



General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

53rd plenary meeting

Wednesday, 20 November 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Kavan (Czech Republic)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

African Industrialization Day

The President: Before turning to the item on the agenda, I would like to remind the General Assembly that today, 20 November, is Africa Industrialization Day. Today, the United Nations family observes Africa Industrialization Day with the collective spirit of supporting and promoting the development of the African continent. It is also an occasion to remind ourselves that more than 30 of the world's 48 least developed countries are located in Africa.

We are at the end of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa. The Decade, covering the period 1993 to 2002, was declared by the General Assembly in order to focus on promoting sustainable industrial growth in the region. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the lead agency for this programme, has just released the Industrial Development Report 2000/2003. The report provides an analysis of industrial performance worldwide and relevant rankings. It is an acknowledged fact that basic industry, and manufacturing industries in particular, are indispensable to economic growth. A skilled work force including managerial cadres, access to capital and technology, good governance and peace and security are only some of the preconditions for industry to flourish. It is expected that by the year 2025 more than 50 per cent of Africa's population will be living in cities. In that context, the harnessing of new

information and communication technologies will be key to rapid sustainable development.

This year, the special theme for this Day is new information and communication technologies (NICTs). It is not a coincidence that through NICT — one of the most visible development tools — opportunities for the industrialization of Africa have expanded. We find that NICTs are at the heart of mechanisms linked to developing new markets and improving existing ones and that they have the capability of bringing villages and nations closer together by facilitating electronic access to global knowledge and creating an environment for learning.

The programme of action envisaged in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which was conceived and finalized more than a year ago under the auspices of Africa's leaders, set itself the goals of promoting accelerated growth and sustainable development, eradicating widespread and severe poverty and halting the marginalization of the continent in the globalization process. NICTs are an important tool for achieving those objectives: NICTs would facilitate human development, accelerate intra-Africa trade and improve access to markets of developed countries. Furthermore, NEPAD foresees the crucial role of NICTs in the context of Africa's recovery and calls for concrete and practical steps to develop a proper information and technology infrastructure.

The United Nations family, including UNIDO, the United Nations Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

and the International Labour Organization, should continue their support for removing the many constraints that industry faces on using NICTs, through awareness creation and building capacity for national information networking activities and through facilitating public-private partnerships in the context of lessons learned from the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the two Industrial Development Decades.

This is a day to renew the commitment of all parties — including the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Conference of African Ministers of Industry and the country-specific bilateral public and private partnerships — to the sustainable development of Africa.

Agenda item 22

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

- (a) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/122)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.18)

- (b) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/87)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.11)

- (c) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.26)

- (d) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.23)

- (e) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/266 and A/57/266/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.25)

- (f) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.22)

- (g) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/358)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.29)

- (h) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.38)

- (i) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/128)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.24)

- (j) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/386)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.32)

- (k) **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons**

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (A/57/576)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.31)

- (l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/217)

- (m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.39)

- (n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/267)

- (o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/405)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.28)

- (p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/475)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.21)

- (q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (A/57/255)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.40)

- (r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community**

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/94 and A/57/94/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.30)

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/57/L.16)

The President: This morning, the General Assembly will begin a joint debate on sub-items (a) to (s) of agenda item 22.

I give the floor to the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Mr. Wolfgang Hoffmann, to introduce the report of the Preparatory Commission.

Mr. Hoffmann (Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization): I am pleased to be here today to report on the activities of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is one of the cornerstones of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Its total ban on any nuclear test explosions in any environment will help in ending the development of ever more sophisticated nuclear weapons, as well as in arresting the proliferation of these weapons.

To date, the Treaty has been signed by a total of 166 States and ratified by 97. Thirty-one of those ratifications are by annex 2 States — the 44 States listed in the Treaty whose ratification is required for entry into force. The level and pace of signatures and ratifications indicates the firm support of the international community for the Treaty. The conference on facilitating entry into force of the CTBT, which was held in New York in 2001, led to a significant increase in signatures and ratifications.

The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization was established six years ago to carry out the necessary preparations for the effective implementation of the CTBT and to prepare for the first session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty. The main activity of the Commission and its Provisional

Technical Secretariat during recent years was the establishment of the verification regime to monitor Treaty compliance.

The global verification regime needs to be operational at the Treaty's entry into force. It will be capable of detecting nuclear explosions underground, in water and in the atmosphere.

The International Monitoring System (IMS) consists of 321 monitoring stations and 16 radionuclide laboratories that monitor the Earth for evidence of a nuclear explosion. The IMS uses seismic, hydroacoustic and infrasound monitoring technologies to detect possible nuclear explosions. Radionuclide monitoring technologies collect and analyse air samples for evidence of the physical products created by nuclear explosions. Progress in establishing these facilities has been good, considering the engineering challenges that face the establishment of this first worldwide monitoring network. Currently, 43 per cent of the monitoring system is operational.

Good progress in establishing the IMS was in great part made possible by those States hosting facilities. I would like to take this opportunity to thank States for their help and flexibility, and express my hope that the good cooperation will continue for the remainder of the build-up process and beyond.

A Global Communications Infrastructure carries the seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide data from IMS facilities to the International Data Centre. This global satellite communications network is also used to distribute data and reports relevant to Treaty verification to the States signatories.

The International Data Centre supports the verification responsibilities of States signatories by providing the products and services needed for effective Treaty monitoring. The Centre receives raw data from monitoring stations around the world, which it processes, analyses and transmits to States for final analysis. Improved software is enhancing precision in locating the events which produce seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide data, and the verification system as a whole is being continuously developed and refined.

On-site inspections (OSIs) are provided for in the Treaty as a final verification measure, and the development of a draft OSI operational manual is a key task for the Preparatory Commission. The Commission

is also acquiring inspection equipment and building up a pool of potential inspectors. A realistic field experiment was conducted in Kazakhstan in October 2002. The results of this experiment will facilitate preparations for real on-site inspections.

While the primary purpose of the CTBT verification regime is to verify compliance with the Treaty effectively, the verification technologies, data and products have the potential to offer a range of useful civil and scientific applications for sustainable development and the betterment of human welfare. In this regard, the Commission organized, at London in May this year, with the strong support of the Government of the United Kingdom, a Senior Experts' Discussion on Civil and Scientific Applications of CTBT Verification Technologies.

Seismic, hydroacoustic and infrasound data can be used in studies of the Earth's structure and for research on earthquakes, volcanic eruption forecasting, tsunami warnings, underwater event location and sea temperature and climate change monitoring. The data can assist in minimizing the effect of volcanic eruptions on civil aviation and can be used for oceanic swell research and atmospheric and meteorological studies. Radionuclide technologies offer opportunities for detecting radionuclide dispersion, monitoring radiation levels and studying natural radioactivity, as well as for supporting atmospheric studies, biological research and environmental change tracking. Follow-up meetings and seminars are already taking place among policy-makers and scientists in support of the work of the Commission.

The Commission organizes training programmes and workshops in support of States signatories in the enhancement of national technical capability for the implementation of the Treaty. They include training courses for IMS station operators in all four verification technologies, training courses for data analysis, storage and management, on-site inspection technologies, workshops for global communications infrastructure and workshops on international cooperation and national implementation of the Treaty.

In addition, the Commission promotes international cooperation among States signatories for them to participate in the fullest possible exchange relating to these verification technologies and the establishment and operation of national data centres. Since my last report to the General Assembly,

international cooperation workshops were hosted by Senegal and Kenya. Next week I will open a workshop for the Caribbean region in Jamaica and for 2003 workshops are scheduled in Azerbaijan, Fiji and Malaysia.

Along the same lines, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's Preparatory Commission and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, which share the same objective of enhancing international peace and security, concluded a Relationship Agreement in Vienna on 18 September. This is the first agreement concluded between the Preparatory Commission and a regional nuclear-weapon-free zone organization.

On 15 June 2000, the General Assembly adopted the Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, thereby accepting the Preparatory Commission as a new member of the United Nations family. The Commission remains an independent international organization, but has been given formal status by which it can contribute to the goals of the United Nations.

Under this Agreement, the Commission's links and interactions with the United Nations and its programmes, funds and specialized agencies are developing even further. In order to fully contribute to the work of the United Nations family, the Preparatory Commission has requested full membership in the United Nations system's Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). The Preparatory Commission already participates in the work of the High Level Committees of the CEB. In light of the disarmament related issues in the Millennium Declaration, we feel it particularly important that the Preparatory Commission should be able to contribute fully to the work of the United Nations family.

We believe that it would be of great significance for the General Assembly to be kept abreast of the rapid development of our new and growing organization on a closer basis. In times of increasing concern about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the reports of organizations specialized in this field should be of particular relevance to the deliberations of the General Assembly. However, we understand that the revitalization of the work of the

General Assembly is of utmost importance and that the clustering and biannualization of the agenda item on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations was an important part of the endeavours in this respect. We will therefore look for alternative ways to inform the General Assembly about the outcome of the next conference on facilitating entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, to be held in 2003.

I am grateful to Ambassador Bota of Romania, the current Chairman of the Preparatory Commission, for the excellent work he has performed in Vienna. I also want to thank Romania for introducing the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission this year.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that six years after its opening for signature, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has the confirmed support of the international community and is recognized as playing an important role in nuclear disarmament and in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. By signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, States confirm their commitment to these shared goals.

