of the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to achieve the goals of peace and democratization they had earlier set for themselves in the Esquipulas II agreements and more recently in the Tela agreement have brought the termination of a decade of turmoil in the region within sight. We believe these regional initiatives deserve the positive support of extra-regional Powers.

In the Middle East, despite some positive developments, represented by the Palestine National Council's acceptance of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute continues to elude us. The question of Palestine, which is at the core of the Middle East conflict, remains unresolved. No tangible progress has been achieved, and the formidable obstacles to the peace process persist. We believe the time has arrived for the parties involved to make their utmost efforts to bring about an enduring peace in the region in conformity with the terms set forth in the said Security Council resolutions. Those resolutions provide the only workable basis for a lasting peace in the region, and any attempt to call their validity into question is fraught with incalculable dangers. My delegation supports the proposal that an international peace conference on the Middle East be held under United Nations auspices, with the participation of all parties concerned on an equal footing.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

Here, we would like to reiterate our unwavering support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including their right to national independence and sovereignty. We would also like to take this opportunity to express the hope that the continuing constructive efforts of President Mubarak of Egypt would facilitate our search for peace in that region. In the mean time urgent steps should be taken to ensure that General Assembly resolution 43/233 of 26 April 1989 be strictly observed and that, in conformity with its terms, necessary measures be taken to provide protection to the Palestinian civilians in the occupied Arab territories.

In Lebanon 14 years of hostilities have brought untold suffering to its people, destroyed its economy, rent its communities asunder and left its State institutions in shambles. Given the nature of the conflict, a solution of the crisis will require concerned international efforts. My delegation therefore welcomes the laudable efforts of the Heads of State of Algeria, Morocco and Saudi Arabia to end the bloodshed, to reestablish peace in the country and to safeguard its unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.

Coming nearer home, we believe that every avenue must continue to be explored in order to put an end to the protracted strife and misery in neighbouring Kampuchea. We are greatly distressed that the quest for a peaceful solution, which began in earnest with the Jakarta Informal Meetings in July 1988 and February 1989, and which was intensified at the International Conference held in Paris in the summer of this year, has not achieved the desired result. The continuing aim of the international community must remain the working out, on the basis of the gains already made, of a comprehensive political solution that would ensure respect for Kampuchean sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and for the neutral

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and non-aligned status of Kampuchea, as well as for the right of the Kampuchean people to self-determination free from outside interference.

In the quest for such a solution the interests of the Kampuchean people must be held paramount. No one should aim for anything less, and no one should seek anything more. The total withdrawal of all Vietnamese forces last month is an important and necessary first step towards achieving a settlement of the Kampuchean problem in all its interlocking internal and external aspects. Given the deep mistrust and bitterness generated by 11 years of foreign military intervention, it is imperative that all stages and aspects of the implementation of any settlement plan for Kampuchea be carried out under the supervision and control of an appropriate international mechanism.

We find it distressing that the emergent spirit of co-operation in the political field has not yet spread to the sphere of international economic relations. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his annual report on the work of the Organization for the current year,

"the progress we have achieved in the global political climate can prove precarious if the economic climate remains adverse for the majority of the world's population." (A/44/1, p. 19)

The efforts of the developing countries to bring about a new international economic order that would be more equitable and more supportive of their development processes has to date been largely unsuccessful. The present international economic environment remains non-conducive to the aspirations of the developing countries. Instead, those countries, including my own, are faced with problems of mounting debt, inadequate flow of external assistance and falling commodity prices that have resulted in a sharp decline in their terms of trade.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

For many developing countries the overriding concern continues to be the impediment to development posed by external indebtedness. Although important guidelines for dealing with the debt problem have been laid down by the international community, a solution remains elusive. The gravity of the situation is illustrated by the net outward transfer of resources from debtor developing countries to their creditors, which, according to the United Nations World Economic Survey, 1989, grew to a staggering \$32.5 billion in 1988. The solution of the external debt problem of the developing countries must remain a major concern on the international agenda. A formula for dealing effectively with that problem needs to be worked out through continuous multilateral dialogue and the shared responsibility of all. Past experience has amply demonstrated that the "market menu approach" and its variants are incapable of addressing the core of the problem. The search for an innovative international debt strategy should therefore be intensified. In this connection we consider that ideas that have been advanced for the creation of an international debt facility represent one such approach and that the mechanics of such a facility should be given serious thought.

The least developed countries have been and are being hardest hit by those unfavourable developments. The over-all socio-economic conditions of those countries have deteriorated in spite of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries adopted in 1981 with a view to improving their condition. That Programme remains the main framework for concerted international action for the economic and social uplift the least developed countries, and its successful implementation is of vital importance for those countries. Here, the delegation of Myanmar would like to reiterate the importance of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held at Paris in 1990 and of the preparatory meetings leading to that Conference.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

My delegation considers that the special session of the General Assembly to be held in the spring of 1990 would provide a significant opportunity to conduct purposeful multilateral dialogue on the complex of issues besetting the global economy and on the means of redressing them on a long-term basis. We hope that it would revitalize the North-South dialogue and that it would take into account the special needs and circumstances of the developing countries, particularly of the least developed among them. Moreover, the elaboration of an international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade that is now in hand will lend a far greater sense of purpose and direction to international co-operation for development than hitherto.

The developing countries are fully aware that the responsibility for the development of their national economies rests primarily with themselves. Many of them are undertaking the daunting task of extremely difficult but necessary adjustment programmes. They also recognize that effective national policies are important in attracting financial flows and new equity investments and in creating a climate for sustained development.

While on this subject, I wish to touch on my country's endeavour in this regard. In my country we are undertaking economic reform measures and have carried out restructuring in selected areas of the economy. Accordingly, we have adopted an open-door economic policy and have undertaken internal and external trade-liberalization measures in line with the country's socio-political conditions. In order to inject new dynamism into the performance of the export trade, there is now an increased reliance and special importance placed on the market mechanism. One of the most significant features of the general liberalization measures is the increasingly important role expected to be played by the private sector in such fields as production, services and trade. Moreover, a

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

foreign investment law was promulgated in 1988 with a view to attracting greater flow of foreign capital investment. The aim of that law is to alleviate the capital constraint faced by Myanmar.

Important as national policies are, the development of the developing countries would be difficult to bring about without a supportive international economic environment. A more open and improved international trading system would be of great benefit to the developing countries.

A great number of developing countries, including the least developed among them, are falling behind because of their inability to move out of traditional economic pursuits, namely, the production and export of primary products, the market for which has in the main been either depressed or unpredictable.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

It is of vital importance to these countries that they diversify their exports. However, their attempts at diversification have to be made in the face of a growing tendency towards protectionism.

