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Chairman; Mr. MASHHADI (Islamic Republic of Iran) (Vice-Chairman)

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In the *absence* of the Chairman, Mr. Maehhadf (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-Cha i tman; took the Chai r.

The meeting wee-called to order at 10. 35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 70 (continued)

QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA, GENERAL DEBATE AND CONS IDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

Mrs. BERTHAUD (Haiti) (interpretation from French) : As this is my f i ret atatement in the First Committee I should like to convey to Mr. Taylhardat Of Venezuela the conqratulatione of the Haitian delegatation on his election to the chairmanship of the Committee. We have no doubt that his quali ties as an experienced diplomat will guarantee the success of our proceedings.

This year once again, the First Committee is considering the question of Antarctica. My delegation welcomes the positive action taken to safeguard this common heritage. Indeed, the Antarctic Treaty signed in Washington in 1959, has donh much to protect the zone. We welcome the efforts of countries such as France and Belgium that have refused to sign the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities. Equally signif icant was the decision of the Belgian Parliament and of all the other countries that support the idea of conservation in the Antarctic region.

(Mrs. Berthaud, Haiti)

However, the inaccessibility of the Antarctic Treaty is a matter *of* major concern to my delegation and to moat third world countries which, like us, do not have the neceeeary human and scien tif ic resources to participate in it. Furthermore, in spite of General Assembly resolutions 42/46, 43/83 A and B, calling upon all States to keep the Secretary-General informed of matters affecting the Antarctic and reaffirming the principle that the United Nation8 be made the repository of all such information, paragraph 2 of the Secretary-General sreport (A/44/586) clearly demonetratee that the Antarctic Treaty Qneultative Parties are disregarding all its recommends tions. We deplore the fact that they have worked for, and on 2 June 1988 adopted, a convention on the regulation of mineral resource activities in the area despite the relevant decisions of the General Assembly stipulating that such a régime should be negotiated with the full Participation of all members of the international community.

My &legation doubts the legitimacy of the Principles on the basis of which certain countries have taken such action. They have arbitrarily monopolized control over negotiationa and are violating the principles of our Charter. The Hai tian delegation takes exception to thie situation md believes that input by all member8 of the international community in everything affecting the Antarctic ehould be welcomed and encouraged so as to permit equitable participation on the part Of all countries in the preservation of this common heritage.

The damaqe recently caused by the oil epille in the seas *of* that area have caused ua conside table conste rnation. The conduct of certain countries, driven by their unbridled desire to destroy everythinq on our plmet, have only added fuel to our concerns. The international community is aware *of* the ill effects of pollution and chemical experiments in the zone. We are all concerned at the problem of the depletion of the ozone layer and the accumulation of carbon dioxide emissions in the at mosphe re. Global warminq can be diminiehed. Certain countries are so

(Mrs. Berthaud, Haiti)

cynical as to he greedy for the riches of the whole Antarctic reqion and Want to use it for military purposes, or nuclear tests, the effeate of which can only hasten the process of destroying our planet. They blithely ignore the fact that the Antarctic contains about 75 per cent of the water reserves of the entire world.

Protection of the Antarctic is crucial. Its value lies in the wealth of information available to humanity from that part of the world: the temperature systems, the geological history of continent8 of the aouthern hemisphere, the structure of the magnetic envelop8 surrounding the Earth, the influence of solar radiation on the atmosphere, the remarkable ability on the Part Of various organisms to adapt to extreme cold snd isolation and so on. These are all factors which should motivate us to preserve its environment and ite fragile ecological system.

Let us not make that region a dump for toxic wastes. Countries that have such wastes must use proper means to dispose of them in their own territory.

I should like to tell the Committee a story that was told to me by a friend a few year8 ago. It occurred to me a moment ago. A 12-year-old child was looking at a newspaper which his father had read a few days before. He noticed the headlines - Depletion of the ozone layer" etc. - and photographs and statistics, which were etaqqering. Perplexed, the son said to his father:

" If all that is written here is true, what kind of planet are you going to leave to me and my children?

In conclusion, my delegation note8 with regret that the racist régime of South Africa, which is excluded from the work of the General Assembly , continue8 to Participate in the meeting8 of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. Haiti will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/44/L.68 and will support paraqraph 2 of the operative part of thie draft resolution, which stipulates:

(Mrs. Berthaud, Haiti)

Appeals once again to the Antarctic Treaty Qnaultative Parties to take Urqent measures to exclude the racist apartheid régime of South Af:ica from participation in the meetings of the Consultative Parties at the earliest Possible date .

Mr. MOHIUDDIN (Bangladesh) : I am making this statement in the serene confidence that the deliberations, of which this is a part, will lead to fruition under the Chairman s able stewardship.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau once remarked that the social compact or State was born when a man pointed to a piece of land and said, This is mine", and no one laughed at him. Similarly, today with the values that we Claim we possess, if we point to that vast largely uninhabited mass of ice called Antarctica and say, This is mankind s ,why should this provoke disenchantment? Have we not come such a long way from the eighteenth century, and is our contemporary civilization not tempered by a keener sense of common human needs?

It is true that Antarctica is remote. It is also a fact that it is largely uninhabited. It cannot be denied also that it is inhospitable. Yet there Can be no argument to the contrary that this land mass affects the lives of all living beings. Antarctica makes an important contribution to the maintenance of the delicate balance *of* the global eco-system. It is crucial to the preservation and protection of our environment, a matter that today deeply concern8 us all. It is vital to the expansion of knowledge throuqh scientific research. It is of significance to the global economy, to peace and security. Therefore the increasing awareness and interest in Antarctica displayed by the international community is indeed welcome to us all.

There are two Preambular paragraphs in the Antarctic Treaty that I must cite in order to develop some arguments. One is:

(Mr. Mohiuddin, Bangladesh)

"Recognizing that it is in the interest of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord =

The other is:

Convinced also that a treaty ensuring the use of Antarctica for peaceful purposes only and the continuance of international harmony in Antarctica will further the purposes and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations".

Three principles can clearly be derived from the88 paragraphs: first, that the use of Antarctica is for all mankind; secondly, that it shall be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and not become the object of international discord; and thirdly, that international harmony so generated would further the principles and Purposes embodied in the Charter.

It is therefore evident that the *framers* of the Treaty themselves envisioned the use of the Continent for the benefit of all mankind. If that be so, why should the signatories of the Treaty hesitate to accept the principle that it is the common heritage of mankind? Secondly, the thrust was on its peaceful uses, without making it an object of political and military discord. Economic activities will attract military attention. "Flag follows trade, we used to say in explanation of colonialism. Ibday it is a sad truth that the gun tends to follow the mining shovel. Finally, the keen desire to further the principles of the United Nations Charter is interesting.

(Mr. Mohiuddin, Bangladesh)

It contrasts strangely with reality when we see that the Secretary-General Of the United Nations, the institution to whose values the adherents are purportedly devoted, is not invited to their mee tinge. This, despi te the urgings of world public opinion.

