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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 1 November 1989, at 10 a.m.President:Mr. SALLAH
(Vice-President)

(Gambia)

- The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security [32]
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (b) Draft resolution
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- Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments [17] (continued)
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- Achievements of the International Year of Peace [21]
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In the absence of the President, Mr. Sallah (Gambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 32

THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/661)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/44/L.17)
- (c) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/44/679)

The PRESIDENT: Ambassador Garba has requested me to convey to the General Assembly his regret at not being able, owing to ineluctable commitments outside New York, to be present to introduce the draft resolution which is before the Assembly now.

It is his view that draft resolution A/44/L.17 is a balanced text which duly reflects the concerns of the parties involved and underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive political solution of the situation in respect of Afghanistan.

The draft resolution submitted by the President is the result of a consensus of the parties. He trusts that the Assembly, too, will adopt it by consensus.

Before we take action on the draft resolution, I wish to point out that, as part of the understanding between those directly concerned, it was agreed that there should be no debate on the item in the General Assembly. It is therefore suggested that we abide by this understanding, which is designed to permit the broadest possible support for the draft resolution. If I hear no objections, I shall take it that the General Assembly agrees not to discuss the item under consideration.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The report of the Fifth Committee regarding the programme budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/44/679.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/44/L.17?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 44/15).

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 32.

AGENDA ITEM 17 (continued)

APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS

- (i) CONFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/108)

The PRESIDENT: In paragraph 22 of part B of its resolution 1240 (XIII), of 14 October 1958, on the establishment of the Special Fund, the General Assembly provided that the Secretary-General, after having consulted the Governing Council of the Special Fund, would appoint the Managing Director, subject to confirmation by the Assembly. This procedure has been construed as applying also to the appointment of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

By its decision 40/324 of 20 April 1986, the General Assembly confirmed the appointment by the Secretary-General of Mr. William H. Draper III as Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme with effect from 1 May 1986, for a term of office ending on 31 December 1989.

Following consultations with members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, the Secretary-General now proposes that the appointment of Mr. William H. Draper III as Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme be extended for a four-year term until 31 December 1993.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves this proposal?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: We have concluded our consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 17.

AGENDA ITEM 13

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (A/44/4)

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the International Court of Justice?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I am extremely pleased to have this opportunity to announce the creation of the Secretary-General's Trust Fund to assist States in the settlement of disputes through the International Court of Justice.

As the Assembly knows, the settlement of disputes "by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law" constitutes an essential tool for the maintenance of international peace and security. The judgements of the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, represent the world's most authoritative pronouncement on international law. The Court is also the principal organ for resolving legal disputes between States, and the Secretary-General therefore has a special responsibility to promote judicial settlement of such disputes through the Court.

When legal disputes arise between States over certain issues there may be instances where the parties concerned are prepared to seek settlement through the Court either of the entire dispute or of a component thereof, but cannot proceed because of a lack of legal expertise or funds. There may also be cases where the parties are unable to implement the Court's judgement for similar reasons. My purpose in creating this Trust Fund is therefore to make financial assistance

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available to States where necessary to enable them to use the Court for the settlement of their legal differences. If even one aspect of a dispute is referred to the Court it may bring the whole situation closer to a solution. In this way, it is hoped, States will be encouraged to make even greater use of the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.

Over the years various steps have been taken by the United Nations to promote and overcome obstacles to the settlement of disputes. The General Assembly has adopted a number of important instruments in this regard, including the Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning the Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes and, most recently, the Declaration on the Prevention and Removal of Disputes and Situations Which May Threaten International Peace and Security and on the Role of the United Nations in this Field. These landmark instruments incorporate sets of valuable procedures, methods and measures which may be adopted by States, the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Secretary-General for the purpose of the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Trust Fund is intended to provide a practical means of overcoming financial obstacles to the judicial settlement of legal disputes by the Court.

I believe that as a matter of policy at the present stage only two categories of case should be considered as being eligible for financial assistance under the Trust Fund. The first would be cases submitted to the International Court of Justice by joint agreement of the parties concerned. This means that both the applicant and the respondent State must have agreed to submit their dispute to the Court. The Court's jurisdiction in these cases would therefore not be in question and all parties concerned would be ready to proceed to a settlement. The secondary

(The Secretary-General)

category would be cases where both parties are ready to implement a judgement of the Court, but one or both are unable to do so because of the lack of funds or expertise.