Foremost among the social concerns of the international community is the increasing threat posed to mankind by narcotic drugs. In recent years it has become particularly clear that drug abuse rends the fabric of societies and ruins the lives of individuals, not the least among them being the youth of our nations. What is urgently required, therefore, is to attack the problem in its totality, from cultivation and transportation across international frontiers to consumption and drug-money laundering. In this connection, we in the Union of Myanmar are fully doing our share by all means open to us. We have long been relentlessly waging a determined war against the menace of narcotic drugs as a matter of national responsibility.

We have laid down comprehensive schemes to combat the drug menace and are energetically implementing them. The comprehensive programme which we have laid down covers the whole gamut of drug-control activities, such as law enforcement, crop substitution, livestock breeding, medical treatment, rehabilitation, education and mass-media information. We have recently launched an integrated rural development programme with particular emphasis on infrastructural building, crop substitution and overall alleviation of socio-economic conditions. We believe that the successful implementation of the programme will accelerate the eradication of opium cultivation. In close co-operation with the United Nations, resolute action is being taken in all these fields. In recognition of the efforts of the Myanmar authorities, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control has authorized an additional sum of \$10.5 million in assistance.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

In the Union of Myanmar an elaborate legal basis is already in place to fight illicit drugs. In 1974 and 1983 the Government strengthened its drug-control laws banning the cultivation of narcotic plants and increasing penalties for illicit drug trafficking. The law prohibits cultivation of any and all crops from which narcotic drugs can be processed. It also provides for the destruction of narcotic crops and confiscation of equipment used in the production of these drugs.

In parallel with the foregoing measures, large-scale military operations are being carried out against drug traffickers and their production camps. The Myanmar security forces to date have not only destroyed 200,000 acres of cultivated opium, but have on innumerable occasions interdicted heavily armed opium caravans transporting the produce to transit points in the border regions. The amount of heroin seized as a result of the Government's campaign totals 100,000 kilogrammes. The magnitude of the task accomplished can be judged from the fact that the opium poppy is cultivated in remote regions of the country which are accessible only on foot or by helicopter, and the opium trails pass through densely wooded and rugged terrain.

These successful campaigns have been carried out with great sacrifice on the part of the Myanmar security forces. In the course of these campaigns well over 100 members of the Myanmar security forces have lost their lives and close to 550 have been wounded.

The significant achievements of our drug-suppression campaigns have earned high praise in foreign Government quarters, including the United States Drug Enforcement Agency. Despite this, certain quarters have chosen to ignore the strenuous efforts made by Myanmar and seen fit to level unfounded allegations against us. Some have gone so far as to accuse the Myanmar security forces of



(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

collaborating with the drug traffickers. Such accusations have deeply pained us. I would remind those who level these malicious charges against us that the ill-gotten proceeds from drug trafficking constitute the very life blood of the various groups that are waging an armed insurgency against the Myanmar State.

Earlier in my statement I paid fitting tribute to the men and women from different lands who are serving as guardians of the peace under the United Nations banner. Members of the Myanmar security forces engaged in a relentless war against drug traffickers may not be wearing blue helmets, but the cause for which hundreds of them have sacrificed life and limb is no less internationalist and no less worthy.

In addressing the Assembly on 26 September in his capacity as Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community (EEC), the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic made an appeal that the Myanmar people be allowed freely to exercise their right of expression and that democracy be restored in the country through the organization of free elections. Furthermore, speaking on the following day the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom stated that there was an urgent need for restoration of human rights and democracy in Myanmar through free elections. I should like to assure them - indeed, the entire world - that that is precisely the objective for the attainment of which the Myanmar Government is exerting sincere and unremitting efforts.

It is known to all that the people of Myanmar have manifested their genuine desire for and aspirations to a multiparty democracy and political reforms. The Myanmar Government has responded positively to those aspirations. It has instituted a number of far-reaching fundamental reforms and is actively carrying

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

out a series of measures to fulfil the aspirations of the people. We have abolished the single-party political system and in its place have adopted a multiparty democratic system. Purposeful measures have been put in train to bring about a smooth transition to the new system.

An independent multiparty democracy general elections commission composed of five retired, widely respected elder citizens was constituted in September 1988. The commission has been performing its assigned tasks since then. Two of the members are Buddhists, two profess the Muslim faith, and one is a Christian belonging to the Kayin national race.

A political parties registration law was promulgated on 27 September of last year. To date more than 200 political parties have been registered with the elections commission.

On 16 February 1989 the commission announced a fixed timetable setting out in detail the various preparatory measures to be undertaken by it prior to the holding of multiparty democratic elections not later than May 1990. The respective time frames for the completion of these various measures were also specified in the timetable.

After soliciting and taking account of the views of political parties and the general public, an electoral law was promulgated on 31 May this year. Subsequently, on 30 June, election rules were promulgated. Nationwide electoral rolls are being prepared expeditiously, and other related measures necessary for holding free and fair elections are being carried out.

To put it in a nutshell, the implementation of the programme and timetable for holding elections is proceeding well and on schedule. The momentum will be carried forward and intensified in the remaining months before the elections.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

Peaceful political activity within the law is being permitted, and political parties are vigorously carrying out their organizational work throughout the length and breadth of the country. In order to safeguard and consolidate the much-improved stability in the country, certain necessary restrictions have perforce to be imposed for the time being on public political campaigning. Those restrictions will be gradually relaxed as election day approaches.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

At the same time, the Government is laying a sound foundation for democracy. An independent judiciary, with the Supreme Court at its apex, has been re-established. The functions of the Attorney-General have been institutionalized. These institutions, indispensable to a democratic State, have been functioning normally since September last year.

Moreover, the civil service has been depoliticized and is being reformed into a body of men and women of high professional competence and integrity, dedicated solely to the service of the country. A mass-media campaign has been launched to instil in the general public the true values of democracy, such as respect for the law, respect for the rights of fellow citizens, and appreciation of the obligations that those rights entail.

I have highlighted some of the measures that are being conscientiously carried out by the Myanmar Government with a view to creating conditions conducive to the successful holding of free and fair elections. Assurances have been repeatedly given at the highest level that these elections will be held without fail, and as scheduled, not later than May 1990. I am authorized to reaffirm this commitment before the Assembly and, through it, to the world.

Here I need hardly mention that this national undertaking can be realized only in conditions where the rule of law and civil order prevail. It is a task to be pursued in a peaceful, systematic and orderly manner, in observance of the true values of democracy. This can be accomplished only by the people of Myanmar themselves. At this critical juncture no outside Power should attempt to prescribe for Myanmar what is best for it or what form its political future should assume. Attempts to channel future events in Myanmar in directions of one's own liking and according to one's own perceptions - instances of which we have, regrettably,

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

witnessed in Myanmar recently - not only violate the fundamental principles of the Charter but would prove ultimately self-defeating.