The Treaty, we are told, is an open one. Yet f inancial requirements and requisite technical know-how preclude a overwhelming majority of States from becoming Qnsultative Parties. Then again, the hierarchic differences between consultative and non -consulta tive Member States create a obvious class distinction that militates against the concept of non-exclusiveness. I f the Treaty , as is of ten argued, has so far worked well in practice, there are reasons to fear that it contains germs of discord that miqht soon propagate and transform into a conflict situation that the world can ill afford. This is a chance we cannot, and must no+ , take. The implications are much too vital for all of us.

In Antarctica, the atmosphere , oceans, and ice-sheet interact in a manner that has profound influence on the climate and weather over a mayor part of the globe. Mineral exploration will entail the use of devices that could release vast amounts of energy that will be infused into the atmosphere. One consequence oould be the melting of ice and a resultant rise in the overall sea-levels. This would have horrific implications for law-lying countries like Bangladesh or the Maldives, in our reg ion. Any decision in this regard would not only call for extreme ci rcumepection but also, ethically, for the consideration of the views of the global community in general, and those likely to be affected in particular.

We urge rationality and calm reflection. No part of the world is immune to the consequences of events in that icy continent. No part of the world should be denied Participation in decision-making with regard to these events.

(Mr. Mohiuddi n, Bangladesh)

The solution to the problem of how the affairs of Antarctica are to be managed is not intractable. Any régime to be established for the protection and conserva tion of the Antarctic environment must be negotiated with the f ull Participation of the international communi ty . Prospecting and mining in and around the continent should be banned. All activities should be exclusively directed towards peaceful scientific investigations. The88 activities, again, should be carried out by common agreement, and under etrinqent environmental safeguards. Antarctica should be made, by general consensus, a nature reserve. The elements are there in the draft reeolu tion before us. We commend it to members for support .

Given Antarctica s crucial importance to mankind in general, that is not too much to ask for. Policies that touch Antarctica touch us all. It is a heritage that all of us share, and its future concerns us all. The United Nations, because *of* its universal character, must have a key role in this. For it to he otherwise would not only be wrong, it would be a great tragedy.

Mr. TSHERING (Bhutan) : In view of the numerous and very eloquent statements that have been made by our colleagues on the question Of Antarctica, I shall be brief.

The acceptance by the international community of holding a conference on the environment is, in the view of my delegation, a humble submission to the fact that nature and its elements have a lasting hold on the destiny of mankind. It is also a recoqni tion that like life itself, nature is a delicate balance. Any changes in that balance could bring about disastrous results of unimaginable proportions. Antarctica is a major part *of* that delicate balance and therefore of concern to all. It is in this spirit that the Ninth Non-Aligned Summit reaffirmed the importance of Antarctica as a common heritage of mankind to be protected and conserved by the entire international community.

(Mr. Tshering, Bhutan)

As in the past, my delegation recognises that the Antarctic Treaty was drawn up at a time when perhaps no other effective mechanism could be adopted, and has been a workable arrangement for co-ordination. We command the manner in which the Treaty has averted significant disturbance of the ecology and prevented any serious territorial disputes. We also believe that members from developing countries have endeavoured to represent the interests and the concerns of those who are unable to subscribe to the Treaty. We also appreciate the effort that has been made to keep the continent nuclear-free and demilitarized. However, there has been considerable growth in the level of knowledge about the role of the continent, resulting in deep Concerns. There has also been a clear development of the United Nations as a proper and effective forum for dealing with all matters of international dimensions. Therefore it is only natural that matters related to Antarctica must be dealt with in the Uni ted Nations.

While the debate on this issue mntinues and is likely- to be prolonged, in the meantime all nations should take measures to Prevent f urther environmental damage to the continent. There should be no commercial exploitation of its natural resources in order to avoid disturbance to its delicate ecology. The criteria and possibility for the interested parties to be involved and to participate in scientific work should not rewire the establishment of stations, but should be possible through the sharing of knowledge. While the proliferation of scientific bases in the fragile ecosystem must be avoided, it is necessary to facilitate the exchange of information. Wore impartant, all scientific and other activities carried out in Antarctica must be for peaceful purposes.

We do not see discussions on the question of Antarctica as anything but efforts to broaden the scope of involvement and participation to include all nations and peoples, since this concerns our collective survival and future.

(Mr. Tshering , Bhutan)

My delegation wishes once again to register our support for the draft resolution under consideration.

Mr. AL-ZADGALY (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic) : For the third time, with great regret, my delegation finds that the list of speakers on item 70, "The Question of Antarctica*, which has been on the agenda since 1983, does not include the Antarctic Treaty Consultative parties. My delegation does not interpret such non-participation as disregard by the States Parties for the discussion under way or the repeated calls by the General Assembly for the international community to give special importance to Antarctica. But we cannot overstress the importance of that continent for the survival of mankind, or its huge untapped and unexploited resources.

The non-Participation of the Consultative Parties can, however, be taken to indicate confusion on their Part in their attempt to find answers for the questions posed by the international community. The efficiency of the Antarctic Treaty system and its Contribution to international peace and security, the soundness and integrity of the environment, the world economy and scientific and meteorological research has been auesticned because of lack of accessibility to the Treaty, for a closed convention can in no way provide guarantees.

(Mr. Al-Zadgaly , Oman)

The system adopted in 1959 by a small qroup of economically and scientifically advanoed Statee to ensure that Antarctica should be uaed solely for peaceful purposes end not be transformed in the future into an area of international controversy has been effective in increasing their ability to exploit and extract natural resources that have not yet been extracted or exploited. Therefore the research and Prospecting operations have had an influence on the entire ecosystem of th plmet, on the harmony md frequency of climatic cycles, and the damage inflicted on the flora and fauna, has increaeed in spite of the success of the Treaty system in maintaining the bm on introducing military forcee an eliminating militry nuclear aativitiee from the continent.

My delegation has always believed, and still believes, that given the international community s broad recognition of the importance of Antarctica, we must apply to that continent the principle that it is the common heritage Of mankind, and should be governed internationally in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter with a view to ensuring international co-operation and the good of all mankind. By adopting that system and the principle of common heritage, we cm put an end to claims of sovereignty , contribute to meeting the basic needs of the overwhelming majority of States, and allow for democratic decision-making within the framework of the ❄□ℳ☺♦⊠ .

Those few pioneers who drafted and promoted the Antarctic Treaty in the beqinning wmted to organize free, unrestricted ecientif ic and reeearch activities and to encourage international scientific co-operation for the peceful uses of that continent. None the less the Antarctic Treaty Cbneultative Parties hastened to conclude the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, thereby transforming the objective of the Convention into a race to usurp the resources of the continent, regardless of the possible risks of pollution to the

(Mr. Al-Zadgaly, Oman)

ecosystem, and regardless of the rights of the majority countries to benefit by the resources of the oontinent. The hasty conclusion of the Qnvention wee carried out without the Participation of the international community.

