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**PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-FOURTH MEETING**

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 22 October 1985, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. DE PINIES (Spain)

later: Mr. AGIUS (Vice-President) (Malta)

- Commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations [39]  
(continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Kenneth David Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia

Mr. Mauno Koivisto, President of the Republic of Finland

Mr. Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, President of the Islamic Federal Republic  
of the Comoros

Mr. Gerald Goetting, Vice-Chairman of the Council of State of the German  
Democratic Republic

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EXAMINED AND CORRECTED

22 OCT 1985

A. PETERSEN, 1985-10-22, 10:00 AM, G. 101

Mr. Fred Sinowatz, Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria

Lieutenant-Colonel Désiré D. Bouterse, Head of Government of the Republic of Suriname

The Honourable R. Premadasa, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Mr. Sverre Strøm, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the Government of the Kingdom of Norway

Mr. Shah Mohammad Dost, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the President of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 39 (continued)

COMMEMORATION OF THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): This morning the Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Zambia, His Excellency Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda.

Mr. Kenneth David Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted to the rostrum.

President KAUNDA: First of all, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of this historic fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. May your leadership ensure that this Assembly gives mankind much-needed hope for a better future.

Allow me also to congratulate your predecessor and my compatriot, Ambassador Paul Lusaka. His presidency was but a modest contribution to the United Nations by Zambia which, we hope, the international community found worth while.

I wish also to pay tribute to His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, our Secretary-General, for his unrelenting efforts and steadfast commitment to the search for global solutions to the many problems we confront in our one world.

The founding fathers of the United Nations did in 1945 set forth specific aims and principles of the Organization.

Looking back, the world has changed a great deal in the past 40 years. Empires have fallen and the international community has expanded enormously with the emergence of new nations. In this connection the United Nations has certainly played a decisive role in the decolonization struggle. There have been spectacular advances in science and technology which have done much to improve the lot of many people. Here too, as in other areas of human endeavour, a great deal has been accomplished by the United Nations system for the betterment of the human condition.

(President Kaunda)

However, in spite of all this, we are - perhaps inevitably - left with so many unresolved problems, old and new, and somewhat disillusioned that many of the great aims and objectives of the United Nations remain unrealized.

The quest "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" has been grossly undermined. As a consequence of the emergence of two major Powers with antagonistic systems, we now have a dangerous arms race in terms of both nuclear and conventional weapons. The global arms build-up has got out of control. It is most regrettable that after 40 years of the existence of the United Nations we are saddled with an irrationally over-armed world, while nuclear weapons threaten the very existence of mankind. Indeed, most of the resources, both human and financial, allocated to scientific research and technological development are directed to serving military ends. How can we avoid the charge that we are all the time preparing for war? How, indeed? We call upon those who direct scientists and others now engaged in preparing for the destruction of humanity and the devastation of the world to change direction and thence expend their efforts and ingenuity on mankind's survival and on how best to fight the wars against underdevelopment and the various inequalities that outrage the dignity of hundreds of millions of people.

It is clear that the possibilities of halting and reversing the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race, will not become practical realities without an improved climate in East-West relations. It will not become a reality without a reduction in the tension and threats associated with the world's nuclear arsenals. In this regard we welcome the new contacts between the super-Powers and the imminent resumption of discussions between them. May I humbly remind them that the international community is more interested in substance than in rhetoric and mere posturings.

It is true that a third world war has not broken out in the 40 years that the United Nations has been in existence. However, in many parts of the world there

(President Kaunda)

exist serious tensions and armed conflicts resulting in untold loss of human life, destruction of property and homes and the tragic impediment to development. Indeed, there have been some 140 armed regional conflicts in various parts of the world since 1945. Those conflicts make it clear that, in spite of all its efforts, mankind, together with its United Nations, has failed to build world peace and security on the concrete and enduring foundation of love, truth, social justice and fair play for all.

(President Kaunda)

Virtually all the regional conflicts to which I have referred have occurred and are occurring in the third world. The circumstances of these conflicts cover a wide range: continuing illegal occupation of other people's lands, foreign intervention, minority or alien rule, denial of basic human rights and the unabated evil system of apartheid. Most of these conflicts could not have grown to the degree they have without weapons supplied by the industrialized countries. Such arms supplies are in fact the dominant source of the arms build-up in the third world and contribute significantly to insecurity there. The persistence of regional conflicts and the attendant arms build-up are matters of grave concern to Zambia.

