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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 25 September 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)
later: Mr. Sahloul (Vice-President) (Sudan)

- Address by Mr. Jose Sarney, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil
- Opening of the general debate [9]

Statement made by:

Mr. Mock (Austria)

- Address by Mr. George Bush, President of the United States of America
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Skuhiszewski (Poland)
Mr. Larco Cox (Peru)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. JOSE SARNEY, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Mr. Jose Sarney, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, His Excellency Mr. Jose Sarney, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President SARNEY (spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate Your Excellency on your election. Your experience assures us that you will lead our work along a firm and constructive path.

I extend my congratulations to your illustrious predecessor.

May I once again express the appreciation of Brazil for the Secretary-General Mr. Perez de Cuellar.

At the outset of this statement I wish to pay a tribute to and express my respect for the people of Colombia and for President Virgilio Barco for giving the world an example of civic courage and patient heroism, governing as he is a region fraught with turmoil, where lawlessness and fanaticism combine to destroy the country in the hallucinating anti-life of drugs.

In 1985, soon after taking office, I stood at this podium. Brazil was then emerging from a long night. It was recovering from tragedy and facing great uncertainties. On the international scene discord prevailed. Four years later I see a different political landscape: conflicts have been reduced and dialogue resumed. There is hope. The war between Iran and Iraq has come to an end. Foreign troops have withdrawn from Afghanistan. Positive developments have taken

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place in Central America and southern Africa. Namibia is well on the way to independence. There are genuine prospects for internal reconciliation and understanding in Angola. Direct contact has been resumed between Argentina and the United Kingdom. The interests of peace, security and development have been reinforced in the South Atlantic. The two super-Powers have come to agreement on the actual reduction of nuclear arsenals.

But we are still far from a world free from anguish, tension and fear. There still remain problems clamouring for solution. In the Middle East the fury of fanaticism continues to claim the lives of innocent peoples and to tear asunder States such as Lebanon, which was once exemplary for its balance between different religious groups. In South Africa the apartheid régime still persists, an affront to the conscience of civilized peoples. In certain areas, to a greater or lesser degree, human rights are being disregarded. In East Timor appeals go unheeded.

But the spirit of peace has made progress as the supreme value of coexistence among nations. Other great values of modern man - democracy and human rights - have gained strength. As we look back over these last four years there is one thing of which we can be certain: democratization is moving ahead in the contemporary world. The establishment or re-establishment of free institutions is a universal aspiration.

The march is on to reinstate or establish democratic freedoms. From my own painful experience I bear witness to the struggle in the transition to democracy. It has the significance of life and a bitter fight, mitigated by the fascination of playing a part in great changes. My term of office will soon come to an end. What I can offer as an end result is to have achieved in five years 50 years of progress towards democracy. We are enjoying a period of unprecedented freedom. Our

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institutions have been restored and a State based on the rule of law has been established. We have built a truly democratic society, with a high degree of organization and participation, in an open system which enables the people to express their will.

We are the third largest democracy in the world, with 82 million voters. We held elections in 1985 and 1986. In 1987 we convened a National Constituent Assembly. We drafted a new Constitution. We held elections in 1988, and on 15 November this year we will elect my successor. All this is taking place in a peaceful and orderly climate, always harmonizing the exuberance of aspirations that have at last been freed. We have had to contend with 10,000 strikes; they were settled in a spirit of conciliation. We have been operating within an economic crisis.

(President Sarney)

It is not only through Brazil that the winds of freedom have swept. In South America, that vast new world, there will not be a single country which is not under democratic rule by the end of this year. Authoritarianism has been definitively discredited.

As I stated in 1985 from this very podium, development can be achieved only through democracy. Democracy and integration: these are objectives in our concept of modernity. I have consistently trod that path. It has been a ruling passion in my life. Democracy and integration are watchwords in Latin America.

The greatest wave of democratization the world has known since the end of the war has swept through Latin America. A burning question, however, haunts the conscience of our peoples: will the democratic values that we have built be capable of dealing with the problems of suffering, misery, poverty, inequality, exploitation and violence that are part of our everyday life? Are the democracies of the wealthy countries joining us in solidarity with our cause, or are they concerned only with their own well-being, relegating us to a marginal existence?

I am convinced that democracy is the road to follow. It was the banner that led our peoples to sweep away authoritarian régimes, strongmen, tyrants and dictators. But it did not do so merely to replace them with hunger, disease, backwardness, foreign debt, recession and unemployment.

Latin America shows signs of negative growth. It is not that we have grown less than other continents: it is simply that we have moved backwards.

Suffice it to say that in 1988 the region's gross domestic product was at the same level as in 1978. The net transfer of resources abroad in 1988 amounted to \$29 billion. Brazil alone, in the past five years, transferred approximately \$56 billion abroad. This is a Marshall Plan in reverse.

(President Sarney)

The 1980s have seen a sustained expansion of the industrialized economies. It was to be expected that this expansion would stimulate economic growth in the developing countries. Nevertheless, the rise in international interest rates for reasons beyond our control, the drastic reduction in the prices of raw materials, commercial protectionism, the volatility of exchange rates, the globalization of financial markets, and the net capital outflows have been responsible for the frustration of that expectation.

The United Nations planned in its development strategy for the 1980s that the gap between the rich and the poor would be reduced. But what happened? The number of least developed countries increased from 30 to 42.

Once again I ask: if the democracy we have established throughout our continent fails to meet the legitimate aspirations of our societies, how can we prevent its values from being challenged? It will serve no purpose to invoke the imperfect realization of such values.

The greatest enemies of democracy on our continent have been low standards of living and inflation, which corrode our economies. Lacking in resources and oppressed by a perverse international economic situation, the leaders of Latin America have no means available to meet the most legitimate and fundamental aspirations of their societies. Guerrilla movements are proliferating in several countries. Spontaneous manifestations of revolt are springing up. Violence is building up and pent-up forces of rebellion may at any time emerge and spread uncontrollably.

We are no longer dealing with ideological motivations. What is at stake in Latin America is no longer the dichotomy between the capitalist and the socialist systems. In Latin America, the persistence of poverty and the worn-out models of development make ideologies outdated. This climate does not seem to be inspired by any doctrines or fed by revolutionary designs. It is a rebellion growing out of

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the lack of prospects and the frustration of the deprived and disenchanted masses. Its origins are lost in remote historical times. The choice today is not between militarism and populism, but between recession and growth.

A great many things are being said about the interdependence of today's world. For Latin America, however, interdependence has shown only its negative side. Interdependence is invoked when we are confronted with the perpetuation of an international order that in reality relegates us to a dependency in which the poorest are paradoxically compelled to finance the richest and in which transfers of knowledge take place only on a horizontal plane. That is certainly not the kind of interdependence to which we aspire.

The European Common Market needed the shock of war in order to materialize. In our case, we are determined to take advantage of the shock of democracy in order to advance towards Bolivar's dream of long ago: the building of Latin American political brotherhood.

Latin America, the victim of violent colonial greed, has become the most genuine melting-pot of races and cultures, extending on an unprecedented scale the miscegenation of ethnic groups and the blending of religions and customs. For Brazil, the fate of our neighbours is our own fate.

For us in Latin America and the Caribbean, the option for social progress is an ethical and economic imperative. We cannot continue to waste enormous quantities of human talent because they are denied access to nourishment and education. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, there are in the world today 145 million abandoned minors between the ages of 12 and 16, and perhaps 100 million of that number live in the streets, tempted into larceny, prostitution, drugs and mugging.

(President Sarney)

Need we point out that these starving and unprotected adolescents in the third world are the present-day version of the poverty-stricken youth we encounter in the most biting pages of Dickens, Victor Hugo or Dostoevski?

There is an urgent need to create conditions through which the developing countries can return to their natural status as recipients of capital, reversing as quickly as possible the trend that has made them exporters of financial resources under the cruel burden of foreign debt.

The discipline and co-operation established by the international monetary and commercial institutions set up in the post-war period have given way to the dominance of the powerful countries' national autonomy in the formulation of their macroeconomic policies. Severe imbalances and asymmetries have developed. The impoverished situation of the developing economies have grown worse. Brazil, for example, is paying more to those institutions than it receives from them.

(President Sarney)

Another major problem is the trend towards an oligopoly of knowledge. Human knowledge is a cumulative process, anywhere, any time. Knowledge is universal. To restrain its potential for changing the well-being of the world, thereby restricting it to the domain of trade, of economic advantage, of cultural colonization, is to reduce mankind to material objectives that deny man himself. Science and technology, today or tomorrow, must be placed at the service of everyone, not only of a few nations.

Yet another disturbing development is the exploitation of the vulnerability imposed upon us by our foreign debt. The developing countries are being pressured to conform to a model of adjustment which is not often followed by the industrialized countries. Budgets are being balanced at enormous social cost and at the price of State bankruptcy; wages are being depressed below subsistence levels; scant attention is being paid to the legitimate aspirations of infant industries and to balance-of-payments requirements; the public sector has dwindled even in those areas in which the need for action is greatest, such as education and health. No attention is being paid to the fact that the primary need of the debtor countries is to grow and that only through accelerated growth can they introduce the necessary economic reforms, fulfill their commitments and contribute, as they have in the past, to global progress.

