



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

31st plenary meeting

Thursday, 28 September 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Holkeri (Finland)

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

Agenda item 10 (continued)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/55/1)

Mr. Botnaru (Republic of Moldova): Allow me to complement you, Mr. President, on the manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly and to wish you every success.

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for a stimulating and comprehensive annual report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). We also commend him for his decision to introduce the report, as was done during the past three years, in a plenary meeting at the outset of the general debate, allowing us to focus better in the ministerial debate. This is a welcome arrangement, which should continue in the future.

The report under consideration gives up a broad and analytical perspective on what the United Nations does and what it expects to do. It also provides an opportunity to review whether the United Nations is equipped to meet present and future challenges by delivering approaches and recommendations focused on areas where the United Nations can make a real difference.

My delegation appreciates the Secretary-General's depiction of problems that currently confront the international community. Like many other delegations, we also believe that globalization is

among the most important challenges facing us all. Nevertheless, the challenges addressed first and foremost by the United Nations Charter, those of peace and security, still have a very central role in today's world. We welcome the Secretary-General's emphasis in his report on the issues of achieving peace and security. The report reminded us that since last September numerous internal conflicts have continued and new wars have broken out. We have seen that the efforts of the international community, including those of the United Nations, to bring peace and stability to those areas have had rather mixed success and some show a distressing tendency to unravel.

As a country affected by a long-running internal conflict, we have always been very sensitive to issues that involve preventing and resolving conflicts. Therefore, we are supportive of the Secretary-General's proposals and approaches, including those contained in the report under consideration, seek to prevent conflicts, stop armed conflicts and keep and build sustainable peace in the area. We commend in particular his initiative in convening the Brahimi panel on United Nations peacekeeping operations and welcome his commitment to implement, together with the Member States, the panel's key recommendations. The experience of recent years has clearly shown that the United Nations capacity to meet an expanding and an increasingly complex range of peacekeeping demands needs significant improvement. Consequently, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations also needs to be strengthened. We agree therefore with the Secretary-General that additional resources must be

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envisioned in order to allow the United Nations to carry out its mandate in the field of peacekeeping and peace-building.

With regard to conflict prevention, Moldova strongly advocates enhancing the United Nations capacity to identify and respond to conflict situations. We are pleased to find out that a prevention team has been established to this end within the Department of Political Affairs. We hope very much that this new unit will pay due attention to all potential conflict areas, and that the specific situation in the Transdnestr region of the Republic of Moldova will also be scrutinized from the perspective of conflict prevention.

We share the view that preventive strategies must reach all communities that are experiencing emergencies. The unequal attention given by the international system to certain conflicts or conflict situations remains a matter of great concern. We draw attention to the appeal made recently by the chairperson of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to increase the political awareness of the world community with regard to a number of unresolved or potential conflicts and the attendant security risks, which often remain outside the spotlight of broader public attention despite their highly destabilizing impact on the region and beyond. It is well known that very often it is the newly independent States currently undergoing profound economic and political transformation that are the objects and victims of conflict situations.

The ardent desire of the peoples of the countries concerned is that these conflicts or conflict situations be terminated and their root causes eliminated. The Secretary-General's report identifies a number of needs and objectives that, in a sense, provide the necessary basis, if implemented, for gradual elimination of the root causes of the conflicts I have mentioned.

The United Nations needs to be refocused and increase its effectiveness so as to play a leading role in shaping this globalizing era. Globalization is a great historic shift offering unparalleled opportunity for huge advancements in human development. But, as the Secretary-General observed, there are risks. Globalization creates losers as well as winners. The challenge, in our view, is to manage these objects equitably and sustainably. The United Nations needs to do more in providing leadership to drive the

development agenda and pursue the development targets Member States have set.

We welcome therefore the broadening of the dialogue between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, focused on strengthening financial arrangements as well as eradicating poverty. Moldova also supports the Secretary-General's efforts to engage the United Nations in a regular dialogue with the private sector and civil organizations involved in the development process.

My delegation agrees that the United Nations and its partners, including global ones, have extraordinary capacities in the development field and that it is imperative to use them effectively in a synergetic way.

In the final analysis, we consider that all these new global partnerships will enhance the capacity of the Organization to assist the developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, to share in the benefits of globalization. The annual report before the General Assembly today embraces all the main areas in which the United Nations is mandated to conduct its activities. Today we have focused our statement on only a few subjects that are, in our view, particularly relevant. However, all the subjects brought to our attention by the Secretary-General are of importance, and it is the intention of my delegation to devote the same attention to each of them in the course of this session.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reiterate its full support for the Secretary-General's activities and for reforming the United Nations and making it more efficient and relevant to the new millennium.

Mr. Al-Humaimidi (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The comprehensive report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/55/1 covers the increasing activities of the United Nations in a world undergoing enormous changes — a fact that underscores the importance of the role of the United Nations and the need to enhance the Organization and promote its credibility and independence. The Secretary-General has touched upon many important topics, and it would be very difficult to comment on every one of them. We will therefore express our position on issues as they come up on the agenda. However, there are some matters that we feel we must address now. I shall begin with the topic of sanctions.

First of all, we welcome the Secretary-General's conclusion that doubts regarding the effectiveness of sanctions have increased in recent years, as well as his concern about the negative effects of sanctions on civilian populations and on neighbouring countries whose trade suffers from sanctions without compensation. The Secretary-General calls upon the international community to reflect upon the current system of sanctions and on whether it is in keeping with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, in particular with regard to the comprehensive sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Those sanctions are now entering their eleventh year and are by any measure a form of collective punishment imposed on the Iraqi people. They have led to the death of approximately 1.5 million Iraqi citizens, including 500,000 children under the age of five, as has been affirmed by the report of the United Nations Children's Fund that was published on 12 August 1999. Moreover, the sanctions have destroyed the social fabric of the country and are killing approximately 7,000 children every month. On the basis of this data, there is absolutely no doubt that those sanctions are blatantly in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law. This has been confirmed by United Nations agencies and humanitarian and human rights organizations.

Further proof of the negative effects of the sanctions against Iraq is provided by the working paper adopted at Geneva by the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights at its fifty-second session, which was held from 31 July to 25 August 2000. That document affirmed that the comprehensive sanctions imposed on Iraq are illegitimate under international humanitarian law. Despite increasing calls by the international community to end this genocide, the United Nations — with the support of the United Kingdom — insists on perpetuating those sanctions as part of its plan to destabilize the region, create permanent tension, impose its hegemony over the region and rob it of its wealth. The United States of America has unequivocally declared its intention to use the veto against any attempt to lift the sanctions imposed against Iraq. Moreover, its Secretary of State has said on a television programme that the death of half a million Iraqi children is an acceptable price for the ongoing sanctions.

Considering that the Member States of the United Nations have conferred upon the Security Council the mandate to speak on their behalf, in line with the purposes and principles of the Organization and Article 24 of the Charter, and given that the Council has gone beyond the purposes and principles of the Charter with regard to the sanctions imposed against Iraq and is thereby providing cover for the application of genocidal policies against an entire people, the Member States of the United Nations should express their opinion as to the Council's adherence to its mandate. It should also be mentioned that Article 25 of the Charter stipulates that the Member States must accept the resolutions of the Security Council and implement them in accordance with the Charter. In other words, the comprehensive sanctions against Iraq — which are illegitimate under international humanitarian law and violate the concept of human rights — do not represent a Council decision to which Member States should be committed.

Mr. Mungra (Suriname), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My second point deals with the achievement of peace and security. The Secretary-General has spoken about, and provided examples of, the changes that have taken place since the end of the cold war with regard to threats to peace and security. We believe that it is appropriate to focus on a new type of threat, namely, that of a single State or States employing armed force against sovereign States in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations. That was the case in the aggression against Yugoslavia and the ongoing aggression against Iraq.

Iraq is subjected to daily raids by British and American planes in the "no flight zone", which was imposed by a unilateral decision by the Governments of Washington and London. Those planes take off from bases in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey. Those zones, established in 1991 and 1992, are in no way legitimate and have no basis in the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, a fact that has been confirmed by the Secretary-General and by numerous countries, including three permanent members of the Council. The United Nations is called upon to end this aggression and to bring those responsible for it to account.

My third point refers to humanitarian intervention. Iraq joins the majority of the Member

States of the United Nations in affirming that the concept of humanitarian intervention runs counter to international law, the Charter of the United Nations and such basic principles of the current international order as sovereignty, political independence, regional integrity and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States. The Non-Aligned Movement has declared its rejection of the concept of humanitarian intervention and has affirmed that human rights should not be used as a political tool to intervene in the internal affairs of States. The Charter, international conventions on human rights and other relevant international mechanisms provide the framework for dealing with violations of human rights. Those rights should be promoted, but imposing new ideas such as humanitarian intervention in a world where one dominant Power prevails will not serve the interests of international security but will in fact put international security at risk. The first victims of that undermined security will be the countries of the third world.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and farsighted report on the work of the Organization. This report offers the General Assembly a broad picture of our achievements over the course of the last year and of the challenges ahead. Coupled with his complementary statement to the General Assembly, the present report is another successful effort on the part of the Secretary-General and his colleagues to restore to the United Nations its rightful role in pursuit of global peace and security.

The Secretary-General's report shows clearly that there is no alternative to strengthening the United Nations as the central mechanism for ensuring peace and security in the world. The developments that marked the reporting period, and the way the international community tried to cope with them, have confirmed that there is no other universal tool to ensure the joint management of international relations. In this context, the endeavours undertaken by the United Nations in the past year, as described in the report, along with the successful holding of the Millennium Summit, are promising.

In his report, the Secretary-General has highlighted, among other things, the way the United Nations handles armed conflicts, as well as the role the Organization can play in helping control collectively the process of globalization. These are among the most

significant issues at the top of the international agenda and, at the same time, command the greatest attention and concern of the international community.

While humanity is undergoing the most radical changes ever experienced by humankind, and when significant efforts are needed to direct the course of events in a way compatible with the interests of the majority of the world population, it is distressing that local conflicts in some parts of the globe, especially in Africa, are continuing unabated. In view of these ongoing crises and conflicts that cause enormous humanitarian suffering, loss of life and have an adverse impact on the socio-economic development of the affected regions, sustainable peace and security for all countries and people remain central objectives of the United Nations, just as they were when the Organization was founded over half a century ago.

United Nations peacekeeping operations are extremely visible and they therefore come under close scrutiny by world public opinion. The political weight of the United Nations is measured by the outside world mainly by the way it tackles and manages conflict situations across the globe. Therefore, it should be worrisome that, in recent years, United Nations peacekeeping activities have been criticized for the lack of uniform standards applied equally to all regions, for the lack of adequate funding and resources, for mismanagement, and for other reasons. In this context, and in view of the reform of the United Nations still on the agenda, there is a pressing need, and a precious opportunity, to articulate a more effective and efficient role for the United Nations in conflict management in the midst of fundamental changes on the international scene.

Three major studies commissioned by the Secretary-General last year have demonstrated that due attention was being paid to the issue and that the Secretariat was committed to addressing seriously the crux of the matter, with a view to removing the deficiencies and to better understanding the needs and the potential of peacekeeping operations. In the first two studies, on the circumstances surrounding the crimes against humanity in Srebrenica and Rwanda, efforts have been made to shed light on what went wrong, including within the Secretariat, and to draw lessons that could help the smooth running of current and future peacekeeping operations.

In view of the increasingly complex task faced by peacekeeping operations as the United Nations seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts, the third study, undertaken by a panel of experts established at the initiative of the Secretary-General and led skilfully and ably by Ambassador Brahimi, is considered to be an important and useful step in the right direction. We are confident that the major overview conducted by the Brahimi Panel and the recommendations put forward by it will greatly contribute to ensuring more effective and efficient peacekeeping operations in the future. In the meantime, we believe that the Panel's report needs to be thoroughly and constructively considered and debated by the Member States in the different bodies of the United Nations. While some of the Panel's recommendations relate to matters that are fully within the purview of the Secretary General, others will need the approval of different bodies of the United Nations.

Today, peacekeeping operations remain an important means for the United Nations to fulfil its obligations in safeguarding world peace and security. However, given the extent of the challenges and complexity of tasks and responsibilities, there is a need for more, better-equipped and trained troops, adequate resources, the appropriate mandate, preparedness for a worst-case scenario and coordinated joint action by Member States and the Secretariat. We believe that we need to build on the momentum generated following the release of the Panel's report and to continue to debate the pressing issues facing peacekeeping operations so as to find proper remedies for the current deficiencies in this field.

In the context of conflict resolution, it is worth recalling that religion can help greatly to combat the hatred and persecution that continue to fuel so many conflicts within and without national borders. Here, I would like to echo the Secretary-General's remark in his address to the Millennium World Peace Summit in New York, when he invited the religious leaders to look within and consider promoting justice, equality, reconciliation and peace. We believe that the promotion of this idea can mitigate some of the fundamental problems lying at the origin of most conflicts.

