



# General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

**20<sup>th</sup>** Meeting

Thursday, 6 October 1994, 10 a.m.  
New York

*Official Records*

*President:* Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.*

## Agenda item 9 (continued)

### General debate

#### Address by Mr. Samuel Hinds, Prime Minister of the Republic of Guyana

**The President** (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will first hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Guyana.

*Mr. Samuel Hinds, Prime Minister of the Republic of Guyana, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President** (*interpretation from French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Hinds, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

**Mr. Hinds** (Guyana): Permit me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that under your skilful guidance the Assembly will move forward in responding to the many complex issues on our agenda. You are equally assured of the full and unstinting support of Guyana in the discharge of your responsibilities in the period ahead.

Guyana was very honoured to have held the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General

Assembly. On behalf of the Government and the people of Guyana, I would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for the confidence and support given to Ambassador Insanally during his tenure of office.

I have every confidence too that the work of the Organization will benefit much from the dynamic leadership of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and his dedicated staff. They deserve our admiration and encouragement in the performance of their praiseworthy but often difficult tasks.

The forty-ninth session of the General Assembly takes place at a momentous time. There have been changes, many of which have had a significant impact on global relations. World events now testify to the need for an Organization which is equipped to meet every challenge posed to it.

The world is observing the United Nations and will not fail to pass judgement on its activities. While much has been accomplished, there are still considerable challenges ahead of us. An overview of the United Nations and its achievements has pointed to a greater awareness of its role in the world. Increasingly, the Organization is being called upon to respond to and resolve critical situations confronting our global community. Our responses, while effective in many cases, are still inadequate. It is now imperative that we move beyond merely responding to individual crises to address the fundamental causes of conflict and threats to global stability.

In the year ahead, Guyana will work with the Assembly to make the United Nations more responsive to the altered situation we face in the post-cold-war era. We shall strive with others to make the Security Council more equitable and effective, so that it may better discharge the functions allocated to it under the Charter. As a priority, we shall seek to promote the work of the Organization in the formulation and implementation of an agenda for development, which should complement "An Agenda for Peace". Equally important, we will press for the revitalization of this Assembly in order that, as the most representative body of the United Nations, it may harmonize our efforts to promote global peace and development.

Efforts to achieve peace and security in the face of overwhelming odds reflect the desire of Member States to dwell in harmony, however difficult such an aim may be. They also reflect the increasing importance of peaceful negotiations to settle conflicts and to solve economic, social and human problems.

The eruption of conflicts, primarily within States, and the ever-present threat of eruption in other States has stymied the hope of a new international order that would address these issues and hopefully proffer solutions. In this context I wish to refer to the proposals of President Cheddi Jagan on a new global humanitarian order, in response to General Assembly resolution 47/106 of 16 December 1992.

In his work, President Jagan has stressed the debilitating effects of poverty and hunger and the urgent need for concerted action to alleviate their effects. But apart from these classic humanitarian concerns, he has sought to broaden the tableau to include the entire spectrum of human development and related issues. Thus, he promotes the principles of international interdependence and cooperation which will recognize the primacy of human development as a *sine qua non* for a peaceful and orderly existence.

He has emphasized the need for good governance and popular participation in decision-making as the cornerstone for a new type of development, which will take into consideration the satisfaction of basic human needs in health, education, housing and the right to productive employment for all.

My Government has recognized that the question of basic human needs cannot be ignored. It is a prerequisite for good order and stability, which would in turn produce a stable political environment. Governments cannot afford

to allow the growth of social discontent that is engendered by the vicious circle of debt, poverty and economic deprivation.

There are many countries, not least my own, which suffer, not from open and violent conflict, but from the residue of a crushing external debt and the debilitating effects of an ongoing structural adjustment programme. In spite of all this, my Government is committed to providing for its people the basic necessities of health, housing, education and an economic and a social environment for both men and women to achieve their full potential. Some of the factors that inhibit advances towards a new economic and social order are attributed to the prevailing inequitable terms of trade and the persistent reduction in commodity earnings of exporters of primary products.

However, social and economic problems are now not confined to developing countries. In this era of greater interdependence among nations and increasing globalization, issues and problems of economic growth and development, poverty, population growth and environmental destruction have become global. It is therefore necessary to first of all address the root causes of these problems before any tangible and lasting solutions are achieved.

President Jagan's proposals for a New Global Humanitarian Order have therefore taken into account the globalization of these pressing issues. His proposals directly relate to the work of the General Assembly on "An Agenda for Development"; the Rio de Janeiro Conference of 1992; the Conference of Small Island Developing States; the recently concluded World Conference on Population and Development; the forthcoming World Summit on Social Development; and the Fourth World Conference on Women. It is therefore my Government's fervent hope that this forty-ninth session will result in positive measures being taken to address the economic, social and humanitarian problems prevailing in the world today. We have shown the capacity to resolve supposedly intractable problems. I may refer here to the end of the iniquitous system of apartheid, when we all felt a sense of pride and accomplishment at the readmission of South Africa to the United Nations on 23 June 1994.

I may also refer to the Middle East where we have seen a marvellous example of what can be achieved through patient diplomacy and dialogue, by the recent signing of a Peace Accord between Israel and Jordan.

The earlier signature of the Declaration of Principles, together with the current self-rule in Gaza, point to the statesmanship of the leaders of Israel, the Palestinian people and the other parties to a conflict which has dragged on for far too long.

We have seen the convening of a World Conference on Human Rights and the appointment of a High Commissioner for Human Rights, events which point to the increasing concern of the United Nations for the protection of human rights and for the improvement of the economic and social conditions of mankind.

In my own region, we see the possibility of the restoration of democracy in Haiti. The multinational operation now under way, of which Guyana is a part, offers the hope that, notwithstanding its inherent difficulties, the illegal government will finally abandon power. Guyana is pledged to participate in the process leading to the prompt return of peace and stability in Haiti. The international community must now work together to assist in the rebuilding of that country's institutions, as well as its economy, as a safeguard to its future welfare.

We are happy that the United States and Cuba were able to meet here in New York and come to a positive agreement on the migration issue. We hope that the maturity displayed in those negotiations will spill over to a correlative issue, the economic embargo, and that Cuba will be allowed to pursue its economic rehabilitation for the benefit of its people.

A peaceful resolution of the Cyprus problem, which has seemed to be elusive, continues to be our great desire. Guyana remains hopeful that the efforts of the Secretary-General and the goodwill of the parties involved will lead to a satisfactory solution.

I am convinced that this Organisation can and will achieve greater success for a better world. I would therefore urge serious consideration of the "New Global Humanitarian Order", which is aimed at fusing various aspects of past and future undertakings by this Assembly. This new order will effectively bridge the gap between rhetoric and implementation, and will succeed in dealing directly with the common problems which face us all.

As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, I appeal to those present here today to reflect on the spirit of solidarity which inspired the Charter of the United Nations. Let us therefore work together to enhance the role of this august body. Let us also, through mutual

respect and tolerance, work to promote better relations between all nations and peoples.

**The President** (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Guyana for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Samuel Hinds, Prime Minister of the Republic of Guyana, was escorted from the rostrum.*

**The President** (*interpretation from French*): The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, His Excellency Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al-Khalifa, on whom I now call.

**Mr. Al-Khalifa** (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is my pleasure at the outset to extend to you as President of the Assembly at its forty-ninth session, Sir, and to your fraternal country, Côte d'Ivoire, my sincere congratulations on your election to preside over this momentous international assembly. I should like to assure you of the cooperation of my delegation. We are confident that your experience in the affairs of this Organization will enable you to conduct the work of this session with competence and efficiency.

I should also like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Samuel Insanally, who conducted the proceedings of the last session with great skill.

It is also my pleasure to take this opportunity to convey our sincere congratulations to the Republic of South Africa on regaining its full membership in the United Nations after its liberation from apartheid, trusting that it will resume its role as active member of the international community.

I avail myself of this opportunity as well to mention with appreciation the persistent efforts and tireless drive of His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to enhance the role of the United Nations in international affairs and to further the Organization's noble objectives. We also note with appreciation his sincere and continuous endeavours in the field of development and international economic cooperation, to which the content of his report "An Agenda for Development" bears witness.

The Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Development" prompts us to reflect anew, as we approach the twenty-first century, upon the future of international

cooperation in all its aspects. The need for such questioning undoubtedly gains an air of urgency at a time when the features of the international post-cold war order have yet to take a clearly identifiable shape. As the international community witnessed profound changes in the wake of the 1815 Vienna Conference, the big powers and others met to establish patterns for relationships amongst States within the framework of a global order, to be buttressed by an international consensus. Yet the current international period, fraught with a host of interlocked variables, is noted for the absence of a similar consensus whereby the features of the new world order could be identified.

Change is a law of nature. However, the accelerating pace of change that we witness nowadays is unprecedented; it has sent tremors into the otherwise monotonous progression of events and has made the present era a historic one. It is only by virtue of our understanding of history as the link between past and present that we are able to fathom for even a little while what goes on around us.

Watching the dramatic changes that took place over the past few years, one could detect two dominant yet contradictory trends in the course of those changes. One is the fragmentation that has occurred in certain regions of the world, causing the emergence on the political map of new States on ethnic and cultural bases. The other trend is the inclination towards globalization, especially as the new technology and current communications revolution have narrowed the distances between various parts of the world. The amazing pace and speed of these changes call for new visions so that the present can be managed and the future's dimensions charted.

The desirable structure of the global world order should, in our view, rest on the following basic principles. First, the creation of a new vision for all aspects of development. Second, the development of an internationally agreed-upon mechanism for the maintenance of world peace and security. Third, cultural and civilizational interaction among nations.

Comprehensive development is a cornerstone of world peace. As the Secretary-General has said in his report, development is a fundamental human right. It is the safety valve for peace. We understand that the concept of development means, basically, the achievement and sustaining of socio-economic progress. While some developing countries have been able to overcome some of the obstacles to their economic and social development,

most of them are still caught in the vicious circle of economic problems. If we look back 25 years to consider a 1969 study entitled "A Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System", we are likely to realize how optimistic that study was and, in contrast, how frustrating is the present condition of development in developing countries. Hence our conviction that the Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Development" and his call for a new vision are an attempt to cast the development process, with all its human and material complications, in a new form that would meet the basic needs of developing countries.

We would like in this connection to welcome the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen next March. We attach great importance to that summit, as it should have the potential to fulfil expectations in the field of social development in accordance with the provisions of Article 55 of the Charter. The significance of the summit is underlined by its programme of work, which addresses three important issues: the alleviation of poverty and eradication of need, the creation of employment opportunities and the promotion of social integration.