There is an urgent need to understand that growth is impossible when about one third of domestic savings is exported to foreign countries every year. It will be impossible to make any adjustment as long as we are required to solve an insoluble equation. It is time to recognize that up to now the remedy for the problem of foreign debt has contributed chiefly to the financial health of the creditors. For the debtors it has been a prescription for stagnation and impoverishment. I repeat: the time has come to adopt a strategy based on the assumption of renewed growth in the debtor countries. Such a strategy will require a sharp reduction in

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the stock of the debt and in the gross and net transfers of resources abroad, the only way to retain the savings necessary to finance development.

We view with deep concern the slow pace and the indifference with which this problem is being handled and the way its solution is being postponed.

There are two major questions to which we must also give our priority attention: environmental protection and the fight against drug traffic and drug abuse. These subjects will figure more and more prominently on our global agenda.

The first question relates to the survival of mankind, to the death of life on this planet. The second relates to a life of death, to anti-life, to the destruction of the human person, chiefly in its purest form: youth.

In the question of the environment we have another dimension of the interdependence of nations. As inhabitants of the same small planet, we are all condemned to solidarity.

The environmental question in its planetary aspects - climate change, depletion of the ozone layer - cannot and must not be discussed from a narrow perspective, as if it were a problem between North and South in which the less developed countries, by their irresponsible behaviour, were affecting the ecological balance of the world.

The truth is quite different. The industrialized countries bear the greatest responsibility for the pollution of the environment. The developing countries cannot accept as a basis for a new mode of international relations a concept of environmentally sustainable development which assigns to them only the task of ensuring the ecological balance of the planet. If this concept is to be valid, it will be essential to extend it to the industrialized countries so as to make it possible to determine whether the production and consumption patterns they follow

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can be sustained from the environmental point of view. It will be essential to establish close co-operation among all countries in efforts aimed at the research and development of new technologies that will be more efficient in the utilization of natural resources and will cause less pollution of the environment; moreover, firm commitments for the transfer of technology at cost will have to be established. The importance we attach to the problem of the environment and the Brazilian readiness to deal with it objectively and openly are clearly reflected in our readiness to host the United Nations conference on environment and development in 1992.

Brazil is more keenly aware than any other country of its exuberant, rich and extraordinary natural world, its forests, its fauna and flora. We will not give up our right to preserve this rich heritage. We preserved it in the past, when the large colonizing companies formed in the rich countries invaded the wild areas of Africa, Asia and America, brutally despoiling them. Brazil rejected them. It forbade them to enter. During the 1960s, the Hudson Institute conceived the idea of a vast lake which would flood Amazonia. Brazil rejected the idea. If the world today is able to turn its attention towards Amazonia, it is only because Brazilians were able to preserve it up to the present day and will continue to preserve it for the future. We are prepared, as we have always been, for co-operation. But we will never be prepared to accept restrictions upon our sovereignty.

With the programme known as "Our Nature", we have already been able in a single year to reduce the fire-clearing of forests by about 40 per cent, we have banned the export of timber, we have eliminated the incentives for projects which have proved to be predatory, and we have created the Institute of the Environment, in which dozens of organizations have joined in a broad project for ecological protection. Approximately 8 million hectares of Brazilian territory are now

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subject to a régime of permanent conservation. Approximately 10 per cent of the national territory is reserved for the total indigenous population of 200,000.

At the same time, Brazil is viewing with great concern the problem of drug trafficking and illicit drug production and consumption. We took an important step forward in 1988 with the adoption of the Vienna Convention. The constantly growing dimensions of the problem make it urgent for the United Nations General Assembly to turn its attention to the adoption of effective measures of co-operation.

Brazil will make every effort to contribute, along with the consumer, producer and transit countries, to the eradication once and for all of this serious threat to our societies. We are pursuing a vigorous preventive policy in this field. With our "Northern Basin" programme in the Amazon, we have been occupying and patrolling our extensive frontiers in order to help the local population and to prevent the entry of drug traffickers escaping from other countries. We are maintaining control over the trade in precursors. We are waging, unremittingly, a war on drugs.

The picture I have painted leads us to contemplate the qualitative transformation of our world.

(President Sarney)

The ideological confrontation which has governed international events throughout this century is showing clear signs of abating. Irreconcilable opposition is being replaced by understanding. Ideologies are losing their emotional content as the advances of science and technology disclose growing prospects for human well-being. It would be Utopian to imagine a world totally free from conflict, but I do not think it nonsensical to think of a rational world in which co-operation and understanding replace confrontation and disharmony, a world in which it will finally be possible to build peace on the solid basis of a universal community of interests, a world in which the democratization of international relations will lead to the overcoming of power politics.

The fundamental difference between the United Nations and its predecessor, the League of Nations, is precisely the awareness of the right to development. That is the ideal that constantly inspires the Economic and Social Council and the Organization as a whole. The League of Nations sought to establish international order, which was no small task, but the United Nations aspires to something more: it seeks also international justice.

Henry Adams declared that so-called practical politics consists in ignoring facts. I am afraid that comment is applicable to the mentality currently prevailing. We need the boldness to advance new concepts, the pioneering spirit to develop new approaches, the courage to carry out new institutional experiments. Let us hope that the decade of the 1990s and the United Nations will be able to think about the problems assailing mankind on the eve of the year 2000.

Our century has not grown old in vain. There are some who attempt to characterize it as an end of history. According to them, the world - and the rich world in particular - is destined to live through a long period of historical inertia made up of prosaic pleasures and mediocre satisfactions. The price of

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eliminating violence would apparently be cultural lethargy and the political laziness of an age without convulsions but also without ideals. That view amounts to a denial of human experience.

New countries such as ours have the feeling of standing on the threshold of an age of great changes. The historical process is now in full bloom. We envisage a mankind free from antagonisms, threats and fear, opening up frontiers for a new kind of man who can achieve the goal of creation, conceived in the image of God.

Two years ago Brazil had the honour to be elected by this Assembly, after almost two decades of absence, to membership of the Security Council. These have been for us two years of intensive participation in the Council's work. That experience prompts some reflections. If the United Nations, acting through the Security Council, is to be able to perform the prominent role expected of it in the field of international peace and security, some changes must be made in the structure and procedures of the Council itself. How can we solve important problems relating, for example, to the establishment and financing of peace-keeping operations without re-examining the very adequacy of the composition of the Council?

That is a problem that deserves to be examined not only from the traditional standpoint of establishing a proper relationship between the number of non-permanent members and the increase that has taken place in the number of States Members of the United Nations, but also - and especially - in the light of the changes in power relationships that have taken place in the world since the Organization was created. The time has come for a re-evaluation designed to make it possible to reflect the multipolarity of today's world in the Security Council so that it may better fulfil its responsibilities. We could consider an additional category of permanent members that would not have the veto privilege.

(President Sarney)

New circumstances on the international scene - in particular the easing of political and ideological confrontation - unquestionably open up possibilities for a more efficient utilization of the United Nations. But that must not mean a return, pure and simple, to an excessive predominance of the super-Powers over the Organization. The United Nations certainly cannot do without consensus between the super-Powers as the basis for effective action. In many cases, however, that consensus will not be enough. Contributions by other Member States may be necessary, and even indispensable, if the Organization is to be able to act effectively and responsibly as a truly international institution.

The time has come to make development and justice the foundations of world peace and stability. This Organization was created as the result of the struggle against totalitarianism, and represents the most advanced level of achievement in terms of democratic relations among States. We must therefore take advantage of the opportunities afforded by ideological demobilization in order to dedicate ourselves with renewed vigour to the great causes of international co-operation.

We must dare. "Dare, if you dare," said the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa.

I propose that the United Nations commit itself to a process of broad and total dialogue on the major problems of these closing years of the century in order that we may enter the twenty-first century with an awareness of the challenges that face us and of our potential. From disarmament to the environment, from the banning of chemical weapons to the transfer of technology, from democracy as an instrument of stability and development to civil rights and political freedoms, from economic reforms to international trade, from the regionalization of the world economy to the new faces of interdependence, from the conquest of outer space to the eradication of poverty, we are faced with subjects that invite discussion.

(President Sarney)

We must go to the source of our problems, understand them in all their complexity, face their consequences without vacillation, take the necessary decisions and eliminate the factors of destabilization and inequality.

Let us act before it is too late, before sacrifices and frustrations crystallize into rebellion, before the satisfied people of the world in their complacency become insensitive to the just demands of those who have little or nothing, before room for negotiation is reduced by mutual fear and intransigent confrontation.

No country or group of countries, no matter how powerful, can claim to be in a position to solve the crisis alone. With an open mind, without mental reservations, resentments or ulterior motives, let us set to work. Perhaps there will never again be a moment in history in which ideological demobilization will offer such favourable conditions. Let us be capable of transforming reality through the creative power of ideas. We call upon everyone, and especially the more powerful, to join in that task. It is not too late to salvage the dream of peace and justice dreamt by past generations.

At the opening of this forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, I wish to leave members with a message of optimism and determination, the same message which inspires Brazilians, who have taken a hand in their own destiny through the democracy they have succeeded in building.

It is Brazil's strength of belief that has enabled it to consolidate a new democracy in our America, triumphing over many challenges.