In this regard, I can do no better than quote the wise words of the Secretary-General, who in his latest report on the work of the Organization says:

"At this critical stage, the mandatory principle of non-intervention by States in one another's internal affairs acquires added importance. ... No State can, of course, insulate itself completely from the currents of information and opinion flowing in the world, but ultimately each national society must find its own equilibrium in accordance with its own genius. Considering the web of memories, perceptions, aspirations and cultural values that constitute national life, any forceful pressures from outside to give it a particular form can hold little constructive promise in the long run. More often than not, they provoke a reaction different from the one desired." (A/44/1, pp. 18 and 19)

Mr. MUSA (Belize): We in Belize are keenly aware of the essential role the United Nations plays in advancing the cause of freedom, peace and justice throughout the world. Our struggle for political independence was rooted in our peoples' desire to be free, but it was nurtured and strengthened right here, in the corridors of the United Nations, by the overwhelming support we received from the international community.

It is not surprising, then, that the Constitution of Belize affirms principles of universality - principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, faith in human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the dignity of the human person. Such principles translate into respect for the sovereignty of other nations, the right to self-determination of peoples, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

We take this opportunity to congratulate the President on his appointment to that high office. The world community looks to him - an accomplished son of Africa - with great expectancy and hope. We express to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, our deep appreciation and recognition of his tireless efforts in promoting peace and the noble objectives of our Organization.

This year, the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly opened in a spirit of optimism. The present atmosphere is one of reduced international tension. The ideological forces that have polarized the world for half a century are diminishing. We see a universal movement of people - people everywhere - in search of freedom and democratic participation.

It is a time of momentous change and transformation. There is a growing recognition of the imperative to manage the world's resources in the interests of the global family. While all this is taking place, issues like environmental degradation, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and drug abuse have joined the scourge of poverty as priority issues on the international agenda - doing so in ways that underline how interdependent nations and people have become.

The achievements in the political sphere are in stark contrast to persistent economic problems facing many developing countries. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, the massive debt problem, flight of capital, decline in trade and investment, and the growing disparity between the rich and the poor have resulted in many countries suffering reverses in the decade of the 1980s.

Reducing poverty and revitalizing growth is the challenge of our time. As we begin the new decade, the task ahead is clear. The development agenda for the 1990s must be to harness growth and use resources creatively to improve the quality of life of all our people.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

If we are to achieve a high quality of growth and development, our Governments must make better use of the resources. This calls for sound public financial and fiscal responsibility. We must find better ways for public expenditure to complement and spur private production, not displace it; and we must provide the essential social infrastructure in education, health and housing to benefit the many, not divert scarce resources to luxuries for a select, privileged few. We must bring the informal workers into the regular economy and allow individual enterprise to flourish.

But this will not happen by itself. There is need for concerted action in a new dynamic partnership where people elect Governments and Governments empower people to solve their own problems and take control of their lives. For this to happen, we must launch a new era in education to equip our young people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they require to take an active role in the development process.

Such pragmatic efforts at the national level will, however, be frustrated if the international economic environment is not conducive to development. While we in the developing countries must carry the primary responsibility for our future, the industrialized world has a vital part to play - not just in providing external resources and the transfer of technology, but also in ensuring that the developing countries have easy access to their markets.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

The time has come to address the pressing imbalances in the world economy. We have repeatedly acknowledged that peace and development are inextricably bound. Indeed, it is true saying that development is another name for peace, or, as others have put it, that economic freedom and political freedom are essential and inseparable companions on the road to national prosperity. The one will not long survive without the other.

Because of this vital connection between politics and economics in a world of global interdependence, the special session of the United Nations devoted to international economic co-operation to be convened in April 1990 takes on added importance. Of special concern is the growing trend in the industrialized world toward protectionism. The economic integration of Europe poses new uncertainties for many of our countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific - the ACP Group. Our economies are open and vulnerable not only to the ravages of hurricanes but also to the man-made disasters resulting from arbitrary decisions in the boardrooms of the industrialized world which distort the levels of commodity prices.

Such vulnerability and fragility make it all the more imperative that we put our own houses in order. We have tried to do that in Belize. Working in accordance with the process of democratic choice, the people of Belize, in the second national elections since our independence eight years ago, decided to replace its Government after one term in office. Belizeans arrived at a consensus to take charge once again of their political, social and economic future in a compassionate and productive atmosphere in which Belizeans come first. To ensure this, they elected to government a majority of the candidates of the People's United Party, the political movement that with the support of the people and the backing of the international community led Belize to independence in 1981.



(Mr. Musa, Belize)

Independence brought with it the promise of development, of more opportunity, peace and stability. Good government delivers and makes possible the attainment by the people of a better standard of living and a higher quality of life. The dynamics of development impel us to give highest priority to that assurance of human dignity - the creation of jobs.

My Government, therefore, continues to welcome investors from abroad who, with their capital, technology and access to new markets can join Belizeans in expanding trade and providing increased export earnings and economic activity. Those investors are our partners in development, who will participate with Belizeans in the mixed economy, assuring jobs at decent wages while at the same time benefiting from the climate of free and fair competition of a socially just market economy.

In accordance with the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, it is heartening to note the current constructive efforts now under way aimed at achieving the peace that has eluded our region for so long. The present political climate now renders the military option obsolete in resolving the embittered tensions that for ages have remained a major obstacle to international peace and security.

The community of nations has reiterated deserved recognition of the far-sighted and unfailing determination of the Contadora process in its conviction that the peoples of Central America wish to achieve peace, reconciliation, development and justice without interference, in accordance with their own decisions and historical experience.

The recent signing of the historic Tela agreement between five Central American Presidents is the latest example of the region's commitment to fulfilling the undertakings assumed under the Esquipulas procedure in search of a firm and lasting peace. That joint plan for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation or

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

relocation of the Nicaraguan resistance is hailed as a singular achievement of the Central American peace process, which seeks national reconciliation and democratization.

Belize maintains its commitment to peaceful coexistence and harmony with all our neighbours. Over the past year Belize and Guatemala have continued the negotiating process aimed at the conclusion of a possible draft of a comprehensive treaty to afford a just and lasting determination of the ancient controversy. We stand ready to resume these discussions with a renewed spirit of goodwill, without compromising the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Belize.

The continued support of our sister Caribbean countries, the Commonwealth of Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the solidarity and understanding of our Latin American neighbours, gives us confidence that the reality of our two sovereign nations living as good neighbours will find universal acceptance.