Mr. Pfirter (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons): It is a great privilege for me to address the United Nations General Assembly for the first time since my appointment as Director-General of the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

I would like also to extend to you, Mr President, my most sincere congratulations for your election to this position, to which you bring experience, diplomatic skills and the respected voice of a country, the Czech Republic, whose contribution to the objectives and purposes of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) are well known.

The presence of a Director-General of an organization such as the OPCW at the United Nations universal body, the General Assembly, is as natural as it is necessary. It is natural because our Convention, and the organization it brought to life, are legitimate expressions of multilateralism in a field — disarmament and international security — where the central role of the United Nations is widely recognized. It is necessary because the CWC and the OPCW have a message to convey: this year and in fact every day, our work, like yours, simply cannot stop.

The United Nations has recognized the OPCW as the organization responsible for activities to achieve the comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons in accordance with the Convention. At the same time, the OPCW, as stated by the Relationship Agreement between the two organizations, recognizes the central role of the United Nations in international peace and security.

Close cooperation between the United Nations and the OPCW seems self-evident. We are determined to work jointly to achieve mutual objectives — by maintaining a close working relationship at all relevant levels and by making sure that effective coordination is achieved in the various areas where the United Nations Charter and our mandate can converge for the benefit of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The organization I represent is the single international institution providing at the same time for disarmament, non-proliferation and international cooperation and assistance.

We verify the destruction of the huge existing arsenals of chemical weapons. We monitor chemical industry and trade related activities in listed chemicals to make sure they are consistent with the provisions of the Convention. We assist and remain ready to provide help for member States in need of reinforcing or creating their own protective capacities and, in cases of attacks or threats of attacks with chemical weapons, we will stand beside those in need.

These three unique elements — disarmament, non-proliferation and international cooperation and assistance — find in the CWC, through the OPCW, the indispensable articulation to become integral parts of a single effort. In this sense, the CWC stands as an example of what can be achieved when the political will exists to tackle questions of global concern through the formidable power of an internationally agreed instrument.

As I explained in my address to the First Committee last month, member States of the CWC are making substantive progress in the achievement of the goals set out by the Treaty.

Destruction of chemical weapons continues. And this is indeed crucial, as we are not talking here of a mere clean-up operation of the remnants of the cold war. We are dealing with weapons of mass destruction,

tens of thousands of munitions, seas of deadly chemical agents — all weapons of choice for terrorist groups, weapons that have been used in recent inter-State conflicts and that unfortunately remain within the inventories of some States.

OPCW inspectors are active in checking destruction activities in all the declared possessor State's facilities. On this front, the task is Herculean, but progress is being made on a continuing basis.

In the United States, the goal of the destruction of 20 per cent of stockpiles of category 1 weapons has been completed. India has also met this crucial threshold. Another State party is making progress towards that goal, with approval given by the Conference of States Parties for it to meet this target by April 2003.

In Russia, where the largest stockpile of about 40,000 metric tonnes of warfare agents remain to be destroyed, agreements have been reached within the OPCW. A number of decisions have been taken that will hopefully enable the Russian Federation to meet its obligations to destroy chemical weapons and to convert some facilities to permitted purposes.

In that respect, we are greatly heartened, and warmly welcome, the 10 plus 10 over 10 initiative for these and related purposes over the next 10 years approved by the G-8 countries at the Kananaskis Summit.

Slowly but surely, the OPCW, together with its member States, is creating the conditions for a world actually free from these weapons of mass destruction. From a technological and scientific point of view, our work is very demanding, as it deals with listed chemicals that, in most cases, do have legitimate civilian applications. The same can be said about the technologies involved, which fall under the well-known label of dual use. That is why we have to make sure that the Technical Secretariat is in a position to uphold the core provisions of the Convention in the light of the breathtaking pace of progress in the chemical industry worldwide. This is an area where we are currently concentrating our efforts in order to ensure the future relevance of the CWC to all States parties.

While we continue our relentless efforts at oversight and our activities to destroy chemical weapons, we must note that this undertaking will

demand ever-greater efforts from the organization in the very near future. Possessor States are announcing that new destruction facilities are coming on-line. This will have a considerable impact on our verification plan, which will grow accordingly.

The anticipated steep rise in verification activities is a clear indication of the challenges ahead for the organization. But the quantitative increase in verification activities is not everything that is involved, because the Chemical Weapons Convention is not only an instrument of multilateral disarmament. In parallel with the monitoring functions at chemical weapons related facilities, the CWC addresses the equally complex, and certainly more elusive, problem of the proliferation of instruments of chemical warfare. Given the vast scope of the chemical industry worldwide, efficient control of chemical proliferation is an arduous task that the Technical Secretariat has to face within the margins of its limited resources, especially against the backdrop of the growing number of facilities to be monitored.

The number of inspections will rise, but the nature of the exercise will also be altered by the combined influence of new technologies, evolving industrial methods and the lessons learned in the past few years by our inspectors. While facilities producing schedule 1 and 2 chemicals will permanently focus the priority attention of the OPCW, we shall also widen the scope of active industry monitoring activities in general terms. This process will be gradual, and it will be defined in consultation with member States and be fully in line with the Convention.

International cooperation and assistance are much more than good intentions under the CWC. Our activities in the field of international cooperation allow our member States to become full partners in the discharge of their Treaty obligations. As it is often said, the CWC is not a self-executing document. It requires constant interaction and an ongoing interrelationship between the Technical Secretariat and member States through their national authorities. This is indispensable both for verification purposes and for the enactment of implementing legislation and chemical exports controls at the national level.

Article X of the CWC mandates us to provide assistance in the case of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons. In the light of the importance of that commitment of the OPCW, we have been actively

working to improve our preparedness and availability, not only in actual emergencies, but also in the area of capacity-building. Two months ago in Croatia, we conducted our first large-scale exercise, which allowed us to test our preparedness for chemical attacks and emergencies in real life conditions. We intend to continue with similar efforts in the near future, hopefully with the support and contribution of other international organizations, starting with the United Nations, as there are many areas where synergetic efforts can and must be found in this area.

Threat-perception and a new sense of urgency have become apparent after the tragic attacks in the United States in September 2001. Assistance has been finally understood as a necessity, especially for States lacking the resources to protect themselves against the possibility of an attack with chemical agents. Following the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001 and the global realization of the possibility that terrorists might use weapons of mass destruction, an increasing number of States parties have invoked the Treaty provisions that request the Technical Secretariat to provide expert advice and to help strengthen their protective capacity. An increasing number of protection courses have therefore been presented by the OPCW in 2002, and some additional courses have already been scheduled for 2003 for the benefit of member States in Central Asia and Africa.

The OPCW is not a counter-terrorism agency, but it is clear that active implementation of the Treaty provisions can help against this looming menace. Doing that through a multilateral instrument like the CWC has the additional advantage of rallying forces that would otherwise remain unconnected at a time when the struggle for already-scarce resources is becoming acute.

In December 2001, States parties and the OPCW Technical Secretariat jointly identified a number of areas where useful contributions could be made to the struggle against international terrorism. Those include the promotion of universal adherence to the Convention, enactment of adequate national implementing legislation — including penal legislation — full and effective implementation of the provisions related to the destruction of chemical weapons capabilities, full and effective implementation of the provisions related to inspections in the chemical industry and transfers of scheduled chemicals to non-State parties, and the further development of the

OPCW's capabilities to respond to requests for assistance in cases of use or threat of use of chemical weapons.

In addressing the General Assembly, I cannot fail to mention the high priority we attach to the principle of the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention. With 147 States parties, the Chemical Weapons Convention already embodies a significant number of Member States of the United Nations. But the Chemical Weapons Convention is an international agreement open to all States without exception. It is for that reason that we have consistently called upon States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Treaty. I repeat that invitation here today. To that end, we have also designed several programmes and outreach initiatives to ensure that all States willing to join the family of nations opposing chemical warfare can do so easily.

For a global agreement like this, which entails security implications for all Member States, ratification by all is our permanent objective, and we continue to work towards that end. We must acknowledge that some States outside the purview of the CWC are of clear proliferation concern. But for others the overall security scenario prevailing in their respective regions could be a determining, and perhaps a deterring, factor.

All those elements have to be borne in mind when we tackle the issue of universality. The overriding notion remains, however, that this is a Treaty where all States, possessors and non-possessors alike, can benefit in terms of their own security, first and foremost, and also in other important areas relating to the peaceful uses of chemistry.

In a few months, in accordance with the provisions of the CWC, we will conduct the first Review Conference since the Convention entered into force. The principal purpose of the exercise will be to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the operation of the Convention from the legal and technical standpoints. The Review Conference will allow us to look into the past, to see what has been done and achieved in the first five years of the Treaty's operation and, perhaps more importantly, to identify the most urgent tasks we will have to face in the next five years. States parties will also be able to assess the implementation of the verification regime to date, and provide direction to the organization to continue its monitoring of the destruction process and of

compliance. During the Review Conference, Member States will also have an opportunity to consider any scientific and technological developments affecting the CWC. Above all, this first retrospective and, at the same time, forward-looking exercise will be an ideal opportunity to reaffirm the validity and importance of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

If any lesson can be learned from recent events, it will confirm the continued urgency and validity of concerns over weapons of mass destruction. That is why we expect the widest participation of Member States at the highest possible level, as well as the active presence of international organizations and civil society, next April in The Hague. I do hope that the United Nations, as the principal Organization dealing with matters related to the maintenance of peace and security, will signal through its presence the high priority we all attach to efforts aimed at eliminating weapons of mass destruction.