Attention paid at the Millennium Summit to the issues of concern to the world community, especially the developing world, such as globalization, poverty eradication, the increasing digital divide, and so forth, should be considered a positive development in international relations. Pledges undertaken by the

heads of State and Government from both the developed and developing worlds are encouraging and should be followed up by our Organization.

Globalization is gaining currency as the prevailing conceptual framework within which a considerable portion of recent international developments and interdependencies can be interpreted. The real debate is not about whether globalization exists and will continue to do so, but about how its costs and benefits are distributed. Globalization remains potentially a powerful dynamic force for growth and development. It can improve the overall performance of developing countries' economies by opening up market opportunities for their exports, by promoting the transfer of technology and by increasing the financial resources available for investment.

Maximizing the benefits of globalization requires the international community to address the imbalances and asymmetries in the international economy, including the new economy based on information technology and characterized, *inter alia*, by the digital divide, which if not bridged, will result in a widening of the gap between the poor and the rich and will render many potential changes in the social, economic and environmental arenas impossible or meaningless. It is evident that international cooperation is the only way to harness the power of globalization to a vision of the good life for all. Sustainability has little meaning in a world marked by poverty and inequality. It is more than clear now that, although globalization is a reality, it is at the same time subject to policy options.

The eradication of poverty still lies at the heart of all endeavours for development in the developing world and has always been a priority of international cooperation for development. The fact remains, however, that poverty has not declined in most regions and in some regions is increasing. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General,

"half of the world's population still must try to survive on less than \$2 a day". (A/55/I, para. 165)

The outcomes of major United Nations conferences and their reviews, particularly the World Summit for Social Development, have set targets for the international community to halve the incidence of poverty by 2015. The translation of these commitments into effective action needs coherence and the

coordinated efforts of all relevant bodies within the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, regional bodies, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. It has become clear that aid alone cannot and will not contribute to poverty eradication; rather, the active participation of developing countries in the international economy and their integration into the international financial and trade system through their effective participation in international decision-making in these fields and market access are also imperative to the success of policies for poverty eradication and their implementation.

The United Nations system has played a major role in raising the concerns of developing countries at international forums, designing poverty eradication policies in developing countries and disseminating best practices within the developing world. Nevertheless, there is a need to create a vision for future actions of the United Nations in the area of poverty eradication through its full participation in global economic policy-making and by strengthening its unique role as a universal Organization for the coordination of social and economic policies at the international level, in cooperation with international and regional financial and trade bodies.

We have come a long way since we met in 1992 at Rio, where we managed to achieve a convoluted compromise and a delicate balance on how to proceed to protect the environment while maintaining the pace of growth and at the same time being responsive to the legitimate quest of developing countries for sustained economic growth in an enabling international environment. The Islamic Republic of Iran is looking forward to the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 and its preparatory process and considers the event to be another chance for all States to subject themselves to an assessment of their level of compliance with the practical requirements of the principles agreed and commitments made at Rio with a view to removing the obstacles impeding the full implementation of Agenda 21.

Of prime importance to developing countries is the pivotal principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which will remain the prevalent spirit inspiring any further review in which the developing world will participate. Iran will continue to offer its best affordable contribution to the advancement of sustainable development — *inter alia*, through the 10-

year review process — and will remain committed to any international endeavour aimed at the dual containment of environmental degradation and poverty.

Ms. Durrant (Jamaica): Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General for the preparation and presentation of his annual report on the work of the Organization, which offers a very informative and comprehensive overview of the various aspects of the work of the United Nations. We believe that this report will serve as a useful basis for our deliberations throughout the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Since most of the issues raised in the report will be addressed under separate agenda items, I will confine my remarks to two areas of concern to my delegation: increasing the emphasis of the United Nations system on the prevention of armed conflicts and the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel.

My delegation supports the clear link made in the Secretary-General's report between international peace and stability and the promotion of sustainable economic and social development. In an increasingly globalized world, achieving sustainable peace demands the increased attention of our Organization. While the forces of globalization have resulted in extraordinary improvements in the lives of many, we have to face the challenges presented by this phenomenon, including the growing digital divide between the North and the South and increasing levels of poverty and social inequality, compounded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. An effective and timely response to these challenges will ultimately constitute a yardstick for assessing the effectiveness of the United Nations.

The Millennium Summit provided a unique and historic occasion to articulate a common vision for a United Nations of the twenty-first century. Although remarkable progress has been made, there can be no question that much remains to be done to secure the universal values of liberty and tolerance and the culture of non-violence to which we aspire. In the face of the continued threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and the new scourges of terrorism, international crime and illicit traffic in narcotics and small arms, our collective efforts to promote the ideals and principles of the United Nations Charter must be maintained and strengthened.

It is in this context that I turn to the problems of peacekeeping, peace-building and development. It is clear that peace operations no longer involve merely separating warring parties and monitoring ceasefire agreements. As noted by the Secretary-General in his report, they are a far more extensive and complex undertaking involving disarmament, demobilization of combatants, monitoring of human rights, and institutional and legal reforms. We therefore express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for establishing the Panel on Peace Operations, chaired by Ambassador Brahimi. We wish to thank the Panel for its insightful and practical recommendations.

Jamaica fully concurs that stronger political and financial support for the Organization, rapid deployment standards and improved technical support for peace operations are essential. The recommendations by the Brahimi Panel deserve serious and careful consideration, and we hope that they will be fully addressed during this session of the General Assembly.

I wish to note the emphasis placed in the Brahimi report on the issue of the prevention of armed conflicts, as my delegation believes that addressing the root causes of conflict merits primary attention and represents the most effective approach to achieving sustainable peace and security.

In this context, my delegation fully supported the Secretary-General's call last year for us to move to a "culture of prevention", as we believe that the prevention of conflicts must be the key focus in the maintenance of international peace. The international community must convert the fruits of the dialogue on the prevention of conflict into an effective course of action for the twenty-first century. A careful examination of the root causes of conflict suggests that the answers will not be easy to come by. Already radical initiatives, such as the move in the Security Council to boldly challenge the sinister relationships between armed conflict and illicit trade in diamonds and other natural resources, point to a new and more systematic approach to the prevention of conflict.

During Jamaica's presidency of the Security Council in July 2000, an open debate on the prevention of armed conflict allowed members and non-members of the Council to again discuss and identify practical initiatives to enhance the role of the Council in the prevention of conflicts. The presidential statement

issued following the debate underlined the need for an in-depth consideration of the issue and provided the mandate for a report which the Secretary-General will present in May 2001.

The other issue which my delegation wishes to address at this time is the protection of United Nations and associated personnel. On 25 September, members of the staff of the United Nations and members of delegations paused for the annual observance of Staff Day. Regrettably, this provided a sad reminder that over the past year some 65 peacekeepers and civilian staff of the United Nations had lost their lives while discharging their duties.

My delegation is deeply concerned about the continued attacks on humanitarian workers, and we recall with deep regret the recent brutal killing of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees staff in East Timor. The constant dangers faced by United Nations staff in the field highlight the urgency with which the safety and security of these persons must be addressed. It is a matter of concern that parties to armed conflict continue to disregard the rules of international humanitarian law and to place the lives of our staff in danger. Steps must be taken to prosecute and bring to justice those responsible for violence against United Nations and associated personnel.

The international community must, as a priority, strengthen international humanitarian and human rights standards. The Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel is an important contribution to the legal regime for the protection of humanitarian workers. With this in mind, Jamaica's Prime Minister, during the Millennium Summit, presented Jamaica's instrument of accession to this important Convention. We do believe, however, that the scope of application of this instrument should be expanded to cover locally recruited and other personnel not currently covered under the Convention.

The targeting of humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel is unacceptable, and we support the taking of measures to improve staff safety and to provide further training to all personnel engaged in humanitarian and peacekeeping missions. Every Member State has a responsibility to contribute to this process. Without the staff of the United Nations prepared to serve in dangerous situations, the work of the Organization would not be taken forward.

In conclusion, we commend the Secretary-General for his outstanding leadership of the Organization and thank him for the thought-provoking ideas expressed in his report entitled "Common destiny: a new resolve".

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): Tanzania commends the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization. We applaud his vision of the Organization, which defines its primary role as the promotion of collective action to meet the challenges that confront our shared humanity. The recently concluded Millennium Summit is a vindication of this vision. The Summit deliberations and the Declaration that was adopted were also a vindication of the critical role of the Organization in evolving, defining and articulating a global agenda. The Secretary-General and the Secretariat have had a significant role in that respect. We commend them, even as we call for a stronger rededication to the implementation of the agenda we have set for ourselves.

It is not our desire to comment on the report in its entirety. Others have done so, and we share many of the concerns raised, in particular those regarding the determination to strengthen worldwide peacekeeping operations. Our central focus is on Africa. The promotion of durable peace has to go hand in hand with the pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. For Africa this is a critical challenge. We bank on the United Nations to take the lead in helping Africa. While we know the challenge is primarily ours, international support is critical. This requires forging partnerships with the other Member States and the international community. Ultimately, an Africa that is at peace with itself and self-reliant will make significant contributions to world peace and development.

In paragraph 231 the report states:

"The breadth and depth of United Nations involvement in Africa is extraordinary".

The involvement is a demonstration of the degree of commitment to African development. We appreciate that Africa has its own share of responsibilities. And indeed a lot is being done in all spheres.

What Africa now needs is concrete commitments for a new partnership. We are gratified that the Summit and the Declaration that it adopted provided a new

high-level political commitment to the development of Africa. It now behoves the Organization and the Secretary-General to draw the attention of world public opinion to the new challenge of helping Africa equip itself with the tools necessary to compete in the global economy.

It is also for the Organization to further demonstrate its commitment to peace and sustainable development in Africa by giving momentum to dealing with the issues that impede Africa's competitiveness. The matters to be dealt with include poor resource flows, access to markets, debt relief, technology transfer and fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

On market access, while Africa is striving to increase the production of goods and services, it needs free and unhindered access for its products in the developed countries' markets.

We welcome the greater international awareness of the need to address the debt problem. In this regard, the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative is a welcome move, but more needs to be done to enable more countries — especially least developed countries — to qualify for HIPC funding. In addition, a comprehensive and durable solution to this problem has to be found.

The Secretary-General raises key questions concerning the complexity of preventing and resolving conflicts. At a time when the Organization is underfunded, the complexities become even more daunting. But some of the conflicts are only complicated by the Organization's own sense of limitations. It is our view that the even-handed application of policies and decisions will go a long way to instilling confidence in the Organization. Double standards should be avoided at all cost.

We are keenly conscious of the need to protect the peacekeepers who are deployed in the field. The recent tragedies in Sierra Leone are a grim reminder of the risks and dangers confronting peacekeeping operations. Caution is therefore justifiable. Here I join those who have called for strict adherence to the rules governing deployment in situations of conflict. But no two situations can be treated equally. Unlike the operation in Sierra Leone, all the parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo conflict have been calling for, indeed urging, the deployment of United Nations forces in the Congo. While caution is justified, as regards the Congo we appeal for a reassessment of

the decision made. Above all, the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be reassured that this Organization cares, that this Organization can overcome the constraints of its past tragedies in that territory in the interest of higher goals: peace, stability and development for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its people.

In paragraph 153 the Secretary-General refers to an important undertaking: the reaffirmation of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees as the universal foundation of refugee protection. There cannot be a nobler way of celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. We hope this anniversary will also be an occasion to evaluate the scope of the refugee phenomenon. The incidence of resettlement beyond camps of refugees who have not taken the option of acquiring citizenship in the host countries cannot continue to be ignored. For example, while the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees figure for refugees in Tanzania is close to half a million, the actual number residing in the country is close to a million. We appeal for a holistic approach to the refugee problem. To the host country all the refugees, whether in camps or with the people, do count.

And yet, as noted in paragraph 149, we continue to be one of the countries suffering the spillover effect of the instabilities in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The hospitality of our people is not without bounds. At times such hospitality has been rewarded by outrageous charges by the countries of origin. Our tolerance in some cases has been tested to the extreme. In rededicating ourselves to the 1951 Convention, we must also dedicate ourselves to a course of action that will not only address the root causes, but also redouble peacemaking efforts that will eventually lead to the return of refugees to their countries of origin. In the meantime, I take this opportunity to appeal for more assistance to refugees as well as to host countries.

In conclusion, we note that the Secretary-General identifies in paragraph 273 the establishment of the rule of law in international affairs as a central priority. For the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization, reform and expansion of the Security Council are imperative. The majority of us cannot repeatedly and without consequence call for the expansion of the membership of the Council without at some point bringing into serious question the credibility of the Organization as a major advocate of the rule of law.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): My delegation is happy that this year, as in the past three years, the Secretary-General was given the opportunity to introduce his report on the work of the Organization at the beginning of the general debate. This is a welcome arrangement, which should continue in the future.