The basic consideration underlying both categories is the requirement of consent of the parties concerned. In this connection, I note that the bulk of the Court's workload during this decade has been cases brought to it by joint agreement of the parties. I may add that the policy of making available the resources of the Fund in cases where there is joint agreement is fully supported by the President and Judges of the Court.

In order to ensure absolute impartiality, I intend to establish a panel of three high-level experts in connection with each request for financial assistance. The panels will examine applications and, where appropriate, make recommendations regarding the types of expenses to be covered and the amount of financial assistance to be awarded. Their work will be conducted with strict confidentiality, and in considering applications they will be guided solely by the financial needs of the requesting State and the availability of funds. Payments from the Fund will be made against receipts showing actual expenditure for approved costs.

The Fund is established under the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

(The Secretary-General)

I now turn to the question of the resources for the Fund, which is to be financed by voluntary contributions. I sincerely hope that the Fund will attract as donors, States, intergovernmental organizations, national institutions and non-governmental organizations, as well as individuals and corporations. I should like to appeal to delegations to communicate this initiative to their Governments and to appeal to them to make financial contributions to the Fund. I believe it is a worthy cause and I urge them to do so. In the words of the President of the Court, this is an initiative towards

"the restoration of the Court to its rightful place among the principal organs of the United Nations, as provided by Chapters VI and XIV of the Charter".

Sir Arthur WATTS (United Kingdom): We have just heard the Secretary-General announce formally the creation of the Secretary-General's Trust Fund to assist States in their settlement of disputes through the International Court of Justice. When this idea was first mentioned in a press release last August, it was immediately clear that it was one of the most imaginative initiatives to be taken in relation to the International Court of Justice.

The United Kingdom has been a consistent and staunch supporter of the rule of law in international relations. The rule of law - and the rule of international law, in particular - is indispensable to the maintenance of international peace and security. It is the counterpart to the principle of the non-use of force enshrined in the Charter of this Organization.

That same Charter declares as one of its principles that Member States "shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means", establishes the International Court of Justice as "the principal judicial organ of the United Nations", records the "consideration that legal disputes should as a general rule

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be referred by the parties to the International Court of Justice" and provides that "all Members of the United Nations are ipso facto parties to the Statute" of the Court.

The international rule of law requires no less; indeed, it requires more. It requires in particular not only that there should exist a court to which legal disputes can be referred, but that access to that court should in reality be available to all States which seek it for the settlement of their international legal disputes. The international community still has some way to go in this respect, but it is possible to be optimistic.

Although the jurisdiction of the Court depends on the consent of the parties, it is possible for that consent to be given in advance by a declaration accepting as compulsory the Court's jurisdiction. The United Kingdom is proud of its record as a State which has always accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court, just as it previously accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court's predecessor under the League of Nations, the Permanent Court of International Justice.

Although less than a third of the Members of the United Nations today accept the Court's compulsory jurisdiction, things are changing. In the last two years three more States have joined those already accepting the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court. Even at this current session of the Assembly two other States have announced their intention to accept the Court's compulsory jurisdiction, and yet other States have recently announced their intention to accept the jurisdiction of the Court for the purposes of various multilateral conventions.

It is particularly encouraging that those States newly accepting the Court's jurisdiction come not from just one area of the world or one group of States but from all areas and all groups. This reflects in a very practical way the increasing attention being given to international law in several very constructive

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proposals which have been put before the Assembly this year, as well as in other recent years. This trend we welcome whole-heartedly.

Having a court with a gradually growing acceptance of its jurisdiction does not fully satisfy the requirement of the rule of law if other practical constraints on access to that court exist. Bringing a case to the Court, or defending one, and finally implementing its judgement can be a long, complex and very expensive business - and it is one which has to be paid for in often scarce hard currency. We are sure that in some cases reluctance to use the Court has been due to the costs involved.