In conclusion, let us remember that chemical weapons happen to be those which the international community has agreed to dispose of completely, without exception and in a verifiable manner. Let us never forget that the Chemical Weapons Convention is our common contract to achieve this lofty goal. Last but not least, let us always support the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which is no more and no less than the guarantor of that process.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): In my capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) for the six-month term starting 1 November 2002, I have the honour on behalf of the sponsors listed in document A/57/L.11, as well as of Ukraine and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization".

In this regard, I would like to express our gratitude to the Albanian chairmanship of BSEC for the successful conduct and conclusion of its term and the preparation of this comprehensive draft resolution. I should also like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General of BSEC, Ambassador Valeri Chechelashvili, who is joining us today in this Hall, for the leadership that he provides in running the day-to-day business of the organization. We very much look forward to continuing to work with him in his efforts to

build the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

This year, we have been celebrating the 10-year anniversary of BSEC. When it was established in 1992, no one could assure that this intergovernmental forum would survive. Yet, 10 years later, have we not only managed to stay together, but also to build on our experience and achievements to evolve into a viable regional organization. This spirit has been marked by the enhancement of BSEC's effectiveness and the expansion of the scope of its activities. BSEC has brought together 11 member States with varied resources, histories and economic conditions, as well as with some major political problems among certain member States. What we have in common is the shared goal to promote economic development, stability and prosperity for our countries and around the Black Sea.

We realized that, by combining and maximizing our resources, we would be better able to compete in and benefit from the modern globalized economy. One of the major goals of BSEC has always been the promotion of intra-regional cooperation and the development of effective partnership with other regional and international organizations, particularly the European Union and the United Nations system.

The adoption of BSEC's charter in 1998 and its transformation into a regional organization in 1999 were key qualitative steps forward in ensuring its role as an important tool for regional cooperation. Its granting of observer status in the United Nations in 1999 provided an international legal identity and thus a further positive spur to continue pursuing its goals and principles. In this spirit, BSEC has gained tremendous institutional growth and has successfully completed its formative stage. The creation of a system of related bodies and subsidiary organs has ensured its transformation into a full-fledged international organization and enhanced its effectiveness.

The draft resolution before us today is a comprehensive and result-oriented document. It incorporates and reflects the major goals, principles and objectives laid down in the BSEC charter and the declarations adopted at its summit meetings in 1999 and 2002. The draft resolution emphasizes the strengthening of regional cooperation in various fields, such as trade, finance, energy, transport, communications, agriculture, health care, environmental protection, science, combating

organized crime, terrorism, illegal migration and illicit trafficking of drugs and weapons.

The draft resolution also attaches great importance to the enhancement of relations with the European Union and the United Nations system. It welcomes the signing of cooperation agreements between BSEC and the Economic Commission for Europe and between BSEC and the United Nations Environment Programme, while the cooperation of BSEC with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization are considered to be priority issues. The draft resolution highly encourages the cooperation between BSCE and other regional organizations and initiatives.

The text we have before us was subject to extensive consultations both here in New York and in Tirana, Albania, during the seventh meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to the following minor editorial changes that have been made to the document since it was submitted.

In the second line of paragraph 5, the word "particularly" has been inserted after the word "initiatives".

In paragraphs 11 and 12, the words "Secretary-General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization" have been replaced by the words "the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization".

The objectives of BSEC remain clear and understandable: to develop equal partnership, to strive for a better life for the peoples of the region and to achieve stability and prosperity around the Black Sea through regional cooperation in various fields. The adoption of the draft resolution will undoubtedly further enhance BSEC's international image.

I should like to conclude by expressing the hope that the General Assembly will, as in previous years, give its unanimous support to the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Ouch (Cambodia): I have the honour, on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines,

Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam — to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.16 on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN. May I thank all the other co-sponsors for their support to this draft resolution.

ASEAN, which was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, is an expression of the collective will of the nations in the region to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation to secure for their peoples the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity. ASEAN and the United Nations have been development partners almost from its establishment in 1967, when the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and ASEAN started their long-standing and productive relationship.

On 29 July 2002, on the occasion of the 35th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Brunei Darussalam, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers agreed on the need to enhance cooperation with the United Nations as a pre-eminent multilateral institution. It is as a follow-up to this declaration that we are submitting the draft resolution calling for closer cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN. Such cooperation is vital to the realization of the basic objectives of ASEAN, which include, among others, accelerating the region's economic growth, social progress and cultural development and promoting stability and peace.

In the light of the many facets of globalization, cooperation between the two organizations will contribute to economic growth and sustainable development in the region so that we could maximize the benefits of globalization while reducing its negative effects, in particular among the region's least developed countries, which thus far have not been fully integrated into the new realities of a globalized world. There is no doubt that ASEAN has contributed to building a culture of peace and cooperation in the region through enhancing habitual cooperation and maintaining regional peace, stability and security.

We have just successfully concluded the eighth ASEAN Summit, held at Phnom Penh, Cambodia, which attracted worldwide attention, followed by the sixth ASEAN plus Three summit meeting with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea and a separate ASEAN-India summit. China signed a framework agreement for a free-trade pact with ASEAN, as well as a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. Japan concluded an agreement focusing on human resources and investment, with the possibility

for a free-trade agreement in the future. And, in a very positive move, India, at its first summit-level meeting with the group, offered to negotiate a free-trade area with ASEAN. I am pleased to report that the Summit also saw the strengthening of collaboration between ASEAN and Africa, represented by the President of South Africa in his capacity as Chairman of the newly established African Union. He spoke about the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which we fully support. Finally, ASEAN will also strengthen its cooperation with the Greater Mekong Subregion. On 3 November 2002, Cambodia hosted the first Greater Mekong Subregion Summit, held at Phnom Penh.

In the area of peace and security, the Phnom Penh Summit focused on strengthening cooperation to combat terrorism in the wake of the heinous terrorist attacks on 11 September last year and of the attack carried out more recently in Bali, which struck at the heart of ASEAN. It adopted a Declaration on Terrorism, which expresses ASEAN's determination to build on measures announced last year in the Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism by ASEAN leaders in Brunei Darussalam to intensify its efforts to prevent, counter and suppress terrorist activities in the region, while urging the international community to support its efforts. Also last year in Brunei Darussalam, ASEAN and the United States signed a Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism.

At the same time, ASEAN believes that the United Nations is the proper forum for international cooperation and therefore cooperates, both individually and collectively, with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee. The ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN plus Three process are viable and increasingly significant forums for peace and stability in the region.

In the area of technical cooperation, productive cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was underscored when the UNDP was officially designated an ASEAN Dialogue Partner. Ties between ASEAN and the UNDP were further strengthened by the launching of the ASEAN-UNDP subregional programmes, aimed at better assisting ASEAN in its regional cooperation and integration efforts. ASEAN cooperation has evolved over the years with such United Nations funds and programmes as the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Conference on

Trade and Development and international agencies of the United Nations family, in particular the United Nations Industrial Development Organization; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the United Nations International Drug Control Programme; the United Nations Children's Fund; the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; the World Health Organization; the International Labour Organization; the International Maritime Organization; and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

For the reasons that I have cited, we feel that the resolution under consideration will be beneficial for both the United Nations and ASEAN.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Fiji, who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.21.

Mr. Naidu (Fiji): Imagine, if you can, a region so diverse in its culture, history and geography that its people speak some 1,200 languages — a region of islands large and small, numbering in the thousands and isolated by vast distances, where pervasive socio-economic change and environmental adversity have had powerful influences on the way in which its widely dispersed communities have developed. Picture that scenario, and then ask yourselves how any of its inhabitants could possibly attain greater economic and social viability in today's world. The simple answer is, of course, through regional cooperation.

The people of the Pacific have long been guided by a strong sense of community and are able to interact with the world around them by working together and by sharing resources. Today, we boast an extensive and highly effective regional institutional network that serves us particularly well. It is for that reason that I am proud and honoured to be addressing this session on regional cooperation on behalf of the members of the Pacific Islands Forum. Our diverse members include the metropolitan countries of Australia and New Zealand; the Melanesian States of Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, in the Western Pacific; the ancient Polynesian cultures of Samoa and Tonga, in the South Pacific; the remote micro-States of Nauru, Tuvalu and Kiribati, in the Central Pacific; and the Northern Pacific States of Palau, the Marshall Islands and Micronesia.

Today, our region is intrinsically linked through a network of organizations. Member States work closely

together through our regional organizations on a diverse array of issues, ranging from peace and security to environmental protection, from aviation law to education, and from information and communication technologies to health. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, our main policy-making body, oversees a central council of regional organizations of the Pacific that includes our regional universities, technical organizations, development and environmental agencies and think tanks.

As the Forum celebrates three decades as the principal multilateral body in the Pacific region, the demands of our members and those of the international community have also increased, thus shaping the interventions required by our regional organizations. The confidence we have in our organizations is demonstrated through the many initiatives and policy decisions in various declarations of the Pacific Islands Forum, the most recent being the communiqué of the thirty-third meeting of Forum leaders, annexed to document A/57/331.