In a similar vein we applaud the announcement of the renewal of negotiations between the United Kingdom and Argentina over the Falkland Islands. Recalling our own struggle, we exhort our Argentine friends to refrain from any action that might be prejudicial to the interests of the Falklanders or compromise their inalienable right to self-determination.

My Government continues to be seriously concerned at the erosion of the constitutional process and the denial to the people of Panama of their right freely to elect a Government of their choice. The decision of the military leadership to annul elections and subsequently impose a president of its own choosing as Head of State of Panama further isolates that country in the international community.

The friendship and co-operation between the peoples of Belize and Panama have a long history and it is the wish of my Government that this relationship should continue. We recall the solidarity demonstrated by Panama during Belize's struggle

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

for independence and the pivotal role played by the late Panamanian leader, General Omar Torrijos towards the achievement of Belizean independence.

We call on the current leadership in Panama to co-operate in national and regional efforts to establish the framework for a return to democracy and constitutional rule in Panama and to put in place mechanisms for early and fair elections.

The success of democracy is inevitable, as is now being proved in several parts of the world. We invite the leadership in Haiti to take certain steps on the path to democracy to demonstrate its commitment to early elections and transition to democratic rule and we ask all sectors of Haitian society to co-operate in this important process.

We now focus attention once more on the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs. The magnitude of this global problem, in addition to its economic and social consequences, has now become a major national security concern for many nations in our region. At home in Belize we are committed to launching a concerted drive to eradicate the drug problem and to join forces in regional and international actions to put an end to this menace to society.

While the cultivation and use of marijuana in Belize have abated considerably, we recognize a new danger stemming from the growing use of crack and cocaine, as well as the use of our territory as a trans-shipment point for illegal drugs. In the face of these problems my Government proposes to work in collaboration with friendly Governments at the interdiction level to eliminate this serious threat to our country. We also recognize that if the use of illegal drugs in our society is to be eliminated, the problem must be addressed as an education issue as well. We will therefore shortly be launching a major campaign using all available resources

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

in our educational system to focus national attention on the inherent dangers associated with the use of illicit drugs. We also plan to establish a drug rehabilitation centre and welcome international support in this endeavour.

We wish to record our support for the related proposal of our sister Caribbean Community (CARICOM) State of Jamaica, which calls for the establishment of a multinational anti-drug task force within the United Nations system. This is a welcome opportunity for countries to pool their resources and military and intelligence capabilities against the well-organized, well-financed, and better-equipped drug cartels. And we can do so without infringing on the sovereignty of any nation.

Despite some progress and relaxation of political tensions in conflicts on the continent, the minority white racist Pretoria régime continues its intransigence, oppressing and exploiting the already dispossessed black majority in South Africa.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

The apartheid policy of this terrorist settler rule administration remains today as the glaring obstacle in the path of peace, stability and development in that region. Belize does not entertain notions that apartheid, as a crime against humanity, can be reformed. We insist on the total eradication of all vestiges of this system, which is an affront to any standard of human dignity. Belize continues to associate itself with those who are committed to keeping up the relentless pressure on South Africa until our brothers and sisters eventually triumph using all possible means in their just and legitimate struggle.

On Namibia, we trust that the Security Council will lend its full weight to ensuring that South Africa proceeds to disband all its paramilitary and commando units which still threaten the implementation of political progress towards independence. Even at this late stage, the international community must remain vigilant to ensure that South Africa does not succeed in subverting the process towards democratic elections in Namibia.

Belize recognizes the urgency of achieving a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which is the question of Palestine. No just and lasting peace can be achieved in the Middle East until the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are recognized, including their right to self-determination and a homeland, without compromising Israel's security. At a time when the Palestinian leadership under Chairman Yasser Arafat is offering important peace initiatives, my delegation looks forward to the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization and all parties on an equal footing.

In the case of Lebanon, it is our hope that the current cease-fire will be respected by all the parties concerned and that Lebanon will be given the

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

opportunity to recover from the destruction and violence which has occurred. All Lebanon wants is to be left alone so that it can find Lebanese solutions to Lebanese problems. Outside interference can only hinder this.

The global issue which today holds centre stage is the environment. In the coming decade, the world must deal much more effectively with problems resulting from the degradation of the environment: acid rain, ocean pollution, nuclear and toxic waste, ozone depletion and climate change. Industrial countries account for over 75 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions, the main cause of global warming. Clearly, therefore, the major responsibility to reduce emissions rests there. Belize has its own concerns: our rain forests, our coral reef system and our flora and fauna are gifts of God which we have a duty to protect for generations of Belizeans yet unborn. We are committed to protecting Belize's natural resources and environment to maintain a harmonious ecological balance, but we must take a holistic approach to the environmental challenge. We must promote and protect the environmental qualities of life in the fullest sense by extending economic choice and opportunities, for poverty is the ultimate environmental degradation. A fundamental environmental task for the decade ahead is the promotion of sustainable agriculture to feed our people. We must meet the growing environmental challenge by expanding economic freedom. True and lasting economic development must necessarily include maintaining ecological balance.

Our societies in the third world are undergoing serious strains in the care of children and in guaranteeing women equal opportunities in education and employment. Our ability as a people to provide the values and ideals that will guide the next generation will determine the course of social realities in the twenty-first century. As a policy, the Government of Belize supports public and private initiatives in the promotion and defence of human rights, and particularly

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

the rights of the child and of women. As soon as it is practicable, Belize will accede to and ratify the convention on the rights of the child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and give practical effect to them by force of law.

All this requires action now. The future is now. We can promote political freedom if we also promote economic freedom. We can aim for a high quality of growth while at the same time providing for the equitable distribution of the fruits of growth. We can achieve greater productivity and expanded trade if we liberate the creative energies of our people and remove the barriers to an interdependent global economy. If we do act effectively together, we may be able to look back on this time as a turning point in building a more peaceful and just world - a new world, a far better world - one in which the eternal dignity of man is respected.

The meeting was suspended at 5.15 p.m. and resumed at 6.15 p.m.\*

## AGENDA ITEM 39

QUESTION OF PALESTINE: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/44/L.2/Rev.1)

The PRESIDENT: As announced at the meeting yesterday afternoon, pursuant to a request contained in a letter from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States (A/44/612), the Assembly will now consider the draft resolution circulated yesterday afternoon as document A/44/L.2, which has been revised and now bears the symbol A/44/L.2/Rev.1.

I call on the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to introduce the revised draft resolution on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States.

Mr. TREIKI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation has already had the pleasure of congratulating the President, on behalf of my country, on his election. However, owing to the close and long-standing bonds of friendship between us, I cannot fail to seize this opportunity to express the pride with which I and the Group of Arab States see him presiding over this important session of the General Assembly.