The Trust Fund seeks to remedy the problem in a straightforward manner. It will not be a charter for plaintiff States. Assistance from the Fund, at least at first, will be available only in certain limited kinds of cases. This cautious approach is only prudent, and we note the proposals for ensuring absolute impartiality in administering the scheme; this is obviously a most important element of it. Whether the scheme should be developed later will depend on, among other things, how it works in practice. We shall be watching how it progresses and we will give it what help we can to ensure its success.

Of course, the best help that any State can give to the Trust Fund is not just words of support and encouragement, it is money. I am therefore very pleased to announce that the United Kingdom will be making a significant financial contribution to the Trust Fund. We are sure our contribution will be only the first of many and we call on other States to give strong support to the Trust Fund and show their commitment to the International Court of Justice and to the cause of international law and justice, and thus to the rule of law in international relations.

Mr. S. M. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): The head of the Senegalese delegation to this session has already had an opportunity on 4 October to convey to the President of the Assembly the congratulations of the Head of State of Senegal and the Senegalese people on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly. However, I wish to reiterate our pleasure that he is guiding our work and to say how happy I am that relations of brotherhood and co-operation bind his great country, Nigeria, to Senegal.

I take this opportunity also to reiterate to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuellar, the tribute paid to him by the Senegalese delegation for his tireless efforts to ensure the triumph of the Organization's ideals of peace and justice.

The statement just made by the Secretary-General concerning the establishment of a Trust Fund to assist States to settle disputes through the International Court of Justice is further proof of his lofty sense of justice and peace.

(Mr. S. M. Sy, Senegal)

Senegal, a country which upholds the primacy of law, warmly welcomes this commendable initiative which, without any doubt, will contribute to the strengthening of the rule of law in international relations.

The United Nations has done a great deal since its establishment more than 40 years ago to promote an international order in which, through scrupulous respect for the law, the States and peoples of the world will live in peace in a spirit of good-neighbourliness. This objective, which for a long time was viewed as an ideal to which the international community aspired, now seems to be more attainable, thanks to the positive changes which have occurred in recent years in the international situation. After decades of confrontation and rivalry, States have realized that the solution of the problems facing them lies not in force but rather in dialogue, tolerance and co-operation.

The United Nations has played an irreplaceable catalysing role in this change by outlawing the threat or use of force and making available to States the legal framework within which to seek settlement of their disputes by peaceful means.

Without listing the numerous instruments and mechanisms which exist in this sphere, we wish to emphasize the increasingly important role of the International Court of Justice. The vitality of this body is the truest evidence of the power of law in international relations today. Senegal, which very early recognized the jurisdiction of the Court, in the terms of Article 36, paragraph 2 of its Statute, notes with satisfaction that a large number of States have in recent years accepted its role in the settlement of disputes.

All of us must encourage this positive attitude to the Court, just as we should consider ways of increasing its effectiveness by making it more accessible and by respecting the legal force of its decisions. By making it easier for poorer

(Mr. S. M. Sy, Senegal)

States to bring matters before the Court and applying its decisions through the setting up of the Special Fund, the Secretary-General has taken an important step in that direction.

Senegal, for its part, fully supports this welcome initiative, because we have made the primacy of law one of the fundamental principles of our international and domestic policies. In the international sphere, my country's dedication to the purposes and principles of the Charter explains our practice of good-neighbourliness and our irreversible commitment to respect the law and ensuring that others do so in the quest for peaceful solutions to our problems with States of the subregion. The well-known attitude of Senegal in support of the cause of human rights, together with our multi-party democratic political system, is the best evidence of the important part that law plays in the domestic policy of my country.

The Secretary-General's efforts deserve the fullest support from States. They have aroused great hope among small States and will considerably strengthen the role of the International Court of Justice and the rule of law in international relations. We must work together and pool our resources to ensure that these legitimate hopes are not frustrated and these prospects do not prove illusory.

I should like to stress the particularly eloquent gesture of the United Kingdom representative in giving effect to this proposal.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has concluded its consideration of agenda item 13.

AGENDA ITEM 21 (continued)

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/615)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/44/L.16)

The PRESIDENT: I draw the attention of members to the fact that the text of the Declaration of Human Responsibilities for Peace and Sustainable Development has been distributed as an annex to document A/44/626.