At present, the Forum enjoys a special relationship with the United Nations through its observer status in the General Assembly and through the strong presence of a number of United Nations funds and programmes operating in the region. That relationship has matured over recent years and has broadened cooperation in new areas such as fisheries, small business enterprise, trade, human rights, democracy, peace-building and oceans management. While we are proud of the fact that the Forum and its membership have themselves provided the bulk of resources for most of the programmes in the region, what the United Nations and its agencies can bring — indeed, have brought — to the table in terms of development cooperation is something that we recognize and very much welcome.

As summarized in the Secretary-General's report on cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum, contained in document A/57/475, the United Nations has provided meaningful assistance in peace-building through consultations and field visits to countries in the region and by participation in the Forum Regional Security Committee. Since establishing a United Nations Political Office in Bougainville, it has also contributed to peace monitoring efforts and has provided electoral assistance in Fiji and the Solomon Islands.

Other United Nations agencies have also established a strong presence in the region, with field offices for the United Nations Development Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization providing direct technical and training assistance to the countries and the organizations of the Pacific. We urge those specialized agencies, along with our bilateral partners, to continue to work closely with the Secretary-General to enhance the coordination of United Nations-related activities in the Pacific.

Our members very much appreciate what the United Nations has done for our region. As we begin the process of carrying out the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and particularly as we move towards the 10-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action, it is important that those efforts be further strengthened and expanded. We, therefore, welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation that consultations be undertaken between our organizations to explore where further cooperation can be gainfully implemented.

To that end, Fiji has the honour to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.21, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum". Through that draft resolution, we, the members of the Pacific Islands Forum, reaffirm our commitment to a partnership of cooperation and friendship and offer some guidance to the United Nations, as well as to our international partners, on where such cooperation may indeed be strengthened and expanded.

Finally, in keeping with the theme of cooperation, I would like to express my group's sincere gratitude to the countries that have joined us in sponsoring the draft resolution. I am pleased to announce that the following countries have also joined as sponsors: Chile, Cuba, Greece, Israel, Kiribati, Kuwait, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sudan and Thailand.

With these short comments, draft resolution A/57/L.21 is hereby introduced for consideration by the General Assembly, and we look forward to its adoption on a consensus basis.

The President: I call on the representative of Turkey, who will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.22.

Mr. Cengizer (Turkey): On 12 October 2002, at the Twelfth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), held in Istanbul, Turkey assumed the chairmanship of the ECO. It is my country's honour, in that capacity, to introduce today draft resolution A/57/L.22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization."

Next week is the tenth anniversary of the expansion of ECO. It was on 28 November 1992 that ECO welcomed Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as its new members.

The seventh Summit of ECO, held in Istanbul on 14 October 2002, provided an opportunity to take stock of the decade-long performance of the expanded organization. In a time-span of 10 years, the basic documents of ECO were concluded, major agreements and plans of action were adopted and an impressive restructuring process was embarked upon. In 1996, a comprehensive economic cooperation strategy was prepared, according to which transport and communications, trade and investment and energy were outlined as priority areas for ECO. Today, the development and successful implementation of joint projects on energy, trade, transportation, agriculture, drug control and capacity-building can be cited among the leading achievements of ECO.

The founding document of ECO, the Treaty of Izmir, envisages the promotion of mutually beneficial interaction and cooperation between ECO and other regional and international organizations, as well as financial institutions. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119) on cooperation between the United Nations and ECO, wherein the status of that cooperation is elucidated. We also support the Secretary-General's recommendation in the report that specialized agencies, as well as organizations and programmes of the United Nations system and relevant financial institutions, should join in efforts towards the implementation of economic programmes and projects of ECO.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the success of the globalization process requires enhanced cooperation between international organizations and, especially, a better division of labour aimed at more efficient and results-oriented collaboration. Only in that manner can regional development be strengthened

and our shared commitment to meet the Millennium Development Goals achieved. It is with that understanding that we have been encouraging the deepening of relations between the ECO and the United Nations system, as well as relations with other relevant international and regional organizations.

The draft resolution before us today, which is sponsored by all ECO members, is designed to further promote the existing cooperation between the United Nations and ECO in the spirit that I tried to describe a while ago.

Having assumed the chairmanship of ECO for the next two years, Turkey is determined to contribute to this common endeavour. No doubt, the technical experience and financial assistance of international and regional organizations will bring substantial added value to the activities of ECO in previously mentioned areas, as well as in the important fields of health, environment, food security, management, transfer of technology, rural poverty alleviation and energy efficiency.

Among the new member States of the organization, Afghanistan deserves special attention. Turkey is keen to see that ECO makes a concrete contribution to reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, ECO is preparing a plan of action, taking due note of the proposals of the member States. This plan will be forwarded to the relevant regional and international organizations so as to raise additional funds for proposed reconstruction projects.

ECO has the potential to initiate reconstruction projects for Afghanistan, modest as they may be, particularly in areas where it has accumulated experience. Contributions by Member States to the ECO Fund would greatly facilitate efforts in this regard.

Turkey will demonstrate every effort to make ECO a dynamic organization, one that will live up to the expectations and aspirations of its members. The Seventh ECO Summit meeting has indeed given impetus to efforts geared at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. Further cooperation with the United Nations will undoubtedly help ECO to reach its goals.

The President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, the representative of Malta, let me give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division of the

Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management Services): I should like to inform Members, with regard to draft resolution A/57/L.23, that operative paragraph 16, as submitted by the sponsors, should read as follows:

“Commends the role of the Council of Europe with regard to the electoral process in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in preparation for the municipal elections on 26 October 2002”.

I should like to inform delegations that draft resolution A/57/L.23 will be re-issued tomorrow morning to reflect this correction.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malta who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.23.

Mr. Balzan (Malta): As Permanent Representative of Malta and the current Chair-in-Office of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, I am deeply honoured and proud to introduce this agenda item which, for the third consecutive time, features on the programme of work of the General Assembly. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to welcome high officials from the Council of Europe and delegations from the parliamentary assembly who have come to New York specifically to follow the proceedings of this item in the Assembly.

At the outset, I would like to express my country's deepest gratitude to the Government of Luxembourg for having worked indefatigably, under the wise and able leadership of Madam Lydie Polfer, Vice-Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, throughout the past six months, towards the attainment of the Council of Europe's tenets and principles and for having striven hard to further the achievement of European integration.

It is also my pleasure to announce that, since the tabling of draft resolution A/57/L.23, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Belgium, Colombia, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Germany, Greece, Norway, the Russian Federation, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I would like to thank all sponsors of the draft resolution for their contributions and strong support.

Since its inception in 1949, the Council of Europe has fully recognized its noble mission to create an organization that would bring European States into

closer unity and association. Today, one can overtly confirm that the “Pan-Europeanization” dream, as enshrined in The Hague Congress of 7 May 1948, is not far from being accomplished.

The Council of Europe was founded on a given belief, shared by the peoples of post-war Europe, to actively search for economic prosperity, social progress and harmony between and among European nations. The objectives and ideals of this organization, which are built on democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, have developed firmly throughout these past five decades. This is the direct result of the work of the Council, focusing initially on the re-building of Europe, and in recent years, on becoming a veritable “pan-European” organization by expanding eastwards. In embracing the Central and Eastern European countries within its fold, including the Russian Federation, the Council of Europe has succeeded in building a greater Europe, without dividing lines, benefiting people worldwide.

The Council, which is considered a beacon of hope and a benchmark for human rights, has grown from a mere 10 member States in 1949 to 23 in 1989. Today it boasts of 44 member States, representing 800 million people. This emerging European architecture evolved pursuant to the political changes at the end of the 1990s, following the fall of the Berlin wall, the demise of Communism and the burial of the cold war.

When Malta joined the Council of Europe in 1965, Prime Minister Giorgio Borg Olivier declared, “Membership of the Council of Europe has been for my country like returning home after a long absence”. As Malta takes up the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers for the third time, it notes with satisfaction that most of the countries of Europe have today returned home.

However, in this vein — and here I quote from the statement of our Foreign Minister, Dr. Joe Borg, made during the Committee of Ministers session on 7 November in Strasbourg: “We believe that, in view of the political changes within Europe in recent years, it is essential that the Council of Europe reposition itself and, in so doing, reassert its value”.

My country is wholly committed to building further on the recent achievements made by previous Chairmanships. Our ultimate objective is to concentrate our efforts on two primordial goals.

First, aware of the Council’s future role in a fast emerging European structure, my Government intends to pursue the process of the political unification of greater Europe, on the basis of the cooperation structures made available by the Council of Europe, and interact with the major partners on the European scene.

Secondly, given that social cohesion is most important in the promotion and protection of fundamental political rights, we will intensify our efforts to strengthen further the social and cultural dimensions of European integration on a continent-wide scale. In this respect, I would like to underscore that only a week ago the Maltese Chairmanship successfully organized a conference on access to social rights. Experts on a pan-European level participated in this important event to discuss the fundamental questions concerning the process of access to social rights. The conference also gave participants the opportunity to propose tangible and concrete solutions to the multiple and often overlapping problems inhibiting such access.