My delegation is particularly happy that this year's report has identified issues that have the potential of challenging the international community in the coming years. My delegation had asked the Secretary-General to give attention to our suggestion to that effect.

The Secretary-General's report this year is readable and presents in a very user-friendly manner a broad picture of the various mandated activities of the world body. The focus on both substantive issues and issues relating to institutional reforms is appropriately balanced. This draws attention to the fact that both aspects require full and thorough consideration by the Member States in order for the United Nations to be effective and efficient.

Bangladesh finds it particularly useful that the Secretary-General offers his own assessment and suggests ways in which the international community can work together to better the lives of the people still left behind. My delegation agrees with the Secretary-General that the United Nations in many of its peace missions is charged with nothing less than helping rebuild shattered societies almost from scratch.

Bangladesh believes that peacekeeping in a broader context is an effective tool for conflict prevention. We strongly believe that peacekeeping operations should be carried out only under transparent political direction, a precise mandate of the United Nations and an effective command and control structure. In this context, we look forward to examining the recommendation made in the Brahimi Panel's Report (A/55/305).

My delegation finds it most appropriate that the Secretary-General argues for a shift from a culture of reaction to one of prevention. We also believe that this will be highly cost-effective both in human and in financial terms. We are encouraged to learn that within the United Nations system a prevention team has been set up by the Department of Political Affairs to watch over the conflict situations that may require preventive action.

We welcome the attention that the Secretary-General has given to natural disasters, as well as to violent conflicts, as events that pose serious challenges to the United Nations. His emphasis on the most basic principles of multilateralism and humanitarian ethics is absolutely relevant in this context.

The development mandate of the United Nations has special significance for Bangladesh. We are satisfied that due attention has been given to this aspect in the chapter entitled "Cooperating for development" in the report. My delegation is particularly happy to see that in this chapter the Secretary-General has emphasized the elimination of poverty worldwide and termed it the most important development goal of the United Nations.

In the section on bridging the digital divide, the Secretary-General's observation on narrowing the gap between rich and poor is commendable. We support the Secretary-General and encourage him to take steps in narrowing that digital divide.

Bangladesh is pleased that considerable attention has been given to accountability and oversight in the report. We encourage the continuation of this in the future. The monitoring of the reform process and the resulting improvements in its operations require the close attention of the Member States and should be reported upon regularly in a transparent manner.

Bangladesh welcomes the emphasis given in the report on the idea that peace, development and human rights are interrelated. The international community has been alerted to the human rights imperatives of its activities and initiatives. We would like the Secretary-General to devote some space in future reports to cover the activities relating to the promotion of the culture of peace, particularly linking it to the ongoing initiatives in various parts of the world involving civil society as a whole.

In conclusion, we would like to commend the Secretary-General again for his well-balanced report. We believe that the suggestions and ideas of Member States, as articulated in this debate, will continue to be reflected in future reports of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General for the comprehensive report he has submitted to us on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). His report covers a broad and deep range of

problems facing the United Nations over the last few years, and the Secretary-General not only raises questions, he also offers us his vision of cooperation for the entire international community in order to improve the life of those who live on hope alone.

This important and basic document provides us with an additional and useful stimulus to ensure the effectiveness of the work of this session of the Assembly, which is taking place following the Millennium Summit. That Summit was unprecedented in the level and scope of representation. It was a milestone because of its political significance. That gathering of world leaders not only confirmed that the United Nations will continue to be the main focus for managing international relations in the twenty-first century but also undoubtedly strengthened the role of the United Nations and elevated its role to new heights in the world today.

Since joining the Organization, Tajikistan has given priority to strengthening the stabilizing role of the United Nations and has supported its rational reform so that it will be able to react quickly and appropriately to what is happening in the world. We have supported building up the United Nations potential to settle crises and conflicts as they emerge. Together with all interested States, we will continue to make our constructive contribution to strengthening the potential of this Organization.

We agree with the Secretary-General that there is no issue that requires greater attention and more resources than the attainment of peace and security for all countries and peoples. The varied, complex crises that have faced the United Nations in the last decade require an in-depth analysis of the current mechanisms available to the United Nations and reflection on appropriate ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of future peacekeeping operations.

In this connection, the report prepared under the leadership of Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi provides, on the basis of an objective analysis of peacekeeping experience, realistic assessments and well-thought-out recommendations, which we agree with overall. It is clear that peacekeeping missions will for a long time continue to be one of the main areas of activity of this Organization. In some parts of the world, the flames of new wars have broken out. New conflicts seem to emerge from the ashes of the old, and some have gone on for decades without being settled. The pain and

suffering of peoples demand stronger action from the international community to help them.

Advocating further strengthening of the peacekeeping potential of the United Nations, we believe that peacekeeping must be based on full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries. It must be timely and appropriate and focused on organizing collective action by the community of nations.

We must not forget that only the Security Council that has the exclusive right to authorize on behalf of the world community the use of force for the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security.

We believe that international law must prevail whatever the circumstances of a crisis. The settlement of the conflict in Tajikistan by political and diplomatic means, under United Nations auspices, provides a very clear example of the Organization's great potential to settle crises. In our view, it exemplifies what the Secretary-General has said about the growing importance of preventive diplomacy and about the need to strengthen a culture of conflict prevention. We agree with the report's view that the very nature of conflict has changed. The dirty money gained through illicit trafficking in weapons and in drugs often fuels conflict. Tajikistan shares the Secretary-General's concerns and will do its utmost to support efforts to combat illegal drug cultivation, production, trade and abuse — which are linked also to terrorism.

In that context, the regional plan of action adopted in mid-September by the "six plus two" group, with the support of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, is of great importance. Owing to its scope and trans-border character, the drug threat from Afghanistan to the Central Asian region is so serious that no State can counter it alone. We believe that implementation of the plan, with serious ongoing support from the main donors, would make a real contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of joint international efforts to counter the growing drug threat. The Secretary-General makes this point in his report.

In his report, the Secretary-General writes also about various aspects of globalization. To varying degrees, we are all enjoying the benefits of globalization and are suffering from the problems it creates. We agree with the report that virtually the entire developing world is concerned about the

consequences of globalization. Tajikistan believes that the United Nations must do more to promote ways to narrow the development gulf between rich and poor States. We shall be preparing actively for the High-level Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development to be held in 2001, to which the report makes reference. We hope that we will be able during the preparatory process to move towards resolving problems related to the excessive debt burden weighing on developing countries, many of which have recently experienced conflicts and devastating natural disasters. Tajikistan welcomes the increasing attention to this matter on the part of the Secretary-General, the donor community and the international financial institutions.

My Government believes that easing the debt burden will release internal resources for use in education and health care, in dealing with the aftermath of conflict, in addressing environmental issues and in reacting effectively to natural disasters.

We welcome the heightened emphasis on environmental issues. A great deal has been done in recent years on those issues, as detailed in the report. The vast scope of the problems touched upon in the report made it impossible for the Secretary-General to deal in detail with one issue of growing importance: fresh water. Water, obviously, is life, and it will constitute one of the main world-wide challenges for the twenty-first century. Today, more than a billion people lack adequate access to safe drinking water; five million die each year from water-borne diseases. This problem arises in all continents. It could be said that half of the world's water resources have already been exhausted. Unless a vast effort is made to deal with the problem of water, it could become a major source of conflict. By 2050, it will be impossible to meet the fresh-water needs of more than half of the world's population. Only by working together will we be able to solve this problem. The timing of the second World Water Forum, held this year at The Hague, was no accident. Drinking water must be made available to all people at a price they can afford. This is among the goals of the United Nations; it is a key to resolving many issues.

We shall not now speak of all the matters touched on in the report, but will state our views during the debate on individual agenda items.

Let me conclude by reaffirming our entire support for the work of the Secretary-General. Tajikistan firmly

believes that the United Nations is absolutely essential. It has great strength and great potential. We believe that joint efforts by the Members of the United Nations will further strengthen the Organization and will enable it to realize that potential. The hopes and aspirations of the world's peoples are focused on the United Nations.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): I should like at the outset to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his insightful report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). It is a comprehensive document and provides us with an overall view of the role of the United Nations in dealing with the myriad issues that are of concern and interest to Member States, along with proposals for further strengthening the Organization's functioning and improving its efficiency.

As the report makes clear, security continues to be a concern of the international community, as long-standing conflicts persist and new ones erupt, often exacerbated by ethnic and religious differences and fuelled by illicit trafficking in arms. These are major challenges to international peace and security. There is thus a clear need to augment global and regional mechanisms for conflict prevention. In that regard, we are gratified to note the steps that have already been taken and those that are under consideration to prevent armed conflicts in the future.

Peacekeeping and peacemaking have now become more complex and demanding. This led to a major review by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, whose recommendations warrant our serious consideration with a view to further strengthening those operations. In view of the indispensable role of the Organization in these activities, it has become imperative to search for ways and means to ensure stable logistical and financial support. All aspects of United Nations activities have faced financial constraints in recent years, but none have faced such severe constraints as the Organization's peacekeeping missions. It is beyond doubt that the current arrangements for financing these activities are inadequate and unreliable. They place the heaviest burden on the developing countries that contribute troops, which discourages participation. Indonesia fully recognizes that implementation of the Panel's recommendations will depend to a considerable degree on the availability of additional resources and on the resolution of numerous other interrelated issues.

Equally important, peacekeeping operations should be non-intrusive and non-interventionist in nature.

This issue has again been raised in the Secretary-General's report, which has acknowledged that many States have serious and legitimate concerns about intervention for whatever reasons. Hence, the question of international intervention continues to be controversial, as it impinges on the critical issue of foreign intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States. The recent debates have underscored how far we are from reaching a consensus. But those deliberations have marked the beginnings of a healthy dialogue and have focused our attention on providing the best care in times of humanitarian emergencies. From Indonesia's viewpoint, humanitarian assistance can only be rendered by the United Nations or any other organization following a request by the State concerned, or at a minimum with its express approval. To contemplate otherwise would threaten the very foundation of the United Nations, which has always upheld the sanctity of the sovereign State as essential to international security and cooperation.

As a long-time proponent of a regional approach to disarmament, my delegation is gratified to note that the validity of this approach is acknowledged in the report. In general, we believe that both global and regional approaches to disarmament complement each other and should be pursued simultaneously.

As regards other disarmament issues identified in the report, the real cause for stalemate is the untenable approaches adopted by some countries in the post-cold-war era. Obviously, if the expectations of the international community are to be fulfilled, negotiations must be pursued with the serious political commitment of the nuclear-weapon States. Questions have constantly been raised as to the commitment of those States to fulfil their obligations. The challenge today and in the future is to ensure the full implementation of all the provisions of all the Treaties by all of the States parties.

The question of illicit traffic in small arms alluded to in the report has acquired urgency in the post-cold-war era as civilians have become intentional targets. The linkage of children to violence is poignant and is due largely to the availability of such arms. They have placed the safety of societies and the security of States in jeopardy. Various initiatives have already been taken at the regional and subregional levels in

stemming the illegal flow of small arms. The success of the forthcoming international conference will depend upon resolving a multiplicity of interrelated issues, including the root causes of conflicts, State control over security, arms supplies and illicit activities, the link of the small arms traffic with drug trafficking and terrorism, the reintegration of former combatants into unified armed forces and confidence-building measures.

The report also touches upon the harmful impact of sanctions on the civilians of the targeted countries and neighbouring States whose trade and commercial relations are disrupted without compensation and to the detriment of their economy. Sanctions are blunt instruments and, when imposed indefinitely, have served no useful purpose in achieving their objectives. They should be subjected to periodic review and terminated when their objectives are attained. Such an approach would ensure future support for the imposition and the implementation of sanctions regimes. Indonesia considers that the issue of humanitarian assistance, either in regard to natural disasters or conflict situations, should be considered in a balanced manner. We agree with the Secretary-General's view that an international response to the situation of internally displaced persons should be designed in collaboration with the Government in each affected country. Furthermore, it is our view that the central premise of the policy is that the responsibility for a humanitarian response lies first and foremost with the national Government and that such assistance should be based on the request of the Government concerned, while fully respecting State sovereignty.

My delegation would like to underline the important progress that has been made in improving coordination within the United Nations system in its response to humanitarian emergencies. The situation in Mozambique earlier this year, which drew an immediate response from the General Assembly and also the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is one example of the success that can be achieved through timely action.

Indonesia has always been committed to strengthening its national human rights mechanisms and to effectively promoting and protecting human rights at all levels. We take note of the new developments in the work and the mechanisms of human rights bodies, as indicated in the report. In that regard, we consider it important to note that what is

required foremost is to make optimal use of existing human rights bodies by reviewing their procedures with a view to avoiding unnecessary overlapping of activities.