I would like to commend the couraqeoua decision of a certain number of Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties not to rati fy the minerals Convention. My delegation conside rs that to be positive proof of a growing awareness and of the influence md power of public opinion as regards the dangers to the planet's ecoeyetem that could reault from mineral prospecting, as well as an awareness of the need to re-examine the Convention so that it may take into account the concerns of the international community .

I would also like to say that the orqanized international co-operation at the end of the 1950s made it possible for a number of scientific reeearch posts to be established on the continent. WI thout that international co-operation the States Parties to the Treaty could not have established their own independent research statlone. If there was any truth in the allegations of the Consultative Parties that their activities were in the interests of mankind, what would Prevent those Caneultative Parties from disseminating information concerning all aspects of Antarctica, so that multilateral international research stations could be eetabliehed and so that the United Natione could be the depositary of that information? What prevents the Consulta tive Partiee f ran invi ting the Secretary-General or his representative to participate in all the meetings of the Parties, including the meetings of the Consultative Partiee, and in negotiations on the minerals régime, so that he or his representative could submit a complete, canprehansive report to the General Assembly.

If the boycott persists, if the information obtained over the years continues to he withheld, what would prevent the States non-parties to the Trea ty f rom

(Mr. Al-Zadgaly, Oman)

proclaiming certain regions of the continent as their own fields of investigation and excluding the Consultative Parties from oonduoting technical, scientif ic, economic and ecological research in those req ions? In other words, how could the Treaty régime deal with such a situation, whioh may seem improbable at present yet is still plausible and possible? How would we address such a situation, taking into account the economic and scientific capabilities of an international group that could, eventually apply the principle of seizure of the continent?

As a civilised international community, we wonder how it can be that the Consultative Parties did not exclude South Africa sracist régime, and that it Continues to participate in the meetings *of* the Consultative Parties. How oan South Africa still be given access to the technical information available to Consultative Parties while up to the present time the International community does not have such access?

The General Assembly, with the assistance and support of the Qnsultative Parties, suspended South Africa smembership of the United Nations because that racist régime does not comply with the principles of the United Nations Charter and the resolutions of the General Assembly and continuously violates the rights Of the blck majority of the population. My delegation rejects the ideas put forward by some to the effect that the best way of controlling the practices of the South African régime and obliging it to comply with military and nuclear non-intervention in the southern continent is to allow it to remain a Qnsultative Party. CM it be that South Africa remains a party to the Treaty at a time when the entire interns tional community as represented in the United Nations has suspended its membership of the United Nations? A State that has no scruples in implementing apartheid md whose aggressive military nuclear activi tia cannot be internationally

(Mr. Al-Zadgaly, Oman)

pcontrolled, must not remain a member of the Treaty and must not be allowed to make use of the information and experience gained by the international community to perpetuate its racist régime.

My delegation joins the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/44/L.69 and calls upon the Consultative Parties to comply strictly with the appeals of the international community, so that Antarctica can be declared the common heritage of mankind, its resources devoted to the good of mankind, thus avoiding ecological problems for people everywhere, so that the Treaty may be redrafted and opened to tho interna tional community, ensuring equal rights to decision-making, and so that the continent may remain a symbol of international peace and security.

Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria): Since the thirty-eighth sess ion in 1983, when it was first brought before the United Nations General Assembly, the question of Antarctica has continued to attract considerable international attention and interest. Thanks to the initiative and perseverance of some Members of the Organization, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the various environmental organizations, scientific groups, and publ ic-spi r i ted indi vidual resea rchere In many countries, the international community has within the past six years become more knowledgeable about the virgin continent *of* Antarctica, the 1959 Treaty that is supposed to govern activities therein, and the implica tions for global peace, security, development and sound environment.

Inasmuch as Antarctica is a vast land-mass representing nearly 10 per cent of the Earth s landsurface, and is located in the southern hemisphere with no settled population, its strategic importance was manifested by the initial scramble and dispu tee by various Sta tee over possession of the terri tory. That eventually reaulted in the 1959 Antarctic Treaty.

(Mr. Aaikiwe, Nigeria)

Antarctica, enormously rich in rare marine resources as well a8 having about 70 Per cent of the world sfresh water, has since long before the 1983 United Natione General Assembly initiative been subjected to a series of commercial activities under the guise of scientific experiments and drilling. Recent diecoveriea of vast auantitiee of deposits of oil and rare metals have, not surpris ingly, fuelled a free-for-all competitive rueh of minerals exploitation by the *Antarctic* Treaty Parties with the rejuvenation of old territorial claims and the consequences of that for the environmental &gradation of the virgin continent.

Time and time again, we are told that the 1959 Antarctic Treaty was designed to avert international conflicts arising from rival territorial claims by these Sta tee. We are also led to believe that some of the objective6 of the Treaty Were to regulate activities in the oontinent, preserve Antarctica as an international ecientif ic laboratory only for Peaceful research, and effectively to prohibit the militarization of the continent and keep it a nuclear-free area. *If* genuinely implemented, these are in themeelvee laudable goals, which we support.

Unfortunately, not only is the 1959 Antarctic Treaty fundamentally *flawed* in many respects, but the Little credibility the States Parties claim for themselves through the Treaty has been eyetematically eroded over the years as a result of their gradual reorientation from purely scientific aim to the present-day commercial opportunism in Antarctica as a result of the vaet economic and touristic potential ava ilable there .

Nigeria believes that the Antarctic Treaty is fundamentally flawed because it is primarily inconsistent with the broad aims and objectives of the Uni ted Nations. Like many non-parties to the Treaty, we cannot support a treaty the nature of which is exclusive, discrimina tory and secre tive. Nor can we favour a no-called international system which does not consciously univeraalize its

(Mr. Azi kiwe, Nigeria)

membership or recognise a role for the United Na tione, but which at the same time claims to further the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Above all, we can only withhold support for a system such as the Antarctic Treaty, which relishes having South Africa as a key member in spite of the régime's apartheid policies and the global sanctions against it. Nigeria can only assume that the Antarctic Treaty system hae a Place for apartheid South Africa, in violation of Uni ted Na tione sanctions and resolutions, because of the Treaty 's lack of recognition of the United Nations role and the sense of discrimination fostered in its division of membership into consultative and non-consultative status.

The failure of the Antarctic Treaty as an instrument to foster peace, equality and justice among na tions is matched by the failure to preserve Antarctica as a nuclea r-f tee continent and ecientif ic laboratory for peaceful exploration, failures which have caused greet concern in recent times. Because of its remoteness and frigid nature, there have been unconfirmed reports of the dumping of nuclear and other hazardous wastes in some parts of Antarctica, which for lack of inhabitants might be considered safer for waste merchants. Apart from this, there hae been unrefuted evidence that apartheid South Africa, aided and abetted hy some major parties under the Antarctic Treaty, hae been conducting nuclear-weapon tests in close range to Antarctica to shield such explos ions fran publicity of the kind that exposed its Kalahari nuclear-test preparationa in 1977. In spite of a world outcry, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, to which apartheid South Africa belongs, have neither prevented that régime from conducting such tests nor suspended it *from* the Treaty mee tings for violation.