One of the major scourges afflicting humankind in this day and age is international terrorism. The tragic events of 11 September 2001 and other events that followed have clearly placed the brutal realities of terrorism before the entire world. It is our firm belief that the most effective manner to view those heinous attacks is as part of an unfolding historical process. It is for this reason that the international community is duty-bound, compelled and committed to fight against that undefined and faceless enemy.

My Government has openly condemned international terrorism, not only in the Assembly but also in many international conferences and forums. We maintain that closer and sounder cooperation at the global, regional and bilateral levels is indispensable for the successful eradication of modern-day terrorism.

Combating terrorism is our inviolable right. Henceforth, a strong Europe in a better-organized international community is becoming more and more vital. In the wake of such uncertainty and instability, we must be highly vigilant with regard to this new, emerging plague, since terrorism destroys life, annihilates democracy, rejects all legal orders and negates human rights. At this juncture, my delegation commends the Council’s recent adoption of the guidelines to help its Member States to safeguard fundamental values in addressing terrorism. Those

guidelines reiterate the responsibility of States to protect each human being from acts of terrorism, and, therefore, to recognize that the struggle against terrorism may require the adoption of specific measures, while at the same time outlining the limits that States shall impose upon themselves in this respect.

My Government remains firm in its unwavering and steadfast commitment to this fight, which continues to be ever more imperative, especially within the context of the negative impact of terrorist activities on the lives of ordinary and innocent people. We must form a common front to fight this scourge while simultaneously finding ways and means of dealing with its root causes.

In this connection, allow me to praise the Council of Europe for having assumed its full responsibilities in the fight against global terrorism by working in tandem with the United Nations on various fronts, most notably in the sphere of legal cooperation, the protection of fundamental rights and in the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

Synonymous with humane values, the Council of Europe, in conformity with the provisions of Protocol No. 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights, prohibits recourse to the death penalty in peacetime. One notes with satisfaction that the Council has put the abolition of the death penalty high on its agenda, and in this regard, one is pleased to report that no execution has taken place in the Council's member States since 1997. With Protocol No. 13, which was opened for signature on 3 May 2002 in Vilnius, the scope of Protocol No. 6 was extended even further as it opened the way for abolishing capital punishment in all circumstances.

Within the context of globalization, it is becoming more and more important for the United Nations and the Council of Europe to promulgate cooperation by exchanging information and by seeking further coordination in their work, while at the same time encouraging the streamlining of activities with the aim of ensuring the proper utilization of resources.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe dates back to 1951. However, one must not be oblivious to the accelerated and steady pace with which these two organizations have, in recent years, moved forward together. Testimony of this cooperation is well documented in the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225). Suffice it to mention the involvement of

both the Council of Europe and the United Nations in the process of conflict-prevention, post-conflict rehabilitation and peace-building in South Eastern Europe, most particularly, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia — Serbia and Montenegro — and, further afield, in Georgia. At this stage, I would also like to add that the active contribution of the Council of Europe concerning the electoral process in Kosovo in preparation for the recent municipal elections has also been remarkable.

In view of the above, I would like to mention the fruitful contribution of the Council of Europe to the International Conference on Human Rights and Democratization in Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus, which was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, towards the end of last year. The Conference was co-organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). In the Conference, the Government of Croatia and the European Commission offered Governments, regional organizations, national institutions and representatives of civil society the possibility of reviewing developments in the field of human rights in Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Let me underscore that we are living today in an era which is indeed as interesting as it is difficult. The challenges, old and new, that lie ahead are enormous, yet not totally insurmountable. Having said that, I would consider it propitious for the General Assembly to call upon the Secretary-General to explore every avenue to further consolidate the already sound ties that exist between the United Nations and the Council of Europe in order to meet these challenges.

In conclusion, may I appeal to all Member States of the Assembly to support the level of cooperation existing between the two bodies and contribute to its further enhancement.

The President: I now call on the representative of Uruguay, who in the course of his statement will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.24.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.24 entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System". This draft resolution, which updates resolution 56/98 adopted by consensus by the General Assembly on 14 December 2001, is based on the most

recent report of the Secretary-General on this subject, which is contained in document A/57/128.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his report, which clearly demonstrates that, since the Agreement between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System (SELA) on 27 December 1991, cooperation between them has evolved and expanded in a way that is very satisfactory and productive for both entities. In this connection, we would like to point out that the *Summary* section of the Secretary-General's report (A/57/128) states:

“Such cooperation has evolved over the years and has become more diversified in terms of both the areas of cooperation and the organizations concerned”.

The diversification referred to in the report demonstrates that regional affairs, both economic and social, are closely interlinked, and that in providing an impetus for greater cooperation and integration among the countries of the region — one of the principal objectives of SELA — coordination is required with regard to issues that are increasingly complex and diverse. That is why it is essential to strengthen and expand channels of cooperation between our universal Organization and the regional system with a view to achieving a greater exchange of information and experience with regard to public policy and the formulation and implementation of projects.

The idea of strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and SELA is referred to in the preambular part of the draft resolution and is stated again in the operative part, where references are made to some of the specialized agencies, organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations that have successfully carried out cooperative programmes with SELA. They are invited to continue and to deepen that cooperation. But such a process is not an end in itself; it must be directed at identifying the best way to improve our ability to attract resources, bring about greater coordination and make better use of technical cooperation, with the goal of contributing — in the words of paragraph 4 of the draft resolution — “to joint actions to achieve the Millennium goals”.

In view of the positive developments in the cooperation that exists between the United Nations and SELA and given that we will continue to work along these lines, the draft resolution reiterates its request to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the

Permanent Secretary of the Latin American Economic System, to assess, at the appropriate time, the implementation of the Agreement between the two entities, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session. Finally, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session a report on the implementation of the draft resolution.

The members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States hope that, as in the past when similar drafts were presented, draft resolution A/57/L.24 will be adopted by consensus.

The President: I call on the representative of the Congo, who in the course of his statement will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.25.

Mr. Ikouebe (Congo) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the Economic Community of Central African States — Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Chad — all of which have sponsored draft resolution A/57/L.25, which is currently the subject of broad consultations. Any revisions that might be made to it will be communicated to you, Mr. President, before the end of the debate.

About two years ago — on 10 November 2000 and on 12 December 2000 — the General Assembly adopted resolutions 55/22 and 55/161, respectively, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States. Through those resolutions, the United Nations sought to support the efforts and initiatives of the Central African States in meeting the challenges facing them, in particular those relating to crises, armed conflict, reconstruction and development.

This year the draft resolution has been drawn up within a new context, and thus has a special character. First of all, on 22 October 2002, the Security Council, at the initiative of the then President, Mr. Martin Belinga-Eboutou, the Permanent Representative of Cameroon, convened a public meeting on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations system and the Central African region in the maintenance of peace and security. During that meeting a very constructive exchange of views took place between the States of Central Africa and their bilateral and multilateral partners on the situation in the region with regard to

peace, security and economic integration. The representatives of the Central African States and the members of the Security Council also discussed ways and means of strengthening existing partnerships between the United Nations system and the Economic Community of Central African States. Most speakers said that economic reconstruction, the strengthening of human and institutional capacities and the promotion of the rule of law were crucial elements for peace-building in Central Africa. Likewise, several members of the Council recommended that special attention be given to the development of the subregion, particularly with regard to making the international community aware of the need for immediate action to stabilize the situation in that particularly sensitive area.

I should like to take this opportunity thank our bilateral and multilateral partners for having reiterated, during the course of that debate, their interest in and commitment to helping Central Africa to strengthen its capacities in maintaining peace, security and reconstruction.

The statement by the President of the Council of 31 October 2002, following the public meeting of 22 October, now serves as a reference text for relations between the United Nations and Central Africa. The draft resolution before the Assembly stresses how crucial that is.

Secondly, I would like to refer to the regional development effort undertaken by Africa in elaborating the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which places Central Africa in a key position with regard to the development of the continent and provides the region with an opportunity to develop its enormous potential.

This new challenge is huge, just as our region is huge — a point made so well by the Gabonese Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Jean Ping:

“Central Africa is evolving at the pace of a two-fold destiny. First of all, the destiny of abundance, characterized by a sort of divine providence that has bestowed upon our immense subregion vast natural resources — diamonds, leather, manganese, oil, and rich forests — necessary not only for its own development but also for that of the rest of the world.”
(S/PV.4630, p.16)

Today, with the gradual return of peace to most countries of the subregion, Central Africa, now more than ever before, has to try to live up to its enormous potential and to play a major role in the international arena.

As everyone knows, Central Africa has for several years been facing a serious situation of armed conflicts, destabilization, insecurity and, consequently, impoverishment. But, finally, there are some glimmers of hope on the horizon. Witness the political will of heads of State concerned, who are seriously concerned by the worsening situation and have given new impetus to the development of the region by taking initiatives to meet these challenges and by becoming personally involved in the quest for negotiated solutions. Witness the Libreville Summit on the crisis between the Central African Republic and Chad. Witness also the goodwill of parties to the conflict and the growing awareness of most actors, who finally want to give peace, reconstruction and development a chance. I refer also to the tireless support given by the international community, which has constantly accompanied the efforts of the subregion, as shown by the presence in Central Africa of 6 out of the total 16 Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General in the African continent.