It is for the same reason that Brazilians express their views here, through the voice of their President, to dream the dream of peace and justice, exorcizing fear and raising altars to hope.

(President Sarney)

As a politician and an intellectual, I have never regarded poetry as an uninvited guest at the Assembly's plenary meetings. It is with poetry that I take my leave, with the verses of Luiz de Camoes, the universal poet of the Portuguese language:

"After the storm, tempestuous and drear,
And shadow of night and shrieking winds that blow
Comes on the morning hour, serene and clear,
With hope of harbouring safely from the woe."

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. José Sarney, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9

GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT: We shall now begin the general debate.

I should like to remind representatives that, in accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting, the list of speakers will be closed on Wednesday, 27 September 1989, at 6 p.m. May I request delegations to be good enough to provide estimated speaking times that are as accurate as possible so that we can plan our meetings in an orderly way.

Mr. MOCK (Austria): It is with great pleasure, Sir, that I congratulate you on your election to the presidency of this General Assembly. This is an expression of esteem for you as well as for the Federal Republic of Nigeria, a country which has assumed a significant role in regional and international affairs. May I wish you every success in carrying out your important task.

I also wish to convey our sincere appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina, for the skilful leadership of our deliberations during the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

Permit me to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General for his self-sacrificing and tireless service to the community of nations. The progress

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

achieved towards peaceful solutions to many of the regional issues testifies to the manifold efforts and accomplishments of the Secretary-General and his dedicated staff.

This is once more an age of profound changes. Never before in history has our civilization faced such challenges. During the past 100 years the society of nations has moved from international relations to international co-operation, to ever more international administration and management. A system originally based on the use of force has become increasingly characterized by the use of diplomacy, with an ever-more-important role for international law.

In fact, the changes in the role of law in international relations have been impressive. Originally limited to regulating how and when to use force for pursuing a country's legitimate claims, it has increasingly introduced other and more peaceful means of settling international conflicts. Three and a half centuries after Hugo Grotius, the famous Dutch philosopher, founded the modern concept of international law, the United Nations Charter now outlaws the use of military force in international relations.

However, the use of force has not remained the exclusive domain of States. Today, the international community must therefore strengthen its efforts to combat new forms of violence such as terrorism. The adoption of conventions against terrorism by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), as well as various General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, are steps in the right direction.

International law has reacted to the steadily advancing weapons technology, for instance by outlawing certain categories of weapons or by reducing the availability of particularly harmful arms. We fully support initiatives related to the limitation or prohibition of nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

The fundamentally positive changes in East-West relations, as reflected in the recent talks between President Bush, Secretary of State Baker and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, give rise to expectations that disarmament diplomacy has entered a new phase, a phase in which further concrete results are within reach.

Accepting the supremacy of law in international relations must lead also to the strengthening of international judiciary bodies. The attention of the members of the international community must therefore be focused on the possibilities for dispute settlement offered by the International Court of Justice and the need for States to accept its compulsory jurisdiction.

International peace and security, the most noble aim of the Charter, cannot be achieved if internal peace in Member States is in jeopardy. Wherever basic human rights and fundamental freedoms are denied to the individual human being, peace is in danger.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

All endeavours to strengthen the role of international law with regard to human rights rely on the recognition of the principle that human rights are obligations under international law, a principle that can now be considered as universally recognized. Today, therefore, no State can any longer claim that international concern regarding its human rights situation is an interference in internal affairs.

On the basis of that principle an important step has been taken within the European framework by including further humanitarian commitments in the Vienna Concluding Document of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). The adoption of the so-called mechanism of the human dimension of the CSCE might be regarded as the starting point for an all-European system for the promotion of human rights. However, the deteriorating situation of ethnic and religious minorities in certain European States since the adoption of the Vienna Concluding Document clearly shows the wide gap between commitments and realities in this field. As history has amply demonstrated, citizens will identify with their Governments only to the extent that basic rights and freedoms are guaranteed.

May I suggest that the competent United Nations bodies study the relevant CSCE procedures with a view to their possible application on a universal level. I also wish to appeal to the Government of Romania fully to apply the mechanism in the field of human rights provided by the Vienna Concluding Document. The Paris meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE in May of this year offered a welcome opportunity to review progress regarding the implementation by the participating States of their human rights commitments. On that occasion I made reference, inter alia, to the question of the Islamic community in Bulgaria. Let me express the hope that a negotiated solution of that problem can be found in the near future.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

We wholeheartedly welcome the emphasis placed on human rights and fundamental freedoms by the members of the Non-Aligned Movement at their recent summit conference in Belgrade.

A new and significant field of international law relates to regional and global environmental resource systems, such as international river basins, the oceans, outer space, the polar regions and the atmosphere. Regulating the use and preservation of the global commons has widened the scope of international law in an unprecedented way. Our generation becomes accountable to future generations for this common heritage.

The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development provides us with an excellent conceptual framework in this regard both for national policies and for future work on the international level. We are convinced that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in 1992 must be based on the concept of sustainable development that has been elaborated in the report. Austria is faced with the problems of a precarious Alpine environment. Austrians have therefore developed a relatively high degree of environmental awareness reflected in the high standard of Austria's environmental legislation.

Hence it is only natural that Austria actively participates in international co-operation on environment, hosting international conferences on such important issues as climatic changes, the use of tropical forests and the protection of the ozone layer. The latter Conference has led to the respective Vienna Convention. We are prepared to play a similarly active role in the elaboration of an international convention on climatic change.

We also fully share the concerns of many with regard to the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal. The Basel Convention adopted earlier this year will be an important instrument for protecting human health and environment.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

There can be little doubt that the current international institutional framework for environmental decision-making and enforcement mechanisms requires decisive strengthening. Austria therefore strongly supports all efforts aimed at reinforcing such existing United Nations structures as the United Nations Environment Programme. We believe that the Hague Declaration will give a strong impetus to international endeavours in this direction.

New legal instruments with regional and global scope may be required. We should review the possibility of drawing up an international environment charter that would set clear guidelines for international action.

As the economic use of transnational environmental systems becomes more competitive, appropriate procedures for dispute settlement will become indispensable. Just as we have become accustomed to the Blue Helmets, which have become so successful in peace-keeping operations in areas of crisis, we may express the firm hope that, in the foreseeable future, United Nations "Green Helmets" may engage in the protection of the environment.

Solving regional conflicts is a priority task for the community of nations. We are very pleased to see how the United Nations has effectively contributed to peace-making and peace-keeping over the years. In this context we pay special tribute to the Secretary-General and to the members of the Security Council, where timely decisions on appropriate measures have been taken. They have greatly facilitated the progress made during the past year.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

At the same time, international peace-building efforts through programmes of reconstruction, humanitarian aid and development co-operation are rightly considered a complementary element to the settlement of conflicts, such as "Operation Salaam" in Afghanistan and "Operation Life-Line" in Sudan.

Austria has a long tradition of actively supporting the United Nations in its peace-keeping efforts. More than 28,000 Austrians, roughly every eighth Austrian soldier, have served with United Nations peace-keeping forces during the past 30 years. Austria currently participates in seven of the ten United Nations peace-keeping operations.

On the basis of our long-term experience in peace-keeping and peace-making efforts we know that every issue has to be settled on the specific merits and conditions of each region. Nevertheless, we believe that the progress achieved in confidence- and security-building measures within the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) may also be of interest to other regions. Austria is prepared to organize, in co-operation with the United Nations, an international seminar on this subject for which it will also draw on the experience of experts from participating States of the CSCE process. Such a seminar could be held in Austria in 1991.

The crisis in Lebanon, with its tragic consequences of continuing bloodshed and victimization of innocent individuals and the civilian population, is a matter of utmost concern to us. We firmly believe that a lasting solution to this problem can only be found on the basis of respect for the national unity, territorial integrity and full independence of Lebanon. We support the peace plan of the Tripartite High Arab Committee and welcome the results so far achieved. Let me express the hope that this agreement will pave the way at last for a final peaceful settlement.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

With regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, we continue to support the idea of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all the parties to the conflict, including the Palestinian people represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and the permanent members of the Security Council. That conference would be the most appropriate instrument for a comprehensive settlement of the conflict. We regret any escalation of violence. The excessive use of force and the continued violations of human rights in the occupied territories have become increasingly intolerable for the international community, which strives more and more for universal respect for human rights.

We welcome the recent peace proposal put forward by President Mubarak of Egypt and firmly hope his initiative will be successful.

The process towards Namibia's independence, for which the United Nations has accepted special responsibility, together with the United Nations peace-keeping efforts in areas which have been prey to conflict and bloodshed not long ago, exemplify the major role of the United Nations in the settlement of highly sensitive international issues. This process could be a source of inspiration in the search for a solution to the Middle East problem.

Independence for Namibia is on its way. Many obstacles which have arisen in implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978) since last December have been overcome. Special care and vigilance, however, will be necessary to assure that the elections in November can take place in an atmosphere and under conditions which will allow for a plebiscite free from intimidation. Austria has provided a contingent of police officers to participate in the work of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG). UNTAG deserves our full appreciation for its

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

accomplishments under most difficult conditions. We look forward to welcoming Namibia as an independent nation at next year's session of the General Assembly.