Regarding social issues, Indonesia agrees with the Secretary-General that the special session of the General Assembly reached an agreement on sensitive social development issues and resulted in commitments to social development. In particular, we were encouraged by the attention that was given to emerging issues, such as the impact of globalization and the prospects for the future. In this regard, my delegation would like to express its sincere wish that that special session does not end as an exercise in rhetoric, but will help restore momentum for social development.

Finally, on the issue of women, Indonesia also welcomes the outcome of the Special Session of the General Assembly for the Beijing + 5 Review. In particular, the prominence that is being given to the issue of violence against women has strengthened that process. We would note, however, that given the significance that should be attached to the five-year reviews, it was perhaps too ambitious to hold two special sessions in the same month and same year.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand): I would like through you, Mr. Acting President, to offer my delegation's congratulations to the new President of our General Assembly. We look forward to working with him and his team, as we enjoyed and appreciated working with his respective predecessor.

I would also like to join with those other delegations that have expressed their appreciation for the Secretary-General's excellent report contained in document A/55/1. This report contains an eloquent account of how the United Nations has confronted major challenges over the past year in pursuing the objectives of sustainable peace and security.

Indeed, through our own contributions to United Nations peace operations, and especially through our commitment of troops and civilian experts to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, we have some small understanding of the extent and complexity of the activities being undertaken by the United Nations today. It is essential that all of us join with the Secretary-General in helping to strengthen the Organization's capacities in this area, including by acting upon the Brahimi Panel's key recommendations.

The Secretary-General has noted that many of the questions surrounding humanitarian intervention and national sovereignty, which he first posed last year, remain unanswered. Our own impression is that there is some polarization among the membership that needs to be put aside if the Organization is to move forward. Yet the debate raises important issues that warrant careful reflection, and we believe it is essential to work towards a consensus on improved ways of dealing with situations in which universally accepted human rights are being violated on a massive scale. At the same time, we see no inherent contradiction between intervention and national sovereignty in terms of the United Nations Charter. Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter makes clear that there are circumstances where Member States do not have exclusive jurisdiction over their domestic affairs, in particular in the case of measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. In other words, the Charter provides that measures to preserve international peace and security can override State sovereignty. National sovereignty is therefore not an absolute.

If there is new ground to be broken in order to improve the Organization's ability to respond more effectively, it probably lies, in part at least, in the domain of the Security Council, which has the task of determining threats to the peace or breaches of it. The main impediment, as we see it, to the Security Council's taking concerted action to try to end massive human rights abuses, including in the recent cases of Rwanda and Kosovo, has been shown to lie in its decision-making processes. I refer, of course, to the veto, by which the will of the wider membership of the Organization can be continually frustrated. As we know, the veto is omnipresent in negotiations in the Council, even if it is less frequently deployed formally these days.

The Secretary-General refers in his report to developments in the South Pacific region, where the United Nations has become more involved recently. As one of the contributing countries to the Peace Monitoring Group in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, I want to pay tribute to the very fine work being done by the United Nations Political Office, which comprises just three substantive staff, in helping further the peace process. The Secretary-General also makes the point that sustainable peace and prosperity can only be assured in Fiji if the aspirations of all the peoples of Fiji, regardless of race, are taken into

account and all its citizens can play a meaningful role in the political and economic life of the country. Finally, he calls our attention to Solomon Islands, where Australia and New Zealand, working with the Solomon Islands Government, are helping to lay the ground for peace talks among ethnic factions.

Finally, before leaving peace and security issues, may I express our strong support for the Secretary-General's observation that future sanctions regimes should be designed to maximize pressure on the target to comply with United Nations resolutions, while minimizing their effects on the innocent.

The Secretary-General, in his chapter on development, deals with many of the issues that received the greatest priority from our Heads of State and Government during the Millennium Summit. He refers, for instance, to the concerns of many countries, especially in the developing world, regarding globalization. We will be particularly interested to learn of any mechanism the Secretary-General has in mind to enable him to fulfil the comprehensive responsibility accorded him by heads of State and Government under paragraph 31 of the Millennium Declaration.

Finally, my delegation is very pleased to see from the Secretary-General's report that important administrative reforms, such as results-based-budgeting, are being taken up imminently by the appropriate Main Committee. We hope that there will be good progress during this session on some of the unfinished business remaining from the Secretary-General's 1997 management reform package. We note with satisfaction that encouraging progress has indeed been made, in particular in the complex area of human resources reform. Sustaining meritorious performance from staff and managing them capably are fundamental to the Organization's success. We believe this area has rightly been given top priority by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): On behalf of the Pakistan delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his detailed report on the work of the Organization. We fully agree with the Secretary-General that it is time that we translate into action the commitments made at the level of heads of State and Government during the Millennium Summit. It is in that spirit that the Pakistan delegation looks forward to working in partnership with other

delegations and the Secretariat with a view to implementing the decisions of the Summit.

The two main themes that pervaded the discussion during the Millennium Summit were peace and security, and development and poverty eradication. Those themes also form the focus of the Secretary-General's report. In our view, they constitute the two central challenges to the United Nations in the new millennium. Durable peace cannot flourish in the absence of sustainable development. Development is unsustainable in the absence of peace. Peace requires both the prevention of conflicts and the resolution of existing disputes.

If we look around us, we can see that new conflicts have taken root in different parts of the world while many outstanding disputes continue to fester. The Secretary-General has called for a shift from what he calls a culture of reaction to one of prevention, one that is highly cost-effective in both human and financial terms. One can only agree with such an approach. However, for conflict prevention to be effective and credible, it must be applied to all situations, and root causes must be effectively addressed. Here, too, commitment must be translated into action.

The Security Council is charged under the Charter to uphold and strengthen international peace and security. In fulfilling that mandate, it must act in a uniform manner, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and its decisions. There must be no selectivity. Nor should the Council be used as a forum to vent narrow prejudices. Otherwise, it will run the risk of eroding the confidence of the international community in the United Nations.

The Charter also empowers the Secretary-General to undertake preventive diplomacy through the use of his good offices. We would encourage him to continue to use this authority, with a view to promoting the peaceful settlement of ongoing disputes and the prevention of potential conflicts.

The General Assembly should also give consideration not only to the development and strengthening of its own role in support of peace and security but also to the reinforcement of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) as an impartial mechanism for the pacific settlement of disputes.

For the United Nations to discharge its responsibilities, it must have adequate resources available to it on a predictable basis. The Secretary-General has to be provided with the tools to effectively implement the tasks mandated in the areas of peace-making, peacekeeping, conflict prevention and peace-building. Here, I would like to express our appreciation to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi and members of the high-level Panel on their report on how to strengthen the United Nations capacity in these vital areas. We look forward to receiving and discussing the Secretary-General's implementation plan based on the recommendations contained in that report.

The Secretary-General has invited our attention again to the "dilemma of intervention", while reminding us of the tragedies of Rwanda and Srebrenica. My delegation had the occasion to comment on the concept of humanitarian intervention in detail during our discussions last year, as well as during the discussions on the subject in the Security Council. At the time, we had been calling for a careful and detailed consideration of the concept. We had also identified certain fundamental parameters within which such a concept could have been studied. I will, therefore, not repeat them now. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize our willingness to enter into a discussion on this important issue.

The General Assembly and the Security Council must strengthen the international regime established to effectively prevent crimes against humanity. Countries that are guilty of systematic and gross violation of human rights and international humanitarian law and that bludgeon a people into submission must not go unpunished. The shameless practice of State terrorism and brutal repression against a people to prevent them from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination must be brought to an end through concerted international action. The perpetrators of these crimes must be made to respect the Charter principles and Security Council resolutions and punished for their refusal to do so. They do not deserve a place in the comity of nations. Article 6 of the Charter clearly provides for such cases. The display of double standards in this regard by our Organization towards identical situations around the world would only serve to undermine the authority of the United Nations in the eyes of suppressed peoples.

Here, I specifically refer to the relentless campaign of repression against the people in Indian-

occupied Jammu and Kashmir, where we witness the true face of what is called the largest democracy in the world revealed as a blatant violator of rather than an adherent to the immutable principles of democracy that it so dearly and unabashedly seeks to champion. The continued suppression of the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people cannot be obfuscated by India's hollow professions of democracy. The United Nations must fulfil its promise to the Kashmiri people consecrated in the Security Council resolutions. What is at stake is the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations system of dispute resolution and conflict prevention. Also at stake is peace and security in South Asia, which today is the most volatile region in the world. The root cause of all problems afflicting this region, with serious implications for global peace and security, is the unresolved dispute of Jammu and Kashmir. Peace in this region is contingent upon a just settlement of this dispute, which concerns the destiny of 10 million people. It is not a territorial dispute. It is a dispute involving the fate of 10 million people. Also contingent upon the early settlement of this longstanding dispute is the socio-economic well-being of one quarter of humanity, which inhabits South Asia.

Development and poverty eradication are equally daunting challenges. While we seek to strengthen the United Nations capacity in the areas of peace-keeping and conflict prevention, we must also strengthen international cooperation for the promotion of sustainable development and the elimination of poverty world-wide. As I mentioned earlier, sustainable and equitable growth are essential for durable peace and stability.

It is generally agreed that globalization has not been without its negative consequences. It has widened the economic divide between the North and the South and deepened the gap between the rich and the poor. The United Nations, as the most representative and universal body, is uniquely placed to ensure an even spread of the benefits of globalization to all nations and peoples.

The present international financial and trade architecture has failed to meet the challenges of development and poverty eradication. The Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) must reform and adapt themselves to the new requirements of sustainable and global growth.

The fact that the number of people worldwide living in abject poverty has increased is a clear signal of the imbalances and bias in the current global financial and trading system. The 1997 Asian financial crisis served to underscore the continuing vulnerability of countries seeking sustainable development in such a global environment.

Official development assistance has progressively declined. On the other hand, the agenda of United Nations specialized agencies is being revised away from the goals of sustainable development and poverty eradication. During the Millennium Summit, all heads of State and Government agreed to halve the proportion of people living on \$1 a day by 2015. We must now come forward with the necessary means and resources to achieve that goal. The forthcoming high-level event on financing for development will be an important opportunity for Member States, along with other relevant actors and stakeholders, to chart a course for the mobilization of adequate resources for development, trade, development assistance and debt relief.

Sustainable development and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive. Both require adequate resources. The commitments made in Rio in 1992 towards resource mobilization have yet to materialize. In their absence, the goal of environmental protection will remain elusive.

The information and communication revolution has yielded many new opportunities. At the same time, it has given rise to the digital divide. It is a gap that needs to be bridged if the vast majority of the world's peoples are to derive benefits from these new technologies.

The developing countries continue to be heavily burdened by external debt — a burden that militates against their efforts to achieve sustainable development. Some innovative measures need to be taken to provide relief to indebted countries. During the Millennium Summit, the Chief Executive of Pakistan proposed that resources presently devoted by indebted countries to debt servicing might be diverted to social-sector development, focusing particularly on their education, health-care and social welfare programmes.

The challenge of economic development and poverty eradication is most acute in Africa, coupled with simmering conflicts in that region. The

international community needs to give special attention to the economic and security situation obtaining in that continent. Similarly, the special needs of small island developing States and of landlocked countries require special attention and responses.

The Secretary-General has called for a Global Compact to meet the challenges of development and environmental protection through the observance of "good practices" by the private sector based on shared values among the broader international community. We are fully conscious of and recognize the need to engage the private sector in partnerships. However, for the Compact to succeed, it is essential that it enjoy the trust and confidence of Member States.

To meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, the United Nations must undergo a change in order to reflect the universal character of the Organization. This is particularly true in the case of the Security Council, which needs to be made more democratic, representative, transparent and effective.

An effort is being made to create the perception that the majority of the membership favours the realization by a few States of their great power ambitions. In reality, it is the reverse. During the Millennium Summit and the general debate, we repeatedly heard calls from this very podium for the democratization of the Security Council and not for the creation of new centres of power and privilege, which would aggravate the existing imbalances. The reform process will not be complete unless the working methods and decision-making of the Security Council are brought into conformity with the principle of sovereign equality.

We must rise to meet the tasks mandated to us by our heads of State and Government. We must effectively respond to the challenges that confront us. It is only through a reinvigorated and adequately equipped United Nations that we can hope to collectively realize our shared objectives.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): My delegation wishes to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his thoughtful report on the work of the Organization, which we are considering today. The report covers a comprehensive range of issues. We are pleased with the broad coverage and careful treatment of many critical issues in the report. On many of these issues, we share the concerns of the Secretary-General and we make our own his appeal for the speedy consideration and

implementation of the recommendations contained in the Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations.

The Namibian delegation is pleased that, in addition to the more traditional areas of United Nations concern, such as international peace and security, humanitarian activities, development cooperation and human rights, the report addresses other important issues, including the bridging of the digital divide, HIV/AIDS, social development, the advancement of women, poverty eradication and development finance.