Many of the current regional conflicts have repeatedly been placed before the United Nations. But the decisions and resolutions of this Organization in the quest to resolve those problems have been met with intransigence, prevarication, arrogance and utter disregard by one party or both parties to the conflict in order to pursue vested national interests, and so they remain unimplemented. Equally regrettable is the fact that some big Powers, in pursuit of ideological, strategic or economic interests, have sometimes also frustrated the implementation of such decisions and resolutions. We call upon the parties to conflicts and those interfering in such conflicts to reconsider their positions and to make determined efforts to resort to the solutions proffered by the United Nations in order to bring to an early end the sufferings of the peoples of the regions concerned.

Since I come from southern Africa, I wish at this juncture to say something about the situation in that region. We continue to confront three major problems there: that of apartheid and minority rule in South Africa, that of the continued illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa and that of South Africa's acts of aggression against and destabilization of neighbouring independent African countries. As will be seen, our problems in southern Africa stem from South

(President Kaunda)

Africa. Their heart and soul is apartheid. That evil system adopted, practised and defended by the white minority régime in South Africa is responsible for the tension in that region.

As we meet here, a major and irreversible revolt against the apartheid system and white minority rule in South Africa is in progress. The oppressed black majority and other non-white people of that country are saying in word and deed: Enough is enough. Ordinary men, women and children are out on the streets demanding their freedom and the immediate dismantling of apartheid. They are angry and without fear. They are confronting the Pretoria régime's armed police and military agents head on. The régime, on the other hand, has become more oppressive, more repressive, more cruel, more inhuman and more intransigent. It has resorted to panic measures. A catastrophic explosion which will engulf all of us in the region is imminent.

There are some Governments in the West that think that Mr. Botha is carrying out crucial reforms. But the liberation struggle in South Africa is not aimed at reforming apartheid. It seeks the complete dismantling of apartheid in order to bring about majority rule so that all South Africans may be enabled to realize their full potential for the good and progress of their country.

These are the fundamental issues that Mr. Botha must address. The situation demands that bold steps be taken now in order to diffuse the explosive situation in South Africa. Accordingly, we call upon Mr. Botha to do the following: first, declare unequivocally that apartheid is a dead issue and that he is prepared to meet genuine leaders of the oppressed people to discuss the future of South Africa; secondly, lift the state of emergency; thirdly, lift the ban on the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other political parties; and fourthly, release Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners.

(President Kaunda)

It is equally necessary to increase international pressure on South Africa. The most effective peaceful means for doing so is the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions. But we are distressed by the attitude of some Governments in the West on this matter. On the one hand, they oppose armed struggle and violent change in South Africa and in Namibia. On the other hand, they oppose sanctions as a peaceful means to bring about change, arguing that sanctions will hurt the black people of South Africa, Namibia and neighbouring States. This posture is clearly not dictated by a sense of philanthropy. Self-interest is really what is behind it.



(President Kaunda)

The oppressed peoples of South Africa and the front-line States refuse to be used by those who are opposed to economic sanctions. The harm consequent upon the imposition of sanctions will be far less than that which will result from the imminent explosion if sanctions are not imposed on South Africa. We support sanctions and call upon those Governments now opposed to such measures to change their minds.

As we meet today, there is no immediate prospect of Namibia's independence. It is important that the international community revive the momentum to resolve this problem by putting sustained pressure on those who have placed road-blocks in the path of implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978) to remove them. The present stalemate in Namibia is quite intolerable and must not be allowed to continue.

South Africa's destabilization policy seriously endangers the peace, security and independence of African countries in the neighbourhood of South Africa. We badly need a climate of peace and stability in our region so that we can exploit more adequately the enormous natural resources that are there - for the benefit not only of the peoples in the region but of mankind as a whole. We therefore call upon the international community to help us to defend our countries adequately and also to compel South Africa to cease its hostile acts against its neighbours.