The recent elections in South Africa without the participation of the black majority have shown once more that the inhumane system of apartheid must be abolished. We hope that the new South African President will undertake the necessary steps without further delay. It is to be emphasized, however, that all steps taken by South Africa must lead to the complete eradication of apartheid, avoiding bloodshed and confrontation.

Austria's position with regard to Cambodia has remained unchanged over the years. We have always condemned the abhorrent violation of the most fundamental human rights, but we have also repeatedly stressed that military interventions cannot resolve conflicts. The withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops, which is presently under way, will significantly enhance the chances for a settlement. We regret that the endeavours towards reaching a negotiated solution, including the most recent Paris Conference, so far remain without concrete results.

Having recently been entrusted with the presidency of the International Conference on Kampuchea, I shall spare no effort to contribute to the peace process in the region. I look forward to the moment when all Cambodians, in full sovereignty and independence, can open a new chapter in their nation's history.

As in Cambodia, in Afghanistan the ongoing hostilities have brought immense suffering upon the population. We strongly support the endeavours of the Secretary-General to initiate a peaceful settlement and the necessary international co-operation for the recovery of that war-torn country.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

In line with our traditional commitment to the principle of universality, Austria has always welcomed the admission of sovereign countries to the world Organization. It is only logical, therefore, that we also support the aspirations of the Republic of Korea to become a member of the United Nations.

We are impressed by the efforts of the Central American nations to cope with their regional difficulties. In particular, we welcome the results of the Tela summit meeting, which constitute a concrete step forward. The link-up between the effective employment of regional responsibilities and of the authority of the United Nations may become an exemplary case of regional peace-making.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

The continued imbalances in the world economy remain a source of world-wide preoccupation. Austria is committed to far-reaching trade liberalization because it believes that this will contribute to stable growth and prosperity among nations. We consider that the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round could mark the beginning of a new era of global co-operation with increased awareness of mutual interest and shared responsibilities among all nations.

The problems connected with the debt burden figure prominently on the international agenda. Their repercussions on the political and social stability of many debtor countries have now become even more visible. Extreme poverty and hunger remain rampant in many countries and regions. In the long term they have to be considered as a serious threat to peace and security.

The international development strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade must respond to these issues, which are at the centre of our development efforts.

While the interrelationship between economic and social development has to be adequately taken into account, a more thorough look at the world social condition, particularly in developing countries, has become necessary.

Drug abuse is not only a social problem. It also affects the political and economic stability of nations. This is corroborated by the fact that the annual turn-over of illicit drug trafficking has reached the staggering amount of \$US 220 billion. Recent tragic events in several countries constitute a proof of the global character of this problem. We welcome the determination of the President of the United States to fight this cancer of mankind and fully support his recent proposals. As a visible symbol of our commitment to this noble cause I shall today sign the 1988 Vienna Convention on Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

Any society will command as much cohesion and stability as its constituent parts. Social changes and transformations have affected, and in some cases even threatened, the basic unit of society: the family.

While family structures greatly vary in different national cultures, there is a general need to strengthen national programmes and international co-operation regarding protection of and support for the family. Austria therefore welcomes the decision of the forty-third session of the General Assembly, based on a proposal by Poland and other countries, to observe an International Year of the Family. Such a year could help to highlight the central function of the family in society. Peace and stability ultimately begin in the home.

While in some societies families still provide social and economic security to its members, in others families require public financial support in order successfully to perform their functions, which ultimately benefit everyone.

The equality of men and women generally enshrined in international as well as in national legal instruments still needs better translation into the reality of society. Family structures sometimes mask violence against women and children, a fact which requires decisive measures at all levels.

The continuous dialogue between the United States and the USSR has facilitated further progress in the area of disarmament and arms control. It presents an unprecedented chance for co-operation in the economic, scientific, cultural and humanitarian fields. A sentiment of mutual interdependence and common responsibility is growing.

We welcome the reform process generated by perestroika, which provides a historic opportunity for a new quality in East-West relations. The strengthening of human rights, the democratization of public life and the introduction of a socially-oriented market economy constitute essential elements of this reform process. The era of confrontation should be replaced by an era of co-operation.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

The Vienna Concluding Document of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has strongly promoted co-operation among European nations.

Austria's relations with the other countries of Western Europe are characterized by common values and close economic ties. Austria is a member of the Council of Europe. As a member of the European Free Trade Association we intensified our relationship with the European Common Market by concluding a free trade agreement in 1972. In July of this year Austria applied for membership in the European Community. We are firmly convinced that participation in the process of European integration is compatible with our status of permanent neutrality.

In conclusion, permit me briefly to touch upon the implementation of the Austro-Italian Accord on South Tyrol of 6 September 1946, which has been the subject of General Assembly resolutions 1497 (XV) and 1661 (XVI). On the basis of these resolutions agreement was reached in 1969 between Austria and Italy concerning the regulation of regional autonomy by means of 137 concrete measures. Full implementation of these measures is the pre-condition for a complete settlement of this dispute.

Last year I was able to report to the Assembly for the first time, after years of stagnation, that significant and substantive progress had been made and that relations between Austria and Italy had reached excellent levels. This positive trend continued during the past 12 months. We are particularly satisfied with the formal implementation of measures aiming at the equality of the Italian and German languages. This is of fundamental importance for the protection of the German-speaking population.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

The major part of the measures still to be implemented concerns issues where the Government of Italy has already been active on the basis of the 1969 agreement. However, in view of certain developments in the legal field in Italy, additional complementary measures are now necessary in order to assure the protection of the German-speaking population of South Tyrol in a way agreed upon with Austria.

Austria is convinced that the present Italian Government is fully aware of the problems and dangers inherent in a further delay in the full implementation of the 1969 agreement. We are confident that on the basis of the implementation of all remaining measures we shall soon be able to make a declaration to the United Nations stating that we consider the dispute with Italy settled.

The recent developments in the relationship between the two super-Powers, the success achieved in solving several regional conflicts, the progress in the implementation of human rights and the general trend towards more openness in international relations, whatever the shortcomings of the existing world order may be, give us reason to be optimistic and encourage us to make further active contributions towards achieving a better world.

The meeting was suspended at 11.25 a.m. and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. GEORGE BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. George Bush, President of the United States of America, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the United States of America, His Excellency Mr. George Bush, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President BUSH: I am honoured to address the General Assembly today at the beginning of its forty-fourth session. I should like to congratulate Joseph Garba of Nigeria, a distinguished diplomat, on his election as President of this session of the General Assembly, and I wish him success in his presidency.

I feel a great personal pleasure on this occasion, for this is a homecoming for both Barbara and me. The memories of my time here in 1971 and 1972 are still with me today - the human moments, the humorous moments that are part of even the highest undertaking.

With the Assembly's permission, I should like to share one story from one of the many meetings of the Security Council. I was the Permanent Representative of the United States, and I was 45 minutes late for the meeting. All 45 minutes were filled by the first speaker to take the floor, and when I walked in and took my seat the speaker paused, with great courtesy, and said: "I welcome the Permanent Representative of the United States. And now, for his benefit, I will start my speech all over again, from the beginning."

(President Bush)

That is a true story. At that moment, differences of alliance and ideology didn't matter. The universal groan that went up around that table from every representative present, and the laughter that followed united us all.

Today, I would like to begin by recognizing - again, a personal privilege - the current Permanent Representatives with whom I served: Ambassador Dugersuren, Ambassador Martinez Ordoñez, Ambassador Rabetafika, and Permanent Observer John Dubé. It is wonderful to look around and see so many familiar faces - foreign ministers, members of the Secretariat, and delegates. Of course, Mr. Secretary-General, you were the Permanent Representative of your country when we served together. Under-Secretary-General Farah, you were a Permanent Representative back then too. Ambassador Aguilar was here then and is now back. It is an honour to be back with you in this historic Hall, and I apologize if I have forgotten any of you old enough to have served in 1971 and 1972.

The United Nations was established forty-four years ago upon the ashes of war and amidst great hopes. The United Nations can do great things. No, the United Nations is not perfect, it is not a panacea for the world's problems. But it is a vital forum where the nations of the world seek to replace conflict with consensus, and it must remain a forum for peace.

The United Nations is moving closer to that ideal, and it has the support of the United States of America. In recent years - certainly, since my time here - the war of words that is often echoed in this Hall has been giving way to a new mood. We have seen a welcome shift from polemics to peace-keeping. United Nations peace-keeping forces are on duty right now, and over the years more than 700 peace-keepers have given their lives in service to the United Nations.

Today, I should like to remember one of those soldiers of peace, an American on a mission of peace under the United Nations flag, on a mission for all the world, a man of unquestioned bravery and unswerving dedication to the United

(President Bush)

Nations ideal - Lieutenant-Colonel William Richard Higgins. I call on the General Assembly to condemn the murder of this soldier of peace and to call on those responsible to have the decency to return his remains to his family. Let us all - right now, right here - re-dedicate ourselves and our nations to the cause that Colonel Higgins served so selflessly.