On the question of Antarctica s preservation as a ecientif ic Laboratory, the Antarctic Treaty is even more culpable. Under the guise of scientific explora tion, Antarctica has been despoiled by the disposal of wastes through human activities

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

instead of returning such wastes to their countries of origin. Scientific drilling has caused great harm to the delicate ecosystem. The construction of air strips, acientif ic atations and support facili ties is mushrooming da ily vithout effective inspection mechanisms conforming to reasonable standards. Commercial tourism is being developed without even minimal regard for the neqative impact on the conservation of Antarctic wildlife, plants and valuable mineral resources, or for protection of the continent 's cultural heritage, historic si tea, geographic landscape, aesthetic and scenic beauty and and its wilderness value.

More damaging to the credibility of the Antarctic Treaty was the conclusion in Wellington on 2 June 1988 of the Qnvention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, which legi timized mineral exploitation in Antarctica. Apart from its being incompatible with their obligations under article XX (1) of the Antarctic Treaty, the mineral Convention concluded by a handful of States having no mandate from the rest of the international community is tantamount to economic pillage *of* Antarctica s mineral resources. Above all, by focusing only on the immediate economic potential of mineral deposits in a fragile virgin continent, while neglecting ths permanent environmental destruction that mineral prospecting in Antarctica would unleash on the rest of the world, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have demonstrated scant regard for the peace, security and environmental safety of the rest of mankind.

As Antarctica contains 90 per cent of the world sice, it. is common knowledge that any large-scale human activity such as mining would change the Antarctic ice temperature and cause a rise in its sea level. Such a rise, even by one inch, could lead to a chain reaction with a corresponding rise in global sea levels which could submerge many islands and coastal settlements across the world. Furthermore, as mineral exploitation would have to depend on heavy machinery and fuel that would

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

have to be transported to Antarctica by ships and tankers. large-scale environmental pollution could be envisaged. The iessons from the Exxon Valdea oil spill in Prince William Sound in Alaska in March 1989 and the disaster wreaked on the precious Alaskan marine resources are sufficient early warnings of what would happen were such a spill to take place in a delica te place Like Antarctica. Reports that substantial oil spills in Antarctica have already taken place, with increasing regularity, cannot but generate serious global concern for the environmental consequences of greater oil spills. A case in point was the 1 February 1989 oil spill from the Argentine ship Bahia Paraiso, when 250,000 gallons of spilled diesel fuel resulted in the killing of large stocks of krill and birds *In* Antarctica.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

Niger ia cannot remain indifferent to those negative developments. As a part of the African oontinent in close proximity to Antarctica and as a coastal State sharing the South Atlantic Ocean that commands the approaches to a vital area Of? the Antarctic, developments in the virgin continent naturally have a direct bearing on us from the political, strategic, economic and environmental perspectives.

My delegation is aware that since 1988 some of the Antarctic Treaty parties have indeed started to draw back f ran implementation of the minerals Convention and, as a result of domestic opposition as well as *of* international outcry, are now canvasing for the establishment *of* a sound environmental-protection régime in the Antarctic. Nigeria welcomes such rethinking on tbeir part, as manifested in the outcome of the XVth Treaty Consultative Meeting held at Paris last October. We favour any initiative aimed at creating the Antarctic as a world park or nature reserve under a global arrangement that would permanently prohibit mineral-resource exploitation or other activities there that could endanger the ecosystem and its virgin beauty.

However, Nigeria does not believe that such an environmental-protection régime can or should be concluded under the present Antarctic Treaty system. If any thing, we believe that the Present Treaty should first be brought under the United Nations. It should be open to all States on a non-discriminatory basis, and its meetings, decisions and activities should be made public for all States, non-governmental organiza tions and international research bodies. The establishment of international bases and research expeditions working in the interest of all mankind should replace ths present system of establishing national hases devoted to national scientific programmes whose benefits are not shared by, or made available to, non-parties.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

As constituted at present the Antarctic Treaty is not accountable to the international community in any way but, rather, to its current 25 Consultative Parties, which make all the decisions at its meetings and control activities in the virgin Continent. Nothing could be more illusory and unrepresentative of the entire international community, composed of the 159 Sta tea Members *of* the United Nations, than a Treaty that can boast of only 39 member States in the 30 years of i ta existence. Notwithstanding the level *of* their economic and technological development, those Treaty Parties cannot claim to represent the rest of mankind. Indeed, the United Nations is neither invited to their meetings nor has it a say in their activities on behalf *of* the 120 States remaining outside the Treaty. Such exclusivity cannot foster the international co-operation towards which the Treaty claims to be directed.

The Antarctic Treaty provides for a review in 1991, It is the view of my delegation that if the Parties want to be taken seriously the opportunity for a review should be consciously used to make the Tree ty acceptable to the majority of the Sta tea Members of the United Na tions by removing those deficiencies that have led those States not to be associated with it. It is in the interest of the survival of the Treaty for the Parties to begin vesting its meetings with universality, transparency, accountability, eauity and confidence-building measures. They should exclude apartheid South Africa, the polecat of the international community, from their ranks in order to gain any respectability - if the Treaty is to be a system that is not anchored in the protection of racism, in justice and institutionalised discrimination. Above all, the Parties must respect the global concern for sound environmental protection by scrapping their mineral-resource régime without delay. The prohibition of mineral exploitation

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

must also be reinforced by an equal prohibition on commercial tourism, for both can upset the fragile ecology and deplete the ozone layer of the Antarctic.

As the common heritage of mankind, the Antarctic should be preserved for all humanity, and any activities there should be to further the collective interests of all nations. To achieve that preservation, Nigeria strongly believes that all territorial claims should be permanently abrogated and that the virgin continent should be mads truly demilitarized and used exclusively for peaceful scientific and non-commercial purposes under the direct auspices of the United Nations.

The present international opposition to the minerals régime and the attendant popular clamour for the Protection of the Antarctic environment from further &gradation is increased testimony to the fact that the veil of deceit created by the 1959 Antarctic Treaty is gradually being removed to reveal the real intention of the modern-day version of scramble and colonial lam in the Antarctic. The world has changed so much since 1959, when most of the present States Members of the United Nations were still strugqlinq against colonialism and its legacies, that we should not tolerate such practices again, be they in the unpopulated Antarctic or elsewhere .

Mr. DJIENA (Cameroon) (interpretation f tom French) : As it has in past years, the delegation of Cameroon would like to make some comments on agenda item 70, Question of Antarctica.

This year s &bate is based ona real paradox: at a time when the improvement in the international climate and the democratization of international relations have become incontrovertible realities, a larqe group of States is continuing to exclude the international community f ram the decision-making process on Antarctica.

The détente that ve have all been observing with great optimism and hope does not seem to have had any effect at all on the consideration *of* the auestion Of

(Mr. Djiena, Cameroon)

Antarctica by the Assembly, since the 1959 Treaty retains its secretive, exclusive and selective nature and since the States parties to it are denying our Organization any right of oversight.