In this intervention, I will limit myself to four issues highlighted in the Secretary-General's report that are of particular importance to my delegation.

First, we agree with the Secretary-General that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is a serious development issue. In addition, we believe that the AIDS pandemic represents a real threat to peace and security on the African continent, as was agreed during a recent historic Security Council debate on the impact of this dreaded disease on the security situation of the affected African countries. Many startling statistics are available to describe the real situation on the ground.

In view of the fact that next week we will debate the issue of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and in view of the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly, I wish to make only a few preliminary comments. Given the magnitude of the pandemic, I think it is only proper that the General Assembly address and urgently adopt concrete action to tackle this scourge. It is long overdue for this body to deal with the matter and set the exact dates for the special session. It is also important that the preparatory process and the special session should be inclusive.

My delegation strongly believes that adequate funding should be provided to both the preparatory process and the special session itself. This requires strong political commitment from all Member States, and I believe that commitment may have to be demonstrated in the Fifth Committee soon.

Secondly, development and poverty eradication are issues of tremendous importance to the United Nations and all individual countries. My delegation appreciates the succinct presentation of this subject in the Secretary-General's report in the context of globalization and other challenges facing the developing countries. Namibia maintains that there is an urgent need to review and redesign the basic

paradigm of globalization itself. We look forward to an early opportunity to discuss this matter further.

For now, we would like to stress that development and poverty eradication should be addressed in the context of the commitments made by our heads of State or Government in the Millennium Declaration. In addition, the Namibian delegation would want to see a closer link established henceforth between the commitments of the Millennium Declaration and the upcoming High-level Event on Financing for Development.

Namibia will participate actively in preparations for this important international event, which must fully take into account the needs of all developing countries. Furthermore, this event will be an occasion to take a fresh look at the recommendations and commitments of all the major United Nations conferences of the past decade. Representatives are aware that many worthy recommendations emanating from those conferences remain unimplemented for want of resources. All of these considerations must provide a relevant point of departure for the work of the Preparatory Committee of the High-level Event on Financing for Development.

International peace and security remain elusive, especially on the African continent. In this respect, we could not agree more with the Secretary-General on the issues and problems he raises on this subject in the section of his report dealing with peacekeeping and peace-building. In this connection, my delegation joins others that have spoken before it in calling for the early consideration of the Brahimi report. We also urge the speedy implementation of many core recommendations contained in that report.

Namibia also shares the concerns of the Secretary-General expressed in paragraphs 31 through 37 of the report under consideration. However, as the Foreign Minister of Namibia, Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, stated before the Assembly during the general debate,

“Namibia remains unconvinced and will continue to oppose any form of unilateral humanitarian intervention outside the Charter”. (A/55/PV.24)

We believe that the provisions of the Charter provide an adequate framework to deal with the types of problems contemplated in paragraph 37 of the report under consideration. Furthermore, we note the initiative of Canada for the establishment of an independent commission on humanitarian intervention.

However, we maintain that the General Assembly itself should remain seized of this issue until a satisfactory outcome is reached.

Lastly, I would like to draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 30 of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which the heads of State or Government reaffirmed the centrality of the General Assembly and called for it to play that role effectively. In that context, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Namibia made some practical proposals to assist in this matter. We would be pleased to see any initiatives that the General Assembly may want to take in respect of considering those proposals.

My delegation is ready to participate in any discussion relating to this and other matters raised earlier. We also stand ready to cooperate fully with the President of the General Assembly and to continue supporting him in his endeavours.

Mr. Stuart (Australia): One of the worthwhile results of the Millennium Summit is that the Declaration has given us an agenda to work on. This features a number of goals for tasks that ought to be quite central to the way the United Nations develops as an Organization in this new century. Some of these goals have been put in the form of simply stated targets, including a common resolution that by the year 2015 we shall halve the proportion of the world's people whose daily income is less than one dollar; achieve universal primary-school education; and reduce the rate of maternal mortality by three quarters.

My delegation accepts the inclusion of such targets as a readily understood way of encapsulating what we, the Member States, agree to be core challenges for the United Nations of promoting development, poverty alleviation and individual welfare. The utility of these targets is both as benchmarks against which we can measure the results of the collective effort of United Nations Member States to cooperate in these areas, and as a succinct, unequivocal message of our intentions and priorities.

The elimination of poverty is an aspect of the United Nations work which features in Chapter III of the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization. Indeed, the Secretary-General presents it as the most important development goal of the United Nations. Based on the estimate in the report of the number of people trying to survive on less than a dollar a day, our Millennium Summit target will require a

change from 1.2 billion people living on or below that level to 600 million people. This is a daunting figure — but we should not be deterred, as experience, for example, in several East Asian countries has shown that strong economic growth over a generation can have a major impact on poverty levels. Nonetheless, setting such a target does beg the question, just what should the United Nations do to help realize this change?

The Secretary-General's report recognizes the importance of translating commitments into effective action. My delegation certainly agrees with its observations that "the promotion of sustainable and equitable growth" is the most important means for making progress towards the poverty target, and that this is tied to open markets and stable legal and regulatory institutions to facilitate the operation of such markets. Overall, however, the relevant section of the report is rather thin on specific suggestions for action.

Accordingly, my delegation believes that one of the tasks we should set for ourselves in this session of the General Assembly is to identify what more the United Nations could do to promote the levels of economic growth that could generate such a significant fall in levels of poverty, including by considering how to encourage the removal of constraints to growth in developing countries.

These constraints are both external and internal. Externally, we should address the need for an equitable, rules-based, non-discriminatory system for international trade and financing. Increased and fairer access to markets, and a removal of the distortions to international trade that flow from continuing trade barriers and export subsidies, would be a major impetus to the kind of growth levels needed to approach the Summit target. Broad-based multilateral negotiations have proven the best way of delivering a more equitable, open and predictable trading environment, and for this reason Australia has been a strong advocate for the early launch of a new, market-access-focused round of multilateral trade negotiations. Such a round is needed not only to further trade liberalization but also to ensure that there is no going back on existing commitments. In particular, it is important that negotiations produce the conditions in which developing countries benefit more equitably from increased trade and overall growth of the world economy. For this to happen, market openings must be

available in areas where developing countries have export potential and the capacity to supply competitively. And with this in mind, it is vital that agricultural trade be put on a more equitable footing.

According to the annual report of the Organization for Cooperation and Development (OECD) on agricultural policies, total agricultural support in OECD countries reached \$361 billion in 1999. That is seven times as much as the development assistance OECD countries provided to developing countries. Farm protection has returned to levels not seen for more than a decade. In particular, export subsidies for agriculture are the most pernicious and trade-distorting of all forms of support, which is precisely why they have not been permitted for industrial exports for 40 years.

One of the most significant of the internal constraints to growth which we suggest the Assembly address is the impact that national policies and institutions have on development. This was recognized during the recently concluded General Assembly session in the resolution adopted on globalization, which resolution underlined the importance of

"governance responsive to the needs of the people based on efficient, participatory, transparent and accountable public service, policy-making processes and administration". (*resolution 54/231, para. 10*)

Respect for the role, and the rights, of individuals and of families is also an essential concomitant of a flourishing market-based economy. We believe that while the United Nations and its agencies have a role to play in helping to strengthen good governance as an element of sustainable and equitable development, there is also no substitute for action by Governments.

Another aspect of fostering economic development mentioned in the Secretary-General's report is financing. In considering how to implement our Summit goals, next year's high-level event on financing for development is an important element. Australia will continue to contribute actively and constructively to the preparatory work for this event.

The Secretary-General's report describes some of the work done over the last 12 months in the United Nations system in considering the relationship between globalization and the eradication of poverty. Some worthwhile ideas have emerged from meetings between

the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions and from discussions within the Council. For the most part, these discussions have reflected a realistic appreciation of the role and limitations of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations. Yet we still hear the occasional argument that indicates that the United Nations can in some way roll back the tide of global change. It cannot. Rather its role should be to help its Member States identify and address both the challenges and opportunities of globalization. Simplistic formulas linking these changes with poverty or inequality will not take us far — and they may well be misleading, as in the past 10 years the proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty has, according to one reliable measure, in fact fallen from 28 to 24 per cent.

What is important in the globalization debate in this General Assembly is to focus on action where the United Nations can make a difference. The Secretary-General's report notes that "steady progress" is being made in improving the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations operational performance. My delegation sees this as a much more fruitful area for cooperation than pursuing quixotic and unworkable proposals for international taxes. In particular, while encouraged by the experience to date of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, we would like to see this model for coordination of country programmes among United Nations agencies become a standard approach. We also strongly support the move within the United Nations funds and programmes towards results-based budgeting. This increased focus on achieving and demonstrating results will not only attract greater funding, but will also ensure that those funds are best used to support the goals in the Summit Declaration.

The above will, I hope, give delegations a good sense of Australia's views of some areas warranting attention in pursuing the agenda set out in the Millennium Summit. Other priorities for us on issues relating to development and humanitarian assistance will include the following. One of these priorities is seeing how we can step up international efforts to stop and ultimately reverse the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We would also like to boost early preparations for the ten-year follow-up conference to United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as we would like to see the groundwork

laid for a worthy follow-up to the Rio conference. We also wish for consideration of oceans-related issues to progress. This would include consolidating the very successful inaugural meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea and addressing some pressing issues relating to fishing practices through resolutions of the General Assembly. My delegation is also interested in touching on water security, including the proposal, which Australia supports, for an international year of freshwater, and practical means of pursuing such elements of the Millennium Summit as the target of halving the proportion of people with no access to safe drinking water.

I have concentrated much of my attention today to issues of poverty alleviation, an issue that Australia believes is very much a core issue for the United Nations system. To conclude, however, I would like to offer some more general comments on how the Millennium Summit might inform our work at this session.

The Secretary-General's report is, as usual, a useful survey of United Nations activities. And as usual it covers a very wide range of activities carried out by the United Nations system. The Summit has, however, given us an exceptional opportunity to give more impetus and focus to the work of the Organization. The impetus derives from the extraordinary attendance at the Summit of the great majority of national leaders. The focus can be drawn from the Summit Declaration, which has given us a road map for our work within the United Nations and has given us guidance on priorities. This latter element is fundamental. The United Nations cannot do everything. Now we have made progress on establishing those areas where the United Nations does have an indispensable role, it is up to delegations to make sure that the resources and efforts of the Organization are geared to achieving them.

Naturally my delegation's priorities include a number of areas I have not mentioned. Some are reflected in the statements made by the Australian Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister at the Summit and in the general debate respectively. We share the strong interest that many have expressed here in practical reforms, including to update the composition of the Security Council, reconfigure the electoral groups and increase the United Nations peacekeeping capacity along the lines of the recommendations in the

Brahimi report. We will again be pursuing vigorously work in the areas of disarmament, and a number of aspects covered in chapter IV of the Secretary-General's report — the chapter on "The international legal order and human rights".

My delegation looks forward to working with the delegations of other Member States in an effort to give practical effect to the goals set out in the Summit Declaration. We are conscious that we are not starting from scratch. There is a considerable foundation of achievements, programmes and operations on which we can build. We do not need to reinvent the wheel, but we should be prepared to try doing things differently so that the United Nations responds to contemporary challenges as effectively as possible.

Ms. Enkhsetseg (Mongolia): At the outset, I would like to express my Government's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his annual report (A/55/1), which covers broad aspects of the Organization's work carried out in the past 12 months. The report contains many useful ideas and proposals aimed at further promoting the Organization's work in specific fields. My delegation would like to assure the President of the General Assembly that Mongolia will cooperate with the Secretary-General and fellow Member States to make this Organization stronger and more efficient in pursuit of the noble goals and principles enshrined in its Charter.

With regard to enhancing the role of the United Nations, my delegation would like to underline the importance of the recent United Nations Millennium Summit and its outcome. The Millennium Declaration adopted at the Summit not only reiterated the commitment of the international community to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, but it also reaffirmed its readiness to reshape the activities of the Organization in the spirit of the evolution that characterizes today's world. As the Secretary-General has rightly pointed out in his report, it is now time, at this session of the General Assembly, for us to roll up our sleeves and start putting into action the bold pledges made during the Summit, pledges that are challenging yet nevertheless achievable.

Since consideration of this agenda item should not be a second general debate, I would limit my statement to the following points.

In the Millennium Declaration world leaders have solemnly reaffirmed that

"the United Nations is the indispensable common house of the entire human family, through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development".

Implementation of the Millennium Declaration implies pursuing further the reform of the United Nations, including restoration of the General Assembly's important role as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations, reforming the Security Council, enhancing the role of the Economic and Social Council and better coordination of United Nations activities with international financial institutions.