In the global economic sphere, there can be no doubt as to the seriousness of the present situation and the hardships it has brought to bear on the majority of countries. In spite of the undoubted successes the United Nations has scored in the last 40 years, poverty and its offshoots of hunger, ignorance, disease, crime, corruption and, above all, exploitation of man by man continue to haunt much of the world today. The gap between the rich and the poor nations grows wider with each passing year, and any hopes of narrowing it have been dashed by the reluctance of the rich nations to co-operate in creating a more equitable international economic

(President Kaunda)

order. The vast majority of developing countries are now buckling under the debt burden. That is why we support the call for an international conference to address the debt problem. There is also an urgent need to restructure the financial and economic links between the developing countries and the developed world, to create conditions that will stimulate rather than stifle development in the poor countries.

There are indeed many regional and world-wide challenges we face in our one world today. In these circumstances, who can seriously doubt the continuing relevance of and need for a foremost international forum such as is provided by the United Nations? But we need to recognize and address the disabilities of the Organization.

There has been a growing tendency to use the world body more as an organ for furthering national interests at the expense of the rest of the humanity. We have turned the Organization into a gambling house where we make concessions on issues only as a trade-off for favours or in return for similar concessions on other issues of particular interest to our own countries. While we publicly declare our acknowledgement of the interdependence of the world and the need for joint efforts in solving world problems, our actions show that deep down we still believe that we can do without others and that their problems have nothing to do with us. Some Member States agitate for bilateralism and belittle the United Nations because it is an embodiment of multilateralism.

We must stop these tendencies and review and renew our faith in the United Nations. But to reaffirm our confidence in the world body is not to accept its weaknesses. Let us therefore strive to strengthen the Organization and not to destroy it. In accepting this responsibility, let us all renew our commitment to the Organization and pledge to respect its Charter and be guided by it in our conduct towards others.

(President Kaunda)

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Zambia's continuing faith in and support for the United Nations.

Mr. Kenneth David Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Finland, His Excellency Mr. Mauno Koivisto.

Mr. Mauno Koivisto, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted to the rostrum.

President KOIVISTO: My first pledge on this occasion is to the Charter. I wish to reaffirm Finland's commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. When Finland was admitted as a Member of this Organization 30 years ago, our representatives said:

"In this constructive work for the good of humanity, Finland, true to its own ideas and aspirations, wishes wholeheartedly to participate". (A/PV.576, para. 64)

That is still our policy.

Many questions haunt us at this anniversary celebration. Do we live today in a better world than that of 40 years ago? Is there now less violence and warfare? Is there less human suffering in the world? Do nations feel more secure and more confident in their future? Simple answers are not possible, but those questions are worth asking. I am afraid that some of the answers would not meet the expectations of the statesmen who created the new world Organization in 1945.

On the other hand, the nations of the world have succeeded in one basic task. Mankind has been able to avoid the ultimate calamity of a general world war. Had that not been possible, all the efforts and achievements of our Organization would have been in vain.

The positive achievements will, no doubt, be highlighted in many statements during the anniversary celebrations. What I want to emphasize first is the authority of the Organization.

The General Assembly has been foremost in carrying the voice of Member States to the attention of the world. That voice may often have been weak, but it is sustained by the common purpose expressed in the Charter. By its persistence in such matters as national self-determination and the struggle against racial prejudice, the moral authority of the General Assembly has broken down walls of resistance.

(President Koivisto)

The Organization is an authority also in a different sense. It represents an effort to create order and maintain security in a world of the powerful and the weak. The uniqueness of the United Nations is nowhere more evident than in its role as the guardian of the rights of the small and the weak: the majority of mankind. Finland will do its utmost to hold the Organization to that task.

The United Nations is a respected authority thanks to its universality. It guarantees that the Members of this Organization are aware of the state of the world. There are many matters on the agenda of mankind which we would not fully understand if they had not first been on the agenda of the United Nations. Yet more awareness is needed. This should lead to understanding, and ultimately to action.

We know, for example, that there are some 50,000 nuclear weapons in the world, and that those weapons are controlled by five States. The United Nations has made many studies and approved many resolutions on different questions related to the existence of those weapons. We know that a much smaller number of them would suffice to destroy most of the civilized world. We know that new and more accurate weapons continue to be tested and deployed.