(President Bush)

The founders of this historic institution believed that it was here that the nations of the world might come to agree that law, not force, shall govern. And the United Nations can play a fundamental role in the central issue of our time, for today, there is an idea at work around the globe, an idea of undeniable force - and that idea is freedom. Freedom's advance is evident everywhere: Central Europe and Hungary, where State and society are now in the midst of a movement towards political pluralism and a free-market economy, where the barrier that once enforced an unnatural division between Hungary and its neighbors to the west has been torn down and replaced by a new hope for the future, a new hope in freedom. We see freedom at work in Poland, where, in deference to the will of the people, the Communist Party has relinquished its monopoly on power, and indeed in the Soviet Union, where the world hears the voices of people no longer afraid to speak out or to assert the right to rule themselves.

But freedom's march is not confined to a single continent or to the developed world alone. We see the rise of freedom in Latin America where, one by one, dictatorships are giving way to democracy. We see it on the continent of Africa, where more and more nations see in the system of free enterprise salvation for economies crippled by excessive State control. East and West, North and South, on every continent, we can see the outlines of a new world of freedom.

Of course, freedom's work remains unfinished. The trend we see is not yet universal. Some régimes still stand against the tide. Some rulers still deny the right of the people to govern themselves. But now the power of prejudice and despotism is challenged. Never before have these régimes stood so isolated and alone, so out of step with the steady advance of freedom. Today we are witnessing an ideological collapse, the demise of the totalitarian idea of the omniscient,

(President Bush)

all-powerful State. There are many reasons for this collapse, but in the end one fact alone explains what we see today: advocates of the totalitarian idea saw its triumph written in the laws of history; they failed to see the love of freedom that was written in the human heart.

Two hundred years ago today, the United States - our Congress - proposed the Bill of Rights: fundamental freedoms belonging to every individual. Rights no Government can deny. Those same rights have been recognized in this congress of nations in the words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. From where we stand, on the threshold of this new world of freedom, the trend is clear enough. If, for those who write the history of our times, the twentieth century is remembered as the century of the state, the twenty-first century must be an era of emancipation, the age of the individual. Make no mistake, nothing can stand in the way of freedom's march. There will come a day when freedom is seen the world over to be the universal birthright of every man and woman, of every race and walk of life. Even under the worst circumstances, at the darkest of times, freedom has always remained alive - a distant dream, perhaps, but always alive.

Today, that dream is no longer distant. For the first time, for millions around the world, a new world of freedom is within reach. Today is freedom's moment. You see, the possibility now exists for the creation of a true community of nations, built on shared interests and ideals. A true community, a world where free Governments and free markets meet the rising desire of the people to control their own destiny, to live in dignity, and to exercise freely their fundamental human rights. It is time that we worked together to deliver that destiny into the hands of men and women everywhere. Our challenge is to strengthen the foundations of freedom, encourage its advance and face our most urgent challenges, the global

(President Bush)

challenges of the twenty-first century: economic, health, environmental well-being, the great questions of war and peace.

First, global economic growth. During this decade, a number of developing nations have moved into the ranks of the world's most advanced economies, all of them - each and every one - powered by the engine of free enterprise. In the decade ahead, others can join their ranks, but for many nations, barriers stand in the way. In the case of some countries, these are obstacles of their own making: unneeded restrictions, regulations that act as dead weights on their own economies and obstacles to foreign trade. But other barriers to growth exist, and those, too, require effective action.

Too many developing countries struggle today under a burden of debt that makes growth all but impossible. The nations of the world deserve better opportunity to achieve a measure of control over their own economic fate and build better lives for their own people. The approach the United States has put forward - the Brady plan - will help these nations reduce that debt and, at the same time, encourage the free market reforms that will fuel economic growth.

In just two days, I will be speaking to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and I will discuss there, in more detail, the steps that our nations can take in dealing with the debt problem. But I can say now the new world of freedom is not a world where a few nations live in comfort while others live in want. The power of commerce is a force for progress. Open markets are the key to continued growth in the developing world. Today, the United States buys over one-half of the global manufactured exports that all developing nations combined sell to the industrialized world. It is time for the other advanced economies to follow suit, to create expanded opportunities for trade. I believe we will learn, in the century ahead, that many nations of the world have barely begun to tap their

(President Bush)

true potential for development. The free market and its fruits are not the special preserve of a few; they are a harvest that everyone can share.

Beyond the challenge of global growth lies another issue of global magnitude: the environment. No line drawn on a map can stop the advance of pollution. Threats to our environment have become international problems. We must develop an international approach to urgent environmental issues, one that seeks common solutions to common problems. The United Nations is already at work on the question of global warming and the effort to prevent oil spills and other disasters from fouling our seas and the air we breathe. And I will tell you now the United States will do its part. We have committed ourselves to the world-wide phase-out of chlorofluorocarbons by the year 2000. We have proposed amending our own Clean Air Act to ensure clean air for our citizens within a single generation. We have banned the import of ivory to protect the elephant and rhinoceros from the human predators who exterminate them for profit. And we have begun to explore ways to work with other nations, with the major industrialized democracies, and in Poland and in Hungary, to make common cause for the sake of our environment.

(President Bush)

The environment belongs to all of us. In this new world of freedom, the world's citizens must enjoy this common trust for generations to come. Global economic growth and the stewardship of our planet - both are critical issues.

But as always, questions of war and peace must be paramount to the United Nations. We must move forward to limit and eliminate weapons of mass destruction. Five years ago, at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, I presented a United States draft treaty outlawing chemical weapons. Since then, progress has been made, but time is running out. The threat is growing. More than 20 nations now possess chemical weapons or the capability to produce them. And these horrible weapons are now finding their way into regional conflicts. That is simply unacceptable. For the sake of mankind, we must halt and reverse this threat.

Today I want to announce steps that the United States is ready to take, steps to rid the world of these truly terrible weapons, steps towards a treaty that will ban - eliminate - all chemical weapons from the Earth 10 years from the day it is signed. This initiative contains three major elements. First, in the first eight years of a chemical weapons treaty the United States is ready to destroy nearly all - 98 per cent - of our chemical weapons stockpile, provided the Soviet Union joins the ban; and I think it will. Secondly, we are ready to destroy all of our chemical weapons - 100 per cent, every one - within 10 years, once all nations capable of building chemical weapons sign that total-ban treaty. And thirdly, the United States is ready to begin now. We will eliminate more than 80 per cent of our stockpile even as we work to complete a treaty, if the Soviet Union joins us in cutting chemical weapons to an equal level and if we agree on the conditions, including inspections, under which stockpiles are destroyed.

(President Bush)

We know that monitoring a total ban on chemical weapons will be a challenge. But the knowledge we have gained from our recent arms control experience and our accelerating research in this area makes me believe that we can achieve the level of verification that gives us confidence to go forward with the ban. The world has lived too long in the shadow of chemical warfare; so let us act together, beginning today, to rid the Earth of this scourge.

We are serious about achieving conventional arms reductions as well. And that is why we put forward new proposals just last Thursday at the negotiations in Vienna on conventional forces in Europe, proposals that demonstrate our commitment to act rapidly to ease military tensions in Europe and move the nations of that continent one step closer to their common destiny: a Europe whole and free.

The United States is convinced that open and innovative measures can move disarmament forward and also ease international tensions. That is the idea behind the "open skies" proposal, about which the Soviets have now expressed a positive attitude. It is the idea behind the "open lands" proposal, permitting for the first time ever free travel for all Soviet and United States diplomats throughout each other's countries. Openness is the enemy of mistrust, and every step towards a more open world is a step towards the new world we seek.

Let me make this comment on our meetings with the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Shevardnadze, over the past few days: I am very pleased by the progress made. The Soviet Union removed a number of obstacles to progress on conventional and strategic arms reductions. We reached agreements in principle on issues from verification to nuclear testing. And, of course, we agreed to a summit in the spring or early summer of 1990. I look forward to meeting Mr. Gorbachev there.

(President Bush)

Each of those achievements is important in its own right, but they are more important still as signs of a new attitude that prevails between the United States and the USSR. Serious differences remain; we know that. But the willingness to deal constructively and candidly with those differences is news that we and indeed the world must welcome. We have not entered into an era of perpetual peace. The threats to peace that nations face may today be changing, but they have not vanished. In fact, in a number of regions around the world, a dangerous combination is now emerging: régimes armed with old and unappeasable animosities and modern weapons of mass destruction. That development will raise the stakes whenever war breaks out. Regional conflict may well threaten world peace as never before.

The challenge of preserving peace is a personal one for all individuals right here in this Hall. Mr. Secretary-General, I say with great respect that you have made it your own. The United Nations can be a mediator, a forum where parties in conflict come in search of peaceful solutions. For the sake of peace, the United Nations must redouble its support for the peace efforts now under way in regions of conflict all over the world. I assure the Assembly that the United States is determined to take an active role in settling regional conflicts. Sometimes our role in regional disputes is and will be highly public, and sometimes, like many others do, we work quietly behind the scenes. But always, we are working for positive change and lasting peace.

Our world faces other, less conventional threats no less dangerous to international peace and stability. Illegal drugs are a menace to social order and a source of human misery wherever they gain a foothold. The nations which suffer this scourge must join forces in the fight, and we are. Let me salute the commitment and extraordinary courage of one country in particular: Colombia, where

(President Bush)

we are working with the people and their President, Virgilio Barco, to put the drug cartels out of business and bring the drug lords to justice.