Economic growth is a central element of comprehensive development. Although the world economy's performance has improved, relatively speaking, its growth rate still falls short of the rates of the 1970s and 1980s. During 1993, the growth of the world economy has not exceeded one percent, nor is it expected to grow more than two-and-a-half percent during this year, according to economic projections.

Economic problems that plague the world economy continue to have adverse effects on the economies of developing countries — in particular, on their development process. Those countries are beset by economic problems that are primarily external and are manifested mainly in indebtedness, the decline in the prices of commodities including oil, high interest rates, the decline in investments, fluctuation of the rate of exchange, scarcity of cash flows and international trade barriers.

The world is now in need of an equitable international economic order that would enable all States, small and large, to reap the benefits of experience and great accomplishments in the economic field. In spite of economic disagreements between States, the economic situation will improve with firm political will and the

genuine desire on the part of all States to solve the economic problems of the world today.

Encouraging signs of change appeared on the horizon early this year with the signing of the final document of the Uruguay Round in Marrakesh and the establishment of the World Trade Organization. We hope that the objectives of the said Organization will be translated into concrete reality for the benefit of all humanity. We believe that the terms and framework of the Uruguay Round should translate into access to markets and expansion of international trade to cover all States. In addition, the World Trade Organization should contribute effectively to the establishment of a non-discriminatory trade system. Meanwhile, we voice our concern that multilateral conventions concerning the liberalization of trade could be thwarted by the use of environmental issues as a means to raise protectionist taxes on international trade, with a view to reducing the use of certain commodities in world markets.

The second fundamental principle for the world order, in our opinion, is the achievement of peace and security throughout the world. It should be based on three basic elements: the establishment of a feasible collective-security system, the peaceful settlement of regional and international disputes and disarmament.

The history and experience of the United Nations in the field of international peace and security, which was overburdened by the feverish political polarization which prevailed during the cold war era, should serve as an incentive for the international community to build on the content of the Charter with a view to developing a globally acceptable and supportable mechanism that would be able to take firm action, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter, with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression. It is possible, in this respect, to develop a pattern of cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

With regard to the peaceful settlement of disputes, the Secretary-General's proposals, as set out in his report "An Agenda for Peace", should be employed by the international community to maintain international peace and security and to develop the means whereby the capability of the United Nations to engage in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping may be strengthened and made more efficacious. Preventive diplomacy is undoubtedly an effective instrument for preventing the outbreak and

escalation of hostilities between States that would use or threaten to use force.

Disarmament is an important requirement for the maintenance of world peace and security. The nightmares generated by stockpiles of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, continue to haunt humanity and to cause great anxiety throughout the world in view of the threat that such weapons pose to the human race and its security. In the wake of the bipolar era, and as an inevitable result of the cold war, the international community has turned its attention to the question of disarmament. There is an urgent and growing need to put an end to nuclear terror and to weapons of mass destruction.

During the past few years many people, in both the developing and the developed countries, have demanded that an end be put to the race to acquire nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Although an understanding to curb the increase in nuclear stockpiles has been reached as a result of certain concerted efforts, those stockpiles have yet to be adequately reduced.

It is regrettable that the world has become capriciously involved in another dilemma of a different type. I refer to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related technology through their acquisition by illegitimate means. Such arsenals and the phenomenon of proliferation must be eliminated if the international community is to ensure that international peace and security may be maintained.

The third requirement for the establishment of a new world order is fulfilment of the need of peoples to come closer to each other, to be better acquainted with each other through cultural and social interaction with a view to reinforcing the noble human values and ideals ordained in monotheistic religions. The world is experiencing an important epochal transformation as communities shift their focus from individual States to regional groupings, such as the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and the European Union. This phase is expected to lead to another, in which interaction and cohesion between States and regional groups, with their diverse cultures, is enhanced, with the ultimate goal of creating a world that is economically, culturally and intellectually interrelated.

The profound apprehension, in terms of history and civilization, of man's crisis in modern times leads to the conviction that enlightened dialogue sows the seeds of cooperation and association between the various nations

and races that yearn for security, tranquillity and stability, even if they are at variance in their cultures and in their outlook in respect of the human being, life and the universe. The polemics to which the final document of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo have given rise are evidence of that variance. This reality underlines the need for dialogue, especially since we are at the threshold of the twenty-first century.

The significance of the Cairo Conference was due to the crucial human-life-related issues that it addressed, such as the family and family planning, productive health, the relationship between the environment and inhabitants and other issues that concern countries, both rich and poor. Bahrain, which participated in that Conference, has endorsed such provisions of the Final Document as are consonant with the magnanimous Islamic law, our social values and our national legislation.

The Middle East is one of the regions that have experienced particularly severe and bloody wars and hostilities. The longest of these was the Arab-Israeli conflict, which repeatedly threatened regional and international security. This fact underlines the need to establish the order of relations between the States of the region on a basis of co-equal security.

I should like to reaffirm here our full support for the policy of freeing the Middle East region from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and, accordingly — bearing in mind its capability in this field — we call upon on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We are confident that the elimination of such destructive weapons will be of benefit not only in the area of peace and security but also in the areas of development as the resources saved as a result of reduced expenditure on armaments could be diverted to economic and social areas, thus enabling the peoples of the region to raise their living standards and secure a better life for future generations.

Bahrain welcomed the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel on 13 September 1993 and regarded it as the first step toward a comprehensive peaceful and just settlement in the Middle East. Since that historic event there have been other developments in the peace process. Among these was the signing, in Cairo on 4 May, of the self-rule Agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel. This was followed by the Palestinian self-rule authority's arrival in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. The

Jordanian and Israeli sides also were able to sign the Washington Declaration on 25 July this year.

We welcome these developments and hope that they will constitute a first positive move towards a comprehensive and just peace on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the other resolutions of international legality and the land-for-peace principle. We view these steps as a breakthrough in the attempts to achieve peace, and we hope that they are the beginning of the solution to the question of Palestine and of the process of enabling the Palestinian people to secure their legitimate national rights, including the right to their own independent State.

It is our hope that, in the context of the peace process in the region, efforts on the other tracks will yield positive results so that the process may be concluded successfully. It is hoped that the negotiations will lead to complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including Holy Al-Quds, the Syrian Arab Golan and southern Lebanon.

While we affirm our deep interest in the achievement of peace and development in the Middle East region, the State of Bahrain, as expressed by His Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa at the opening of the third session of the Consultative Council last week,

“deems it incumbent upon it to stress that the ensuing peace should be comprehensive, the security mutual and the development common.”

His Highness continued:

“All peoples and countries of the region should reap the tangible results.”

It is our conviction that the peace process should be comprehensive and integrated, for it would be futile to focus on achieving peace and development in one part of the region while leaving unresolved problems of others. Mutual security and vital interests should involve all parties that are called upon to take part in peacemaking and mutual development. In this context, all steps by all parties should be taken in a measured, balanced and equitable manner.

My delegation wishes to express its support for the Syrian Arab Republic in insisting on its right to regain sovereignty over its territories in the Golan that have been

occupied since 1967. We also call on Israel to withdraw completely and unconditionally from southern Lebanon, pursuant to Security Council resolution 425 (1978). The past has taught us that inequitable peace is the shortest way to more crises. This must be realized by all those who are interested in the future well-being and stability of the region.

Security, stability and political balance in sensitive regions are important. Territorial and boundary claims aimed at changing the present boundaries of States are matters of concern to my country. It is our conviction that the ideal means of dealing with such issues is to respect the existing and generally recognized borders between States, and to settle all differences that may rise by peaceful means acceptable to both sides.

Accordingly, we stress that Iraq should implement Security Council resolutions relating to Kuwait and should officially recognize Kuwait's sovereignty and release all Kuwaiti and other prisoners of war and detainees. As we call on Iraq to comply with the requirements of international legitimacy, we express at the same time our insistence on Iraq's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and our sympathy with the brotherly people of Iraq, who are beset by difficult economic and living conditions. It is our hope that these conditions will change once the causes for them have been removed.

It is regrettable that the dispute between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran in relation to the question of sovereignty over the islands of Abu Moussa, Greater Tumb and Lesser Tumb has not abated, because it adversely affects the security and stability of the Gulf region. With that in mind, the State of Bahrain calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond to the invitation by the United Arab Emirates to seek a settlement of the dispute over those islands through serious bilateral talks and through other peaceful means available for the settlement of disputes between States by mutual consent.

The situation in Somalia is still precarious despite all the good offices and sincere efforts of the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the international community at large. While we voice our concern over the situation in that sister nation, we maintain that it is the Somali parties themselves that have the primary responsibility for the achievement of peace, the protection of Somali national interests and the rebuilding of the institutions of a unified Somalia. Bahrain also supports the recent League of Arab States resolution calling for the establishment of a ministerial committee to follow, along with the Secretary-

General of the Arab League, the situation in Somalia and developments there, and to maintain appropriate contacts with a view to finding a suitable solution to the dangerous state of affairs and to achieving national reconciliation, in the interest of Somali unity and the well-being of the Somali people.

The plight that has afflicted the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the last two and a half years persists with full intensity. This year, the Serb aggressors have continued relentlessly to commit appalling massacres, killings, torture and rape against unarmed Bosnians, in flagrant disregard of the rules of international humanitarian law that outlaw such practices. In pursuance of their policy of *fait accompli* through the seizure of more territory, the aggressors persist in preventing delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, violating the sanctity of and destroying places of worship and carrying out "ethnic cleansing".

The unabated aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a clear test of the effectiveness of the United Nations and its role in providing protection to populations. The Serb aggression against Sarajevo and Gorazde has shown the extent to which the Security Council is intentionally avoiding ensuring that its own resolutions are implemented against the Serbs. Although in all its relevant resolutions, including resolutions 900 (1994) and 913 (1994), the Council has affirmed the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and political independence of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, none of these resolutions have yet been enforced. The Security Council is now in a dilemma, since developments have shown the great difference between adopting resolutions and taking action to implement them.

The adoption by Security Council of resolution 943 (1994) which relaxed the sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro was, in our view, tantamount to rewarding an aggressor whose credibility has not been demonstrated. We believe rather that the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the one that deserves reparations and should be rewarded for accepting the peace plan advanced recently by the five-party Contact Group — a plan rejected by the Serbs. Through its President, Mr. Alija Izetbegovic, the Republic of Bosnia Herzegovina also accepted the proposed postponement of the lifting of the arms embargo against it for another six months, a position that indeed warrants appreciation by the international community and all peace-loving nations.