There have been many calls on the nuclear Powers in the United Nations to stop the nuclear frenzy; not to test and produce, but to freeze and reduce. Most Members believe that stability can be attained at much lower levels of armament if there is a mutual will to agree. In Finland we believe that this will to agree can be advanced, however laboriously, guided by the awareness of us all.

How much is enough? As far as Finland is concerned, we are fully aware that the threat of even one nuclear weapon is too much. Stability between the nuclear Powers and limitations on the number of nuclear weapons are highly desirable. The small States, however, are entitled to more than that. They expect from the nuclear Powers binding security assurances and agreed codes of conduct. In a

(President Koivisto)

dangerous world they need nuclear-weapon-free zones, as well as other measures to build confidence. The longer it takes to work out new treaties regulating and reducing weapons of mass destruction, the greater is the need for assurances that those weapons are never to be used.

The basic code of conduct is found in the Charter of the United Nations. If it had been fully respected, no other code of conduct would be needed. In fact, the problems of the world and the difficulties facing the world Organization cannot be laid at the door of deficiencies in the Charter. They are caused by the inability of the Members - of us - to agree on the implementation of its provisions. Therefore, we should all do our utmost to develop a common political will to live up to it, in spirit and in letter.

The United Nations has helped all peoples to understand that there is no national security without global security. Awareness of that interdependence has to go beyond nuclear weapons and military threats, because security means more than the prevention of war or the absence of fear of aggression. Security is needed in everyday life, in order to ensure the basic needs and fundamental rights of all human beings. That requires a continuing and growing effort to bring about global justice.

My predecessor said from this same rostrum 15 years ago that

"the power of a nation no longer depends on territorial gain, security no longer can be assured by digging trenches along borders, and prosperity no longer can be achieved in isolation or at the expense of others". (A/PV.1881, para. 8)

The parable was drawn from the experiences of Finland in having been able to rise from the ashes of war and to establish, on the basis of good-neighbourly relations and friendship with all nations, its own policy of national survival: a policy

(President Koivisto)

of neutrality. In our country, that policy has evolved in parallel with expanding awareness of global issues.

We are all committed to promoting the economic and social advancement of all peoples. As members of the world community we must thrive together or face untold human suffering, bitterness and deprivation all over the world. Great disparities remain between nations in economic performance and well-being. Awareness of those disparities leads to concern over some fundamental trends in the world economy.

It is also widely recognized that social advancement is not only a consequence but also one of the preconditions of sustained economic and political development. The pillars of the system of economic co-operation continue to be eroded by protectionist trade practices and by the daunting problems of international debt and development financing. We are challenged by disintegration and increased uncertainties within the world economy.

What we need is a viable, co-operative world community, which can meet the needs of the developing countries, in particular those of the least developed nations. Such a community has to be based on sound domestic policies, mutually reinforcing each other in a responsive international framework. That framework should assist us in tackling such urgent issues as the needed transfer of resources, the expansion and further liberalization of international trade, and the appropriate development of the monetary system. Success in those tasks will also mean more demands on the multilateral development agencies. Finland will continue to do its share to ensure the growth of their resources.

(President Koivisto)

The United Nations, with its nearly universal membership, offers a unique forum to review the global economic trends and issues. Let us strengthen both the normative efforts of this Organization and the operational activities for development. That is the way to promote the effective functioning of an open and interdependent world economy.

Many other tasks lie ahead of us. None is more urgent than that of the reduction of nuclear arms and the promoting of global economic and social development. The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations should encourage all peoples to focus more than ever on these common concerns.

Finland, for its part, will do its best to give, in close co-operation with other Member States, the support that the United Nations needs.

The United Nations is about to launch the International Year of Peace. I wish it all success. Every year should be a year of peace. In this respect the United Nations Charter, after 40 years of existence, continues to represent the best aspirations of humanity.

Mr. Mauno Koivisto, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the President of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane.

Mr. Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, President of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, was escorted to the rostrum.

President ABDEREMANE (interpretation from French): It is a signal honour for me to speak from this rostrum on this exceptional occasion, when we are solemnly celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.



(President Abderemane)

On behalf of my country and the Comorian people, I wish warmly to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to preside over the General Assembly at the current session. We are convinced that the experience you have gained during your long career as a diplomat, both in the service of your country and within our Organization, is a valuable asset guaranteeing the success of our work.