It seems to us that one cannot simultaneously proclaim one's faith in multilateralism and one's firm resolve to promote international law, equity and international co-operation, while at the same time defying the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

(Mr. Djiena, Cameroon)

In fact, for many years now, the First Committee has been considering the question of Antarctica, which is, furthermore, recognized as the common heritage of mankind. Year after year the General Assembly has affirmed the need to establish a multilateral and non-selective framework for dealing with this question, thus allowing the internaticmal community to participate in the taking of the decisions on problems of security and the environment and on other problems concerning that continent. It has also reaffirmed the urqent need to guarantee its demilitarised nature and to preserve it from any national appropriation and from ideological conflict.

In so doing, the Assembly has shown realism and objectivity. It has avoided condemning the attitude of the States Parties to the Treaty on Antarctica and has thus avoided closing the door to dialogue. It is in this spirit that the General Assembly in 1986 requested that a moratorium be imposed on the negotiations that had been undertaken by the States Parties to the 1959 Treaty to establish a minerals régime until such time as all members of the international community could Participate in such negotiations. But in spite of that wise and restrained appeal, the above-mentioned States continued their negotiations - negotiations that culminated in the adoption of a convention whose qoal is, in fact, the exploitation of the mineral resources of Antarctica.

At its forty-third session the Assembly adopted resolution 43/83, which avoids any sterile polemics and any condemnation, confining itself rather to expressing its deep regret at the adoption of that Convention while asking the States Parties to the Treaty on Antarctica to invite the Secretary-General to participate in their meetings,

At the meeting that was held by those States in Paris from 9 to 20 October - a meeting which was devoted to the protection of the environment in that region of the world - not only was the Secretary-General not invited, whereas other

(Mr. Djiena, Cameroon)

intecna tional organiza tions were, hut the documents of that closed meeting Were not available to the overwhelming majority of States. And durinq this sess ion of the General Assembly the Statee Partiee to the Antarctic Treaty have maintained their position of non-participation in the debates and in the decieion-makinq on the question of Antarctica in spite of the concerns of the international community about the problems posed with regard to the protection of the environment.

We believe the time has come for the States Parties to the 1959 Treaty to display the same restraint in their reaction and to take a more flexible position - a position which would be in keeping with the purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter, which are recoqniaed by all Statee, including the States Partiee to the Treaty.

Positions of principle can only crystallize the conflict of interests in the consideration of a question as delicate as that of Antarctica and thereby Prevent any progress on the question.

My country wishes to reaffirm here the recoqnized status of Antarctica as the common heritage of mankind. The protection of Antarctica is a common and universal concern. It ehould be ehared and exercised by all the members of the international community and i n its interest. An approach of any other nature - a selective and restrictive approach - would seem to us suspect in so far as it excludes the majori ty of States, Sta tee which have not qiven a mandate to any other group of States to represent them or to leqislate in their place.

It is necessary to promote a universal framework for consultations and decision-making on Antarctica. In fact , not only would this ensure the participation of all States in one way or another, hut attempts at national appropriation and the unbridled Proliferation of haeee and of scientific expedi tions on the continent, in disregard of the preservation of the ecosystem and of the environment, would then be greatly reduced.

(Mr. Djiena, Cameroon)

That is why Cameroon will aontinue to denounce the secret and exaluaive nature of the Antarctic Treaty. We also reiterate our deep concern about the continued participation of raaiet South Africa in the work of the Consultative Parties. At a time when the international community is making considerable efforts to eradicate racism, colonialism and apartheid, we cannot understand how the Pretoria régime can continue to participate in the meetings of the Consultative Parties, which is composed of Sta tea that have always affirmed their aversion to racism and apartheid.

My country regrets that South Africa was able to participate in both the Preparatory Meetinq and in the XVth Consultative Meeting held in Paris in May and October this year. We urgently appeal to the Pert iee to the Treaty to exclude the apartheid régime from all future mee tings.

As the Qneultative Parties are aware. exploitation at the resources of Antarctica is not among the objectives of their Treaty. It is approprb te to underecote the fact that the minerals régime adopted is not intended for the preservation of the resources of the continent and the protection of its environment but rather that it could in the future lead to an uncontrolled exploitation of minerals with all the foreseeable impact this would hsve on the environment and on international peace and security.

It could also fuel qreed over the mineral resources of the continent. All mininq on the continent should therefore be prohibited. Moreover, the States Partiea should show objectivity and take a more constructive attitude because we must, as of now, lay the foundations for the development and conclusion of a truly multila tetal arrangement that could ensure the partiaipa tion of all Sta tee in the protection Of Antarctica, in its exploration and exploration for the benefit of science and of all mankind.

Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) : The record ehould show that since 1983, when the question *of* Antarctica was first inscribed on the aqenda of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, many deleqatione, including my own, addressed themselves to the scope of obliqationa and undertakings assumed by the 1959 Antarctic Treaty which deeiqnated the area eouth of 60° South Latitude as an area to be ueed exclusively for peaceful purposes. It is widely recognized that the Treaty , among other things, prohibits any measures of a mill tary nature, imposes a ban on nuclear explosions, whatever their nature, as well as on the dumping of radioactive waste ma terial, thus qivinq the reqion an important demilitarized statue. The arme-control aspect of the Antarctic Treaty, whiah is closely linked with its other objectives, truly eetablinhee a *foundation* for international co-operation amonq all Members of the United Nations in scientific inveetiqatlon in this area so as to ensure protection of its unique environment. and avoid discord over territorial claims.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

My deleqation recoqnizea and apprecia tee the deep concern for global stability demonetrated hy the original Qneultative Partiee to the Antarctic Treaty by devising a way to eet aside territorial claims in Antaratioa, to convert their national ambition6 into a common concern and to use the area for peaceful purposes only. However, as the Prim, Minister of France, Mr. Michel Rocard, said in his Opening address to the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetinq, held in Paris from 9 to 19 October this year,

"The world hae changed in 30 years . . . The pressing development needs of the most underprivileged and the conetrainta genetated by *the* failure to exercise proper control over the processes of industrialization compel us to look to the world 's future in a new f rame of mind and with new means. The world is one and mankind is one ... It is no longer enough to acknowledge the facts . . . The time has corm for politicians to face UP to their responsibilities".

That statement, which reflects ettonq scepticism on the part of one of the original parties to the Antarctic Treaty, qivee a etronq indication of the inherent flaws and weaknesses in that exclusive club.

We do not dispute that the Antarctic Treaty has kept the Antarctic region free of nuclear weapons, but the major points with which my delegation has difficulties are, first, the non-democratic decision-making process over issues concerning Antarctica ; secondly , the reluctance of the Antarctic Treaty Parties to accept negotiations on a universalized meahaniem that would enable the sharing by all na tions of the benef ite to be derived from Antarctica , both now and in the future; and, thirdly, the total disregard of United Nations resolutions which call upon Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to put a moratorium on negotiations to

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

establish a mineral régime in Antarctica and their deplorable refueal to invite the United Nations Secretary-General to their consultative meetings.