With regard to the situation in Afghanistan, we are deeply concerned over the escalation of fighting between the parties to the dispute. We appeal to all Afghan factions to put the national interests of the Afghan people above all other considerations by putting an end to the fighting among them, pursuant to the provisions of the Mecca agreement of 1993.

Among the appalling developments in Rwanda this year were the dreadful massive massacres committed in tribal strife within the nation. For our part, we support the efforts exerted by the international community with a view to repatriating the refugees and displaced persons and to putting an end to the tragedy resulting from the civil war.

As far as the Cyprus question is concerned, we are interested in seeing the obstacles to settlement removed. We are deeply encouraged by the good offices of the Secretary-General and hope they will lead to a solution that may be satisfactory to both communities, especially now that both sides have declared that they accept, in principle, a set of confidence-building measures.

In a few months, we shall see the dawn of 1995. In that year we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Although the Organization coexisted with political polarization during the cold-war era, the peoples and Governments of the world continued to be loyal to it for five decades. They are now counting on the Organization to contribute to the formulation of a new world order for the future. To that end, it behooves us as Member States to make available to the Organization the capability and the necessary means which would enable it to face all the challenges ahead. The Organization should develop itself into an effective instrument capable of coping with global changes. A number of important steps should therefore be taken, including above all gaining the support of the Security Council for the desired reforms. The growing number of Member States and the emergence in the international arena of new influential Powers justify such reforms.

It should be noted in this respect that a growing number of Member States have begun in recent years to assume effective roles in the work of the Organization and to contribute to the maintenance of world peace and security. Proceeding from this, Bahrain looks forward to contributing to such efforts should it be elected to a term on the Security Council.

The ability of the United Nations to prevent disputes and to maintain world peace depends greatly on the

credibility of the principles of the Charter, which should, as a basic rule, guide the discussions and decisions of the United Nations, and particularly of the Security Council. If it is perceived that application is selective, credibility will suffer and the moral authority which is a basic feature of the Charter will be weakened.

Notwithstanding certain failures, the many great successes the Organization has achieved in many parts of the world deepen our conviction that the United Nations an indispensable guarantee for a future in which our hopes for international peace and security will be fulfilled.

As it approaches the end of the twentieth century, mankind longs for a world in which international relations will be governed by the principles of equality, justice and the renunciation of the use or threat of force. Mankind longs for stability and peace based on solid foundations of understanding, good-neighbourliness and non-interference in internal affairs as a means of consolidating the ideals of justice, security and peace amongst all nations.

**The President** (*interpretation from French*): I call upon the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, His Excellency Mr. Mostafizur Rahman.

**Mr. Rahman** (Bangladesh): I warmly congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Your election is a tribute not only to you personally but also to your great country, Côte d'Ivoire. I am confident you will carry forward the high tradition set by your predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, to whom we owe our deep appreciation.

The untiring efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to renew, reform and revitalize our Organization deserve our special tribute.

As we stand at the threshold of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary, one goal remains paramount, namely, the need to promote human development and human security in all its manifold aspects. The role and relevance of the people are enshrined in the very first words of the Charter. People form the key link that bind our global society, the source of democracy, the object of humanitarian concern, the spirit of justice in ensuring human and minority rights. They are the cause and object of all our endeavour.



Too often, people have been ignored, to our peril. As we see the stricken faces of men, women and children around our world, the dead, the brutalized, the frightened and dispossessed, the hungry, diseased and despairing, this lesson is dramatically brought home by the media. And yet our sense of purpose and achievement is ennobled as we witness the new light of hope dawning in South Africa, the Middle East, Cambodia and in many other States and societies where the painstaking process of peace, democracy and development take root and where solutions are characterized with a human face.

Individuals find identity in nations and nations derive cognition in universalism. The success or failure of the United Nations stems from the contribution each Member makes to promote its goals. The Organization's principal motivation arises out of the responsibility borne by each nation for the stability and welfare of its own people. It is the sum total of these individual efforts that marks the United Nations measured progress towards maintaining peace, securing justice and realizing the Charter prerogative of "social progress and better standards of living in larger freedom".

The limitations of Governments are also painfully evident. International cooperation has become an imperative, not only because it is possible or necessary, but because it is indispensable in a world that has moved from interaction to interrelationship to interdependence.

As we seek to seize opportunities and confront challenges at every level — individual, national or global — we are deeply aware of the contradictory forces at work, forces that emanate from both within and without our nations. The way we channel these forces into productive activities will determine the success of our common endeavour to forge a just and stable world order.

On the positive side, ideological walls have tumbled, democracy has spread worldwide, more caring and responsible Governments have come to power and economic empowerment and social imperatives have lessened reliance on military culture. Pragmatic cutbacks in strategic weapons and a heightened focus on the destabilizing capabilities of conventional weapons have opened doors for more productive use of human, financial and material resources. Historic political changes in the Middle East and South Africa and political settlements in Asia and Central America can have a far-reaching positive impact on those regions.

After a long period of stagnation the global economy is poised for its first significant expansion. The successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the creation of the World Trade Organization as a universal forum for trade negotiations and the settlement of disputes have brightened prospects for increased trade and long-term growth. More importantly, the desire and ability of developing countries to contribute to the growth of the world economy and help to mitigate common global concerns as participants and not as bystanders has significantly increased.

Yet, negative impulses everywhere challenge peace and security, democracy and human rights, economic progress and social cohesion. Together, they call for a concerted response, nationally and internationally, that is new and imaginative. Today, issues of territorial security are being overshadowed by concerns over human security. There is increasing recognition of non-military threats to security. Nation States are under siege from multiple forces from within and without that are retarding their capacity to act effectively and independently.

Within States resurgent micronationalism and factionalism based on narrow self-interest, ethnic and cultural rivalries, bigotry and extremism have contributed to unprecedented human misery. Political instability has fuelled economic breakdown, and economic backwardness has fired political upheaval in a never-ending vicious circle. Poverty, unemployment and social exclusion pushed by the population explosion, rapid urbanization, environmental degradation and a crisis in values, together with rising expectations, have led to social dislocation, alienation and sometimes violent confrontation. Demagogues, political separatists and fringe elements are being encouraged and supported by powerful external groups to challenge the capability and legitimacy of Governments to sustain socio-economic reform, peaceful progress and political stability.

New global forces have emerged that no State acting alone can control but which threaten the legitimacy of all States. Pollution, ecological damage, the spread of communicable diseases and the massive speculative transfers of monies by electronic means have been the cause and manifestation of a host of cumulative ills. These have been exacerbated by corrosive new threats — organized crime, drug lords, traffickers in women and children, arms smugglers, money launderers and terrorists — that eat into all societies, vitiating values and crippling development. Furthermore, rapid technological progress and transnational processes are reducing the

scope of nation States to act on their own, to regulate domestic policies and the international movements of goods, services, labour and capital.

On another plane, fears are surfacing that the bipolar world of the past 50 years could now assume a new configuration, a North-South polarity, not between opposing political and social systems but between rich and poor nations. Anxiety is increasing in the South that its interests are being marginalized; that there is a diversion of resources away from the South; that its potential to act as a partner in revitalizing the world economy is being ignored and new constraints, aid conditionalities, rigid adjustment measures, standards of human rights and good governance, environmental criteria and military scrutiny are being selectively imposed. There are signs that, while social and environmental issues are being highlighted, vital economic and development imperatives are being sidelined, although both are integrally related and mutually reinforcing. Indeed, there is a crisis in development policy, which manifests itself in stagnation, absence of dialogue, selectivity and insufficient interest, participation and commitment.

It is against the backdrop of those prospects and problems that I now turn to the position and priorities of our Government. There is strong recognition in Bangladesh today that to promote representative and constitutional government, strengthen human rights and ensure socio-economic emancipation a country must increasingly depend on itself. Individual self-reliance must be bolstered by collective self-reliance through South-South cooperation in concrete and practical areas of cooperation such as food production, manpower planning, trade, investment and joint ventures. The critical catalyst, however, remains a reactivation of a constructive North-South dialogue leading to a more conducive external environment that can supplement individual efforts.

Reaching out to the attainment of these goals, Bangladesh has a development policy that embraces a fourfold perspective: addressing structural and macroeconomic reform; stimulating the market economy; increasing the quality and amount of productive investments; and concentrating on human-resources development, particularly the empowerment of women. These perspectives are all linked together by the unifying theme of the alleviation of poverty. The cardinal emphasis is on the connection between structural adjustment and alleviation of poverty — that is, the quantity and quality of programmes favouring the needs of the poor and most vulnerable.

Our efforts at reform and consolidation have led to some positive results. Bangladesh is enjoying today perhaps the longest period of macroeconomic stability in its history. The budget deficit has been reduced. Imports and exports have increased. Foreign-exchange reserves are comfortable, inflation is at an all-time low, and there is increased self-reliance in financing our annual development plans. Today we are financing 38 per cent of our development projects from our own resources. We have achieved near self-sufficiency in food production, and the overall gross-domestic-product growth rate has reached 5 per cent. The incidence of absolute poverty has decreased and some headway has been made in advancing our human-development policy.

We can reasonably be proud of our efforts to stabilize population growth and contain and mitigate the impact of natural disasters. A concerted and determined family-planning programme has yielded positive results. Population growth has fallen from 3 per cent to 2.03 per cent, accompanied by progress in reducing family size; declining infant, child and maternal mortality rates; and expansion of the immunization programme to cover 74 per cent of all children.

We believe that the recent successfully concluded Cairo International Conference on Population and Development has strengthened our efforts in dealing with three critical, interlinked issues — namely, a holistic approach to development, of which population policies are but one essential element; informed choice in accordance with the laws and culture of each society; and the vital issue of garnering and allocating additional resources.

Preparedness and planning for disasters helped us contain the consequences of the devastating cyclone of 1994 without recourse to outside help. Bangladesh was able to save countless lives by timely evacuation of hundreds of thousands of people and to get on with rehabilitation and reconstruction measures on its own.

Democracy has taken firm root in Bangladesh. Like all democracies we have our share of domestic differences, but we remain fully committed to working out our differences through democratic dialogue and the rule of law. Fragile democratic institutions and traditions in new democracies need strong and sustained international support. Our experience has demonstrated vividly that without improved standards of living and a vision of the future that can sustain hope, democracy will wither. Equally, without people's participation the potential for socio-economic progress cannot be achieved.