An assessment of the cooperation between the United Nations and ECCAS, even if it has not lived up to all of our expectations, nevertheless gives us reason for hope. The report submitted by the Secretary-General, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States” (A/57/266), reinforces this impression. This cooperation has been reflected in many initiatives to implement confidence-building measures, security and development in the region.

Suffice it to recall the efforts made by the United Nations in the framework of the work done by the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the creation of which is part of this political determination to establish a subregional mechanism for preventive diplomacy and collective security, and which is a special forum for effective cooperation between the United Nations and the Central African States in a very sensitive area.

Several mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution are being developed, and the many recommendations and decisions adopted

reinforce the image of a geopolitical space that is in the process of normalization. The efforts of the countries of the region are also shown through many actions to reinforce human rights, democracy and good governance.

In addition to these initiatives, we have given new momentum to subregional integration by reviving the functioning of ECCAS itself, whose powers since 1999 have been extended to peace and security and by re-launching, within the context of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central African States, joint programmes for economic and social development.

A lot remains to be done; the situation remains fragile. That is why we stress the urgent need for concrete measures to reinforce these various peace processes. This is also why we welcome the recommendation contained in the Statement by the President of the Security Council, dated 31 October 2002, for

“the inclusion, where appropriate, of support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the mandates of peacekeeping and peace-building operations”. (*S/PRST/2002/31, p.3*)

This is key, because, whether we are talking about the Lusaka, Sun City or Pretoria Agreements on the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Angola or in Burundi, or the Libreville Agreements — just to refer to these instruments — the continuation and stepping up of cooperation between the United Nations and ECCAS remain decisive for our efforts to bring about stability in the subregion and to promote its development.

Draft resolution A/57/L.25 meets these concerns. It reiterates the texts adopted in 2000 and 2001 and stresses the conclusions reached at the public meeting of the Security Council on 22 October 2002, which was a milestone. We cannot over-emphasize the urgent importance, in a context marked by the need for post-conflict peace-building, of supporting the process of conflict prevention and settlement, as well as the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

Accordingly, the countries of the subregion reiterate their commitment to strengthen all existing mechanisms available for preventive diplomacy and collective security in order to ensure that the whole

subregion enjoys social and economic development commensurate with its enormous assets.

In order to attain these two goals, peace and development, the Central African States place real hopes on cooperation between the United Nations and the ECCAS.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Jamaica who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.26.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): I have the honour to introduce, for the consideration of the General Assembly, the draft resolution entitled, “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community”, which is before the Assembly as document A/57/L.26. I do so on behalf of the following sponsors: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and my own country, Jamaica.

Activities pertaining to cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have been dealt with in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/57/254 prepared pursuant to paragraph 8 of resolution 55/17 of 7 November 2000. The report outlines various aspects of cooperation between the secretariats of the United Nations and CARICOM, which involves an active process of consultation and exchange of information.

This cooperation has been growing in areas critical to the economic and social development of the Caribbean subregion including disaster preparedness and risk reduction, follow-up action, in relation to major international conferences, drug control, health, the environment and marine affairs.

Cooperation has been strengthened through the involvement of various United Nations bodies and agencies, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In its preambular section, the draft resolution before the Assembly reaffirms the importance of regional organizations in furthering the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, within the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter. It also notes the fruitful results of meetings held between representatives of the United Nations and the Caribbean Community. It draws attention to two initiatives of particular interest to Caribbean Community: first, the importance of the adoption of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea in the context of sustainable development and, secondly, the necessity for the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action on Small Island Developing States. It notes relevant proposals emanating from recent international conferences, in particular the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, and the United Nations special session on HIV/AIDS, in which special recognition was given to the situation in the Caribbean region. It also reaffirms the need to strengthen existing cooperation in the areas of economic and social development, as well as in political and humanitarian affairs.

In its operative section, the draft resolution takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community, as well as of efforts to strengthen that cooperation. It calls upon the Secretary-General, in association with the Secretary-General of CARICOM, to continue to assist in furthering the development and maintenance of peace and security within the Caribbean. It urges specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to cooperate in order to initiate, maintain and increase consultations and programmes with the Caribbean Community and its associated institutions in the attainment of their objectives, giving special attention to the areas and issues identified at the second general meeting, held in March 2000. The draft resolution also welcomes the initiatives of Member States to assist the cooperation between the two secretariats, and recommends that a third meeting between representatives of the two organizations be held in New York in March 2003, in order to review and appraise progress in the implementation of the agreed areas and issues and to hold consultations on

such additional measures and procedures as may be required to facilitate and strengthen cooperation between the two organizations. Finally, it requests a report by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly during the fifty-ninth session and the inclusion in the provisional agenda of that session of an item on the subject for its consideration.

I should like to announce that since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Canada, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador and Japan.

The contents of the draft resolution basically seek to further develop the process of cooperation and collaboration between the United Nations system and the Caribbean Community. Its provisions, we believe, will receive wide support within the Assembly. It is the hope of the sponsors that, as in previous years, this draft resolution can be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Sudan to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.28.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure and an honour to submit to the Assembly the draft resolution contained in document A/57/L.28, which is sponsored by Algeria, Gambia, Mali, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Syria and Turkey. I will read out additional sponsors later on.

The draft resolution relates to agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations", and specifically to sub-item (o), entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference".

At the outset, we would like to commend the annual report submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/57/405, in which the Secretary-General gives a detailed accounting of the consultations that have taken place in the course of the year between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in the political, economic, social, humanitarian and other spheres.

In its preambular part, the draft resolution recalls resolution 3369 (XXX), of 10 October 1975, by which the General Assembly decided to invite the Organization of the Islamic Conference to participate as an observer in the work of the General Assembly

and its subsidiary bodies. The draft resolution also welcomes the results of the meetings held at Vienna from 11 to 13 July 2002 between the agencies and bodies of the United Nations and those of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

In its operative part, the draft resolution deals with the following salient issues. First, the draft resolution notes with satisfaction the active participation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in the activities of the United Nations in realizing the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Secondly, the draft resolution welcomes the efforts made by the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to promote cooperation between the two organizations in areas of common interest and to consider ways and means of enhancing the actual mechanisms of that cooperation.

Thirdly, the draft resolution welcomes the periodic high-level meetings held between the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and encourages their joint participation in the important meetings held by both organizations.

Fourthly, the draft resolution urges the entire United Nations system, and especially donor agencies, to increase their technical and other support to the Organization of the Islamic Conference and its subsidiary bodies and specialized and associated agencies to enhance and strengthen cooperation.

Fifthly, the draft resolution expresses appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his continued efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in the political, economic, social, cultural and scientific spheres.

Sixthly, the draft resolution calls on the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session a report on the state of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It also calls for the inclusion of an agenda item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference" in the provisional agenda of the Assembly's fifty-ninth session.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Lebanon to introduce draft resolutions A/57/L.29 and A/57/L.32.

Mr. Diab (Lebanon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to associate myself with previous speakers in conveying profound gratitude to the Secretary-General for the high quality and precision of his report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie".

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Senegal on the election of Mr. Abdou Diouf to the post of Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) at the ninth summit, held at Beirut in October. We assure him of our full support as he undertakes his important duties. I also thank his predecessor, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his work in office to promote the role of OIF and to develop its relations with the United Nations.

It is a great honour for me to introduce, on behalf of the 68 sponsors, the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie, contained in document A/57/L.29. Turkey and San Marino have joined the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

The current draft resolution is an update of resolution 56/45 and deals with the same subject. It includes a preambular part consisting of 10 paragraphs, which is the draft resolution's legal basis for the cooperation between the United Nations and OIF in promoting the purposes and principles of the Organization. The preambular part addresses in particular the crucial commitments adopted in the Beirut plan of action by the heads of State and Government of countries that use French as a common language. Those commitments are the guidelines for action in which Francophonie can and must play a major role in the fight against poverty and the establishment of a more equitable globalization that is conducive to progress, peace, democracy and human rights and is respectful of cultural and linguistic diversity to the benefit of the most vulnerable people and for the development of all countries.

The operative part of the draft resolution consists of 17 paragraphs that identify previous international and regional attempts and subsequent steps to consolidate, develop and strengthen existing links

between the United Nations and OIF in the political, economic, social and cultural areas.

The operative part stresses the increasingly close and fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and OIF. The Secretary-General's report indicates progress made in the number and quality of cooperative activities cited in the operative part of the draft resolution and jointly conducted by both organizations. This cooperation has several aspects, including political cooperation within the secretariats; cooperation in the economic, social and cultural fields; and cooperation with the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies through participation in conferences organized under the auspices of the United Nations system and OIF. Such cooperation is designed to pool efforts in the areas of preventive diplomacy, the promotion of democracy, peacemaking, peace-building, the promotion of human rights and of economic, social and cultural development, and participation in strengthening the dialogue between cultures and civilizations.

Lebanon keenly hopes that cooperation between the United Nations and OIF will be strengthened and extended to a growing and more diversified number of fields. That is why my delegation calls on the General Assembly to give its full support to the draft resolution.

In conclusion, I am pleased to stress the importance of the solidarity expressed in favour of the Arabic language and culture at the most recent OIF summit — held for the first time in an Arab country, Lebanon — by the heads of State and Government of countries that use French as a common language. The summit offered the heads of State and Government an opportunity to support, through the Beirut Declaration, the Arab peace initiative unanimously adopted at the Arab summit held in Beirut in March.