After space, the Antarctic region, with more than 5 million square miles surrounding the South Pole, is the most isolated, and humanity s last relatively unexplored f rontier. Its land appears only where the 15,000-foot peaks of mountain ranges break throoqh the ice. The value of this region for scientific research and co-operaion, its location and its ecosystem are of qreat importance and are necessary to the entire world community, so that, truly rpeakinq, it is quite unfair to leave its entire management in the hands of an exclusive club made UP of a few self -appointed rich nations.

The Antarctic Treaty itself is discriminatory. It is restricted to thoee States with hiqh technological know-how which can, owinq to *their* scientific advancement, undertake scientif ic expeditions In the region. Theae countries, as we all know, are the rich and induetriallaed States. The Treaty also maintains a two-tier membership syetem. The Qnsultative Pattiee, as the Treaty core, reserve f o r themselves the right t o determine policies, while the rest remain peripheral to the whole system. Even the right to propose a review mechanism is reserved to members of the Treaty only. This two-tier membership is extremely discrimina tory with regard to new signatories.

Another ma jor problem in that the Antarctic Treaty system hae no mechanism for the enforcement of its own rules and requla tions, even tf there *were* the wish to do this. Moreover, the obligation to carry out the onqoinq scientific research necessary to achieve decision-makinq status within the Antarctic Treaty system is discriminatory aqainet States which choose not to build permanent stations in the reqion. The result has been a concentra tion of bases and a duplication of research

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

efforts in areas which are more acceeeible qeographioally, with resultant serious environmental impacts in those regions.

The member Governments of the Antarctic Treaty system must be ready to open it up to all members of the international community. They should be willing to universalize the regulatory machinery properly to control human activities in Antarctica. The present Treaty, which depends on goodwill and beautiful worde from member countries, is quite inadequate. The guarded, secretive nature of meetings *of* States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty iteelf gives rise to suspicion. Public comments and criticism are important ingredients in the evaluation of any quality production. In the case of the Antarctic Treaty there is no mechanism for public Participation or input even On environmental problems in the area. What in the justification for this secrecy and lack of public information on what goee on in the Treaty system? With the refueal of the Qneultative Parties to invite the Secretary-General to their meetings, one wonders if there is a hidden agenda-

It may be recalled that on 2 June 1988 the Qneultative Partiee to the Antarctic Treaty held neqotia tione and adopted a convention on the Antarctic mineral régime in spite of an international appeal to them to impose a moratorium on the negotb tione and to invite the United Na tione Secretary-General. They were well aware of the keen interest that this undertaking would qenerate or evoke among the wider community of nations not signatories to the Treaty. It is no wonder that the implementation and ratification of the mineral régime has reached a cul-de-sac.

In thie regard my delegation wholly supports the joint statement of the French and Australian Prime Ministers, on 18 August 1989 in Canberra, that mining in Antarctica is totally incompatible with protection of the f raqile Antarctic environment .

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

The joint eta tement by the two Prime Minis tere has underscored what the community of nations has always said, that is, that Antarctica is an important regulator of the Earth s weather patterns, that it is a phenomenon of which there is 1 imited ecientif ic underetandinq, and that any major change in the Antarctic environment could have serious unpredictable effects on the climates and environments of all parts of the globe. Its land mass of approximately 13.5 mill ion square kilometres is covered for the most part by water and ice. The 2 Per cent that remains and that is exposed provides an important but critical habitat for marine mammals and birds.

The region holds many *of* the Earth's paet secrets. The surrounding ocean is rich in planktcnic species, which form a vital link and foundation for the marine ecosystem. It is also the site of the Antarctic convergence zone, where cold water mete the warmer waters of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, which provides the environment with the necessary nutrients that are carried thousands of kilometres alonq the Earth's surface. Also it hae been established that any uncontrollable exploitation Of krill, which forma a vital link in the protein-rich food-chain system in the area, could be hazardous to the whole world. Thus the impact of Antarctica on the world ecology is of concern not only to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Partiee but to the community of nations as a whole.

Therefore it is necessary that an acceptable arrangement be worked out that would universalize the distribution of benefits accruinq from Antarctic resource8 and make all nations accountable to the United Nations system. At present there is an underlyinq theme of ecepticiam vis-à-vis the technical or economic feasibility of exploitation in Antarctica, which requires more stringently evaluated economic guidelines agreed upon by the whole international community. In recognition of the collective responsibility for the prctection of the environment in reqard to the

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

question of exploitation and exploration rights, the Secretary-General would act as a bridge between Treaty parties and Member States outside the Antarctic Treaty system. In this way the international community could be involved in Antarctica and also be able to see that its concerns and interests were fairly accommodated.

It is on the same premise that we support the current French-Australian proposal and the eubrequent decision of the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting held in Paris calling for proper international management of the Antarctic. This proposal, which speaks of an "urgent need for negotiation of "a comprehensive environmental protecticn convention ,should be able to lead to the creation of an international Antarctic environmental protection agency, within the framework of the Uni ted Na tions, that should establish needed regulatory controls On tourism, map out rules of liability covering all States' activities and set out enforceable and comprehens ive in ter na t ional mon i tor ing programmes.

As an African delegation, the delegation *of* Kenya is very sensitive, and naturally so, to the continued participation of the hideous Fascist régime of South Africa in the Antarctic Treaty activities, and more painful and deplorable is its par ticipa tion in the recent Consulta tive Meeting, held in Paris last month, in total disregard of various General Assembly resolutions, particularly resolution 42/46 A, which specifically called for the expulsion of the racist Pretoria régime from Antarctic Treaty activities.

It defies logic and it is indeed mind-boggling that even countries together with which we have fought againet the apartheid régime, others which we regard as friends of free Africa and of course others that boast loudly in various international forums of being the champione of democracy, peace, freedom, justice and eauality are directly or indirectly underwriting apartheid by condoning the membership and participation of the racist régime in their Consultative Party mee tinge and acti vi ties.

(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to ret tera te its appeal to all parties to the Antarctic Treaty to muster the necessary political courage and take urgent measures to exclude the racist régime of South Africa fran participation in meetings of the Consultative Parties at the earliest date possible.

Mrs. MULAMULA (United Republic of Tanzania): The significance of Antarctica to the international community has been increasingly underlined by the growing international interest in, and knowledge of, the uninhabited continent and i ts legal régime. The growing international environmental concerns, such as the depletion of the ozone layer and global warming, have particularly brought to the forefront the main obligation upon us all of preserving and protecting the Antarctic milieu in it8 entirety. The value of environmental integrity, the unity and fragility of the pertinent ecosystem in Antarctica, must be observed.

My delega tion is participating in the debate on this important item because of our strong conviction that the future of Antarctica and of its fragile ecosystem is a matter of global concern. It cannot be left as the exclusive domain of a few countries which have abrogated the right to exploit the area, which is exclusively *the* common heritage of mankind .