I wish also to express our deep appreciation of, and gratitude to, our Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his tireless efforts on behalf of world peace.

To the Government and the people of Mexico, grief-stricken by the tragedy of the earthquakes that have struck their country, I offer our sincere condolences, while renewing our expressions of profound sympathy.

At this historic time, when we are given an opportunity to make an objective evaluation of our collective experience within the United Nations, so that we may reflect on ways to strengthen its role and enhance its efficacy, my country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, is proud to be able to make its modest contribution to this common undertaking of reflection and soul-searching at the highest level in our Organization.

When the United Nations was created 40 years ago, many countries and peoples, still mindful of the failure of the League of Nations, whose creation had not prevented the triggering of the Second World War, were sceptical about the chances of success of a new universal organization in a world already marked by the conflict of ideologies and blocs. However, gradually, faced by the many dangers to mankind, including the persistent, dreadful threat of a third world war, which would be fatal to the human race, the nations and peoples of the world came to realize the irreplaceable role to be played by such an organization.

(President Abderemane)

Thus, year after year the United Nations has seen the ranks of its Members grow, with the independence of countries that freed themselves from the colonial yoke. In that connection, it is worth recalling that 40 years ago only three African States signed the Charter. Today we can assess how much our Organization contributed to the decolonization of continents, especially the African continent; its decisive contribution is undeniably one of its most brilliant successes.

To be sure, some Territories still remain on our Organisation's agenda for decolonization, while others continue to be illegally occupied by foreign Powers, thus perpetuating the rule of force and the *fait accompli*.

The explosive situation prevailing in southern Africa, with its daily toll in destruction and bloodshed, is of extreme concern to us. My country unreservedly condemns the system of apartheid practised by the South African Government as well as the repeated acts of aggression and destabilization in neighbouring States, carried out in contempt of international law and the sacred principles of our Charter.

We believe that we must give our Organization all the necessary powers to resolve the problem, on the basis not of violence but of the principles we hold dear - dialogue and a concerted approach - in order to avoid the bloodshed that leads to hatred and rancour, which will not promote coexistence in the region.

In our humble opinion, much could be gained from bringing the Pretoria rulers and the leaders of the liberation movements of southern Africa to an international forum in order to encourage them to initiate a dialogue. Indeed, we believe that the search for a solution to this painful problem must take place within the framework of constructive dialogue under the aegis of our Organization, with all the parties concerned taking part.

(President Abderemane)

In our opinion, the question of Namibia still remains the major challenge before our Organization and the conscience of mankind and continues to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. The ongoing occupation of Namibia is depriving the people of that country of its inalienable right to self-determination and freedom. Settling this problem by negotiation would enable the peoples of the area to live in freedom and would lend new impetus to lessening tension and to strengthening stability in international relations in the subregion.

My country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, reaffirms its support for the struggle being waged by the Namibian people to regain its independence and restore its dignity. We remain convinced that only the full implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) will make it possible to arrive at a peaceful solution of the problem.

In the Middle East, the intransigence of the Zionist entity and the permanent state of war it is fostering is creating a climate of explosive tension which is liable at any moment to engulf the entire region and in the long run to degenerate into a generalized conflict.

The State of Israel, driven by its expansionist and annexationist designs, does not shrink from resorting to all manner of repression against the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied territories and continues to launch repeated assaults against neighbouring countries. Thus, some weeks ago Israel dispatched its bombers to a Palestinian camp located close to the capital of Tunisia, taking a toll of dozens of innocent lives. The Government and the people of the Comoros categorically condemn this criminal and barbarous act committed in contempt of all conscience and morality.

I should like to seize this opportunity to renew our unswerving support for our Tunisian and Palestinian brothers and to assure them of our fraternal solidarity.

(President Abderomane)

As we have had occasion to say on many occasions, there will be no genuine peace in the Middle East so long as the Israelis do not withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, including the city of Al Quds Al Sharif and so long as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are not guaranteed and indeed effectively exercised.