Finally, we must join forces to combat the threat of terrorism. Every nation and the United Nations must send the outlaws of the world a clear message: hostage-taking and the terror of random violence are methods that cannot win the world's approval. Terrorism of any kind is repugnant to all values that a civilized world holds in common. And make no mistake: Terrorism is a means that no end, no matter how just, can sanctify.

Whatever the challenge, freedom greatly raises the chances of our success. Freedom's moment is a time for hope for all of the world, because freedom, once set in motion, takes on a momentum of its own. As I said the day I assumed the presidency of our country, we do not have to talk late into the night about which form of government is better. We know that free government, democracy, is best. And I believe that is the hard-won truth of our time, the unassailable fact that still stands at the end of a century of great struggle and human suffering.

(President Bush)

And this is true not because all our differences must give way to democracy, but because democracy makes room for all our differences. In democracy, diversity finds its common home.

At the very heart of the democratic ideal is respect for freedom of belief, freedom of thought and action, in all its diversity, for human rights. The world has experienced enough of the ideologies that have promised to remake man in some new and better image. We have seen the colossal tragedies and dashed hopes. We know now that freedom and democracy hold the answers: what men and nations want is the freedom to live by their own lights and a chance to prosper, in peace.

When I began today I spoke to you about peace-keeping. I want to speak to you now about peace-making. We must bring peace to the people who have never known its blessings. There is a painting that hangs on the wall of my office in the White House which pictures President Abraham Lincoln and his generals meeting near the end of a war that remains the bloodiest in the history of my country. Outside at that moment a battle rages, in this picture, and yet what we see in the distance is a rainbow, a symbol of hope, of the passing of the storm. That painting is called "The Peace-makers". For me, it is a constant reminder that our struggle, the struggle for peace, is a struggle blessed by hope.

I do remember sitting in this Hall; I remember the mutual respect among all of us proudly serving as representatives; yes, I remember the almost endless speeches - and I do not want this to be one of them - the Security Council sessions, the receptions, those long receiving lines, the formal meetings of the General Assembly, and the informal discussions in the delegates' lounge. And I remember something more, something beyond the frantic pace and sometimes frustrating experiences of daily life here: The heartbeat of the United Nations, the quiet conviction that we could make the world more peaceful, more free. What we sought then, all of us, now lies within our reach. I ask each of you here in this Hall:

(President Bush)

Can we not bring a unity of purpose to the United Nations? Can we not make this new world of freedom the common destiny we seek? I believe we can. I know we must. My solemn wish today is that here, among the United Nations, that spirit will take hold, and that all men and all nations will make freedom's moment their own.

Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the work of the United Nations.

Mr. George Bush, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

* Mr. Sahloul (Sudan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. SKUBISZEWSKI (Poland): I should like to convey to Mr. Joseph Garba our sincere congratulations on his election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at the forty-fourth session. I wish him every success in his important mission.

The Polish delegation also addresses its best wishes to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. Recently it has been our honour to have the Secretary-General as our guest in Poland. We wish to express to him our great appreciation and full support for his indefatigable endeavours to ease international tension and solve regional conflicts.

The Assembly meets on the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War. That war began in and against Poland as a result of aggression committed by the Nazi Government of Germany and executed in collusion with the Stalinist Government of the Soviet Union. At the same time those two Governments concluded a series of agreements that provided for the partition of Poland and its liquidation as a State. The agreements also concerned the fate of other countries in the region. All those arrangements went against international morality and conflicted with various treaties and fundamental and peremptory rules of general international law. The agreements were thus null and void from their very inception. Yet they were put into effect by their signatories, and as a result, they have brought about extreme suffering afflicting millions in that part of Europe.

I am aware of the fact that the Assembly is not a place for historical reminiscences. However, I have mentioned the war for three reasons. First, we must have a full and definite clarification of what happened immediately before and during the war. That is necessary in order to eliminate the influence some past events still exercise on an essential part of our contemporary international

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

relations - and may yet have an impact in the future - and on the reaction of public opinion in the respective countries. Secondly, we must make the United Nations more effective in its task of preventing armed conflicts. In that field the record of the Organization is less than perfect. Thirdly, 50 years ago frontiers and territorial acquisitions were at stake. Today, much emphasis must be put on the duty of all State not to question the frontiers and on the obligation to treat frontiers as inviolable. Some recent debates on territorial issues did more harm than good.

The past year has seen many important and favourable changes on the international scene. The development of East-West relations is to a large extent auspicious - including relations between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Signs of rapprochement can be observed in new contacts and new areas of co-operation between the States of Eastern and Western Europe. Poland takes and will take an active part in that trend.

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

The extinction or mitigation of some regional conflicts also contributes to the overall improvement of the international situation. This is a development in which the United Nations has recently had a major role. Poland endorses the efforts of the Security Council and the Secretary-General for the peaceful settlement of regional conflicts. Consequently, Poland has dispatched military contingents and observer groups for duty in a number of the United Nations peace-keeping and observer missions.

But let us take a broader view. At this particular juncture the Organization has a chance to map out the ways of resolving the key problems which beset mankind. These problems include relieving the burden of the arms race, enhancing living standards, preventing further degradation of the environment, and problems of international law, in particular the protection of human rights.

Let me begin with the problem of armaments. In our view, the top priorities are limitation of armaments, progressive elimination of nuclear weapons, and elaboration of an effective system of supervision. The world needs new and far-reaching disarmament agreements in which all States would have their fair share. Such agreements should concern all types of armaments in all areas of the world.

We believe that all States, whatever their size and strength, bear responsibility for disarmament. Without detracting from the obvious role of the major Powers, each and every State should seek to initiate and promote disarmament measures, including steps of a unilateral character.

Poland has been present in that field for a long time. More than 30 years ago the Polish Government submitted proposals for a nuclear-free zone in Europe. Though they did not materialize, they did introduce the very idea into diplomatic thinking and practice.

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

Poland has been taking an active part in the work of the Geneva Disarmament Conference. We assume that the Conference will shortly produce a balanced draft treaty eliminating, once and forever, chemical weapons. The determination of many States to reach agreement on that important matter has been confirmed, among others by the Paris Conference of States Parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

Naturally, Poland focuses its attention on Europe, but does that not only because it is a European country. In Europe, in spite of détente, we still have the largest concentration and, therefore, the heaviest concentration and confrontation of the armed forces of the two Power blocs. Hence, the Polish idea of making their military doctrines more defensive and less confrontational. Hence, also, the emphasis on political means of ensuring security, in contradistinction to measures of a strictly military nature. During the recent meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty reaffirmed their readiness to engage, together with other interested States, in a common search for agreements with a view to eliminating all weapons of mass destruction, radically reducing conventional armed forces, preventing the arms races from spreading to outer space, gradually limiting industrial production for military purposes and significantly cutting back military expenditures.

On its part, Poland has been making a specific contribution to the limitation of armaments in Europe. The Polish Government decided to reduce its armed forces by the end of 1990 by some 40,000 soldiers, 850 main battle tanks, 900 artillery guns and mortars, 700 armoured vehicles and 80 combat aircraft. The Government also decided to eliminate a number of other items of military technical equipment.

At the same time, the Polish Government is also working to develop a new approach to regional disarmament in Europe. Poland has submitted a plan to decrease armaments and increase confidence in Central Europe. That is the Jaruzelski Plan.

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

Motivated by the same aspiration, we take an active part in the Vienna talks of the 23 and 35 States. It is with satisfaction that we take note of the proposals made in regard to conventional forces in Europe at the summit session of the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). We are determined to do our utmost to make it possible for the first accord to be reached in 1990.

I now turn to the economic problems, particularly the problem of living standards. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening. Many countries have entered into economic regression. Incidentally, this is also the case of Poland. In the long run this situation will hurt everybody because it will lead to an eruption of social discontent on an unprecedented scale. The effects of such an upheaval may well cripple the interdependent world economy, for nowadays development has become indivisible. What we need is a new consensus on growth and development capable of bringing about an economic order that would be more efficient and of greater use to all groups of States, particularly those that remain under-privileged. We should reach such a consensus next year, during the special session of the General Assembly. We should then start work on the elaboration and adoption of the International Development Strategy for the 1990s.

It is becoming imperative to co-ordinate national economic policies in order to reduce instability and unpredictability and to enhance international economic security.

We still face the global debt problem. Its magnitude, its persistence and the massive damage it inflicts on the development process in debtor countries and on the world economy are difficult to grasp. Some would assume that after a period of adjustment the debtor countries would return to financial viability and would grow and develop again. That assumption has not materialized. My country is particularly disturbed by the lack of significant progress in achieving a solution

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

to the debt problem of the middle-income countries. In view of the Polish experience, I must tell members frankly that without debt reduction, national economic policies and austerity measures, no matter how vigorous and stringent, will remain but paper measures.

There should be a resumption of capital flows to indebted countries in the framework of an open international trading system. The adjustment efforts, which are painful on the social plane, are likely to fail if there is no external support. And there is a pressing need for multilateral schemes. All this would amount to a "debt-with-growth" strategy.

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

May I add that the difficulty of some States is aggravated by the transfer of resources from the developing countries to the highly industrialized regions.

I shall not deal at length with the economic problems of Poland. We realize that help must come from within; yet we seek reasonable assistance coming from abroad.