Reform of the United Nations is a continuing process. It is well under way and is yielding results in some areas. However, the effort to reform the Security Council has not brought us closer to resolving one of the main issues: expansion of the Council to reflect present-day realities and to increase its effectiveness. We believe that the expansion of the Security Council should be made in both categories, permanent and non-permanent. A reasonable increase in the number of non-permanent seats should reflect the representative character of the Council and enable a growing number of Member States, including small States, to contribute to its work. The reform of the Council should also deal with the right of veto, which should be considerably curtailed.

As is seen in the Secretary-General's report, in recent years the demands for the peacekeeping and peace-building roles of the Organization have increased manifold. The lessons of Srebrenica, Rwanda and Sierra Leone made it abundantly clear that a thorough and critical review is needed to make peacekeeping operations succeed in meeting commitments under the Charter.

In this connection, the Mongolian delegation commends the work of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Ambassador Brahimi. The Panel's report (A/55/305) presents a frank analysis of the prevailing situation and a forthright recommendation for change. We share the view that the report deserves serious consideration and specific action even at this session of the General Assembly. With a view to increasing its direct contribution to peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, last year Mongolia signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Today, Mongolia has trained personnel ready to

participate in peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, a special unit of Mongolia's armed forces has recently successfully participated in the United Nations-supported regional peacekeeping training exercise in Central Asia.

The reform of the United Nations should be judged in part by the role that the Organization could play in promoting developmental goals of its Members, especially of the small, vulnerable and least developed, and in overcoming and reducing poverty. In today's globalizing world this role is acquiring greater importance. In this connection, my delegation commends the positive role that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is playing in articulating the problems of landlocked developing countries, countries that due to their geographical location cannot compete fairly with others and that are forced to spend two to three times more to get access to world markets, thus losing whatever competitive edge they could have had otherwise.

Implementation of the decisions of the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development could help this group of countries tackle some of the difficulties mentioned above. My delegation hopes that the upcoming trilateral and ministerial meetings on the problems of landlocked developing countries will have a practical impact on reducing the enormous obstacles facing their development. Likewise, we also attach great importance to the forthcoming high-level conference on financing for development.

Turning briefly to the questions of security and disarmament, my delegation would like to express its support for the proposal of the Secretary-General to convene a major international conference aimed at identifying ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. We hope that this timely proposal will be given serious consideration at this session of the General Assembly.

Mongolia also believes that pending the conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty, the United Nations could establish a register for all stocks of weapons-grade fissile material. This would also help establish an important balance with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

All States, big and small alike, are expected to contribute to promoting and attaining the goals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Guided

by that spirit, Mongolia is trying to turn its vast territory into a nuclear-weapon-free area. To this end, and in implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/77 D, it has undertaken a series of consultations with the five nuclear-weapon States on institutionalizing this status. As a result of these consultations, it is expected that the five permanent members of the Security Council will soon make a joint statement providing nuclear security assurances to Mongolia in connection with that status. This would be a concrete step in institutionalizing the status. We believe that strengthening other aspects of Mongolia's external security would make the status more credible and effective. A transparent, credible and stable security regime relating to Mongolia's status would be our contribution to the international efforts of promoting regional peace and security.

In conclusion, allow me to underline once again Mongolia's resolve to contribute actively to the work of the Organization in pursuit of its noble goals and objectives.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and insightful report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1). The Millennium Summit held in this very Hall only three weeks ago was a historic event. It provided a rare opportunity for more than 170 world leaders to reach consensus on guiding principles to address daunting challenges in the new century. Now it is our responsibility to translate the summit Declaration into action.

I would also like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his continued interest in developments on the Korean peninsula. We take note of paragraph 58 of the report, in which the Secretary-General made reference to the Korean peninsula. We also share his view that a historic opportunity is unfolding on the Korean peninsula to resolve decades-old conflicts between South Korea and North Korea and thus to contribute to peace and stability in the region and beyond. I take this opportunity to express my Government's deep appreciation for the statement issued by the Co-Chairpersons of the Millennium Summit welcoming the inter-Korean summit and its follow-up measures (press release GA/SM/194, 6 September 2000).

We have recently witnessed a resurgence of United Nations peacekeeping operations in the face of

ever-increasing challenges around the globe, in particular in East Timor, the Balkans and Africa. The number of United Nations peacekeepers in the field has tripled, and United Nations peacekeeping operations seem to continue to be on the rise. The complexity of recent crisis situations requires peacekeeping operations to expand their scope beyond the traditional realm of peacekeeping. My delegation shares the view of the Secretary-General that peacekeeping and peace-building have become inseparably linked.

In that regard, we welcome the report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, which we believe will be an important basis for deliberations aimed at making United Nations peacekeeping operations more effective and adequate in addressing future challenges. While reserving detailed comments for future occasions, I would like to make a few remarks with regard to the Brahimi report. In implementing many of the recommendations of the report, we should bear in mind their budgetary implications, among other things. We are of the view that the decision-making process of the Security Council should be more transparent. Countries contributing with troops or other important means should be given the opportunity, in one way or another, to participate in the decision-making process of the Council. In this context, briefings by the Secretariat should be made available outside the Security Council to contributing Member States, not only on matters affecting the security and safety of their own personnel, but also on all other matters related to peacekeeping operations. By doing that, we will be able to make peacekeeping operations more successful in the long run.

I would like to assure the Assembly that the Republic of Korea, which has joined the peacekeeping force in East Timor, will remain firmly committed to the cause and the activities of United Nations peacekeeping operations in the future.

At the dawn of the new millennium, information technology has facilitated the process of globalization. We all know that globalization presents tremendous potential for economic growth and poverty eradication. We should not underestimate its positive impact in terms of integrating the peoples of the world. However, more attention needs to be paid to mounting concerns over undesirable consequences of globalization, in particular in developing countries.

The United Nations certainly continues to take the lead in building a "digital bridge" enabling developing countries to join the information-technology revolution. My Government attaches particular importance to education in information and communication technologies, so it has provided developing countries with information-technology training programmes; it plans to expand those programmes in the future. We believe that the United Nations should do more to provide developing countries with training of that nature. More concerted action is required at the national, regional and international levels to bridge the digital divide. Furthermore, it has become clear that genuine partnership with major development stakeholders, such as the Bretton Woods institutions and the private sector, is increasingly vital. In that context, my delegation supports the creative initiative of the Secretary-General on a global compact, proposed last year, and recent developments in that regard.

Let me now turn to the successful outcome of the two special sessions to review and appraise the implementation of, respectively, the commitments made at the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development and at the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women towards the realization of a "society for all" in the new millennium. At those sessions, we all reaffirmed our commitment to put people at the centre of development. For development to be sustainable, it must be carried out with genuine respect for democracy and human rights. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the resolution adopted by the Commission on Human Rights last April on the role of good governance in the promotion of human rights. My delegation agrees with the Secretary-General that that groundbreaking resolution links good governance with an environment conducive to the enjoyment of human rights and the promotion of human-centred development.

One of the most fundamental challenges this Organization faces is how to be more responsive to the needs of the world public. I believe that broad-based support for the United Nations depends on timely and effective communication and on result-oriented activities. In that regard, the United Nations has made considerable achievements in strengthening public outreach and in enhancing administrative efficiency. However, more work must be done to make better use of the Organization's resources and funds.

My delegation wishes to reiterate the commitment of the Republic of Korea to the strengthening of the work of the General Assembly. We believe that, under the able leadership of Mr. Harri Holkeri of Finland, the fifty-fifth session, following the historic Millennium Summit, will prove to be the most productive one ever.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Secretary-General for the thoughts set out in his report on the work of the Organization (A/55/1), which, together with his millennium report (A/54/2000), will contribute to identifying the problems facing the international community as it enters the new millennium and in offering solutions to those problems.

Unfortunately, over this past year new conflicts have broken out. Wars, extreme poverty, natural and man-made disasters and the AIDS pandemic symbolize the suffering being endured.

The linkage between peace and poverty is becoming increasingly clear. As the Secretary-General points out to us, there is a visible link between thriving markets and human security, which requires, we believe, an approach based on greater solidarity that will provide the system with resources and will also promote a just and lasting development for all human beings. In addressing the Millennium Summit, the President of Argentina focused precisely on this issue.

We still have not given thought to the challenge the Secretary-General put before us last year about the limits to sovereignty and the need to respond to serious and massive human rights violations. The principle of non-intervention is fundamental to relations among States that are equal and sovereign. However, at the same time, Argentina believes a principle that would complement non-intervention must be added: the principle of non-indifference. This principle means, among other things, that those responsible for aberrant crimes cannot enjoy impunity and that we must actively pursue ways and means to prevent their occurrence.

Therefore, we welcome the establishment of the International Criminal Court and the tribunals for the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, convinced that their formidable deterrent power constitutes real, important and defined progress of the United Nations towards peace, national reconciliation and justice.

We must increase the protection of the civilian population affected by conflicts. The recommendations contained in the report submitted to the Security Council last September continue to be fully valid and the resolutions adopted by the Council represent important strides in that direction.

United Nations officials and humanitarian personnel continue to experience very serious attacks. We pay our tribute to those who recently lost their lives. Argentina is very active in this arena, and when we presided over the Security Council last February, we organized an open debate on this matter. We look forward with interest to the proposals that the Secretary-General will make on the scope of application of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. We call upon those countries that receive this report to sign and ratify its text and for the international community to firmly confront this problem.

With regard to Security Council reform, my country believes that the reform must be wide-ranging and comprise all its aspects in order to make it more democratic, transparent and effective. My country believes that expansion of the membership must be made only by non-permanent members in order not to create new privileges in addition to those already in existence.

The consensus-achieving body required for that reform to be legitimate must be, in our view, the Open-ended Working Group that is open to all members of this Organization.

The reception by Member States of the Brahimi report demonstrates the broadly shared recognition of the importance of peacekeeping operations, the shortcomings of the system and the need to adopt urgent measures to revitalize it.

This moment in political life must be seized to advance towards the implementation of its recommendations. Success of the implementation of the Brahimi report is rooted in the will of Members States, which, on one hand, should be translated into the decision to provide the Organization the necessary human and financial resources, and, secondly, to assume risks inherent in peacekeeping missions. Without the genuine commitment of its members, the United Nations will not be able to maintain international peace and security.

The report is a valuable contribution to maximizing the system. We urge States to analyse their recommendations in the General Assembly, as well as in the Security Council, and to not delay the implementation of measures that, without doubt, will strengthen United Nations peacekeeping capacity.

This year's report also reflects the effort of the United Nations to alleviate the multifaceted aspects of humanitarian emergencies that are exacerbated by the devastating dimensions of natural disasters and the terrible suffering of civil populations and humanitarian personnel in countless conflicts.

This report demonstrates that United Nations action system-wide is being impeded by financial and political limitations. In the financial realm, the decline in contributions in response to inter-agency consolidated appeals is alarming. In the political realm, the inadequate capacity and readiness to cooperate with the affected authorities or clashing groups is concerning.

As a non-permanent Security Council member, Argentina has been closely following the unfolding of a vast number of humanitarian emergencies, examining the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons. We support the tireless work carried out by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Mrs. Ogata, who, with her energy and creativity, has stepped up the work of her office to reach increasingly more individuals.

We must stop and think even more about the internally displaced persons that live in extreme conditions, often lacking assistance and protection. We must support the States that are going through these processes, particularly the most extreme cases, so they can provide these citizens with assistance and basic social services as long as they are displaced and so that they can create conditions for their safe and dignified return.

We must emphasize that actions being taken by the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies must be focused on individuals and on protecting and defending the values and the property of individuals affected by crises and conflicts.

The United Nations has contributed to broadening the agenda of issues now being discussed at international forums, especially the Bretton Woods institutions. Greater interaction between the United

Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund is central to discussing new strategies that will factor in the dichotomy seen in various developing countries between globalization and poverty eradication.

Bringing Governments together with actors of civil society strengthens the capability for development. We highlight here the "Global Compact" initiative, which links corporations, trade unions and civil organizations with the daily work of the United Nations system as a way of complementing Governments' actions and generating certainty for the business sector in those countries that require the capital flows and investment for their economic growth.

We must also point to the creation of a volunteer corps to assist those countries that are most isolated from information technology and to work to integrate the most backward areas into the global information highway.

While the Secretary-General has identified the drop in official development aid as one of the main obstacles to be overcome in fighting poverty, he has also called upon the States themselves to become involved, ensuring good governance, responsible public administration and the state of law.

We must implement the policies, programmes and projects recommended as a result of the review processes relating to the world summits on women and on social development. Argentina has taken upon itself the relevant commitments, and is promoting the adoption of specific policies to deal with poverty, the elderly, pregnant and nursing mothers and their children and those infected with the HIV virus or who are sick with AIDS.