In this regard, my delegation deeply regret8 that, while there is so much talk about the current euphoria and constructive dialogue created by the improved international relations, there is ample evidence of a mntinued conspiracy of silence on the part of the Antarctic Treaty contracting Parties in our debate on a subject as important a8 that of the maintenance of international peace and security . It is even more astonishing, when nation8 have come to terms with global environmental questions, that the representativea of the Antarctic Treaty Parties still see fit to continue playing down the importance of the subject under conside ration.

(Mrs. Mulamula, United Republic of Tanzania)

The present legal machinery for Antarctica has, undeniably, not kept UP with changing international realities. St is now almost three decade8 since the adoption of the Antarctic Treaty. Over the years, new principles and new norm8 of international law have emerged with respect tc the legal eta tus of spaces and area8 beyond na tional jurisdiction. First and foremost, the Antarctic Treaty does not contain specific reference to the common-heritage principle. A8 one legal writer rightly acknowledged, it could not have done so because in 1959 the expression was not yet part of the international vocabulary. Today that principle ha8 become an important ingredient in the progressive development of international law governing the use of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

For the record, one need only cite a few international treaties which have incorporated that principle. These include the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea, as well a8 the 1979 Treaty Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, reference to this principle was also made in the Outer Space Treaty of 1967.

(Mrs. Mulamula; United Republic of Tanzania)

Among other things, these régimes have demonstrated a general consensus that the common-heritage principle tends to create obligations for individual States to use those areas in a way that promotes not only national interests but also the well-being of the world.

The continued exclusivity of the Antarctic Treaty - its unaccountability, its secrecy and its two-tier membership - above all diminishes the applicability Of the Principle of universality often invoked by its numerically limited group of States.

Those are some of the issues to which the parties should urgently address themselves in view of the fast-approaching deadline of 1991 for the Treaty's eventual revis ion.

We are gratified to note that the pendulum of history appears to be swinging against a minerals future for Antarctica, thanks to the continued vigilance demonstrated by the Greenpeace Movement and other environmental and conservation organizations around the world. By their marches, their picketing, their writing, their voices, their personal sacrifices, they have brought to the forefront an issue central to the preservation of the natural environment of humanity, and given that issue the weight it deserves.

The shift in position by the Governments of France and Australia against the 1988 Convention on the Regulation of Mineral Activities in Antarctica (CRAMRA) - and this shift has won support among other Treaty Parties - has largely demonstrated what informed public opinion can do to force a reappraisal of Government priorities. Unlike the law-of-the-sea Conference, where negotiations for the drafting of the mineral régime of the international sea-bed area saw the participation of virtually all the States of the world, the negotiations on the Antarctic minerals régime were conducted in secret and within a small circle of

(Mrs. Mulamula, United Republic of Tanzania)

States, without due regard to the evolving principles applicable to the exploitation of resources beyond national jurisdiction.

The Antarctic Treaty Parties should realise that consideration of the universal Principles and interests of mankind is essential for the eventual survival of the existing Antarctic Treaty régime. It is no coincidence that the Purported consensus on CRAMRA has now collapsed, with so many Consultative Parties having second thoughts. CRAMRA, as one of the environmental groups' bulletins, Echo, put it, "has failed the test by failing to satisfy all interests".

My delegation wishes now to turn to an issue that is beyond the comprehension of Governments and Peoples that believe in civilized national and international policies. This is an issue that concerns the continued accommodation of the South African racist régime in the Antarctic Treaty system. Tanzania is deeply concerned that because of so-called strategic and economic interests and the often-invoked Principle of universality, a policy of acceptance of, or accommodation with, apartheid is being fostered by the members of the Antarctica special club. Yesterday we were reminded by the spokesman for that club that all regions were represented in the membership of the Antarctic Treaty. I wish to ask that spokesman whether Africa should take pride in the fact that it is being represented by an outlav State.

Tanzania has more often than not stated that there can be no peace or accommodation with apartheid. Those who associate themselves with the representatives of the apartheid régime in the secret meetinqs of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties are in fact contributing to the undoing of all that has bean achieved in the global campaign to isolate the apartheid regime. Ib preach accommodation or neutrality with regard to a system that has been universally

(Mrs. Mulamula, United Republic of Tanzania)

condemned as a crime against humanity is immoral and politically unacceptable. The responsibility for eliminating apartheid belongs to all mankind. For as a system apartheid offends mankind. In essence it represents a negation of our common endeavour, which we seek to foster by our commitment to the ideals of the Charter of this Organization.

My delegation therefore wishes to appeal to those States Parties which have maintained a strong anti-apartheid stance in this body not to let their vigilance against apartheid lapse but, instead, continue to demonstrate their commitment to the isolation of the apartheid régime. If those countries, some of which are Consultative Parties, could extend their strong opposition to apply to the participation of the racist régime in their meetings, then we believe that the rest Of the members would be either persuaded or shamed into compliance with the international mandate to isolate South Africa.

In conclusion let me cite here the words of Jean Jacques Rousseau, a political philosopher, who in 1762 wrote that

"... everything is perfect coming from the Creator; everything degeneratse in the hands of man ."

Since time immemorial, man has abused the Earth. Newton slaw of physics demonstrates that to every action there is a reaction. We plunder the Earth without giving thought to the fact that we live in a world with finite resources. If we keep on plundering out of economic greed, we shall have to pay our debt at a time when it may be very costly to ensure our own survival. The greenhouse effect and the depletion of the Earth s protective ozone layer already under way are irreversible but one hopes that these effects Could be contained if all concerned could act responsibly and in time.

(Mrs. Mulamula, United Republic of Tans an ia)

A grea t eta tesman, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, wrote a letter on 26 February 1937 to etate governors in which ha said, "... the nation that destroys its soil destroys itself ". Antarctica, with its fragile ecosystem, on which the balance of the global environment8 and the ecoeyetem heavily depends, should therefore not be left to degenerate in the hands of man. We would be destroying our awn Planet.

The draft resolutions before the Committee are expressions of our Organization's legitimate concerns over the future of and operation6 in Antarotica. My delegation therefore believes that all those who care for the interests and eutvival of mankind should find no difficulty in supporting these draft resol utione.

Mr. KALUDJEROVIC (Yugoslavia): Discussion of the issue over a number of years har failed to bring about oonoerted efforts by the international community to resolve tht remaining, and inoreaeinqly important, questions reqardinq protection of, and the promotion of co-operation in, Antarctica. The fact that this issue has been under oontinual consideration by the United Nations confirms its qlobal character. Thie session provides yet another opportunity for open and constructive dialogue.

The ohallenqes fboinq the contemporary world raise many questions that can, and rhould, be resolved throuqh united and effective action by the international community. We are oonvincsd that the question of Antarctica, as one of the issues of qreat importanoe and interest to the en tire international community, can beet be considered in the United Natione.

Proceed1 nq from these pos i tions, Yuqorlavia believes that in ooneiderinq the question of Antarctica, the validity of the Antarctic Treaty and the régime eetabliehed in 1959 rhould be recognized. It certainly includes the demilitarization, as well as the denuclearization, of Antarctica, These and other provisions that enable Antarctica to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes are of exaeptional importance, regardless of the fact that they have been agreed upon by a small group of countries. These provisions must be preser ved.