As representatives may recall, the General Assembly has before it draft resolution A/44/L.16, which was introduced by the representative of Costa Rica at the 37th plenary meeting. I call on the representative of Costa Rica, who wishes to raise a point in connection with the draft resolution.

Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): Taking into account the urgings of various delegations, the delegation of Costa Rica would be glad if consideration of draft resolution A/44/L.16 could be postponed. I wish to make it clear that this postponement should not be sine die; we hope that the draft resolution can be taken up very soon, for example next week. My delegation reserves the right to speak on that occasion in order to complete the introduction of the draft resolution, because on 24 October we merely indicated that, at the request of certain delegations which needed more time we had agreed to postpone consideration of the draft resolution to a later date, which was fixed for today. We hope very much that this will be the last time we have to ask for postponement of consideration of our proposal.

The PRESIDENT: In the light of the statement by the representative of Costa Rica consideration of draft resolution A/44/L.16 will be postponed to a date to be announced later.

AGENDA ITEM 157

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AGAINST ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SUPPLY, DEMAND, TRAFFICKING AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS, WITH A VIEW TO EXPANDING THE SCOPE AND INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCH CO-OPERATION

- (a) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/44/L.12, A/44/L.19)
- (b) DRAFT DECISION (A/44/L.13)
- (c) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/44/695)

The PRESIDENT: At the request of the sponsors consideration of draft decision A/44/L.13 and draft resolution A/44/L.19 is being postponed to a later date, which will be announced in due course.

I call on the representative of Yugoslavia, who will introduce draft resolution A/44/L.12.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): Before I start my introduction on the draft resolution on the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on narcotic drugs, I have to inform the General Assembly that the following countries have joined the sponsors of this important draft resolution: Belgium, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, Madagascar, the Netherlands, Oman, the Philippines, Singapore, Togo and Turkey. The list of sponsors of this important draft resolution now numbers 121, which in itself demonstrates the importance that the international community attaches to this serious problem of our time.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

Many speakers in the general debate at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly pointed to the more and more dramatic and disastrous effects of the problems caused by the illicit demand for, production of, trafficking in and consumption of narcotic drugs not only for the physical health of individuals but also for the well-being of entire segments of society, threatening the political, economic, cultural and social fabric of individual countries and sometimes even of entire regions. In this context, the current session has confirmed the unanimous assessment that this is a very complex problem of global proportions that requires a global approach and comprehensive measures.

The alarming estimate given in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization that

"the monetary value of drug trafficking has recently surpassed that of international trade in oil and is second only to the arms trade"

(A/44/1, p. 23)

is sufficient reason for deep concern and calls for urgent and resolute international action.

Assessing all the dimensions of this scourge, the non-aligned countries pointed out in the Declaration and the separate document on illicit drug trafficking adopted at their ninth summit Conference, in Belgrade, the dangerous, global proportions of this scourge and stressed that the struggle for its eradication was a common responsibility and called for co-operation by the entire international community.

This is a problem that, irrespective of the measures taken and the resolve demonstrated, cannot be stemmed by isolated campaigns on the national level. The struggle can be meaningful and effective only if it is based on effective and constructive measures of international co-operation, taking due account of the

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specific ways in which this problem is reflected in various countries and environments. The crucial role in this struggle belongs to the United Nations and its specialized agencies, for, as President Barco of Colombia said in his important and memorable statement before the General Assembly,

"if this effort is not accompanied by a global commitment, then no victory can be achieved". (A/44/PV.13, p. 6)

Bearing in mind the resolve with which Colombia has approached the eradication of this evil, regardless of threats and victims, President Barco's call for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to broader aspects of the global problem of narcotic drugs has found a general positive echo and support.

As the representative of Yugoslavia, which is the current Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and a country that has made and continues to make a major contribution to the suppression and interdiction of illicit drug trafficking, I have been given the special honour of proposing to the General Assembly, on behalf of the now 121 sponsoring countries, the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/44/L.12 on the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to discuss the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such co-operation. This will testify in the best possible way to our shared concern and interest in putting an end to this dangerous scourge.