On behalf of the Group of Arab States, of which my country is Chairman for this month, and of the sponsors, I have the honour to submit draft resolution A/44/L.2/Rev.1 to the General Assembly for consideration. I urge all delegations to support it.

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\* Mr. Vraalsen (Norway), Vice-President, took the Chair.



(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya)

Two years have elapsed since the beginning of the intifadah of the Palestinian people, and hundreds of lives have been sacrificed by them during that time. They daily see the massacre of innocent children, defenceless women and old people, martyrs whose only crime is to reject occupation and aspire to the freedom that is the right of all.

The United Nations General Assembly has adopted a number of resolutions on this subject, as have the Security Council, regional organizations and other international organizations, all calling for an end to the occupation and respect for international agreements, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.

Draft resolution A/44/L.2/Rev.1 is moderate and balanced. It recalls earlier resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council and calls for an end to bloodshed. It also calls for respect for international agreements and condemns murder and genocide.

The draft resolution deserves the Assembly's full support. Its purpose is not provocation or publicity. Rather, it is dictated by the tragic circumstances of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation. The Palestinian people have held out an olive branch. They express their desire for peace; they seek peace. But that olive branch has been met by napalm and engines of destruction. The Palestinian child's hand extended with the olive branch of peace has been cut off.

(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

There is now an intensification of the practices of murder and genocide on the part of the occupation forces; there is also the violation of the sanctity of Palestinian homes, churches and mosques, confiscation of property and the systematic demolition of houses. All this should induce the international community represented by this international Organization to take the necessary measures to put an end to those inhumane practices.

In view of the urgency and gravity of the situation in the occupied Arab territories, the sponsors of this draft resolution - Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Yugoslavia - call for its adoption without discussion and for it to be put to the vote immediately.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): At the outset, I should like to congratulate Ambassador Garba of Nigeria on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly. We know of his leadership qualities both in his home country and at the United Nations. We are therefore confident of his success in the difficult and important task of steering this session of the General Assembly.

Ten days ago, as the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Moshe Arens, rose to address this body, the representatives of every Arab State with the exception of Egypt demonstrated a collective show of belligerent contempt as they marched arrogantly out of this Hall. Had they remained, they would have heard, first-hand, Foreign Minister Arens call on the 20 Arab States still in a state of war with Israel to meet with him and discuss how we can move from belligerency to peace.

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

The following day, on 28 September, our mission telephoned the Permanent Missions of the 20 Arab States mentioned by name, in an attempt to co-ordinate the meetings and initiate the dialogue called for. Not one of them - I repeat, not one - reciprocated.

At the very same time that a scant minority of Middle Eastern nations is engaged in strenuous diplomacy aimed at solving the problems of our region, regrettably, the overwhelming majority of Arab States has other ideas in mind. While they are all deeply implicated in the creation and perpetuation of this conflict, somehow they allow themselves the luxury of, at best, lethargically ignoring and, at worst, attempting to obstruct, the fragile diplomatic process.

At international forums, however, Arab nations find the stamina to rush headlong into a somewhat different course of action: that of political warfare, against Israel and against the peace initiative of its Government.

The timing of this ritualistic draft resolution is significant and speaks for itself. There should be no mistake as to the intentions of its drafters. It is a flagrant exercise in public relations, the motivation of which is twofold. The first motive is to nip the peace process in the bud. The second, and more dangerous motive, is to institutionalize the idea, to implant in the minds of all, that while a new climate of global co-operation indeed exists, this climate is irrelevant as far as the Arab conflict with Israel is concerned. As they would have it, peace should reign the world over, but Israel and the Middle East peace process should enjoy no part in this global rejuvenation. Allow me to illustrate.

In August, the Syrian Minister of Defence chose to declare:

"... we do want war with Israel, as it will do us good." (Al-Anba,

15 August 1989)

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

Or, as a State-controlled Syrian newspaper so eloquently put it:

"On the threshold of the 21st century, such an ... entity ... should not continue to exist." (Al-Thawra, 1 August 1989)

Meanwhile, the eminent statesman, Qaddafi, whose representative is the chief sponsor of the draft resolution before us today, goes even further in various statements made by him in recent months:

"We want destruction of the enemy." (FBIS, 20 September 1989)

"The Zionist entity must be removed." (The New York Times, 2 September 1989)

"All of Palestine is for the Palestinians" (The New York Times, 2 September 1989)

"We all must be extremist and choose violence against the Israelis to liberate Palestine." (FBIS, 26 September 1989)

And finally, at the non-aligned Conference in Belgrade, Qaddafi outdid himself with the following statement:

"If you do not want to give them Alsace and Lorraine, or the Baltic states ... the Palestine people will continue to fight them and exterminate them." (5 September 1989)

So spake Qaddafi.

Only three days ago, the Arab Group decided once again to challenge the credentials of the delegation of Israel when the report of the Credentials Committee comes up for approval in about 10 days. Ironically, the membership of Israel in this body dedicated to peace and coexistence is being challenged by the very forces most opposed to peaceful coexistence. What is even more ironic is the demand for an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations which is made by the same forces that are seeking to expel Israel from this Organization.

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

The political warfare, exemplified by the challenge to Israel's credentials as well as by this draft resolution, is accompanied as always by escalating violence on the ground. The latest violence, however, has also been waged against the land itself and all that lives on it, the trees, wildlife and human beings.

On Tuesday, 19 September, in one of the cruellest premeditated blows to the environment in recent years, the forests of Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel's northern port, were turned into a charred, smouldering wasteland in a ferocious forest fire ignited by arson. Approximately 2,000 acres of the oldest and most beautiful forests, some 250,000 trees, were destroyed in the blaze. An Arab terrorist organization took credit for the arson, stating with glee that:

"The fires in occupied Palestine were the worst in the history of the Jews."

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

That statement is of interest. It refers to Haifa - Haifa! - as occupied Palestine and implies that the struggle is not only about Israel's borders but about its very existence, and not only against the Israelis but against the Jewish people.

PLO radio station broadcasts have long called for acts of arson inside Israel. They intensified their incitement in the two weeks preceding the blaze, calling on Palestinians to burn forests and fields, and including instructions on how to do it. "After the stones, the fire" was a slogan that appeared on the front cover of the official PLO Fatah periodical, Falastin Al Thawra, on 26 June 1989. The cover page has a graphic colour photograph glorifying arson. The war conducted by the PLO is against the land itself, and is nothing but wild destruction for its own sake. These acts are all the more repulsive at a time of world-wide concern for the welfare of the environment.

While Israel builds, they destroy; while Israel develops, they devastate; while Israel plants, they ignite fires; while Israel strives for peace, they strive to escalate violence.