We believe that it is necessary to consider the remaining outstanding issues - those that were not, and could not have been, covered by the Treaty at the time of i ts oonc l us ion. However, to the repeated calls of a majority of United Nations Member States there has been no appropriate response by the Consultative Parties to the Treaty. This one-sideness cannot be understood au other than a form of discrimination against the reet of the internationai community. Exclusiveness, by its very nature cannot secure the realization of the long-term interests of any Country or qroups of countries.

(Mr. Kaludjerovic, Yugoslavia)

In view of the global importance of Antarctica, it is becoming increasingly evident that all members of the international community should participate in the decis ion-making process. With that in mind, the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, at their Ninth Conference, held in Belgrade last September, reaffirmed their conviction that, in the intereats of all mankind, Antarctica should for ever be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and that it should not become the scene or object of international discord. They recoqnized the interest Of mankind as a whole in Antarctica, in terms, inter alla, of international peace and eecuri ty , the economy, the environment, and scientific research and its effects on global climatic condi tione. They also affirmed the interest of all mankind in ensuring the Protection and conservation of the environment and of the dependent and associated ecosystem of the Antarctic aqainot all harmful human activities.

Among the pr iori ties of the international community, perhaps no ques tion has assumed such topicality in such a ehort period as has the environment. Growing environmental Problems, which poee a threat to the very eurvival of mankind, testify to the interdependence of the interests of all nationo. We all suffer the consequences of environmental degrada tion, therefore environmental protection calls for a qlobal, multilateral approach. In thie regard, Antarctica cannot, and must not, be an exception. There is an increasing awareness of this fact in the liqht of the consequences that the exploitation of Antarctica miqht have by way of disruption of the ecological balance.

In this context, we welcome a new approach by Australia, France, Belgium, India, Austria, Italy, Greece and Bulgar is. We also reooqnize the importance of the special consultative meeting, to be held next year, concerning the creation of an overall system to protect the dependent and associated ecosystem in Antarctica. We commend the decision of some countries to abandon the Convention on the Req ula tion of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activi ties.

(Mr. Kaludjerovic, Yugoslavia)

Owing to the qiobal character of this issue, however, this process should lead to the broadest possible participation. The protection of Antarctica is our common concern. This neoesearily implies the involvement of the United Nations - in more ways than one. It is difficult to underatand the rejection of the repeated requests that the Secretary-General, or a representative of the Secretary-General, be invited to meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. Likewise, it is difficult to understand the non-availability of vital information and documents on this issue. It is also difficult to undsratand why possible involvement by the United Nation8 should cause fear at a time when other international organizations have been invited to the Consultative Parties' meeting in Paris. In these circumetancee we all must feel duty-bound to act jointly.

Like many others, my deleqation would Like to reiterate its reqret at the continued assocla tion of the apartheid régime of South Af rice with the Antarctic Treaty réq ime. We fully endorse the request that the Consultative Parties take urqent measurer; to exclude the apartheid régime of South Africa from participation in their meetinqs at the earliest possible date.

In conclus ion, let me point out that our interest is neither divis ion nor confrontation; our interest is co-Operation between the Treaty Parties and the United Nat ions. We shall eeek every opportunity to engage in such a dialoque in order to ensure full protection of Antarctica in the interests of all of us.

Mr. MORADI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Antarctica is a common heritaqe Of mankind and an important part *of the* planet Earth. Consequently we bear the responsibili ty for its perserva tion, and no nation rhould be excluded from active Participation in something that affects its very survival. As with outer space and the sea-bed, Antarctica is considered the common heritaqe of mankind. In this regard the representative of Pakistan was speaking the truth when, in his statement, he said:

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

"The parties to the [Antarctic] Treaty . . . have arrogated to themselves the right to decide what is the mmnon interest of mankind. Even worse, the decisions that are taken in the 'common interest of mankind are kept as closely quatded secrets from the vast majority of that mankind."

(A/C. 1/44/PV. 42, pp. 24-25)

We believe that the United Nations should manifest the wish of the international community by playing a pivotal role in issues pertaining to Antarctica. In this light, the General Assembly hae touohed upon the ieeue - an ieeue that has drastic implication8 for future generations - in various resolutions. It is unfortunate that, despite the request embodied in United Nations reeolutionta, particularly General Assembly resolution 43/83 A, the Secretary-General hae not been invited to take part in meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. In thie respect, in paragraph 6 *of* his report (A/44/586), he says:

*The Secretary-General was not in receipt *of* an invitation to meetings of Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, and therefore is not in a position ta Provide any evaluation@ thereon.

At a time when openness and transparency are prevalent in international relations we are witneasinq strict observance of secrecy in the decision-making Process and meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Qnsultative Parties. Even documents of those meetings are not released publicly. Those documents should be released and made public concurrently with meetinqs or immediately aftarwarde.

It may be taken for granted that the territorial claims embodied *in* article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty and the discriminatory nature of its decision-making process constitute an obstacle to those seeking to participate actively and

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

positively in the Antarctic process. The book Antarctic Legal Réqime auotee United States Secretary Hughes as having declared, in 1924, that discovery alone does not support 4 valid claim to sovereignty. "

The aurvival of our planet depends on the safety of Antartica. The fraqile Antarctic environment and its associated ecosystems need more attention than ever before. Incidents such as the einkinq of an Arqentinian oil tanker in January 1989 near Palmer Station once again underline the importance of preserving the Antarctic environment. This rewires a univereal régime that can act efficiently and promptly in the event of such mishaps. We share the concerns expressed in the statement annexed to document A/44/125, dated 13 February 19 89, which, inter alia, says:

> It is apparent that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, despite their technological and scientific knowledqe of the continent, have not 1 ived UP to their responsibilities to deal with such threats to the environment, due to the absence of appropriate institutional mechanisms within the Treaty system itself.

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Reouhlic of Iran)

The potential hazards of the exploitation of the resources of Antarctica have, Particularly since the adoption in June 1988 of the Wellinqton minerals convention, increased dras tically. In addition, this convention has taken the restrictive and unequal nature of the Antarctic management régime as a fait accompli. Furthermore, this is contrary to the principle of preservation of the environment envisaged to some extent in the Antarctic Treaty.

We welcome the reservations on the minerals convention recently expressed by some members of the Treaty, as well as their declaration of the Antarctic as the world s wilderness reserve. We hope that efforts will be di rected towards negotiating 4 new environmental protection convention for the raq ion, with the Participation of all State Members of the United Nations.

Another issue of concern to my delegation is the participation of the apartheid réqime of South Africa in the meetinqs of Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. Such participation rune counter to General Assembly resolutions, includinq resolution 43/83 B. This is also a sign of acquiescence in the crimes committed by that réqime and its non-compliance with United Nations resolutions against apartheid.

In conclusion, I wish to call for the widest support for the draft resolution introduced by Malaysia and sponsored also by other deleqations, includinq my own.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I have to inform the Committee that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Republic of Tanzania have become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/44/L.69.

The meetinq rose at 12.25 p.m.