In the preambular part of the draft resolution the General Assembly expresses deep concern about the serious problem and the disastrous consequences of drug abuse for individuals and society caused by illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs. It recalls the statements made in

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

plenary meetings of the General Assembly during its forty-fourth session, including the address by the President of Colombia on 29 September, with his call for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to this problem.

In the operative part the General Assembly decides to hold a special session of the General Assembly, at a high political level, to consider as a matter of urgency the question of international co-operation in the struggle against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such co-operation. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is requested to make the necessary administrative arrangements for the purpose of convening such a special session.

The sponsors earnestly hope that the draft resolution will be adopted unanimously.

I have been asked to inform this body - although this has been mentioned already by the President of the Assembly - that, in view of the wide and extensive consultations that are still going on to arrive at a genuine consensus on the preparatory process for the convening of the special session, action on draft decision A/44/L.13 and draft resolution A/44/L.19 will, by agreement, be deferred until a later date.

Mr. BADAWI (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): We meet today to consider a matter of grave concern. Narcotics are a scourge that has now spread throughout the world. They not only destroy the lives of individuals but also threaten political régimes, not to mention their economic and social effects on the very existence of society as a whole.

The call for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to address the issue of narcotics met with the immediate support of my country; therefore Egypt has joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/44/L.12.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

Egypt, as a country in which narcotics are consumed and as a transit area, takes a comprehensive and varied approach to this problem. First, the authorities of the Ministry of the Interior are strengthening control over the sea and land borders, ports and airports. Secondly, Egypt has recently promulgated a new law on narcotics which, inter alia, provides for more stringent sanctions against traffickers and traders in drugs. The law decrees the death penalty as just punishment for such destructive acts, which undermine the whole social, political and economic fabric of society. Thirdly, Egypt has established rehabilitation and cure centres for drug addicts, as well as a fund for combating and treating addiction. This fund comes directly under the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister and is drawn from special provisions in the State budget and from fines and money and lands expropriated in lawsuits connected with narcotics. The fund is used to establish, equip and maintain rehabilitation centres and organize medical, psychological and social treatment for drug addicts.

Egypt's interest in narcotics also covers the regional area. It therefore participated in the Sub-Committee to Combat Narcotics in the Middle East. Internationally, Egypt maintains very close relations with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC).

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

We draw on the experience of the Fund particularly with regard to the monitoring of narcotic substances used for medical purposes. Because of Egypt's interest in the drug issue, it was keen to become a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, while an Egyptian expert on drugs is a member of the International Narcotics Control Board.

The special session of the General Assembly on the question of drugs will be dealing with a serious issue, and it should be treated accordingly. That is why my delegation believes that every guarantee should be provided that this is well prepared and will be a successful session. In this connection we make the following suggestions.

First, there should be wide-ranging, in-depth consultations between the various States and regional groups so that each of them can contribute their own ideas and views on the basis of the experience they have accumulated in combating narcotics. This is indeed an issue of concern to the entire world; it is not of concern to one State or a limited number of States only.

Secondly, the preparations for the session should also involve the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the Economic and Social Council, the International Narcotics Control Board and UNFEDAC, in view of their roles and experience in this sphere. These international bodies should each contribute to the session on the basis of its own practical experience, if we really want the special session of the General Assembly to be crowned with success and not simply confine itself to repetitive statements.

Thirdly, participation in this session should be at a high level. Participants should include both political decision-makers and those with practical experience in combating drug trafficking and drug addiction. A political decision

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

is not in itself sufficient to resolve this problem. Rather, the decision should be the outcome of practical experience; it should be grounded on such experience and should take account of the precise data, statistics and information available.

We urge the General Assembly, so that the session may be properly prepared for, to establish the dates for the session on the basis of the practical, pragmatic considerations to which I have referred.

Mr. KHORO (Pakistan): Pakistan welcomes the proposal to convene a special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such operation. Pakistan was privileged to sponsor, along with many other countries, the request for the inclusion of an item on this issue in the agenda of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The problem of narcotic drugs in its various manifestations has emerged as one of the most dangerous threats to human civilization. This menace respects no boundaries or cultures. It is ruthless and devastating. In his moving address to the General Assembly on 29 September 1989, President Barco of Colombia drew attention to the grim situation created by the Colombian drug barons and the armed mercenaries employed by them. Rich and powerful drug barons pose a serious threat to democracy, not only in Colombia but also in Pakistan. A recent report in the newspaper The Times of London testified that the drug industry in Pakistan is

"a legacy from the era of the late General Zia, who turned a blind eye to drug activities in exchange for loyalty. All 40 of the main drug gangs have members who were senior public figures at that period."