PLO terrorism waged against Israel continues. Since Arafat, on 14 December 1988, decided on a change of terminology, according to which, PLO acts of terrorism are not terrorism, Israel has withstood a wave of over 30 infiltration attempts by PLO squads. These attacks, including the launching of countless rounds of Katyusha rockets, were aimed at our civilian communities. Some of the infiltration and rocket attacks were instigated by Syria, in order to heat up the Jordan-Israel border. Seventy-five Israelis have lost their lives in PLO-instigated violence over the last two years.

Meanwhile, Arafat's agents have dumped the mutilated bodies of more than 130 local Palestinians in the streets, mosques and schools in Judea, Samaria and

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

Gaza. These are the victims conveniently ignored by this draft resolution - those murdered for failing to toe the PLO line. The draft resolution before us calls for international protection for the Palestinian civilians. Protection from whom? Indeed, they need protection. Palestinians are being slain by PLO operatives in the most brutal ways, and on a daily basis. The majority of violent assaults in Judea, Samaria and Gaza are committed by the PLO against Palestinians.

International law places on Israel alone the responsibility to maintain public order and safety in the administrated territories. This draft resolution ignores that reality and condemns Israel's attempts to quell the violence. Yet it is a deeply biased condemnation. Conspicuously absent is any condemnation whatsoever of the resort to violence by Palestinian extremists, let alone an appeal for mutual restraint or a call for dialogue. By attempting obsessively to censure Israel for every measure it takes, while continuing to ignore the intense violence that has necessitated these measures, this draft resolution only distances peace.

Despite the apathy on the part of most Arab States, despite their political warfare, which is intended to obstruct the peace process, and despite the escalating terror, Israel remains committed to the pursuit of peace. Israel has launched a peace initiative comprising four interrelated points. The initiative has served to revive the search for peace, as evidenced by the diplomatic process that is in full swing. The four points call for: a common Israeli-Egyptian effort to build, on the foundation of the Camp David Accords, a comprehensive peace for the Middle East; the 20 Arab States - all in a state of war with Israel - to cease their hostility and begin a process of normalizing relations with Israel; an international effort to rehabilitate the Palestinian refugee camps in Judea, Samaria and Gaza; the Palestinians in the territories to cease the violence, and

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

enter a process of free democratic elections to choose representatives to negotiate, with Israel, an interim agreement, to be followed by negotiations on a permanent settlement.

The first point - Israeli-Egyptian efforts - is already being acted upon. The third - refugee rehabilitation - is widely recognized as crucial. The fourth - the concept of democratic elections - is strongly endorsed in the territories. Only the second, which urges the participation of the Arab States, has remained out of reach. Yet an end to the state of belligerency is the linchpin of any peace process. Peace in our region and an end to the suffering are clearly contingent upon the normalization of relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

There is no alternative way to advance the Middle East peace process. Rejection of this initiative is tantamount to rejecting peace. This draft resolution, with all its vitriolic rhetoric, has absolutely nothing to contribute to the pursuit of peace in our region. On the contrary, it is intentionally harmful. It seems that some sponsors of the draft resolution would prefer to have the peace process destroyed like the charred forests of Mount Carmel.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now consider the draft resolution contained in document A/44/L.2/Rev.1.\*

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\* The President returned to the Chair.



(The President)

I remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/44/L.2/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Antigua and Barbuda, El Salvador, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Uruguay, Zaire

The draft resolution was adopted by 140 votes to 2, with 6 abstentions. (resolution 44/2).

The PRESIDENT: I now call on representatives who wish to explain their votes.

Mr. TAKHTERAVANCHI (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran voted in favour of the draft resolution to express its full support for the heroic uprising of the Palestinian people. We believe that the international community should make every effort to help the Palestinian people in their just cause in order to counter the oppressive measures of the Zionist régime. To eradicate the root causes of the inhuman and brutal practices being imposed on the Palestinians international measures must be broadened in all Palestinian territories.

The Islamic Republic of Iran does not recognize the Zionist entity and, since there are some connotations in the context of the resolution vis-à-vis that entity, my delegation wishes to state its reservations for the record.

Mr. WATSON (United States of America): The position of the United States on the issues at stake here are well known to all. We deplore all acts of violence from any quarter. We have repeatedly called for restraint by all parties, Israel and the Palestinians alike. We believe that Israel, as the occupying Power, has an obligation to comply with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. We have criticized actions that are inconsistent with that Convention, while recognizing Israel's responsibility to maintain law and order in the occupied territories. We are aware of the difficult situation in Beit Sahour and the plight of its inhabitants. We urge that the level of confrontation be lowered by all concerned and that the problems be resolved by non-violent means, including dialogue and negotiations.

This resolution presents only a one-sided view of the difficult situation in the occupied territories. Like others adopted before by this body, the resolution includes sweeping condemnation of Israeli policies and practices without regard to the complex political and security environment in the area or the cycle of violence that has unfortunately taken so many Palestinian and Israeli lives.

(Mr. Watson, United States)

Resolutions incorporating one-sided and unbalanced rhetoric do not help to alleviate the conditions they purport to describe, nor do they make a practical contribution to resolving the underlying problems. Rather, such resolutions only deepen divisions, harden positions and poison the atmosphere.

The United States and other interested parties are engaged in intensive efforts to promote a process of dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians that could lead to elections in the occupied territories and a negotiated, comprehensive peace based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). This is what the General Assembly should be supporting, not unbalanced resolutions.

The conflict and bloodshed in the occupied territories will not end as a result of continued military action, civilian violence or additional resolutions of this kind. Nor will such resolutions assure the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people or the security of the State of Israel. This can be achieved only through dialogue leading to negotiated settlement agreed to by all the parties. Initiating and nurturing such a dialogue as a way to open negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis should remain the first priority of all who are seriously interested in resolving this tragic conflict.

For these reasons my Government has voted against the resolution considered today.

Mr. FORTIER (Canada): My delegation voted this afternoon in favour of the draft resolution, which embodies a principle which the Government of Canada has fully and consistently supported. Canada believes that the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War is a fundamental instrument of international law which must always be applied in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The continuing violations of the Convention by the Israeli occupation authorities and, in particular, the continuing violations of the

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

human rights of the inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are unacceptable and do not serve to enhance the prospects for peace.

This said, however, my Government regrets that the text of the resolution on which we have just voted contains certain other elements that are not helpful. In particular, the text fails to acknowledge that acts of provocation have taken place and that all the violence has not been one-sided. We also regret that the drafters, in several instances, chose to employ language that will not help to create the climate of goodwill needed to facilitate progress in the peace process.