At the same time I can assure the Assembly that the process of liberalization of our trade régime is well advanced and this year a new customs tariff became effective. Moreover, we intend to modify our present formal status in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in order to be put on an equal footing with other countries.

Against this background I should like, on behalf of my Government, to express our thanks to all countries that have responded to the recommendations of the Western economic summit and launched a special programme of economic assistance to Poland. Let me observe that this assistance transcends the realm of economic action. It has a broader sense because it helps to overcome the division of Europe.

I also feel it necessary to make some remarks on international law and human rights.

Apart from drafting treaties the General Assembly has its own methods of influencing the law-declaring or law-making process. I am thinking of the adoption of resolutions laying down rules of conduct for States. Certain branches or divisions of contemporary international law owe their origin to the initiatives undertaken by the Assembly along these lines.

The manner, however, in which the Assembly fulfils that role is sometimes open to doubt, and it is not without its flaws. The Organization and its Members have not succeeded in stopping the inflation of resolutions, and this statement also applies to some instruments, which aspire to a role in law-making. More often than

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not the dividing line between law and non-law is blurred. I think that the use of resolutions for declaring existing law and for suggesting new law should be more selective. There is still much room for improvement regarding procedures in this field: more extensive preparatory work, elimination of haste, more insistence on agreed solutions - in contradistinction to those imposed by majorities - and much greater use of legal expertise. In the latter respect the Assembly could take more advantage of the International Law Commission.

This observation leads me to say a few words about that organ which has rendered so many services to the cause of international law.

The International Law Commission was restructured some time ago, but there are still doubts regarding its composition, methods of work and results. The influence of politics on the elections to the Commission has had some bad consequences. There is some connection between that problem and the value and authority of the Commission's drafts. As to the choice of subjects, one may suggest that the Commission should not avoid the great legal issues of our time. The Commission's prudence is proof of its wisdom; yet, more imagination would enhance the process of law-making. The Commission should respond to the global challenges we face. It is only then that the Commission will be able to fulfil its mandate under the Charter.

In the important field of the judicial settlement of disputes Poland intends to accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice according to Article 36 of its Statute. We think that the obligatory jurisdiction of the Court should be enhanced and supported.

Poland attaches major weight to the implementation of human rights. We put forward the idea of, and then initiated the work on, the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We hope that this Convention will be adopted at the present session. We intend to accede to some instruments which are not yet binding on us.

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

In the first place we intend to accept the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We also look forward to the day when it will be possible for us to become a member of the Council of Europe and to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights.

I now come to my last point, which is Polish foreign policy seen against the background of our obligations under the Charter and the political changes now taking place in my country.

Poland has a geostrategic location that makes its position militarily significant. This has a bearing on the whole region. Yet, I believe that one can control the consequences of this objective fact, or at least try to do it, so as to base Polish foreign policy firmly on the fundamentals of external sovereignty and internal independence. Poland will do its best to maintain peace, freedom and good-neighbourly co-operation in Europe.

In other words, without disregarding the facts, we have a vision of peace and freedom in a region which, in contemporary history, has been too often one of conflict, division and domination. If Poland is free and democratic, then its geopolitical and geostrategic importance could and should be turned into an asset that supports peace and fosters freedom.

Until recently the role of the ideological factor in international relations - at any rate among many States - has been considerable. Now that role is greatly reduced and the present Polish Government welcomes this development. We shall strive for the total elimination of ideology from inter-State relations, which does not mean that we reject international morality. Ideology and morality are different things. Morality and respect for the human person remain our highest values.

I am convinced that the present reform movement in Poland is a good sign for the world and, more particularly, for Europe. The new Polish Government, under the

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

imaginative leadership of Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, has no intention whatsoever to destabilize the existing international order and, in particular, one of its components, that is the mutual strategic security involving the two super-Powers. However, spheres of security can never mean spheres of influence. We regard changes such as those now taking place in Poland as an element of the disengagement of the super-Powers from their long-standing confrontation in the heart of Europe.

(Mr. Skubiszewski, Poland)

The key issue of Polish political strategy lies in our relations with the Soviet Union. We shall respect existing treaties and we firmly believe in mutual respect for national interests. Yet such respect does not impose any limitations regarding the choice and change of the system of government. The present Polish Government acts in such a way that the promotion of our vital interests is not in conflict with the interests of others.

We shall contribute to the recreation of a united Europe, in which Poland should have its place. The most recent step in that direction is our treaty with the European Economic Community. We highly appreciate the friendly and helpful attitude of the Community presided over by France.

Politics do not boil down to the mere application of some purported laws of history. Personally, I do not believe in the existence of such laws. Destiny can wait, but the time has now come and Poland must shape its fate. We count on our friends in the United Nations.

Mr. LARCO COX (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): It is profoundly symbolic that Africa is presiding over the General Assembly. On one hand, it heralds the imminent culmination of the lengthy process of decolonization and, on the other, it reaffirms our belief in the successful abolishment of apartheid. In that struggle, the Ambassador of Nigeria, Mr. Joseph Garba, has played a prominent role as Chairman of the Committee concerned.

The fact that Latin America preceded Africa in the presidency of the highest international political forum is also of especial significance since the climate of détente, so insistently demanded by the South, began to emerge during its presidency. For the first time in this century and in the era of technological dominance, we have a situation in which the struggle for the attainment of peace and justice within nations makes understanding between the super-Powers possible.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

The reappraisal of multilateralism in an ideologically relaxed international environment will open the way to the consolidation of this new process of détente. Inevitably and inexorably, reality is testing the principles that led to the costly military alliances and the forced division of the world into zones of influence.

Formulas of understanding and co-operation, unforeseeable only five years ago, are now emerging. This is the beginning of a global strategic re-alignment, which is replacing the framework that has prevailed during the last four decades.

This new scene shows complex and encouraging signs. The new dynamics of co-operation among States incorporates the diverse non-military issues that are currently threatening the peace. Hence we see an increasing interdependence between national, regional and global factors. However, the expected benefits of a progressively open world are neither automatic nor balanced. The developing countries are faced with the dual risk of marginalization and new asymmetries. Therefore, we reaffirm that underdevelopment constitutes one of the main threats to international peace. The steady increase of poverty, the impossibility of reactivating growth, the political impossibility of carrying out programmes of economic structural adjustment, terrorism, and the illegal trafficking in drugs are, among others, negative social factors that point dramatically to our critical position in the new global strategy.

The international community must face these problems resolutely in order to ensure peace. The positive effects which the international transformation is having in certain regions cannot serve as an excuse for the marginalization of developing countries. We therefore are faced with the challenge of giving positive meaning to the concept of interdependence in order to take advantage of the capacity of developing countries to participate in the spirit and rhythm of this global transformation, taking into account the direct relationship between political, economic, security and development factors.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

The fundamental features of Latin America today are its increasing political maturity and the incidence of elements whose interaction threatens our security and growth. In this context, we are trying to assert ourselves in order to ensure our defence and the promotion of the democratic system, the strengthening of the value of multilateralism and collective action. Thus we place emphasis on the possibility of our taking action, avoiding confrontation, but defining a genuine Latin American solution for Latin American problems, thereby avoiding the trend towards unilateralism.

Gradually, Latin America has set in motion various efforts at political co-operation aimed at implementing concrete proposals relating to the security of the hemisphere, the consolidation of democracy, the maintenance of peace, and the problems of international trade and the foreign debt. Another aspect of regional co-ordination efforts is expressed in a dialogue with other States or groups of States. Among these efforts, the Group of Eight represents an imaginative alternative in the new international context, promoting as it does a policy of peace and democracy that demands that there be international understanding and solidarity.

May I now emphasize the issue of the defence of democracy. This is a regional priority and a factor of Latin American unity. In our region we speak of the defence of democracy, because it is constantly threatened, despite the fact that our people have overwhelmingly opted for freedom. Our experience demonstrates that the political and social effects of the severe and prolonged crisis, which has stultified development and turned the region into an exporter of capital, constitutes the fundamental threat to democracy. Democracy alone does not guarantee economic growth nor does economic growth automatically lead to democracy. International solidarity and political will are needed in order to assure ourselves of both bread and liberty.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

In Latin America we continue to observe the peace-making process in Central America with fraternal interest. Peru maintains its willingness to support this peace process within the terms of the philosophy that inspired the creation of the Contadora and Support Groups. Now that an agreement between the Central American countries has been reached at the highest level, nothing should impede compliance with Esquipulas II and Costa del Sol.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

We consider it highly positive that the United Nations has taken the important step of supervising the electoral process in Nicaragua and of establishing the United Nations Observer Group in Central America - a multilateral presence compatible with national sovereignty.

The stalemate over the question of the Malvinas Islands had to be ended. Dialogue is indispensable, and we are glad the parties have resumed this course. The evolution of world affairs has confirmed the validity of international principles that are part of an ever-changing legal reality that is now almost universal: the principles of non-intervention, self-determination, the peaceful settlement of disputes and respect for treaties as the basis for peaceful coexistence.

In this new era of international détente, the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan has ended. We hope for national reconciliation that will lead to an independent and non-aligned Afghanistan in the near future.