It is beginning to overwhelm entire societies.

(Mr. Khoro, Pakistan)

The convening of a special session of the General Assembly to consider this question in its entirety is a timely expression of concern by the international community about the threat it poses to mankind. It is also an expression of the commitment of all States to strengthening and intensifying international co-operation in eradicating this scourge.

The title of the special session is indeed most appropriate. It recognizes the need to remedy the problem in all its dimensions. It recognizes that the campaign against narcotic drugs has to be all-encompassing. The time has now come for the international community to join hands in launching a co-ordinated and comprehensive strategy to counter and eliminate this menace.

The newly elected Government of Pakistan, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, has launched a major campaign against illicit drug abuse, trafficking and distribution. The Prime Minister in her first press conference, on 3 December 1988, expressed her Government's resolve to address this problem forcefully and announced the establishment of a separate Ministry to deal with it. Subsequently, the Narcotics Control Division, in the charge of a Minister of State, was set up in the Federal Government. The Division has been entrusted with the task of achieving the Government's policy objectives in all areas of drug-abuse control.

The Government of Pakistan is committed to achieving a drug-free society. In the past six months impressive progress has been made in this direction. During the current crop season the Government's call to poppy-growers voluntarily to destroy the poppy crop received positive response. In areas where persuasion failed to have an impact, stringent law enforcement measures were taken, as a result of which production of opium during the current season is estimated at approximately 100 tons, in contrast to the production figure of 205 tons during the 1987-88 crop season.

(Mr. Khorro, Pakistan)

The processing machinery is also being targeted for destruction. Since assuming power the new Government has neutralized 24 heroin laboratories in addition to launching a major offensive against drug traffickers. The Narcotics Control Division is planning to set up a narcotics elite task force to strengthen efforts to bring the traffickers to book.

We have also become a victim of narcotics addiction. Although Pakistan is a traditional producer of opium and cannabis, the use of heroin was not known in our society until 1980, when the first cases of heroin abuse were reported. Since then the abuse has multiplied and over 1.9 million Pakistanis are currently estimated to be addicted to drugs.

(Mr. Khoro, Pakistan)

The Government is fully conscious of the devastating human and social toll of drug addiction. It has launched major programmes for treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. An awareness programme has also been launched through the media to alert people to the need for community awareness and action. A Drug Abuse Prevention Resources Centre has also been set up under the Pakistan Narcotics Control Board to provide active support and encouragement to local, provincial and national efforts to free our society of the drug menace. Pakistan is also actively involved in regional efforts to curb illicit trafficking and abuse. On a proposal by Pakistan, the Fourth Summit Conference of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation designated 1989 their Year for Combating Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking.

The convening of the special session would constitute a landmark in the evolving global efforts to contain and eliminate the scourge of drug abuse and trafficking. We expect the special session to focus on the following aspects: first, the need to strengthen the will of the international community to combat the drug menace in all its forms; secondly, enhancing international co-operation in drug abuse control; thirdly, provision of additional resources to accelerate international action against the drug menace, in particular the provision of substantial resources to the developing countries to strengthen their efforts regarding treatment, rehabilitation, and so on; and fourthly, co-ordination and streamlining of the activities of the United Nations system in this field.

Pakistan supports the proposal for the establishment of a preparatory committee of the whole for the special session to ensure appropriate and effective preparations. We also support the suggestion that the session be held in the third week of February next year.

Pakistan will participate actively in the preparatory process as well as in the special session. It will spare no effort in working for the complete success of that session.

The PRESIDENT: The report of the Fifth Committee regarding the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/44/L.12 is contained in document A/44/695.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/44/L.12.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/44/L.12?

Draft resolution A/44/L.12 was adopted (resolution 44/16).

The PRESIDENT: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 157.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.