It is also clear that, to survive within States, democracy needs to be sustained through democratization among States so that it can expand universally as an essential foundation for cooperation. We firmly believe that the restoration and consolidation of democracy worldwide within States and among States is a vital bed-rock for peace.

We are indeed happy that the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna, upheld the right to development as a basic human right and as a vital catalyst in mutually reinforcing the interrelationship of democracy, development and human rights. Widespread poverty and economic deprivation seriously vitiate the protection and promotion of human rights in many societies, despite the best of intentions. These realities need to be recognized for a realistic evaluation of human rights in developing countries.

For national efforts to succeed, it is essential to create an atmosphere of peace within our own region. Bangladesh continues to sustain the momentum and viability of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), not only to promote its fundamental socio-economic mandate but also to create a more receptive climate for broad-based confidence building, to reduce tension in the region and to contribute to the resolution of outstanding differences through dialogue and negotiation. A major endeavour of Bangladesh, as the current Chairperson of SAARC, has been to consolidate cooperation between members so that they may, in the words of our Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, turn into partners of development to combat poverty in the region and meet the most important challenge to security from hunger, disease, ignorance and prejudice. The Prime Minister stated that the options of unilateralism and bilateralism might seem tempting in the short run but in the long-term interests of the SAARC spirit we need to display more commitment for multilateralism and for building a better regional consensus.

Bilaterally, we have taken important steps to strengthen constructive relations with all our immediate neighbours in pursuit of our policy of friendship, cooperation and peaceful coexistence with all countries of the world. The exodus of 250,000 Myanmar refugees to Bangladesh since 1991 has imposed an enormous socio-economic and environmental burden on our country. The rate of repatriation is still slow, and we hope that with the policy of mass registration carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) the pace of repatriation will pick up and all the refugees will return to their country.

There has been some improvement in our relations with our largest neighbour, India, on the issue of the return of Chakma refugees and on that of economic interactions. However, the critical issue of sharing Ganges waters remains unresolved. Meanwhile, one dry season has followed after another without any water flowing to the Ganges and this is having a cumulatively disastrous effect on the economy and environment of one third of our country and on the socio-economic survival of 40 million people. We earnestly hope that India, our partner in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and our neighbour, would agree to a fair sharing of common rivers, including the Ganges. We hope our common friends would recognize the implications of the situation and encourage the support of an early and equitable solution.

National efforts in the absence of global cooperation have only limited prospects of improving the human condition and ensuring peace, justice and development. Recognizing this fact, we are engaged in perhaps the most comprehensive exercise ever undertaken to streamline our Organization, to reform and restructure its main organs and, together, to forge a more meaningful agenda, one that is action-oriented, cost-efficient and adequately funded. The Secretary-General has set the stage with his proposals put forward in *An Agenda for Peace* and in *An Agenda for Development*. The structure and shape of this world agenda that is leading us into a new century has been given more refined substance by a variety of concentrated suggestions: the outcome of world conferences and the follow-up to them, making possible legislation and new and innovative proposals. They form a continuum that is closely integrated and interrelated.

Bangladesh has been an active participant in this concerted build-up. Certain key imperatives strike us as particularly important. The end of the cold war should not mark the end of competition to support development around the world. The global society is only as strong as its weakest link. The world cannot prosper if the poorest continue to decline. Peace and development are intrinsically interlinked, and peacemaking and peace-keeping must go hand in hand with peace-building.

Resolving social issues must be based on the recognition of the centrality of the individual, the acceptance of human equality, and the worth and dignity of the human person. Yet social development is predicated on progress in economic development. Together with environment and population, it forms the logic of comprehensive sustainable development. These

are not separate concerns, but integrated within a composite whole. The core of development and its main impetus will remain accelerated economic growth fuelled by the input of additional resources and by resource generation.

*Mr. Arzoumanian (Armenia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The growing divide between rich and poor among and within nations is of central concern. The plight of the least developed countries assumes special poignancy at a time when the world economy has yet to show convincing signs of recovery, macroeconomic coordination is weak and poverty is inexorably deepening. The unabated development crisis calls for urgent remedial action, especially to implement quickly the 1990s Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. A proper response to these problems requires accelerating growth, writing off debts, wider and preferential access of exports to markets of developing countries markets, enhanced flow of foreign direct investment and supportive action in the area of services and labour.

The phenomenon of widespread and increasing unemployment and underemployment in both developing and developed countries needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Today, even food availability is determined by access to employment and financial resources. Rectifying the situation of jobless women and combating poverty among women are major priorities.

Reducing damage to the ecosystem and mitigating the consequences of natural disasters continue to be a great burden for all concerned. Unchecked consumption of resources, production patterns triggered by developed countries and the real plight of the poor need to be dealt with through remedial action rather than analysis.

There has been an increase in the movements of people across borders as migrants, persons seeking asylum, refugees or displaced persons. Much closer introspection is required to analyse and solve this crisis. A key factor would be the promotion of socio-economic development and the protection of migrants.

Strengthening the rule of international law is imperative, inasmuch as it offers certainty, predictability and the assurance of the legitimate interests of all States. This continues to be the only real protection for smaller and weaker States, especially in areas where the absence of law can mean a serious potential for conflicts such as the scarcity and sharing of water, maritime jurisdiction,

transboundary pollution and environmental damage, and so on. In this context, we welcome the entry into force, on 16 November 1994, of the International Convention on the Law of the Sea.

A critical yardstick for all these concerns is the issue of limited resources and the need for new and additional resources. At the heart of the matter is the need for a commitment to enhance the entire development cause rather than particular interests. It calls for balancing long-term interests that will not only address continuing emergencies and immediate conflicts but will face up to the underlying silent crisis of development.

The absence of peace in our world is a continuing reality. It is manifest in an immense array of conflicts, no two of which are alike. They call for solutions that must be adapted to widely differing circumstances in new and creative ways. Past, present and potential conflicts haunt us. Many nations bear the burden of recent devastation and ethnic strife. No one is safe from the threat of nuclear overkill and nascent nuclear proliferation. The ongoing arms race, the potential of a return to antagonistic spheres of influence, and the threat of regional hegemony all carry within them the dangers of conflict and destabilization. Yet today, the real heart of our concern is the recognition that any viable solution must be directed towards promoting development as a fundamental impetus for, and long-term measure of, peace.

Among Bangladesh's major priorities are the following.

First, of key importance is the preservation of the security of smaller and weaker States and the strengthening of the rule of law. The enhanced role and contribution of the International Court of Justice now assumes much greater relevance.

Secondly, the reduction of military expenditures is essential for development and peace. Escalating arms expenditures continue to consume too large a share of productive resources and capacities. From 1987 to 1992, the cumulative peace dividend resulting from reduced military expenses and cut-backs in arms amounted to some \$500 billion in both developed and developing countries. Little of this dividend was channelled into development. Reduced reliance on military security must also be buttressed through monitoring, regulating and limiting the growing traffic in arms, especially the clandestine arms trade.

Thirdly, regional efforts and regional disarmament are vital imperatives to stabilize peace. Regional groups can and must harness durable structures of stability at the base, through confidence-building measures and broad-based socio-economic cooperation. For the first time, in the wake of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process, Asia has begun to look hard at steps towards Asian security. The United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs has initiated over the past five years a vital process of dialogue and interaction that has opened up useful prospects and potential. These provide an analytical base that strongly supports the goal of promoting regional security arrangements under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Disarmament and arms control are the major vehicle to reduce the threat of destabilization, economic decline and tensions leading to war. A new momentum has been generated that needs to be pushed and sustained. Progress towards negotiating a comprehensive nuclear test ban, the signing of the chemical weapons Convention, the establishment of a Register on conventional arms — these are important milestones on this road. A strengthened nuclear non-proliferation regime has gained in significance with important advances in nuclear disarmament. A critical concern is the objective of extending the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) either indefinitely or for limited periods, contingent on progress on the other objectives of the Treaty, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Bangladesh is committed to support the continuation and strengthening of the NPT, and we look forward to actively participating in the 1995 review and extension Conference.

Bangladesh has purposefully contributed to United Nations peace-keeping efforts, and stands proud of its record as the fourth largest contributor of troops, dispersed over 10 conflict areas. We strongly add our voice in concert with those who seek to make peace operations a more effective instrument of collective security and to enhance the structural framework for performing and managing peace-keeping, including strengthened staff, stronger logistic capability and greater coordination, standardization and support for training.

In the formulation of critical follow-up guidelines to strengthen peace-keeping we would like to pinpoint the following matters.

First, there is a need to define clear-cut mandates with definite time frames, objectives and rules of engagement and with secured financing. This must keep in view the real

constraint identified by the Secretary-General, that traditional assumptions relating to the consent and cooperation of parties, upholding of agreements and minimum use of force have all been under challenge in recent peace-keeping developments.

Secondly, there is a need for impartiality, full transparency and continuous consultations with troop-contributing countries so that mandates can be constantly reviewed, updated and amended. The role of the General Assembly must be enhanced in this regard.

Thirdly, there should be clear-cut political directions and a clearly defined command and control structure for each operation.

Fourthly, contributions to peace-keeping operations are mandatory and arrears must be paid in full. Resources for peace-keeping should not be at the expense of resources for development activities of the United Nations.

Fifthly, decisions on peace-keeping operations should include provisions for the safety of personnel, appropriate standardized compensation of all personnel and timely payments.

Intimately connected to the process of peace-building in both its political and economic dimension are efforts to reform and revitalize the main organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly and the Security Council. Bangladesh has been an active participant in this exercise and will continue to play a constructive, moderating and flexible role to promote the realization of these efforts for greater democratization, efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy.

I turn now to some of the critical political issues on our agenda.

Bangladesh's consistent and categorical position on the Middle East question and the issue of Palestine needs no reiteration. We believe the Palestinian cause to be founded on justice. We have always stood for a comprehensive solution, which must be based on serious a commitment by Israel to abide by Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978); the principle of returning land for peace; restoration of Arab sovereignty over occupied lands; and recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians, including a State of their own. We believe that a historic momentum has been initiated since the Madrid Peace Conference in

October 1991, the signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and Palestine in September 1993, the Cairo agreement on Gaza and Jericho and the common agenda agreed between Jordan and Israel this year. We welcome these vital steps in the peace process, and hope they will lead to a viable and durable settlement.