With the implementation of the tripartite agreements between Angola, South Africa and Cuba, southern Africa has entered a new era of peace. It is finally laying the foundations for the historic plan for the independence of Namibia under the supervision of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), which was established more than a decade ago.

The fall of the last stronghold of colonialism in Africa and the speedy entry of Namibia into the society of free nations heralds the end of the infamous crime of apartheid. Only the Pretoria régime remains. The international community must continue to exert pressure to bring it to end its international rebelliousness.

Greater efforts are required to resolve sources of tension that have long been under consideration by the United Nations, such as the Middle East and others. Although no immediate solution is in sight, new and positive developments have

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

emerged: the proclamation of the independent Palestinian State on the basis of resolution 181 (II) of 1947, the renunciation of terrorism by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the acceptance of the existence of Israel by those who had denied it.

We call upon the parties finally to agree to the convening of an international conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices and with its participation. This must lead to peace for all the States of the region within secure and internationally recognized borders, taking into account Israel's right to exist as a State, and restitution of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and independence.

We are following with interest the prospects for the situation in Kampuchea arising from regional agreements and the withdrawal of foreign troops carried out in accordance with resolution 43/19.

Peace-keeping has had a special evolution. Peru has contributed to, and continues to participate actively in, operations directed to support it. We were therefore gratified to learn that the United Nations peace-keeping forces had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In summary, there are reasons for cautious optimism in evaluating the international situation. The United Nations has finally broken free of the inertia imposed on it by the cold war and the aftermath of the confrontation between ideological power blocs. At the same time, the international legal order and respect for its principles and institutions are being enhanced. It is a long time since they suffered the arrogant challenges of power politics. None the less, grave non-military threats to security persist, and they constitute the origin of new global problems that we will be able to tackle successfully only through collective action and co-operation within the United Nations.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

In this context, the implementation of democratic processes to channel the will of the people is the indispensable basis for the decolonization process and the solution of conflicts. Namibia, Western Sahara and Central America, are clear examples of the use of democratic procedures under the supervision of the United Nations.

Historically, democratic values have proven fundamental in the promotion of human rights as well as in the maintenance of the international legal order and the right of peoples freely to determine their own destiny. Democratic processes are a factor of peace. Therefore it is indispensable to apply the essence of democracy to international relations. Unfortunately, the instability and asymmetry of the international economic order undermine this process by denying the majority of the people equitable access to its benefits and participation in the decision-making process on issues of global concern on which their own survival often depends.

Earlier I mentioned the direct relationship between democracy and development as fundamental elements of security and its consequences for the future position of the underdeveloped areas in the new strategic world scheme. In Latin America we understand security as a comprehensive concept. In other regions also, common criteria on national, regional and collective security are the answer to the challenges posed by the new nature of traditional unilateralism. In essence this is the goal of all the multilateral strategies being implemented to solve current conflicts.

In addition to choosing an option in favour of nuclear disarmament, my country has taken an initiative in the field of conventional armaments on a regional scale. Peru has proposed substantial reductions of armament expenditures, as well as confidence-building measures. We achieved this by matching words with deeds. We suspended important military purchases and also promoted, as we still do, frequent contacts between military authorities as part of our neighbourly relations.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

The projected convening of the fourth Review Conference of the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Arms, in 1990, will constitute a corner-stone in the sphere of nuclear disarmament. Peru is ready to play a constructive role in its capacity as a developing country and a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which instituted the first nuclear-weapon-free zone, thus making an article of faith of the renunciation of those weapons. We consider it essential that that Treaty be observed universally and definitively.

We are deeply concerned by the continuation of dangerous nuclear tests because of the ecological damage they represent. We are gratified that our initiative for their complete and definitive prohibition has prospered.

While the multilateral solution of regional conflicts of the post-war period continues, new global threats have emerged, demanding collective and immediate action.

At this session, the General Assembly has on its agenda the question of international terrorism. In addition to categorical condemnation of this phenomenon, stronger legal commitments must be made within the framework of the United Nations, drawing a clear line separating States from such activities no matter where or by whom they are perpetrated. We are concerned and disappointed that lack of knowledge of real situations leads democratic societies to apologize for crime and its proselytization on their territory. The agents of terror and violence shamelessly present themselves as victims in the name of human rights they violate daily. In Peru this insane violence has cut short the lives of thousands of people, including international experts and co-operation specialists - the true missionaries in the struggle against poverty in our country.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

Forty-two years ago, during the st session of the General Assembly, Peru demanded concerted action by the international community to fight drug trafficking. In keeping with that farsightedness, we repeat that demand today. There is no need for us to stress the danger that this scourge represents for mankind. Without exaggeration we can state that the next world war will be one waged against drugs, its destructive effects on health and its corrupting impact on institutions.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

Our youth, which should guarantee the continuity of our values, is the very first target of this social scourge. The security of our countries and of international society as a whole demands responsibility on the part of all in the struggle for its elimination.

We Peruvians do not shirk our responsibilities. We devote a substantial part of our scarce resources to fighting drug trafficking, despite the economic crisis that we are enduring.

However, the fight against drug trafficking must be viewed as a process with interdependent phases, starting with the growing of the cocoa leaf crop. From ancient times our peasants have dedicated themselves to this agricultural activity, on a reduced scale and only for legitimate purposes. Today, this activity has acquired an economic significance upon which tens of thousands of peasants depend. If we were to deprive them of it we would be promoting a social problem of hunger and protest which might lead to subversion and the relocation of illegal crops. Therefore, genuine solutions must be found that take into account political and social, as well as environmental, issues.

That is why we cannot speak about solutions based upon eradication but, rather, about crop substitution on the basis of international agreements of preferential treatment for commodities and the improvement of our transportation infrastructures in order to facilitate access of such commodities to markets at competitive prices.

The growing link between terrorism and illegal drug trafficking, with the latter financing the former in exchange for gangster-like protection, is now a proved practice. This association brings out the worst in both individual criminal activities. The ethics of those who claim to be defenders of a supposedly superior system are abdicated and negate the principles of equality, social justice and

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

liberty are negated, as well as the human rights of the Peruvian people, which are systematically being violated by those who are colluding in this sinister alliance.

Control of the trade in the chemical inputs for drug manufacturing, the seizure of property and money derived from drug trafficking, and co-operation against the laundering of the illicit profits from it, together with the urgent implementation of a system for the promotion of prices and access to markets of goods to substitute for illegal drug crops, would and should complement the International Convention against illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and thus become a message of hope for our people.

The boldest proposals put forward so far would seem to lead to the solution of the global problem I have outlined - namely, the partial conversion of the debt into resources to be used to fight drug trafficking; the legal seizure of all coca-leaf production; and, finally, the decriminalization of consumption. These proposals have not yet been considered in depth, but - and this is important - they go beyond the stage of mutual accusations between producing and consuming countries and introduce a positive dialogue that, despite differences of views, opinions and objectives, agrees on the higher goal: putting an end to this scourge.

The decisions to be taken should be agreed by the Heads of State of the countries involved in this process. President Bush, in a speech delivered on 5 September last, extended the invitation. Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, the front-line States, have accepted this invitation and are actively working on co-ordinating the pertinent agenda and programme. Should we, however, limit participation to the United States on the side of consumers? Should we not extend it to other countries which may potentially create the demand?

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

We know that when drug traffickers find difficulties in obtaining access to the market they promptly find an alternative. That is why it would be a disservice to exclude from this dialogue the Heads of State of other countries that represent alternative potential markets.

Global concern about the deterioration of the environment today constitutes one of the priorities of the international community. Peru reaffirms the sovereign right of States over their natural resources and the rational use of those resources. Nevertheless, we consider it indispensable to stress the need to preserve the right to development as an inherent part of collective well-being. That requires increased international co-operation to guarantee the developing countries access to new environmentally sound technologies.

There is a need to establish a new category in international relations, a new field of international political co-operation, in order to neutralize these global scourges from whose effects no State can remain exempt since they constitute a new form of transnational phenomenon in international relations. In this category are terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, the preservation of the environment and the malfunctioning of the economic and social system manifested in hunger, absolute poverty, the external debt problem and the demographic explosion.

Despite the new level of dialogue attained by the super-Powers, we continue to be unprepared in the midst of a crisis of solidarity and co-operation within an international society that resembles a body devoid of defence mechanisms or a capacity to respond. Hence, we must have recourse to all the potentials of multilateralism.

In contrast to the greater clarity that reigns over political issues, shortsightedness remains in international economic relations, as well as the persistent contradiction of unjust and unequal structures, which makes development a frustrating challenge.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

Therefore, the international political scene must find its logical counterpart in the gradual correction of the deficiencies in the unfair international economic structure within an interrelated approach that takes into account money, trade and finance. To that end we, the developing countries, have renewed our commitment to act collectively in order to achieve the restructuring of the international economic system. If these strategies are not to become an irony in the light of the expansion of absolute poverty, the failure to meet targets, the reverse flows of financial resources and the unilateral and indiscriminate application of macroeconomic policies, there must be collective and democratic management of global interdependence.

We are increasingly aware that we live in an interdependent world, that mankind is one and that it shares and experiences a global reality. Without impinging on national identities, our people must act positively and flexibly, building bridges to understanding and conciliation that will bring together all their efforts and energies in the construction of a more humane and just world where only peace, together with social justice, will reign.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.