Mr. CISTERNAS (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Chile voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/44/L.2/Rev.1, entitled "The uprising (intifadah) of the Palestinian people", in spite of the fact that we thought that this text did not preserve the necessary equity and balance a resolution of this kind should embody. Hence, the Chilean delegation wished to point out, as it did last year, that the text should have contained a generalized condemnation of all acts of violence which have occurred in the territories that are the subject of the resolution, whatever the source of the violence, and should have appealed to all the parties concerned, without distinction, to refrain from recourse to violence in defence of the principles, objectives and interests they consider it their duty to preserve.

Mr. GRÖNDAL (Iceland): In explanation of Iceland's vote in favour of this resolution, we should like to refer to the statement on the Arab-Israeli conflict made by the Foreign Minister of Iceland in his statement to the Assembly last Wednesday, 4 October. The Minister said that a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict will be found only if the parties manage to refrain from acts of violence and thus show their sincere will to attain the goal of lasting peace. Israel's plan to hold elections in the occupied territories is an important step in the process of seeking a solution to the conflict. We welcome and support the 10-point plan presented recently by President Mubarak of Egypt to implement such elections. Egypt has ignited hope for a dialogue that might lift the Israeli-Palestinian conflict off the streets and onto the negotiating table.

Mr. WILENSKI (Australia): Australia has voted in favour of the resolution on the uprising of the Palestinian people because it is consistent with the concern we have long expressed at the continued violence in the territories and the violation of human rights which have resulted from Israeli measures taken against the intifadah.

The Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Evans, in his address to this body yesterday said that Australia has consistently taken the position that the General Assembly, in the wording of its resolutions, should avoid provocative language which exacerbates differences and hinders peacemaking rather than constructively advancing it, and there are aspects of this resolution which are less balanced than they might be in this respect.

The situation in the occupied territories, especially in the light of current moves to a Middle East peace, requires an approach that seeks accommodation and an end to violence from all quarters. An understanding of the situation in the occupied territories requires not only an appreciation of the legitimate claims of the Palestinian people to self-determination but also recognition of the historical situation in which Israel has found itself from its original establishment by decision of this Organization, of the pattern of conflict continuing over a period of 41 years and of the concern it has for its own security and survival so long as its right to exist within secure and recognized boundaries is not universally accepted. The great difficulty Israel faces in dealing with the situation in the occupied territories serves to reinforce the urgent need for a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli dispute, one which ensures Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized boundaries as well as the rights of the Palestinian people. We consider that such a settlement is best served by balanced and non-provocative resolutions of this Assembly which reflect and constructively promote this objective.

Mr. MONTAÑO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution, in keeping with the concern of my Government over the need to protect human rights throughout the world. Our affirmative vote was based on considerations of a humanitarian nature.

Mexico recognizes the right of all the peoples of the region to live in peace within secure and recognized frontiers, as established by Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). There can be no denying that the question of Palestine is the essential component of the Middle East conflict. A complete, just and lasting peace in the region can only be obtained through the complete exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the vote.

Pursuant to resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and 43/177 of 15 December 1988, I now call on the Head of the Observer Delegation of Palestine.

Mr. KADDOUMI (Palestine) (interpretation from Arabic): I myself come from Jaffa. I lived there before Sharon and Begin came to Palestine from Poland, and I cannot forget how it was. We heard that Arens, the Foreign Minister of Israel, had invited the Arab countries to hold negotiations. Well, the response of the Arab countries was: The Foreign Minister of Palestine is here. He is the man directly concerned. Why was he - whom the issue principally concerns - not contacted directly by Israel? In fact, Israel has accustomed us to lies and prevarication. It claims to be distressed about the trees which have been burned, but men are being murdered, children are being massacred, homes are being demolished, hundreds and thousands of people are being sent to prison. Does man exist for trees, or do trees exist for man?

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine)

I extend my congratulations to Mr. Garba, a loyal son of Africa, on his election to the presidency of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. We have long-standing fraternal and cultural bonds of friendship with Nigeria and its people. We are fully confident that, thanks to his wisdom and wide experience and his many other talents, the work of this session will be successful, and that the General Assembly will be able to attain the noble humanitarian objectives to which we all aspire.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the General Assembly on the resolution it has adopted on the intifadah, of our Palestinian people in our occupied territories. This will undoubtedly strengthen the efforts of the international community to attain peace, end the occupation and eliminate injustice and oppression, so that all the peoples of the world can live in freedom, security and peace.



(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine)

Israeli practices against the Palestinian people over the many years since Israel came into being reaffirm the intentions of Israel, which wants to continue this occupation and expansion and refuses to countenance international efforts to establish a just peace. The Israeli entity owes its birth and its continuing existence to the United Nations. It is astonishing that Israel today disavows this Organization and rejects its resolutions, although it was this very Organization that gave it birth and accepted it as a Member.

Last December the General Assembly unanimously endorsed the Palestinian peace initiative. That initiative was approved by the non-aligned countries and supported by the European Community, the socialist countries, the Scandinavian countries and Japan in published statements. Israel and the United States were the only two States not to respond to the international community's expression of its will. Those two countries had recourse to other methods with the purpose of diverting attention from the issue, disrupting the efforts of the international community to reach a balanced, just solution. Furthermore, the United States, in its dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), has avoided examination of the fundamental problems relating to the settlement of these matters, so that Shamir's proposal for so-called elections to be held under occupation remains the only option.

We have affirmed, as has the whole world, that a political settlement can be brought about only on the basis of United Nations resolutions and the principles of international legitimacy. Free and democratic elections under neutral international supervision could thus be held as a stage in a comprehensive integrated settlement that would include negotiations between the parties to the conflict, within the framework of an international peace conference in which the five permanent members of the Security Council would participate.

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine)

However, Israel and the United States persist in ignoring these facts. The United States and Israel try to circumvent the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. But there is no way to avoid negotiations with us.

Israel is pursuing racist and Fascist practices against our people in the Palestinian occupied territories. These practices are designed to demoralize the people, put an end to the glorious intifadah and make their heinous occupation of our land permanent.

Israel knows that it is quite incapable of achieving its aims, because the intifadah continues and has continued for more than 22 months. It has glorious achievements to its credit in spite of the toll of hundreds and hundreds of Palestinian martyrs, in spite of the incarceration of tens of thousands of Palestinians in Nazi-style prisons and mass concentration camps, in spite of the thousands of wounded Israelis - not 75 in two years, as has been said - and in spite of the imposition of lengthy blockades on towns, villages and camps.