We welcome the resolution on good governance adopted by the Commission on Human Rights. This is an issue of particular interest to our country because it goes to the very heart of the social compact between those governing and the governed, the nature of democracy and the real existence of a state of law. A transparent government that does account for what it does is a guarantee for respect for human rights.

We also hail the appointment of special rapporteurs for housing and food, as well as of the special representative for human rights defenders. These competencies extended to the special rapporteurs

further the advancement and protection of all human rights, both civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural.

Unfortunately, these rights are still being trampled upon. There has been a further increase in sex trafficking and the economic exploitation of women and children. We see continuing discrimination against migrants and indigenous peoples, and racist and xenophobic acts. There is, however, a series of major initiatives under way, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recently created by the Economic and Social Council, the upcoming World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We hope that these steps will lead to an ever-clearer awareness in the international community as to the need to put an end to these human rights violations and to prosecute and punish those responsible, thus contributing to a more just and peaceful world.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): In the report under consideration, for which we are deeply obliged to the Secretary-General, we see a fact confirmed, one of which we were all aware to some extent: the fact that, whenever the United Nations failed in its efforts to secure or to keep the peace and to prevent massive human rights violations, this occurred neither for lack of means nor for any structural flaws inherent in the Organization, but rather because of deficiencies or shortcomings in the human management of the instruments available to the international community to respond to such crises.

In paragraph 7 of his report, the Secretary-General lists the causes behind those failures. The nature of those failures necessarily determines the nature of the means to remedy them. Lack of political will can be remedied only where there is political will. Lack of resources can be remedied only by providing resources. Inappropriate mandates can be remedied only with appropriate ones.

That is why our delegation understands that what the Secretary-General calls "the dilemma of intervention" must be resolved not by resorting to unilateral intervention on the part of States or groups of States acting outside the United Nations, but rather by correcting errors that have frustrated effective action

by the international community in the face of tragedies such as those of Srebrenica and Rwanda. We are entirely in agreement with the Secretary-General that we are talking about a problem of responsibility. In all circumstances in which massive human rights violations occur, we, the international community, are obliged to shoulder our responsibilities and to act accordingly. But that responsibility must be made effective through the United Nations, created precisely to act on behalf of all of us through collective action that is legitimate because it emanates from bodies that represent the entire international community.

In the past, interventions, even the well-intentioned ones, used to end up pursuing goals unrelated to humanitarian causes. Humanitarian intervention, designed to put an end to a situation where juridical norms and basic morality were being ignored, can itself end up being the root of situations of this kind, thus generating more problems than it solves. Collective action executed in consonance with the norms enshrined in the Charter has replaced and displaced unilateral interventions.

For these reasons, and without prejudice to the fact that in extreme cases dictated by actual developments we might be able to conceive of the possibility of resorting to humanitarian intervention, there must be no attempt to institutionalize it; nor must it be recognized as a suitable instrument to put an end to the perpetration of international crimes.

As regards peacekeeping operations, the report of the Panel of experts chaired by Ambassador Brahimi, could not have come at a better time. It provides an in-depth examination of these operations, revealing their insufficiencies and shortcomings. We must proceed as soon as possible to consider its recommendations so that we can translate immediately into reality those that appear to be appropriate. We are looking forward to the plan for implementing these recommendations, which the Secretary-General promised us at the opening of this session's general debate. Moreover, we hope that it takes into account other valuable reports on the issue that have recently been produced.

Never is it superfluous to stress the importance of the preventive aspects of the job of ensuring international peace and security. We have read with the keenest interest the information provided to us by the Secretary-General on measures adopted in the last few years to strengthen information and coordination

machinery linking our Organization to other international organizations, Member States and non-governmental organizations. We believe that it is absolutely necessary to strengthen the United Nations information and analytical services so that we can enable them to alert the Secretariat and other bodies of our Organization to situations that may erupt into crisis or conflict. The point is to raise these services to a level of high professionalism so that they can gather, analyse and interpret information in a way that would make it possible to foresee the emergence of trends and discern possible threats to peace and security and to warn of the imminence or possibility of domestic upheaval, institutional crises, human rights violations, border incidents and so forth. The Secretary-General has told us about the establishment of a prevention team in the Department of Political Affairs, and this marks an important step in that direction.

Another avenue to be explored is that of United Nations cooperation with regional organizations. My delegation realizes that we still have not made much progress in this arena. As the Secretary-General puts it, cooperation with some regional organizations has, in some instances, proved fruitful; but the effort for cooperation continues to be difficult in this arena, owing to a series of practical, political and organizational factors.

Our country is convinced that regional organizations of a political nature, such as the Organization of American States and the Organization of African Unity, carry an enormous potential that in some cases could be mined and made available for conflict prevention or peacekeeping operations. The regional organizations afford certain specific advantages. They are usually seen by Governments in any given region as more their own, and the assumption is that they are more familiar with the realities and problems of their member countries. It is to be hoped that tangible progress will be made along these lines at the high-level meeting announced by the Secretary-General between the United Nations and the regional organizations.

The institutional instruments that we rely on to do the task of ensuring international peace and security must be adapted to take a multidimensional and integrated approach, which the nature of contemporary problems requires. The Secretary-General rightly points out the growing complexity of peacekeeping operations, which require the performance of new

functions and the use of civilian personnel trained in a broad range of disciplines. States' cooperation in this arena is becoming more necessary than ever. Uruguay would like to express its readiness to cooperate with the Secretariat and other bodies of our Organization in dealing with this issue.

Whenever we speak of international peace and security, we are ultimately referring to the peace and security of every society, every family and every individual. In the final analysis, the end goal and purpose of our cooperation activities is the human being — every living being within the society in which we live. From this truth flows the need to base cooperation on the concept of human security. As the Secretary-General reminds us in his report, human security and economic development go hand in hand.

The enormous job of promoting economic development must now be pursued in the context of globalization. It has already been pointed out that this phenomenon has two sides to it: on the one hand it generates prosperity, and on the other it accentuates the gap between the developed and the developing world.

While it is true that globalization is an inevitable phenomenon and that trying to oppose it would be like trying to oppose the law of gravity, it is nevertheless controllable and can be oriented and managed. The management of globalization to ensure that its benefits are distributed more equitably among all societies of the world must be undertaken on the basis of certain fundamental principles relating, *inter alia*, to international trade, the movement of capital, the regulation of work and environmental protection.

As a result, we cannot but agree with the Secretary-General when he asserts that, in order for globalization to be made more inclusive and equitable, we must create more effective global institutions. Among other things, we must adopt norms and measures to ensure that freedom of trade works in every direction for the benefit of all States, not only of those that, because of their greater economic development, are better equipped to compete.

Finally, I wish briefly to refer to an issue whose importance is growing day by day: that of information and communications technologies. The report stresses the need to enhance cooperation in this field so as to ensure the access of all to those new technologies. My delegation congratulates the Secretary-General on his initiatives to reduce the digital divide and encourages

the Secretariat and all components of the United Nations system to persevere towards that end.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): My delegation would like to commend the Secretary-General for producing yet another excellent document in his report on the work of the Organization. This report builds on the foundation laid in the Secretary-General's millennium report, which was well received and endorsed by the heads of State and Government who came to New York for the Millennium Summit. We appreciate the high level of reporting that the Secretary-General and his staff have continued to provide to members of this Assembly. We believe that these reports give direction on how we could improve or even change course, in order to make the United Nations of the twenty-first century a more effective and efficient Organization.

The heads of State and Government who spoke at the Millennium Summit emphasized several important points. They reconfirmed their support for and confidence in the work of the Secretary-General and his staff. They said that it is time for us to roll up our sleeves and to start implementing the resolutions that we have adopted over the years. The Summit left us with the spirit of the millennium, which calls on us to proceed with a sense of urgency and not at the pace of doing business as usual.

While the Summit focused a spotlight on many issues, in the view of our delegation the overriding theme that emerged in the plenary speeches and round-table debates was the urgent need to address poverty and underdevelopment. While reaffirming the role of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security in the world, the heads of State and Government acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining global security in a world crippled by hunger, disease and abject poverty.

In fact, my delegation believes that, following the Millennium Summit, it is no longer possible to address questions of peace and security, globalization, poverty eradication and the like in isolation from each other. The work of the United Nations in the twenty-first century will have to be about getting closer to the lives of the people we serve. There can no longer be decisions taken that are not people-centred in their approach.

President Mbeki said it better in his plenary speech when he stated that

"The fundamental challenge that faces this Millennium Summit is that, in a credible way, we must demonstrate the will to end poverty and underdevelopment ... We must demonstrate the will to succeed, such as was demonstrated by those who died in the titanic struggle against Nazism and fascism." (A/55/PV.5)

The Africans have defined the broad objectives of the African renaissance. First, we have concluded that the African renaissance means the establishment of democratic political systems, which will ensure the accomplishment of the goal that the people must govern. Second, the renaissance will make certain that these systems take into account African specifics so that, while being truly democratic and protecting human rights, they are nevertheless designed in ways which really ensure that political and peaceful means can be used to address the competing interests of different social groups in each country. Third, it will establish institutions and procedures which enable the continent to deal collectively with questions of democracy, peace and stability. Fourth, it will seek to achieve sustainable development that results in the continuous improvement of the standard of living and the quality of life of the masses of people. Fifth, it will qualitatively change Africa's place in the global economy so that it is free of the yoke of the international debt burden and no longer a mere supplier of raw materials and an importer of manufactured goods. Sixth, it will ensure the full emancipation of the women of Africa. Seven, it will successfully confront the scourge of infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Last, the renaissance is about protecting the environment of our continent and ensuring the sustainable use of our natural resources.

We are very much aware that the African renaissance is not an event, but a process. We have no illusions about the immense difficulties we face in meeting the challenges listed above. We will make progress, but we are also prepared for setbacks. Like the United Nations of the twenty-first century, our challenge is to tackle the priorities with a sense of urgency and not just to act as if we were engaged in business as usual.

My delegation firmly believes that, throughout the fifty-fifth session, which we prefer to call the Millennium Assembly, poverty and underdevelopment will remain the root causes of most of the issues which

come before us. This unshakeable reality will guide our delegation's participation throughout this session.

One of the things that has sharpened the inequalities between and within States is the phenomenon of globalization. We must accept that globalization is here to stay. It is indeed a reality. The only way to make globalization a positive force for all is to deal with its uneven impact. In April, the developing countries attending the South Summit in Havana, Cuba, spoke on the impact of globalization, including the growing "digital divide". This concern became one of the issues central to the dialogue between the South, represented by President Mbeki, Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, President Obasanjo, Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, and President Boutefflika, representing the Organization of African Unity (OAU); and the leaders of the Group of Eight industrialized countries, whose Summit was held in Japan.

They stressed that:

"The countries of the South must be equitably represented in any forum deliberating and deciding on social, economic or political matters which can adversely or otherwise affect countries of the South."

In other words, if we are to put an end to the growing disparities between the developing and developed countries, there has to be a strengthening of the North-South dialogue. Hence we welcome the channels of communication that have now been established at the highest level between the North and the South through the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China, and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), with the Group of Eight industrialized countries and the European Union.

In the pursuit of poverty eradication and development, our delegation fully supports the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, and we look forward to speeding up its implementation. A critical element of this Initiative is the need for more resources to be made available at a fast pace. We believe, however, that ways need to be explored to further broaden the scope and enhance the depth of debt relief. In our view, it is equally important to make serious progress on the issue of official development assistance and foreign direct investment flows.

In this context, South Africa places a high priority on the successful outcome of the High-level International Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, to be held in 2001. This conference could become a test of our collective political will to make decisions that will improve the lives of those who suffer the most. It should nevertheless be understood that developed countries carry a special responsibility in this regard.

One of the cornerstones of our objective in struggling for socio-economic development, democratization and good governance is to achieve security and stability on the continent. This cannot be accomplished without combating the proliferation and the excessive accumulation of conventional arms, in particular small arms and light weapons, and their illicit trafficking.

We welcome the Millennium Declaration, which addressed both the proliferation of small arms and the need to totally ban landmines and other anti-personnel mines, which continue to take the lives of innocent people in our country. We hope that the 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will offer the international community yet another opportunity to reaffirm its commitment on this issue in a multifaceted manner that takes account of security, humanitarian and development issues.

Once again, we welcome the report of the United Nations Panel on Peace Operations, also known as the Brahimi report, which contains some important conclusions on which Member States can build to reach the objective of an effective United Nations.

My delegation deplores the continuing wave of attacks on, and killings of, humanitarian personnel. We support efforts to improve protection for such personnel and the need to prosecute the perpetrators of these crimes.

A separate but related topic is the important matter of humanitarian intervention. My delegation seriously hopes that this issue will be discussed during this session.

South Africa has in the past consistently called for the democratization of multilateral institutions. Our delegation sincerely hopes that the Millennium Summit will inject new energy and political will into this process. The Security Council needs urgent reform in

order to make it more representative, effective and credible. Of particular importance to our delegation is the need for the Council to reflect current realities and for the representation of developing countries to be increased. We shall continue to work constructively in the Open-ended Working Group on Council reform to achieve these objectives.