We hail the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial Republic of South Africa, a long-cherished goal, and applaud all parties for their relentless and courageous endeavour to this end. Our special tribute goes to President Nelson Mandela and Mr. de Klerk. Bangladesh looks forward to consolidating our relations with South Africa in more concrete ways, bilaterally and in all multilateral forums.

We are deeply concerned over the vicious cycle of starvation, factional fighting, breakdown of central authority, economic stagnation and exodus of refugees in various parts of Africa, exemplified by the situation in Rwanda. We are committed to supporting the Security Council's effort, especially through peace-keeping operations, to break this cycle through a comprehensive programme of action that could provide vital relief assistance, consolidate cease-fires, curtail violence and bring about national reconciliation. We welcome the efforts of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Arab League to promote and supplement these efforts.

In our own region we are anguished by the continuing strife in Afghanistan, and urge all Afghan leaders to resolve differences through peaceful dialogue based on accords signed in Istanbul, Mecca and Tehran. We fervently hope that they can reach a broad-based consensus leading to the formulation of a durable government through free and fair elections. We welcome efforts, including those of the Secretary-General of the OIC, the United Nations and special representatives aimed at bringing about a comprehensive and peaceful settlement in Afghanistan.

The tragedy of Bosnia and Herzegovina continues. Plans, deadlines, hopes for settlement have proved infructuous. The latest plan drawn up by the Contact Group of representatives from the United States, Russia, the United Nations and the European Union has been rejected by the Bosnian Serbs. At the heart of the issue is the dismemberment of a sovereign Member of the United Nations, justified on the basis of pragmatic reality. The arms embargo imposed on the Bosnians crippled them from the outset, making any agreement artificial. Serbian aggression and genocide appalled the world, yet too little

was done to stop it. Bangladesh believes that much more needs to be done to ensure justice, including strengthening the mandate and numbers of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), lifting the arms embargo, extending exclusion zones and ultimately making the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina a safe haven.

The international community has repeatedly affirmed the inviolability, territorial integrity and political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We feel that continuing pressure must be maintained on the former Yugoslavia to recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina and effectively realize a just and negotiated settlement. If present efforts of the Contact Group fail to result in a political settlement we fully support the convening, under United Nations auspices, of an appropriately structured international conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are glad that there have been exhaustive attempts at a peaceful resolution of the problem of Haiti. Bangladesh has pledged its fullest support to this end, guided by two key principles: commitment to the preservation and restoration of democracy wherever it is threatened in the world, and willingness to serve in peace-keeping operations under United Nations command mandated by the Security Council. We hope that will remain a cardinal point for the future as well.

I may say in conclusion that Bangladesh remains fully committed to the United Nations as the only forum that can deal with the cooperative management of the world's problems and where we can successfully meet the challenge of the future by drawing upon our combined solidarity to confront it together.

**Address by Mr. Lester Bird, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda**

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda.

*Mr. Lester Bird, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President:** I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, His Excellency the Right Honourable Lester Bird, and I invite him to address the General Assembly.

**Mr. Bird** (Antigua and Barbuda): I wish first to extend to Foreign Minister Essy and the people of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire congratulations on his election to the presidency of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I pledge to him my delegation's full support as he carries out the weighty responsibilities of his office. In welcoming him and wishing him well in his stewardship of the momentous work of this Assembly, I recall that he replaces in this important office a son of my own subregion, the Caribbean. Ambassador Rudy Insanally of Guyana served the presidency of the General Assembly with distinction, and I thank him for demonstrating the ability and talent of the Caribbean people.

The Caribbean people, their aspirations in the global community and the place of the United Nations in their consideration are at the heart of the presentation that I will make here today. Thirteen years ago my country was admitted to this body as an independent Member State. As Foreign Minister at that time, I said to this Assembly:

"I represent a people living in the reality of underdevelopment. I am before you as a representative of the wretchedness that is the residue of colonialism, a wretchedness which includes unemployment and underemployment, inadequate housing and insufficient medical facilities.

"And yet, despite our condition, my people are part of mankind's universal relationship; by our very existence we are intertwined in the destiny of all humanity. In that sense, regardless of the wealth of some men, mankind will never be rich while we remain disinherited, dislocated and disenchanting."  
(A/36/PV.53, pp. 22 and 23-25)

Since I spoke those words in this Assembly, there has been little action by the developed nations to help alter these conditions in my country. Indeed, they have done little in the Caribbean as a whole. If anything, the terms of our involvement in international economic relations have worsened as prices for our commodities have decreased, the costs of our imports have increased and our access to preferential markets has diminished. At the same time, our calls on the conscience of the rich countries to be mindful of the conditions that fracture the economic and political structures of our society seem to fall upon deaf ears. This body knows well that the targets set within the United Nations itself for official development assistance are met by only a handful of nations.

Today the Caribbean subregion occupies the attention of the international community because of events in Haiti. Eleven years ago it was events in Grenada that catapulted the Caribbean into the consciousness of global concern. In both cases what drove our subregion onto the agenda of international deliberation was not a remedy for the conditions that precipitated crises in these countries, but a desire by some to curtail a threat to security interests — security interests that were defined, in large measure, by their own domestic considerations. It seems that unless the Caribbean is perceived to pose a threat to larger and more powerful States, we remain no more than, on the one hand, picture postcards of white sand beaches and swaying coconut trees, an idyllic playground for tourists, and, on the other, a forgotten backwater of human and economic underdevelopment as represented by the world-wide television pictures of today's Haiti.

Year in, year out, the underlying problems that afflict our economic and human condition and that lend themselves to the crises that we witnessed 11 years ago in Grenada and are witnessing today in Haiti go unnoticed and unattended. Yet in eight months' time we will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter, a Charter that proclaimed that we are determined

"to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and ... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

But can this body truly say that in almost 50 years it has overseen the promotion of social progress and better standards of life of nations large and small? Between 1980 and 1988 real gross domestic product per person in Latin America and the Caribbean steadily fell by an annual average of 0.9 percent. In some States real income dropped by as much as one quarter during the 1980s. With very few exceptions, most countries now have per capita gross domestic products lower than those of a decade or even two decades earlier.

Despite this decline in real gross domestic product, many countries in our region are forced to repay debt that is wrapped tightly around their necks, strangling their efforts to breathe life into their economies. Mark you, this is debt that they have repaid many times over if the onerous interest rates are discounted. Yet they are able to see little reduction in the sum of the debt. In the meantime, the massive haemorrhage of foreign exchange

occasioned by this intractable debt burden seriously hampers the long-term social and economic prospects for some of our States.

For example, debt servicing in the case of Jamaica is between 14 per cent and 16 per cent of export earnings; a recent World Bank report suggests that 70 per cent of Government revenue in Guyana will be consumed this year by debt servicing repayments while as much as 43 per cent of the population lives in poverty. In my own country's case, debt has been incurred by the Government acting as a catalyst for economic development in the absence of sufficient official development assistance or private investment flows despite generous incentives. Our arrears have been rising even with debt repayment and now amount to more than \$200 million.

This burden of debt upon small countries calls for a change in the rules of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to allow for the forgiveness of debt. It also urges a relaxation by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in particular of their position on bilateral debt. If our countries are to maintain political stability and promote economic progress, we need relief from the great burden that debt places upon us.

It is significant that, as the IMF and World Bank mark the fiftieth anniversary of their establishment this week, private aid agencies, led by the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (Oxfam), have accused them of undermining the relief of poverty, of making people poorer and giving short-term economic aims, such as the reduction of inflation, higher priority than the reduction of poverty.

Only a few would today deny the need for drastic reform or the dismantling of State bureaucracies in favour of private investment and more open economies, but the structural adjustment which this entails should do more than pay lip-service to the challenges of providing better education and health facilities in developing countries. The multilateral financial institutions, and the major Powers which control them, must become less ideologically inflexible and more alert to the deleterious effect of some of their policies on poor States.

It is a startlingly telling measure of the wide divergence of views between developed and developing countries that this week developing countries rejected out of hand a proposal by major Powers in the IMF on ways to increase world monetary reserves.

There is an urgent need for urgent, meaningful and sincere dialogue between representatives of the rich and poor nations to bridge this gap in consultation and consensus-building. If such a dialogue does not begin, and begin soon, we may well witness a stand-off in relations that will paralyse economic cooperation and progress on a global scale.

I urge that within the institutions of the Organization itself — specifically within the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) — such a dialogue should begin with the resolve of reaching a practical programme on which both rich and poor have agreed.

If the Organization and its Member States fails to act to promote such a dialogue I fear that it will reinforce the view that the United Nations is captive to the dictates of the rich, and powerless to respond to the needs of the poor.

We in the developing countries of the Caribbean urgently need to develop our human stock and to widen the space of economic opportunity; to provide more of our young people with better education; to provide facilities that will keep our populations healthy and productive; to provide incomes that will encourage our people to save and to convert such savings into low-interest loans for productive enterprise; and to concentrate on exports and undertakings such as tourism to earn foreign exchange.

If we are to tackle this task effectively, the yoke of debt in particular must be eased from our backs. It is not beyond the international community to set standards to achieve both repayment of debt and an easing of the burden of such repayment. To do so, two standards should be set. The first is on the extent of forgiveness of existing debt.

Debt forgiveness should be a minimum of 50 per cent of existing debt, the original principal of which, as I pointed out earlier, has long been repaid. Forgiveness of 50 per cent of debt is the only figure that makes any sense. A lower percentage would simply make realistic repayment unachievable unless we were to impoverish our countries even further.

Secondly, the international community should also establish a standard to set a fixed percentage of export revenue for the repayment of debt. Without a standard, indebted countries will face the prospect of worsening



poverty for decades to come. We should recall that the precedent of debt forgiveness was set by two members of the Security Council, Britain and the United States. In 1946 the terms of a large United States loan to war-torn Britain stipulated that interest should be waived altogether should such interest exceed 2 per cent of British export revenues in any given year. That standard helped Britain to survive. We ask for no more.

Worsening poverty has grave implications for development and democracy in our region — implications which, in the long term, may cost the multilateral financial institutions and their wealthier members more than the debt they could forgive, or cause to be forgiven, in the short term.

Among these implications is the problem of refugees. We should recall that apart from large-scale violence, difficult economic circumstances are what creates refugees. Refugees are not only those people who clamber on board boats and take to the open sea hoping to reach an accommodating shore where economic conditions are better. They are also people, many highly qualified, who reluctantly leave their homelands, illegally settling in other countries in search of jobs and better living conditions. The migration of such people causes problems both for the countries from which they move and the countries which receive them. In the case of the receiving countries, increasing numbers lead to destabilizing immigration pressures, particularly in inner cities. For the sending countries vital skills are lost, skills that could contribute to the social and economic development of the sending countries.