The intifadah continues in spite of the Israeli policy aimed at pillaging and reducing Palestinians to starvation as in the case of the practices of the occupation forces - as was recognized by the United States' representative - in Beit Sahour, which put up a great resistance. Only a few days ago the occupation authorities imposed a blockade on that town and pillaged citizens' homes, shops and factories, the loss to the inhabitants being no less than \$3 million. These practices cannot divert our people from their struggle, because it is aimed at throwing out the Israelis, putting an end to the occupation and exercising their sovereignty over the territory of the independent Palestinian State, which is recognized by most of the States Members of this Organization.

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine)

We are in favour of a just peace and of all the sincere and well-intentioned efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Middle East, the core of which is the Palestinian cause. But we cannot tolerate prevarication, we cannot accept manoeuvres so that the occupying authorities can gain time to pacify or quell the intifadah.

Israel has but one choice: recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people; recognition of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the organization that has every right to participate on an equal footing with all other parties to the conflict in all the stages of any settlement.

We have shown flexibility, but whoever thinks that our flexibility is weakness commits an error. We want to reaffirm confidently that our people is determined to continue its struggle against the Israeli occupation until that occupation is eliminated. In this era of international détente we really want to respond sincerely to all attempts to find peaceful solutions to regional problems. We have affirmed that fact previously through our peaceful initiative adopted by the Palestine National Council in November 1988 in Algiers on the initiative that was announced by our brother Yasser Arafat in Geneva at the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

In spite of Israeli prevarication and the procrastination of the United States, we are still completely ready to strengthen international efforts to bring about peace based on justice.

In conclusion, I reiterate, on behalf of the PLO, our most sincere thanks to all Member countries which voted in favour of draft resolution A/44/L.2/Rev.1, just adopted by the Assembly. Our militant Palestinian people appreciates this manifestation of solidarity with it in its cause and its just struggle.

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine)

I take this opportunity also to convey my warmest thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his continuing efforts to bring about justice and peace in the Middle East and throughout the world.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker for this afternoon.

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 5 minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

The Observer for the League of Arab States has requested to make a statement in reply. I call on him in accordance with General Assembly resolution 477 (V), of 1 November 1950.

Mr. MAKSOUD (League of Arab States): The League of Arab States had no intention of making a statement in reply because we consider that the 140 votes in favour of the resolution in themselves constitute a definitive reply to the Israeli delegation. However, points have been introduced by the Israeli delegation which are not in any way germane to the content and substance of the resolution and the matters that motivated the sponsors in bringing it before the Assembly.

First let me affirm that the Arab States are in a state of belligerency and that the gimmicks which the Israelis used in contacting the Permanent Missions of the Arab States were employed on the assumption that the world community does not understand the techniques of such acts, which are intended only to make points, as if the Israelis have a right to call the shots on how to behave when its own behaviour is in question. Especially when we see its marauders and mercenaries throughout the world and so much in evidence in Colombian drug trafficking, it cannot give any lessons in civilized behaviour and attempted relationships.

I will put it very frankly: the Arab States are in a state of belligerency with Israel because Israel remains an occupying Power in Arab territories, including Palestinian territory. As long as that territory remains under occupation, and the Palestinian people are not able to exercise their right to self-determination, including their right to structure and institutionalize their independent State, the state of belligerency will continue.

The object of this is to help to bring about a comprehensive, just peace. If ceased this state of belligerency while the rights of the Palestinians remained denied and the Arab territories in the Golan Heights and south Lebanon remained occupied we would be accepting negotiations as a form of dictatorship, because negotiations for peace under the duress of occupation constitute a violation of the basic national and human rights of the Palestinians and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab States.

(Mr. Maksoud, League of Arab States)

Therefore, the Israeli call to end belligerency was a trap and the fact that we did not fall into it constitutes, in Israeli opinion, a measure of continued belligerency and antagonism to peace.

A few days ago we discussed in the Arab Group, as we do every year, challenging the credentials of the Israeli delegation. This was not done to obstruct peace but to put on the historical record the fact that the credentials of the Israeli delegation emanate from occupied Jerusalem, whose occupation has repeatedly been declared null and void in a series of United Nations resolutions. Furthermore, for as long as Israel does not comply with the sum total of United Nations resolutions it behoves us to put on the historical record our objection to the credentials of the State of Israel in the Assembly.

The Israeli representative started to say that although there is a global sense of co-operation we want to make the Arab-Israeli conflict an exception. I must answer very clearly that we have seen the growth of détente between the two super-Powers and we have seen how many regional conflicts have been resolved in accordance with United Nations resolutions and through United Nations mechanisms.

That is the reason for our insistence on using that atmosphere of global co-operation to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. That is what has led the Arab States and the great majority of States Members of the United Nations to call for the mechanism of an international conference to resolve all the issues arising from the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with United Nations resolutions. Our call for an international conference is our commitment to the global form of co-operation.

Israel and South Africa alone defy United Nations resolutions, complain and introduce all sorts of gimmicks, such as the so-called elections that Mr. Shamir has proposed and that are intended exclusively to make a municipal matter of the

(Mr. Maksoud, League of Arab States)

recognized national rights of the Palestinian people. But we did not fall into the trap of the so-called elections, whereby the land of Palestine is not recognized as a land and the Palestinians as a nation, as a potential institutionalized State. Israel, for the last 20 years and more, has not recognized that its presence in the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem and the Golan Heights constitutes occupation. The Israeli representative has said that under the Geneva Convention and international law the Israelis have the right to be exclusively responsible for the so-called administered territories. Why does he not call them occupied territories when the Geneva Convention has clearly indicated that law and order and other measures of security are to be administered in occupied territories?

As long as Israel does not recognize that it is an occupying Power and maintains its right to annexation to ensure that it continues its hegemony in the region it is in total defiance of international law, the international community and United Nations resolutions.

In an attempt to be poetic the Israeli representative said that while Israel builds we, or the Palestinians, devastate. Of course Israel builds; it builds illegal settlements in the occupied territories to mutilate the national demographic culture of the Palestinian people. It destroys the homes of Palestinians, as it did in Beta and Beit Sahour only a few days ago. It plans settlements in the occupied territories and ignites the fires of resistance to the occupation. Israel strives for peace, he says. It is a peace of the submission of the people of Palestine, not a peace of equality and human dignity for the Palestinian people. His so-called poetry should be applied in the jungles of the Zionist ideology that has maintained the exclusivist racist approach to the Palestinian people by not recognizing it.

(Mr. Maksoud, League of Arab States)

We hope that this statement in reply puts an end to the attempts at semantic acrobatics which Israel has been able to develop and maximize in order to divert the attention of the international community from its obvious violations of the human rights and territorial sovereignty of the Arab States.

The PRESIDENT: I remind delegations that consideration of item 39 will be resumed at an appropriate time during this session.

The meeting rose at 7.20 p.m.