(spoke in Arabic)

On behalf of the delegations of Arab members of the League of Arab States, and in Lebanon's capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States at the United Nations for this month, I have the honour to submit the draft resolution contained in document A/57/L.32, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States".

The current links between the United Nations and the League of Arab States reflect the cooperation and integration envisioned under Chapter VIII of the

Charter of the United Nations. The relationship between the two organizations is built on firm foundations, as enshrined in the purposes and principles of their two charters. This relationship has evolved over the years in many areas, including the promotion of international peace and security, decolonization, disarmament and economic, social and cultural development.

The new international political realities of today's world are undergoing enormous changes that affect regional and international relations. These new realities have led to increased responsibilities for the United Nations in its efforts to find solutions to problems affecting world peace and security. The League of Arab States has been eager to cooperate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in order to strengthen the Organization's role in establishing peace on the basis of justice and United Nations resolutions, especially in our Arab region. In this regard, the presence of the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the League of Arab States Summit held in Beirut last March reflected that cooperation and helped to increase international support for the Arab peace initiative adopted at the Beirut Summit and welcomed by the Security Council in its resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1435 (2002).

We consider that, in view of current events in the occupied Palestinian territories, it is necessary to intensify that cooperation and to ensure a greater United Nations contribution to ending Israel's occupation of Arab territories and the Israeli occupying forces' continued aggression against the Palestinian people.

In the same context, there is a pressing need to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in economic, social and developmental areas. This would accelerate the pace of development in the Arab world and fulfil the common goals of the two organizations.

There are many examples of practical cooperation between the United Nations, which is an international organization, and the League of Arab States, which is a regional organization, in the areas of conflict prevention and peace-building. In this regard, we would like to refer to the appeal launched by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the States members of the League of Arab States that resulted in the letter addressed by the Iraqi Foreign Minister to the

Secretary-General of the United Nations on 16 September 2002 (S/2002/1034, annex). That letter stated Iraq's response to the international will and its agreement to the return of the international weapons inspectors without restrictions or conditions. Iraq's response represented a first step towards a comprehensive solution that would ensure the implementation of the remaining Security Council resolutions and would bring about, inter alia, the lifting of sanctions; respect for Iraq's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity; and the conversion of the Middle East into a region free of weapons of mass destruction. In the report before the Assembly (A/57/386), the Secretary-General highlights the role of the League of Arab States in facilitating Iraq's agreement to return documents belonging to the Kuwaiti archives.

The preamble of draft resolution A/57/L.32 underscores the desire of the two organizations to further consolidate existing ties in all areas and to continue their cooperation in order to enhance their common goals and to promote the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The operative part takes note with satisfaction of the Secretary-General's report, and expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the follow-up action taken by him to implement the proposals adopted at the meetings between the secretariats of the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations, including the sectoral meeting on the use of information technology in development held at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo, from 18 to 20 June 2002.

Also, the operative part calls for intensified cooperation in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, cultural and administrative fields. In line with that approach, paragraph 10 recommends that representatives from both organizations meet every two years and that joint inter-agency sectoral meetings should also be convened on a biennial basis to address priority areas of major importance to the development of the Arab States.

Finally, on behalf of the Arab Group, I wish to invite the General Assembly, which represents the international community, to support cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab

States. Our group hopes that the draft resolution before us will be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Angola, who, in the course of her statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.30.

Ms. Izata (Angola): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.30, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) on behalf of SADC member countries, which include Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my own country, Angola. The Secretary-General's report, document A/57/94, indicates that the United Nations stands ready to increase its cooperation with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in areas that can promote sustainable development and regional integration. The draft resolution strongly emphasizes the need for United Nations bodies, the international community, the private sector and civil society to continue to assist and participate in the development of the Southern African region.

The purpose of the draft resolution is to strengthen and increase cooperation and support between the United Nations and countries in the region, particularly in areas of major concern to the region, such as the consolidation and maintenance of democracy, peace and security, peace-building and sustainable development. The draft resolution has been updated to incorporate recent developments, particularly the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the movement towards peace in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the humanitarian situation in Southern Africa. The continued high prevalence in the region of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis, has also influenced the content of the draft resolution.

In its preambular part, the draft resolution, having recalled all General Assembly resolutions and decisions on the promotion of cooperation between the United Nations and SADC, welcomes the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development by the African Union and its endorsement by the Assembly. The preambular part of the draft resolution also

expresses concern about the difficult humanitarian situation facing the countries in the region and expresses its appreciation for valuable and effective support demonstrated by the United Nations and the international community. Furthermore, in its operative part, the draft resolution calls upon the United Nations and the international community to support with appropriate resources SADC's efforts to implement the outcomes of the Millennium Assembly and other major United Nations conferences and summits. It appeals to the international community to continue to support the measures taken by SADC in addressing HIV/AIDS and to extend much-needed assistance to SADC countries that are engaged in the process of national reconstruction, sound economic policies, good governance and the rule of law to enhance the implementation of their national economic programmes.

The draft resolution also expresses its support to the economic reforms being implemented by SADC member States in pursuance of their shared vision of creating a regional economic community through deeper integration, and calls upon the international community to support their efforts in capacity-building and in addressing the new challenges presented to the economies of the region arising from the process of globalization and liberalization.

Finally, in paragraph 21, the Secretary-General is requested to submit a report on the implementation of the draft resolution to the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

Besides members of the Southern African Development Community, countries that have joined the list of sponsors include Gabon, Morocco, the Sudan and Uganda. I take this opportunity to thank all the delegations that provided their support during the elaboration of this draft resolution — namely, those of Brazil, Mexico, Morocco, the Russian Federation, Thailand and the United States, as well as the European Union. It is my wish that the draft resolution be adopted by consensus. We would also welcome the inclusion of other countries that wish to join the list of sponsors.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands, who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.31.

Mr. Hamburger (Netherlands): I will be brief. First of all, I should like to thank Mr. Rogelio Pfirter, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), for presenting the report of the OPCW.

Secondly, my delegation has the pleasure to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, the draft resolution regarding cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, as contained in document A/57/L.31. I should like to inform the Assembly that the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Monaco, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Thailand, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia. This procedural draft resolution, once adopted, will enable the General Assembly to include in the agenda of its fifty-ninth session an item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons".

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all those countries that have sponsored this draft resolution, and I warmly recommend that the draft resolution be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile, who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.38.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, contained in document A/57/L.38. I should like to add the following countries to the list of sponsors: Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, the Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Germany, Guinea, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, the Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam.

The draft resolution that I have the honour to introduce is of great importance for the Organization. It

represents the culmination of several years of joint work by the United Nations, its Member States and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to add a parliamentary dimension to the structure of multilateral cooperation. The scope and the quality of that cooperation are detailed in the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, contained in document A/57/375.

Our world is experiencing an era of great changes that entail an important evolution in international relations. That in turn requires our peoples and multilateral organizations to work more closely together. It also gives rise to the need for national parliaments to contribute to international cooperation. It is national parliaments that have the constitutional duty to represent their peoples. In addition, they have an important role in transforming United Nations agreements into national policies. That is why, in the Millennium Declaration, our heads of State or Government resolved to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through their world organization, the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union brings together more than 140 parliaments of the world and can be a channel for cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments. For this new type of cooperation to be effective, we have recognized the need to change the Statutes of the world organization of parliaments. At our request, the IPU Secretary General prepared a report last year in which he made a series of recommendations as to the contents of new Statutes.

The draft resolution that I have the honour to introduce is the result of broad consultations among Member States on the basis of the Secretary-General's recommendations. Accordingly, the draft resolution takes up, first of all, a very important development with respect to the Inter-Parliamentary Union that has long been an aspiration of many Member States: the granting of United Nations observer status to the Union. That recognition is bestowed by virtue of the Union's unique character as an inter-State organization whose essential functions are focused on inter-parliamentary activity. In consideration of that aspect, the draft resolution authorizes the Inter-Parliamentary Union to circulate its official documents at no cost to the organization.

In turn, the draft resolution invites the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to consider adopting similar modalities with respect to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. It calls upon the Secretary-General to adopt the necessary measures to strengthen the cooperation and the relationship between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the General Assembly. Finally, the draft resolution places this item on the agenda of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The sponsors of the draft resolution express the hope that it can be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa, who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.39.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): On behalf of the African Group, it gives my delegation pleasure to stand before this body to introduce the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, contained in document A/57/L.39. I am pleased to announce that the following countries have joined as sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Angola, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, the Comoros, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Swaziland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

When the African Union held its summit in Durban, South Africa, the heads of State and Government took decisions that were aimed at accelerating sustainable development in the continent. In adopting the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Africa took steps which coincided with the Millennium Development Goals contained in the Millennium Declaration adopted by this body two years ago.

My delegation wishes to take note of the elaborate and incisive report of Secretary-General on

cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. In particular, we welcome the creation of an Office that will coordinate issues related to Africa within the United Nations system. This, we believe, will facilitate and consolidate the work of all United Nations agencies with a view to enhancing their effectiveness.

The draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union lays a very solid foundation upon which the relationship between the two organizations will be built and determines the future of Africa and our commitment to the Millennium Development Goals. The relationship between the two organizations is rightly being reviewed to reflect the establishment of the African Union. In this regard, the draft resolution highlights new institutions of the African Union aimed at establishing peace and security in the continent. These structures are the African Union Peace Fund, the Panel of the Wise, a military staff committee and an African standby force.

Any assistance — technical, financial and/or otherwise — aimed at facilitating the establishment of these structures by the African Union will enhance the capability of the continent and its member States in matters related to conflict management, prevention and resolution. The African Union has adopted and is currently implementing a Memorandum of Understanding on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation to enhance and stabilize the continent.

The African Union and the international community are focused in their commitment to fight terrorism. The continent believes that this fight against terrorism can be successful only if it is based on international cooperation. At the continental level, African States have adopted the Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the Plan of Action that was adopted in Algiers, Algeria, on 14 September 2002. I am pleased that this Convention has been ratified by sufficient African States and is due to enter into force on 6 December 2002. We believe that these efforts complement the determination of the United Nations as a collective to fight against terrorism.

In Africa, the common and most vivid terror committed against civilian populations is through the use of small arms. These small arms are on many occasions bartered in exchange for illicit drugs. We therefore have an interest in enhancing cooperation

between the United Nations and the African Union in the fight against illicit trafficking in drugs, small arms and light weapons.

Globalization presents a special challenge to Africa, especially in relation to matters of trade. We look forward to the start of the Doha Development Round, especially as it shall address the improvement of market access for African products in order to promote sustainable growth in Africa.

The draft resolution urges the United Nations and its Member States to increase their support for Africa in its fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other, related infectious diseases. Critical to these efforts is the need to address the plight of children who may be left orphans due to such communicable diseases. To this end, Member States are further called upon to implement the Plan of Action on a world fit for children.

Africa has further committed itself to improving human rights by adopting the Protocol Establishing an African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights. It is anticipated that the process towards establishing such a court will be finalized soon. Human rights will not be fully enjoyed in the continent as long as a large number of its people are refugees and internally displaced. In an attempt to complement Africa's efforts, the United Nations is called upon to support the African countries in efforts to incorporate problems of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons into national and regional development plans.

Africa is establishing institutions that will enhance a culture of democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law in an attempt to enhance popular participation in matters of governance. These structures — such as the Pan-African Parliament, the African Court of Justice, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council and the Financial Institutions — will strengthen and entrench democratic institutions and accountability in Africa. The draft resolution rightfully calls upon the United Nations system and invites the Bretton Woods institutions to assist as appropriate in the establishment of such institutions.

Finally, my delegation would like to propose a slight amendment to the fourth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution before us. We would like to correct the date on which the G8 summit at

Kananaskis, Canada, was held. The date "28 June 2002" should be replaced by "27 June 2002".

My delegation hopes that the General Assembly will adopt this draft resolution by acclamation.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Romania, who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.40.

Mr. Niculescu (Romania): It is a privilege for me to address the General Assembly on agenda item 22, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations", and, more specifically, on its sub-item (q) on cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

I should like to commend the presentation made this morning by Mr. Wolfgang Hoffman, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission, which to our mind illustrates the efficient work carried by the Commission in Vienna.

As a State party to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Romania is fully committed to its early entry into force and implementation. In our view, a good relationship between the United Nations and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) is instrumental to building a more peaceful and secure world through disarmament and non-proliferation. From that perspective, we believe that reports delivered to the General Assembly on a regular basis by the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission on the activities of the Organization are useful and welcome.

In its capacity as Chairman of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the Romanian delegation has the honour and the pleasure to introduce to the Assembly for adoption the draft resolution contained in document A/57/L.40, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization". The draft resolution is based on the consultations held in Vienna and New York.

Like similar texts in the past, the draft resolution is basically a procedural one and is meant to serve as a basis for the CTBTO to inform the General Assembly on its activities at its fifty-ninth session. In its preambular part, the draft resolution takes note of both the note by the Secretary-General on the cooperation

between the two organizations and the report of the Executive Secretary. In its operative paragraph, it decides to include in the provisional agenda of the fifty-ninth session the same sub-item.

In conclusion, I would like to express our hope that this draft resolution will be adopted by the General Assembly with the broadest support possible.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on Mr. Kanu Agabi, Attorney-General and Minister of Justice of Nigeria, who, in the course of his statement, will introduce draft resolution A/57/L.18.

Mr. Agabi (Nigeria): I take this opportunity as the current President of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization" (A/57/L.18). I will also speak briefly on behalf of my Government, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, on the activities of AALCO.

The role of AALCO in the field of international law as an intergovernmental organization comprising 45 countries from Asia and Africa is well known. Members will recall vividly the significant contributions AALCO has made in shaping the international legal regime relating to the law of the sea, the law of treaties and arbitration. There is virtually no field of international law that AALCO has not taken up at one time or another during the 46 years of its existence.

The organization's current programme includes several issues of great importance for our member States, which are discussed at our annual sessions, and at meetings and seminars. My Government, Nigeria, hosted the forty-first session of AALCO in Abuja in July this year. It was a session memorable not only for its high-level participation, but also for its in-depth consideration of issues such as human rights, the protection of migrant workers, trafficking in women and children, international terrorism, the environment, sustainable development, the establishment of the International Criminal Court, ongoing negotiations on the World Trade Organization and issues related to globalization.

The success recorded during that session was due to the cooperation of all the delegations that participated and of the AALCO secretariat. I am, therefore, pleased to extend the appreciation of the

Government of Nigeria to all the delegations that participated and that contributed to the success of that meeting. In particular, I wish to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Wafik Kamil, and the secretariat.

Since the last time this item was considered by the General Assembly, our organization has accomplished a number of tasks. With a view to expanding our knowledge base, AALCO has signed cooperation agreements with the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations University and the International Organization for Migration.

Under the able leadership of our Secretary-General, Ambassador Kamil, issues relating to trafficking in women and children, migration, corruption and intellectual property rights, matters hitherto considered peripheral, have been accorded a place of priority and have received substantial focus within the work programme.

Given the transnational character of the globalization process, we are conscious of the fact that it will be increasingly difficult to deal with international law in isolation and divorced from the political and social realities that dictate the response of States to these issues. The historic, cultural and developmental differences among States have obviously to be taken into account in creating norms for a global society.

Globalization should not be confined to the opening of borders for the free passage of goods. In our thinking, borders must also be open for the passage of men and women whose motives are legitimate. Globalization must lead to the realization of the ideal of one humanity and one world without boundaries. It should mean that no nation should be a safe haven for the proceeds of corruption. It should mean that the proceeds of corruption should be surrendered to the nations that are the victims of corruption. It should mean that corrupt officials from Africa and Asia can be tried and punished wherever they take refuge. That will go a long way towards reducing crimes associated with money laundering, terrorism and corruption.

It is against that backdrop that AALCO, as a body of mostly developing and least developed countries, strives for a balanced, flexible and responsible

approach to international law. The resolutions and studies of AALCO on the elimination of terrorism and its root causes, the responsibility of States to halt the emission of greenhouse gases and the use of trade as a tool for promoting environmental goals attest to this unique approach.

As regards technical assistance and capacity-building, AALCO plans to reinvigorate its training programme for officials of its member States under its Centre for Research and Training. It has also embarked upon a programme for dissemination of information on international law matters and proposes to publish an annual publication: the Asian-African Yearbook on International Law.

Time does not permit me to elaborate on the specific activities of AALCO. I would like to say that over the past 46 years, AALCO has provided a useful forum for exchanging views and for arriving at common positions on crucial issues of international law. It has great potential in meeting the new challenges posed in the context of the development of new rules and a new framework of international law in the twenty-first century. The comprehensive work programme on its agenda demonstrates member States' interest in further strengthening its activities. Its resolve to make concerted efforts together with the United Nations, its agencies and other intergovernmental organizations deserves full support.

With that objective in view, I would like to commend to the Assembly for adoption of the draft resolution contained in document A/57/L.18, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization.

The draft resolution very appropriately makes reference to the close cooperation between AALCO and United Nations agencies. The draft resolution also notes with appreciation AALCO's work aimed at aiding and facilitating the efforts of the United Nations on issues relating to combating corruption, eliminating international terrorism and human and drug trafficking, and the promotion of human rights.

In the light of the legal work undertaken by AALCO, it is necessary to promote close interaction between AALCO and the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly. By the unanimous agreement of AALCO and in order to reduce the problems that might arise, we have deleted paragraph 6 of the draft

resolution. The operative part of the draft resolution therefore reads as follows.

“[The General Assembly] [t]akes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General;

“Notes with satisfaction the continuing efforts of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization towards strengthening the role of the United Nations and its various organs in enhancing the rule of law and wider adherence to related international instruments;

“Also notes with satisfaction the commendable progress achieved towards enhancing cooperation between the United Nations, its organizations, other international organizations and the Consultative Organization;

“Notes with appreciation the work of the Consultative Organization aiming at strengthening the efforts of the United Nations in

respect of issues such as combating corruption, international terrorism and trafficking as well as drugs and human rights issues;

“Also notes with appreciation the initiative and efforts the Consultative Organization has undertaken to promote the objectives and principles set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, including wider acceptance of treaties deposited with the Secretary-General;

“Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session a report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Consultative Organization;

“Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-ninth session the item entitled ‘Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization’.”

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.