We should like to reiterate that the Bretton Woods institutions are equally in need of urgent reform in order to discharge their mandate and respond to the new development challenges. We believe that the United Nations of the twenty-first century will have a much harder time meeting the challenges before us if we cannot find a way to bring the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization into a closer working relationship with the United Nations. The challenges of the future demand collective action and coordination.

Perhaps one of the more contentious issues on the agenda of this session is the proposed review of the United Nations scale of assessments. It is our intention to approach this matter with an open mind, always making sure that the best interests of the United Nations are not compromised. South Africa looks forward to being moved from category B to category C on the peacekeeping scale of assessments during this fifty-fifth session. We are thankful to those Members that have committed themselves to helping us achieve this goal. We count on the support of the rest of the Member States in this matter.

It gives us great pleasure to reaffirm today that our Government would be honoured to host the 2002 Earth Summit in South Africa. We believe that the 10-year review Summit should reinvigorate the global community's support for sustainable development by serving the interests of both developing and developed countries. The Summit should focus in a holistic manner on the integration of environment and development towards the full implementation of Agenda 21. Hosting the Summit on the African continent would provide the people of Africa with an opportunity to take ownership of the principles of Agenda 21 and the objectives and ideals of sustainable development. Furthermore, it would enhance the concept of the African century and give impetus to the African renaissance by highlighting Africa's concerns and aspirations related to sustainable development.

Since 1994, when South Africa was readmitted to the United Nations, we have worked very hard to maintain support for, and the dignity of, this Organization. So it is with a deep sense of our recent history as a nation that South Africa is in the process of arranging for the hosting of the World Conference on Racism and Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance less than a year from now. Having suffered under the cruel system of apartheid, my people, both black and white, feel very strongly about this Conference and look forward to sharing their vision of the future. We look forward to receiving everyone with the warmth and kindness that our continent is well-known for.

Mr. Nesho (Albania): First, I would like to extend our greetings to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization and to express the deep appreciation of my Government for the activities undertaken by the United Nations since the previous session of the General Assembly.

I should like now to refer to particular aspects of the report. I take this opportunity to touch upon the role of the United Nations in the peacekeeping and peace-building operations in Kosovo, eloquently described in the Brahimi report. The Albanian Government has welcomed and supported the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) as well as the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bernard Kouchner. We consider that UNMIK has brought about positive changes in Kosovo in the areas of administration, humanitarian assistance and the building of democratic institutions. This activity was conducted in full compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). I also applaud the important work of the international military presence, the Kosovo Force, and of the civilian police in Kosovo, which has provided a safe and secure environment for the people of Kosovo and for the international civil presence there.

We extend our thanks to the specialized agencies of the United Nations — the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme and so forth — for their invaluable work and the assistance given during the emergency, not only to Kosovo, but also to the neighbouring countries. At the same time, it

is important that these United Nations bodies increase their efforts and cooperation with the international community to establish normal living conditions to prepare for the return of more than 200,000 refugees presently living in other European countries.

Furthermore, the worrisome situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the potential influx of refugees requires that these humanitarian agencies prepare emergency plans to deal with the possible humanitarian consequences.

Regarding the continuing inter-ethnic violence in Kosovo — referred to in paragraph 145 of the Secretary-General's report, where the Kosovar Albanians are assigned the primary responsibility for this violence — I would like to make the following remarks. The Albanian Government has stated that it supports a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo and has condemned the acts of violence. However, we should not forget that the roots of such violence are to be found in the Serb genocide and "ethnic-cleansing" committed against the Kosovar Albanians. This genocide was characterized by the killings of thousands of Albanians, horrendous massacres, mass graves, "ethnic-cleansing" and burned houses. The Kosovar Albanians want a peaceful and democratic Kosovo, while the Milosevic regime is always trying to destabilize the situation by generating violence inside Kosovo and jeopardizing the UNMIK objectives.

We hope that the recent presidential and parliamentary elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) will bring to an end the criminal Milosevic regime and open up new ways of cooperation and understanding among the Balkan countries.

Ms. Ibraimova (Kyrgyzstan): The delegation of the Kyrgyz Republic is grateful to the Secretary-General for his very comprehensive, thoughtful and informative report. It gives us a good overview of the work of our Organization. Reading the report, I was thinking that the Member States of our Organization have achieved a great deal in laying the foundations for the further development of our common world. Of course, much remains to be done, and this report presents for consideration what still needs to be done.

Regarding peace and security issues, the view of the Secretary-General that sustainable peace and security for all countries remains a central objective of

the United Nations is shared by the people of Kyrgyzstan. The report (A/55/305) of the Panel led by Mr. Brahimi contains many interesting ideas that should be developed and elaborated into the future programme of United Nations activities in this field. My delegation supports the concept of conflict prevention and of moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. We welcome the establishment of a Prevention Team within the Department of Political Affairs. We believe that early identification of possible grave conflicts should help the world avoid them. We fully agree that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be strengthened by additional human resources.

We welcome the outcome of the year 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and urge all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to follow up on the commitments they made at the Conference.

World security is threatened not only by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but by the harmful effects of armed conflicts — including international terrorism, drug smuggling and illicit trafficking in small arms — which are not confined within the national borders of any one country.

Kyrgyzstan today faces a drug trafficking problem which has threatened to severely undermine its national security. According to the analysis of World Health Organization experts in Kyrgyzstan, 75 per cent of the drug addicts are under 30 years old. In spite of the energetic measures taken by the Kyrgyz Government, the number of drug-related deaths had increased fourfold by this year. This means that the threat of drug abuse and drug trafficking has not been overcome. In this regard, we will welcome and actively support the efforts of the international community aimed at eliminating this evil.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme for its close collaboration on this issue. Kyrgyzstan will support and contribute to strengthening the global consensus on combating illicit drug trafficking. I also join others in supporting the proposal to hold an international conference in 2001 to address the issue of small arms proliferation.

As regards meeting humanitarian commitments, if peace and security is the central objective of the United

Nations, humanitarian assistance is the most challenging and noble activity that it undertakes. Millions of people who are being helped by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and by United Nations humanitarian agencies trust in the United Nations as a friend in need. We believe that people's trust is the most important indicator of the effectiveness of our Organization.

We strongly believe that the international efforts to eradicate HIV/AIDS, which has become a major problem for entire regions of the world, should be strengthened. My delegation co-sponsored the draft resolution on this issue and has a strong commitment to providing all possible support to the activities in this field. We support the idea of holding, on an urgent basis, a special session to review the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects.

I turn to the subject of cooperating for development. The part of the Secretary-General's report concerning the elimination of poverty worldwide touches on the most important development goals of the United Nations. As regards the United Nations activities, I commend the group chaired by the United Nations Development Programme to prepare a proposal for a system-wide poverty-reduction strategy. We believe that eliminating the gap between the developed countries, on the one hand, and the developing countries and countries with economies in transition, on the other, involves inter alia establishing a fair mechanism so that the developing countries and the countries with economies in transition can participate efficiently in the international trade and economic system.

Kyrgyzstan anticipates a positive outcome of the preparations for the Rio + 10 conference in 2002. The conference will provide an important opportunity to assess the status of the progress achieved in meeting the goals established by the 1992 Earth Summit, where Governments took a historic step towards ensuring the future of the planet, adopting a comprehensive plan for global action in all areas relating to sustainable development.

As the Assembly is aware, 2002 has also been proclaimed the International Year of Mountains. Mountains are a source of hope; their multiplicity of functions makes them an obvious focal point of human concern. The Year gives us an opportunity to ensure the present and future well-being of mountain communities

by promoting conservation and sustainable development in mountain areas; to increase awareness and knowledge of mountain ecosystems, their dynamics and functioning, and their overriding importance in providing a number of strategic goods and services essential to the well-being of both rural and urban, highland and lowland, people, particularly water supply and food security; to promote and defend the cultural heritage of mountain communities; and to pay attention to frequent conflicts in mountain areas and promote peacemaking in those regions.

Kyrgyzstan appreciates the work already undertaken to achieve sustainable mountain development by States and by organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization, and non-governmental organizations. We appreciate the commitment of the Government of Switzerland, particularly the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, to raising public awareness in this field, and the commitment of non-governmental organizations, in particular the Mountain Forum of the United States and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development of Nepal, scientists, researchers and mass media from all countries. They all contribute to making the International Year of Mountains the year of hope, the year of the future and the year of our life.

The end of the International Year of Mountains should be the beginning of the consistent and forward-looking development of mountain regions. We believe that it is vitally important to adopt a new approach to the understanding of mountain regions and to change public awareness.

In conclusion, I reiterate our commitment to work very closely with the President, to achieve our common goal of the success of the fifty-fifth session.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman): At the outset I express on behalf of my delegation our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, for his annual report on the work of the Organization, an important report that deserves the attention of the Assembly.

We share the view expressed by the Secretary-General that the turn of the millennium provides a unique vantage point from which to view the progress achieved and the challenges that lie ahead. The Millennium Summit, which was held at the beginning of this month, was an opportunity to exchange views

on these issues and to seek solutions to the common challenges that face humanity.

Regarding the question of humanitarian intervention, we believe the Secretary-General was right when he pointed out that there would be strong reactions by Member States on this issue. We emphasize that the focus of the Organization should and must remain within the confines and mandates specified by the United Nations Charter.

The sanctions regime is another issue that received greater attention during the Millennium Summit. Despite the fact that the sanctions regime was intended as a political mechanism to guarantee that Governments would implement their commitments in accordance with United Nations resolutions, this mechanism has now become a weapon that has harmed the basic rights of societies, which undoubtedly contradicts the letter and spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We endorse the call on the Security Council to adopt new policies and effective mechanisms to relieve the suffering imposed on States and people. The Security Council, with its responsibilities defined by the Charter, should without doubt play a positive and unifying role to maintain international peace and stability.

It remains to be said that the greatest challenge facing the Organization today is to maintain international peace and security. In this regard, we commend the work of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Ambassador Brahimi for its comprehensive report (A/55/305) and bold recommendations. We are of the view that the report deserves serious and urgent attention from Member States. We cannot but emphasize the need for consensus on this issue and the need to avoid stretching the capabilities of the Organization beyond its intended capacity, where it might become party to conflicts. We also believe that the United Nations should strictly adhere to the provisions of the Charter within a clear and concise mandate, with the full acceptance of the parties involved in conflicts.

The reform of the United Nations and its organs remains a lofty goal and a high endeavour which continues to receive complete support from my delegation. We should review the expansion of Security Council membership to reflect a fair representation and the changes that have occurred in the world since 1945.

In recent years globalization has become an unavoidable force. While it brings benefits to certain societies in the developed world, it has had, on the other hand, a negative impact on others in the developing countries. Therefore, we call on the international community, and especially on the developed countries, to take into account the concerns of the developing countries, with the aim of narrowing the economic and technological gap.

In the same vein, we support the Secretary-General's call to tackle the challenges facing Africa and the least developed countries: the eradication of poverty, the improvement of health standards and education, and the combating of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, all of which necessitate a collaborative effort by all Members of the United Nations. In this regard, we call on the international community to spare no effort to help the African countries and the least developed countries to face the challenges. Measures to be taken should include the relief of debt.

In conclusion, we believe that the time has come for all of us to work together to further the lofty goals and aspirations that we all have. Indeed, the turn of the millennium has given us the opportunity to revamp the United Nations and to bring it to a level that could meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this agenda item.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 10.

Agenda item 8 (continued)

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Second report of the General Committee (A/55/250/Add.1)

The Acting President: I should like to draw attention to the second report of the General Committee (A/55/250/Add.1), concerning a request by Equatorial Guinea for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central

African States”, and a request contained in a letter dated 25 September 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations.

In paragraph 1 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States” should be included in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in the agenda of the current session?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the additional item should be considered directly in plenary meeting. May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: In paragraph 2 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that agenda item 105, “Crime prevention and criminal justice”, should also be considered directly in plenary meeting for the sole purpose of taking action on the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the draft protocols thereto.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider agenda item 105 directly in plenary meeting for the sole purpose of taking action on the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the draft protocols thereto?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I would like to announce some additions to the programme of work of the General Assembly. I should like to inform Members that on Tuesday morning, 12 October 2000, the General Assembly will take up agenda item 15 (b), entitled “Elections of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council”. Furthermore, on Friday morning, 20 October 2000, the General Assembly will take up agenda item 170, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe”. On Wednesday morning, 25 October 2000, the Assembly will then take up as the third item agenda item 174, entitled: “The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order”. This information will be reflected in an addendum to document A/INF/55/3 and will be issued next week. The list of speakers for item 170 and 174 are now open.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.