Even at its summit meeting in January 1992, the Security Council acknowledged that threats to international peace and security can come from

“non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields”. (*S/23500, p.3*)

In this regard, preventive measures need to be taken by the international community, led by this Organization, to mitigate root causes of emigration. Among such preventive measures must be action to guarantee stability in developing countries.

We in Latin America and the Caribbean are not simply sitting on our hands in the expectation that our fortunes will somehow be dramatically altered by a sudden change of heart on the part of the richer States of the world. Within

the Caribbean subregion, the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) are working at deepening our integration arrangements to explore ways in which we can strengthen our economies by our own efforts. The measures we have adopted, such as a common external tariff and open markets, have been difficult for some of us in the short term, but we have taken the medicine, bitter though it is, in the expectation that in the medium to long term we will have created a stronger subregional economy, one capable of sustaining us all. We have also looked beyond the insular Caribbean to the wider Caribbean, including every country of the littoral.

I am proud to say that on 24 July this year, 25 States of the Latin America and the Caribbean region established the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). Its objectives are economic integration and the creation of an enhanced space for free trade and cooperation among the countries of the Caribbean. We expect that one of the major benefits of the ACS will be the promotion of the interests of our grouping in international economic and trade forums. These actions, which we ourselves are taking, are part of the set of preventive measures to guarantee stability in our region.

It is a tribute to the commitment of the people of the Caribbean to the processes of democracy that we have not witnessed greater upheaval and that in 11 years the United Nations has had only two new crises from our subregion with which to deal. The international community should not assume, however, that the crisis in Haiti arose only from internal factors. Much of its genesis resides in the attitude of major international actors motivated by their own domestic concerns.

Haiti's independence in 1804, born of the uprising of black slaves against the colonial Power, caused it to be ostracized from the world community. When Toussaint Louverture led his successful revolt, Haiti was the richest colony in the world, producing more and trading more with Europe and the United States than the rest of the Caribbean colonies combined. But the hostile international environment in which it was born reduced it from the richest colony in the world to the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere.

The price for its limited participation in international trade was an agreement in 1825 to pay its former colonial master an indemnity of 150 million gold francs in six annual instalments. As the respected historian and former

Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Eric Williams, put it,

“Thus was imposed on the infant independent State a heavy financial burden which effectively crippled development of its social services.”

Since then, international actors have continued to influence events in Haiti, accommodating in their own interests dictatorial regimes and military Governments and ignoring the country's growing poverty and the utter disregard for human rights. Is it any wonder that Haitians risked their lives in the most dangerous conditions on the open sea to become refugees?

In this context, let me digress for a moment to take the opportunity to call upon the United States and Cuba to open a dialogue to end the impasse that has characterized their relationship for the past 30 years, threatening the stability of Latin America and the Caribbean. Recently those two countries demonstrated in this very city their capacity to sit at the table of peace and negotiate an agreement to end the movement of so-called refugees from Cuba to the United States. Surely the capacity to reach such an agreement shows that other agreements are possible. The willingness of the United States and Cuba to act now in their own interest would avert not only the continued hardship the Cuban people endure, but would eliminate any perception of threats to their individual security and the security of our region as a whole.

My small country agreed to provide a safe haven for Haitian refugees, just as we agreed to contribute one eighth of our small military force to the multinational expedition authorized by Security Council resolution 940 (1994). We did so out of genuine concern for the lives of many thousands of Haitian people. We did so because we wanted to see an end to their suffering. We did so because we wanted to stamp out the cancer of dictatorship and human rights abuse in our subregion. As it turned out, our motivation to bring order and justice to Haiti coincided with the motivation of others who have the resources to commit to the military undertaking, which became imperative after diplomatic efforts, especially by representatives of the United Nations itself, had been fully exhausted.

But while Antigua and Barbuda supports the objectives of Security Council resolution 940 (1994) and the use of force contemplated in it to remove the Cédras regime in Haiti, I am still troubled by the increasing resort to Chapter VII of the Charter as a basis for acting to end conflicts within a State. Since the end of the cold war the Security

Council has had to invoke Chapter VII, which provides for “Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression”, in relation to Iraq, Liberia, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and, now, Haiti.

In each of the countries where the Security Council took action, there was clearly a need for humanitarian intervention. My Government supports the growing body of opinion that holds that the international community must not remain a passive spectator when Governments massacre their own people or cause them to starve. In such cases the United Nations must act, and should be allowed to do so under the Charter, without having to resort to Chapter VII.

Therefore, it is my view that the nations of the world should amend the Charter of the Organization to confer power on the United Nations to intervene in cases where humanitarian intervention is warranted. But in doing so they absolutely must balance safeguarding human rights with protecting a State's right to autonomy. We must all be mindful that respect for State sovereignty is a fundamental cornerstone of the international legal order. Intervention for humanitarian purposes must not be capable of use for violating the sovereignty of States in pursuit of the interests of any member of the Security Council.

As co-Chairman of the Commission on Universal Governance, Sir Shridath Ramphal said recently:

“An activist United Nations will not long survive as a legitimate and effective actor if it is used simply as a cover for the intervention of major Powers. Intervention should follow principled criteria and should be consistent and even-handed. Above all, intervention should not be unduly influenced, much less determined, by the interests or domestic political agendas of powerful nations acting within a region or globally.”

In this connection, and particularly if we pursue the notion of amending the Charter to provide for United Nations-authorized humanitarian intervention, the membership of the Security Council itself must be revisited to change the anachronistic nature of the Council and make it more representative of the nations of the world.

No State or group of States can proclaim the overarching importance of democracy, nor can any nation or group of States claim to intervene in another State in

the interest of upholding democracy, if that nation or group of States is unwilling to democratize the Security Council itself. The time has come to move away from the anachronism of five permanent members and to establish arrangements which are capable of change with the passage of time and the evolution of events. The time has come for equity for all nations — large and small — in the membership of the Council.

I return now to the point at which I started — the role that the United Nations has played in the almost 50 years since the Charter was signed “to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”.

For much of its existence the Organization was hampered by the cold war and the struggle for supremacy between the major Powers. Witnessing events and responding to them through this prism of cold-war rivalry, the United Nations has not been as effective as it could have been in defining a world, strong in the pursuit of order and justice, where States could live in peace and the rule of law would replace the law of the jungle.

During the greater part of the life of the United Nations, the strong have dictated to the feeble, the big to the small, the mighty to the weak. While there has been order, it has been without justice and without equity. In this context, while the United Nations has been a symbol of hope for people from small countries such as mine, much remains for it to do before it can represent to them an organization which champions their dignity and worth as human beings, which upholds the rights of their small nations, which promotes their social progress and better standards of life.

As the United Nations approaches its fiftieth anniversary no longer shackled by the cold-war rivalry of the major Powers as it looks to the future, it has an extraordinary opportunity to fulfil the aspirations of the Charter which have so long remained mere words. In doing so, it can advance the interests of all mankind by providing a meaningful forum for genuine dialogue between the rich and poor for the establishment of conditions for development, and thus, for peace.

As the Secretary-General has himself pointed out:

“It must be remembered that the sources of conflict and war are pervasive and deep. Political stability is not an end in itself; it is a prerequisite for economic and social development. The inseparable links between peace and development must be

acknowledged and fully understood because the deterioration of economic and social conditions can give root to divisive political strife and military conflict.”

The end of the cold war should encourage a reformed, refreshed and representative Security Council to look beyond conventional security to security born of political stability and economic progress for all nations — large and small. My own small country is willing to do its part. It is my hope that the larger, richer and more powerful States Members of this Organization can recognize the need — and act on it — to apply democratic principles to their relations with poor States by contributing to the creation of a world free from the threat of military and economic pressure, a world strong in the pursuit of equity and justice for all, a world in which the United Nations is cast in a pivotal role as a powerful mediator for good in the interest of all mankind.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Lester B. Bird, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, was escorted from the rostrum.*

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kanat Saudabayev.

**Mr. Saudabayev (Kazakhstan) (interpretation from Russian):** On behalf of the Kazakhstan delegation, first of all, I should like to congratulate Mr. Amara Essy on his election to the office of President of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly and express our confidence that his competence and experience will contribute to the fruitful work of the session.

I should also like to thank his predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for the able stewardship, efficiency and tact he demonstrated during the forty-eighth session.

May I also express our special gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his tireless efforts to consolidate peace and stability and to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the life of the international community.

Our world, multifaceted and contradictory, is rapidly approaching the end of the second millennium. I hope that the confrontation by force which existed throughout the decades of the cold war and its underlying concept that history is an evolving process of struggle between the competing systems are now definitely a part of the past.

The end of the bipolar era triggered the release of enormous political energy, which earlier had been directed towards ideological competition. Today, the world is searching for new institutional structures, non-confrontational approaches to the solution of global problems and a more efficient utilization of human, material and technical resources.

Looking into the future, full of hope, we should not rule out the possibility of meeting new challenges. Indeed, a common set of global problems that existed before has been replaced by numerous other problems no less complex or immense.

In our opinion, the United Nations has never experienced such an important period in its nearly half century-old history. The beginning of the 1990s and the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization can and should become a truly historic milestone that will determine the new tasks of the United Nations and considerably strengthen its role in the life of the succeeding generations.

Each important turning-point in the history of this century has manifested itself in social and political changes in the life of States. Today the transition from one era of international life to another is related to the disintegration of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the revolutionary transformations in the countries of Eastern Europe and the entry into the family of nations of a number of newly independent States, among them my native Kazakhstan.

For us, three years of freedom have been three years of achieving real political and economic independence. The Republic, having become a Member of the United Nations and other international organizations, having signed the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and a number of other international instruments, has *de jure* completed its entry into the world community. From the very first day, our country has striven to ensure the actual implementation of its commitments to deal with common global issues, such as respect for human rights, the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law, economic freedom and social justice, the development of a market economy and the strengthening of international security.

Kazakhstan accords priority to the issue of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In December 1993, the Parliament of our Republic ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear State. At the coming 1995 NPT Review Conference, we intend to join the position of those States that favour an unconditional extension of the NPT for an unlimited period of time. From this rostrum I declare that the Republic of Kazakhstan, deeply committed to the strengthening of its national sovereignty and security and the process of political and economic reforms in society, is genuinely interested in international stability and the development of cooperation with all States. That is our consistent policy, not subject to any changes dictated by short-term experience. I should like to emphasize in particular that we intend to achieve our objectives while taking existing realities into account and effectively using the geopolitical location of Kazakhstan as a kind of link between Europe and Asia, between East and West.

In this context, we think that the initiative of the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. N.A. Nazarbaev, to convene a Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, put forward for the first time from this rostrum two years ago at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, has a special significance. Its purpose is to develop fundamental principles and areas of cooperation in the context of strengthening peace and stability and promoting the economic prosperity of Asian States.

Today the idea of this Conference is being put into practice. Thus, representatives of more than 20 countries of the region, as well as representatives of the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the League of Arab States took part in the two meetings of experts convened by Kazakhstan in Almaty last year to discuss this initiative. As a follow-up to the Almaty meetings on this Conference, the Permanent Representatives of 25 United Nations Member States, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and representatives of a number of international organizations, met twice in New York. A third meeting at the level of senior officials is to be held in Almaty at the end of October.

Confidence in the possibility of the step-by-step establishment of this new international structure is confirmed by the fact that the creation in Asia of different political and economic unions, associations and groups,

closely interrelated and influencing one another, is dependent on a common interest in the strengthening of peace and stability, without which the economic prosperity of Asian countries is impossible. The deep-rooted processes of economic integration on the Asian continent should logically and inevitably lead to the formation of an Asian common market, on the one hand, and political coordination and integration, on the other. Therefore, we think that the political will of the States of the region towards the purposeful and careful management of these processes should speed up the creation of global economic and political structures, similar to those in Europe.

This confidence has prompted the President of our country to put forward a new proposal to establish the Euro-Asian Union (EAU) as a catalyst of integration processes and as an instrument for the prevention of conflicts in the post-Soviet era. The opportunities to overcome the economic and social crisis, and inter-ethnic and inter-State conflicts, and to ensure external and internal security and stability through the proposed mechanism of unification have been received with understanding by politicians and leaders of different States.

Since the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), stability and security as the basis of economic and social reforms have come to the forefront. As for economic aspects, they are in fact a dominant part of the EAU integration processes. The first step is the creation of a common economic space by the Central Asian States — Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan — supported by the appropriate agreements. Appropriate inter-State bodies, such as the Central Asian Bank, have already begun to function. The proposed union is open to all States.

During the transition period, the proposed EAU most adequately reflects the interests of the States of the region, regardless of their size, population, economic and other indicators. It provides an opportunity to demonstrate their willingness to cooperate on an equal basis, as well as their commitment to reforms in the interests of all the nations of the region.

In putting forward these initiatives, Kazakhstan assumes that the problems they seek to resolve are pressing for all countries of the world, and for such an authoritative Organization as the United Nations. Our certainty is also strengthened by the fact that the Kazakhstan initiatives are harmonious with the principles of the United Nations Charter and with key provisions of the broadly supported report of the Secretary-General "An Agenda for Peace", and

particularly with his idea of the need to strengthen preventive diplomacy and the peacemaking activities of the United Nations and deepening cooperation in these areas between the United Nations and regional organizations. The foreign-policy approaches of Kazakhstan were the basis for our decision to join the "Partnership for Peace" programme of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Kazakhstan, as a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), strives to implement its foreign policy initiatives in practical terms and, accordingly, takes into account and respects the legal rights and interests of other CIS States. The true interests of the multi-ethnic population of Kazakhstan lie not only in the maintenance but also in the expansion of common economic, political, military and strategic partnership and interaction within the CIS. Our Republic maintains special relations with the Russian Federation, all the Republics of Central Asia — Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and other CIS States. Certainly, the most important direction for Central Asian interaction is our common interest in strengthening peace, stability and security, both in regional and global dimensions.

In a situation threatening peace in the region or on the Euro-Asian continent, Kazakhstan, together with the countries of Central Asia and Russia, is ready to put into operation an established machinery of joint consultations aimed at coordinating its positions and undertaking measures for the elimination of the threat.

A vivid example of this is our joint endeavours to settle the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border. Thus, at the meeting of the Presidents, Prime Ministers and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan held at Almaty last July the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border was discussed and a joint statement was adopted. Guided by the need to maintain peace and ensure a favourable environment for successful economic and political reforms and greater independence of their countries, the Foreign Ministers of the three States appealed to the conflicting parties to stop hostile activities and settle existing problems by political means through negotiations. The participants in the meeting pointed to a close interrelation between the stabilization of the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border and internal political developments in Tajikistan, and they supported efforts to deepen the inter-Tajik dialogue and the active role of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Kazakhstan's efforts towards integration at the regional and interregional level need the support of international organizations and the leading countries of the world. The prerequisites for such support exist and are being created. They include commitments on a bilateral and multilateral basis and the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on assistance to countries with economies in transition, as well as our participation in cooperation with the CSCE based on one of the components of the concept of global security, namely, the economic dimension.

Kazakhstan attaches great importance to the expansion of United Nations activities in social and economic fields and supports vital initiatives relating to reforms in this area that are being undertaken within the United Nations and, in particular, in the Economic and Social Council.

The report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations "An Agenda for Development" is to play the key role in these issues. We support the fundamental ideas of the report, and we believe that the discussion of this document at the current session of the General Assembly should be marked by our common aspiration to increase the efficiency of United Nations activities in the social and economic fields to ensure proper coordination of efforts of the related United Nations agencies and to set new priorities in accordance with today's global, political and socio-economic realities. The main purpose of these endeavours, we believe, should be to preserve and develop the spirit of global partnership born at Rio two years ago and to ensure the environmentally safe, sustainable development of the whole world.

As a young State endeavouring to resolve difficult tasks of socio-economic and democratic reform and to ensure its efficient participation in the international division of labour, Kazakhstan welcomes United Nations efforts with regard to the integration of countries with economies in transition into the world economy and promotion of their access to world markets, particularly through assistance to the newly independent land-locked States of Central Asia, of which Kazakhstan is the largest. We view this as a manifestation of the comprehensive approach by the United Nations in the field of socio-economic policy and deem it to be the most productive way to meet the challenges of global sustainable social and economic development.

In this connection I should also like to indicate the high value Kazakhstan places on its cooperation with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Union, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and

Development and other international organizations through their programmes of technical assistance. At the same time, we would like to see this cooperation acquire more dynamism and practical efficiency, which would create a favourable climate for market reforms in Kazakhstan and other countries with economies in transition and for their better access to world markets and the flow of foreign investments to these countries.

In this context it is a matter of concern to us that, according to some forecasts, the gap in the levels of factual and required assistance will sharply increase when unemployment in the States of the former Soviet Union peaks. This is expected as a consequence of the closure of unprofitable State enterprises. Against that background, the current level of Western assistance to our market reforms will not be enough to make progress towards the implementation of a second "Marshall Plan".

Another priority of socio-economic development in our country is its activity in the field of environment. It is no accident that Kazakhstan has singled out environmental issues, since it is itself exposed to such environmental disasters of a global and regional nature as the Aral Sea crisis, the degradation of a vast area around the Semipalatinsk nuclear-test grounds, the severe deterioration of the Caspian Sea ecosystem and the dangerous increase of its water level, which threaten the life and economic activity in a large coastal area. All these things seriously hamper the process of social and economic reform in Kazakhstan. A great contribution to the solution of the Aral problem is being made by the International Fund for the Salvation of the Aral Sea, headed by Mr. Nazarbaev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Central Asian Inter-State Council on the Aral Sea has been established, and a programme of action for the coming three to five years has been elaborated to improve the environmental conditions of the Aral Sea.

However, the States of the region have very limited financial and technical resources. In this regard, I should like to appeal again to the world community, the donor countries and the specialized international agencies to join their efforts to fight this truly global, environmental disaster in the Aral Sea. In this connection, Kazakhstan proposes to hold in Almaty or in the city of Aralsk a special international conference on the Aral Sea problem under the auspices of the United Nations, and to consider the possibility of establishing a special structure within the United Nations system to deal with this problem.

When we speak about the balanced and sustainable development of society we cannot leave out the issue of human rights. If an individual is poor and deprived of the elementary means of life, his political rights are meaningless. A comprehensive approach to this problem was demonstrated by the World Conference on Human Rights at Vienna in 1993, which analysed and reviewed the overall activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights. Pursuant to the recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights, the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-eighth session called for the establishment of the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. On behalf of the Government of Kazakhstan, let me congratulate Mr. J. Ayala Lasso on his election to this high and responsible post and assure the world community that my country will fully abide by the recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights and support United Nations activities in the field of the international protection of human rights.

With regard to social and economic issues, I should like to highlight the recently concluded Cairo International Conference on Population and Development. Kazakhstan took an active part in that Conference and believes that its outcome will be yet another practical contribution to United Nations efforts to ensure global sustainable development. In this connection, we also expect significant results from such major forthcoming international forums as the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul.

Kazakhstan supports the joint endeavours of Member States to reform the principal organs of the United Nations, especially the Security Council.

Guided by Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, which states that the Security Council, in carrying out its duties under its primary responsibility, acts on behalf of all Member States, Kazakhstan favours the enlargement of the Security Council to ensure equitable geographical representation and the effective and efficient functioning and transparency of the Security Council.

For many years now we have been witnessing a significant deterioration of the financial situation of the United Nations. Without going into the details of this difficult issue, I should like to note that the current session of the General Assembly is not an ordinary one, because it will have to adopt a new scale of assessments for the

apportionment of United Nations expenses for the period 1995-1997.

As a cornerstone of the whole financial system of the United Nations, the scale of assessments has always been among the most important aspects of the functioning of the Organization. The adoption of the new scale of assessments this year is also important in that the new arrangement will fully reflect the considerable increase in the membership of the United Nations and solve to the greatest possible extent problems related to the contributions of a group of new Member States.

Since the creation of this problem Kazakhstan has demonstrated realism and a balanced approach and has tried to take into consideration the interests of other Member States. We hope that the principle of the capacity to pay and of the need to improve the methodology of the scale by eliminating its most distorting elements will be taken fully into account in the determination of the new scale of assessments. This would undoubtedly help to improve the Organization's overall financial situation.

With regard to the financial standing of the United Nations, I should like to refer to the question of improving administrative and financial management in the system. Kazakhstan has welcomed concrete steps in this field and supported the creation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and we deem it appropriate that such efforts be continued.

Ten years ago, in this Organization, the former rector of the University for Peace, Mr. Robert Muller, said the following very true words:

"A jubilee is an occasion for reflection and not for celebration".

I believe that today, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we are all adopting this very approach in evaluating the Organization's past, present and future.

In this context, I should like to note with gratitude the great efforts of the Preparatory Committee and the Secretariat in respect of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. They are making a concrete contribution to the commemoration of this forthcoming historic event.

Kazakhstan too is preparing to commemorate the event in a fitting way. It has set up a national committee,

which is scheduled to arrange a variety of ceremonial events, as well as to issue collectors' stamps and coins devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The importance that Kazakhstan attaches to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is reflected also in our initiative concerning the holding of a special session of the General Assembly within the framework of the event. In our view, this could be the occasion for a thorough, useful and interesting exchange of views on the most significant aspects of the activities of the United Nations and on its role.

The forthcoming anniversary inevitably brings to mind another historic international date — the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Kazakhstan wholeheartedly supports the initiative to declare 1995 the international year of the commemoration of the victims of that war.

In conclusion, I should like to express my firm belief that the United Nations will come to its anniversary revitalized and fully able to realize the rich potential embodied in the aspiration to peace and humanism that was enshrined in its Charter 50 years ago.

**The President:** I now call on Mali's Minister for Foreign Affairs, for Malians Living Abroad and for African Integration, Her Excellency Mrs. Sy Kadiatou Sow.

**Mrs. Sy Sow (Mali)** (*interpretation from French*): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly for the first time on behalf of the Republic of Mali.

The Malian delegation welcomes the fact that this year's session of the General Assembly is being held under the skilful presidency of Mr. Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire. As well as being a personal tribute, his election honours not only Côte d'Ivoire, which is Mali's friend and neighbour, but Africa as a whole. It also attests to the confidence of all delegations in him. They are confident that he will lead our work effectively and wisely. He can rely on the full cooperation of the Malian delegation. We convey to him our warmest congratulations and every good wish for success.

I wish also to pay tribute to Mr. Essy's predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, for the devotion and skill that he brought to his work as President of the General Assembly at its last session.

I also take pleasure in greeting the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and in commending him for his tireless efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations.

In the period since the last session of the General Assembly there have been encouraging developments in the cause of peace.

The advent of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa is part of this pattern. That event, which puts an end to three centuries of domination, marks the completion of Africa's liberation. But, in addition, by enabling majority rule to prevail, it brings South Africa into harmony with mankind's essential values. For both these reasons we must welcome the fact that joint efforts, in Africa and around the world, were a powerful catalyst in the eradication of the policy of apartheid. I pay tribute to the determination of the South African people and to the courage of two men, President Mandela and Vice-President de Klerk, each of whom understood the trend of history and opted for the course of reason and the path of dialogue.

At the same time, I wish to take the opportunity provided by the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly to pay tribute to the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization, under the leadership of Chairman Yasser Arafat. The Malian Government welcomes the conclusion and the signing by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization of the Peace Agreement on the autonomy of Jericho and Gaza, which constitutes a significant step forward towards settling the Palestinian question. My delegation will continue to support the peace process in the interests of the Palestinian and Israeli peoples, because it provides a unique framework within which to bring lasting peace, stability and security to the whole region.

While developments in South Africa and in the Middle East amount to significant progress towards peace, certain remaining conflicts are a continuing source of grave concern for the international community. Any conflict capable of destabilizing any region of the world is a threat to the peace and stability of the whole international community.

To increase the chances of resolving conflicts that have worldwide repercussions the United Nations should resolutely support regional and subregional initiatives, such as the establishment by the Organization of African Unity of a central body for the prevention, management



and settlement of conflicts. But such initiatives need to be backed up with genuine and forthright involvement by States in the same subregion, as well as by consistent support from the international community, if lasting peace is to be brought to the areas concerned.

Is it not also time to collectively address one of the factors underlying the development of armed conflicts in some regions of the world? I am thinking of the massive uncontrolled circulation of small arms in third world countries in general, and of Africa in particular. We are all aware that very few of these countries manufacture arms. So where do they come from? How are they channelled? What can we do about them?

In the view of my delegation, the answer to these pressing questions would make it possible to find ways and means to ensure that our peoples enjoy a safe and stable environment that will favour development activities.

Returning now to existing conflicts, we believe that in Rwanda everything must be done to promote dialogue in order to preserve peace in that country and in the region. In this respect, my country, Mali, has been actively involved in the quest for a solution to the Rwandan tragedy and is participating in the implementation of the Arusha peace agreements through its contingent earmarked to reinforce the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda.

The international community and the United Nations must continue their efforts to provide relief to the displaced populations and organize their return while stepping up economic, financial, material and technical assistance in order to foster Rwanda's reconstruction and economic rehabilitation.

Similarly, there is a need for stepped-up cooperation between the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement in order to find a settlement to the Somali crisis in humanitarian, political and security terms. This endeavour should be accompanied by the launching of a massive and effective programme of rehabilitation, relief and reconstruction in Somalia. Hence the presence of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) should be maintained and strengthened.

In Mozambique, national reconciliation is under way. My delegation wishes to hail the initiatives taken by the

United Nations through its observer mission and calls for full compliance with the electoral timetable.

In Angola, we welcome the continuation of the peace talks and call on all parties to fulfil their respective commitments in order to bring peace quickly back to that country.

With respect to the Western Sahara, recent developments make it incumbent upon this Organization to further pursue its efforts to bring about the holding of the referendum, in conformity with the pertinent resolutions on this issue.

In Liberia, where my country is actively involved in the search for a solution, all initiatives designed to bring lasting peace must be supported, in particular those of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We call on the parties to the conflict, the signatories of the various agreements, to respect their commitments with a view to promoting the further mobilization of the human and financial resources the country needs. Everything should also be done to make the experiment under way in the Military Observer Group of ECOWAS a model for the settlement of other regional conflicts.

Our abiding conviction that peace is possible everywhere should bolster our determination to bring about a settlement to other persistent conflicts.

Thus, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mali supports all initiatives permitting the speedy adoption and implementation of measures that will break down the stubbornness of the Serb party. My country, like other countries of the international community, remains profoundly perturbed by the armed aggression and policy of "ethnic cleansing" being directed against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its people. We must do our utmost to ensure that the relevant Security Council resolutions are fully respected.

It is with this same goal of reducing the number of regional conflicts that we should approach activities to bring a return to democracy in Haiti and to restore peace in Afghanistan.

Another source of grave concern for the international community lies in the persistence of major economic and financial problems.

Indeed, one of the major challenges facing our Organization today is development. The development strategies and programmes that have been pursued thus far have not yielded the desired results, in particular in the case of Africa.

“An Agenda for Development”, proposed by the Secretary-General, does provide a useful opportunity to diagnose the existing situation, in particular in Africa, and should permit us to propose appropriate measures to lay the foundations for lasting development for the benefit of all the peoples and nations of the world.

The Agenda represents the last hope for millions of people living in poverty and destitution, for millions of children dying every year of endemic diseases, and for the millions of refugees around the world.

That is why my delegation welcomes the upcoming World Summit for Social Development, scheduled for March 1995 in Copenhagen.

Similarly, the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995, should make an important contribution to the elaboration of “An Agenda for Development”. This Conference will permit our countries to better manage the tremendous human resource represented by women by translating policies and measures in favour of women into concrete programmes. More social justice for women can only enhance society as a whole.

In the same vein, my delegation welcomes the ongoing reforms in various bodies of the United Nations, notably those responsible for economic and social development.

The question of world trade and commodities is among those to have received the greatest attention in recent years. In this context, the agreement creating the World Trade Organization was signed in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 15 April 1994.

In the implementation of that agreement, particular attention must be given to the following issues: the specific conditions of the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, which must continue to receive preferential treatment in the implementation of the new mechanisms designed to govern world trade; the transfer of technology in keeping with the aspirations of the countries of the South; regional economic integration; immigration policies; professional training; and job creation.

Resolute political commitment on the part of the whole of the international community is thus vital if the Organization is to play the key role in the area of development and international cooperation entrusted to it by the United Nations Charter and the pertinent General Assembly resolutions.

We welcome the fact that on 18 June 1994, the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, was adopted. Mali, a country that has been hard hit by the cumulative effects of drought and desertification, is hoping for the early ratification and implementation of this Convention.

Strengthening the role of the United Nations is becoming more and more of a necessity, for as it approaches its fiftieth anniversary, our Organization must face many challenges, whether in the maintenance of international peace and security or in the fields of economic and social development or respect for human rights.

Let us equip this Organization with the means to accomplish these tasks.

While the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary provides a useful opportunity to assess the work accomplished thus far, it is also a reminder of the limits that reality has imposed on the implementation of the Charter. In this respect, it is not simply the problem of the Organization's financial situation that arises, but also its Members' ability to agree on its priorities and its tasks that is being questioned. We can only rejoice when we see that our collective awareness of the disorder and shortcomings of the past has, for the first time, become the promise of a readiness to engage in serious thought, as attested to by the development of “An Agenda for Peace” and the draft of “An Agenda for Development”, which can become effective instruments to enable our Organization to provide a better future for present and future generations.

I should like to take this opportunity to inform the international community of the democratic developments that have taken place in Mali since 1991.

In political terms, democracy is daily being further consolidated and expanded. After free and democratic elections in 1992 we set up the institutions provided for by our Basic Law. My Government today is striving to educate the whole of Malian society in democracy.

Evidence of this is the recent regional consultation meetings which permitted the whole population in their respective regions to voice their views on the major concerns facing the Malian nation. That exercise has also permitted the Government, among other things, to gauge the impact of its measures on the population.

In economic terms, I wish to draw attention to the important achievements in the context of the policy of economic recovery and reform of public finance. The

Government's new economic policy also stresses the promotion of the private sector.

The challenges that face us are daunting and hence our achievements still need to be consolidated; but that will be possible with the support of the international community.

The success of the recent round-table conference on the development of Mali, held in Geneva on 13 and 14 September 1994, attests to the confidence of Mali's partners in development in the measures that have been taken.

These qualitative changes in Mali have also been observed in several developing countries. They reflect the fundamental aspiration of peoples to freedom, justice and development with solidarity. These positive developments, if they are to be consolidated, require a series of complementary measures at the international level. In this regard it is important to ensure equal participation by all States in the development of new norms designed to place the international system on a more solid foundation while at the same time providing better security for all.

It is my hope that the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization will provide a useful opportunity to reflect in depth on these issues.

*The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.*