I cannot pass over in silence the fratricidal war which is tearing apart two brother States - Iran and Iraq. The many initiatives launched by various international bodies, including friendly countries, have not yet succeeded in putting an end to that conflict. We reiterate our appeal to the two belligerents that they finally heed the voice of reason and put an end to the hostilities in keeping with the sacred principles the Holy Koran teaches us.

As to Western Sahara, we reaffirm our support for the resolutions adopted at the eighteenth and nineteenth summit meetings of the Organization of African Unity. We remain convinced that the solution of that problem must necessarily first involve the organizing of a self-determination referendum with the people concerned.

As we have already pointed out, there can be no doubt that the successes achieved by our Organization in the field of decolonization are for the most part positive. Yet we deplore the lot of certain countries still suffering from the consequences of colonization.

In this connection I should like to allude particularly to the situation that has been created by the incomplete decolonization of the Comoro Archipelago. This has led to the painful problem, of which our Organization has been aware for the past 10 years now - the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

Indeed, this island which is an integral part of the national territory of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, as confirmed by General Assembly

(President Abderemane)

resolution 3385 (XXX), remains illegally occupied and administered by the former colonizing Power.

The French authorities today, like those of the past, are reneging on the solemn commitments they undertook with regard to the Comoros and world public opinion on the eve of the independence to our Archipelago. As the Assembly is aware, those commitments quite naturally were aimed at respecting and preserving the unity and territorial integrity of the future Comorian State, in conformity with the sacrosanct rule of the French Constitution as to the indivisibility of overseas territories and colonial entities.

Indeed, in accord with the Accords of 15 June 1973, initialed by the late President Pompidou, and with the French law on the organization of the self-determination referendum of 22 December 1974, the results of the balloting were to be taken as a whole, not island by island. That position was confirmed by former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and the current President, Mr. François Mitterand. As a reminder, I should like to stress that the Comorian people as a whole decided by 95 per cent in favour of the independence of its country.

By selectively interpreting the results of this self-determination referendum, France has played the role of a large knife coldly slicing through a chunk of meat, thus turning our country into a three-legged animal. France has thus violated, not only its own commitments and internal statutes, but also international public law.

The continued existence of this problem is at once a negation of the tradition France had until then observed in the field of decolonization and a break with the principles laid down in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 1515 (XV) of 14 December 1960. At the same time, it casts a shadow over peace and security in our part of the Indian Ocean.

(President Abderemane)

It is time for France, as a founding Member of our Organization, to transcend the confines of short-term interests and devote its intellectual powers, in concert with the United Nations, to the search for a just and lasting resolution of this problem.

It is along these lines that all other international organizations and regional bodies dealing with this question are advising France to proceed.

For their part, the people and the Government of the Comoros, faithful to the principles of peace and justice embodied in the Charter of our Organization, continue to remain open to dialogue and to a concerted approach so that once and for all, while there is still time, this problem may be resolved. Our attitude, dictated as it is by the voice of wisdom, must not, however, be taken as some sort of weakness, given the fact that, in one way or another, even a mosquito can do battle with an elephant. Nor must we become victims of our own readiness to be conciliatory.

We regret that France, to which we continue to hold out our hand in friendship to resolve this problem, has until now not manifested any understanding, notwithstanding the good relations we enjoy with France in other areas.

Science and technology have made significant knowledge available to mankind. Only rational and equitable use of this knowledge is required to end the suffering, hunger and malnutrition of a majority of peoples.

(President Abderemane)

In other words, the arms race set in train by the super-Powers seriously comprises the prospects of bringing about a peaceful and stable world for the well-being of all people. Our Organization is absolutely right to be in the vanguard of a world-wide campaign for disarmament. Indeed the military expenditures by States in the name of security are very much a manifestation of national egoism and hegemonist designs and are rushing us inexorably towards the point of no return.

Why, then, let ourselves be guided by an aggressive instinct? Why should we wish to kill or destroy, when our Charter shows us the way to peace and friendship among peoples, free from distinctions on grounds of race or religion? Deeply desirous of proceeding down that particular path, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, which is situated in a much coveted part of the world, intends to strive tirelessly to ensure that the Indian Ocean becomes a truly demilitarized, denuclearized zone of peace.

In a world in which the danger of a global conflagration seems increasingly and alarmingly inevitable, the imbalance that characterizes international relations is destabilizing the world economy to an extent that causes concern, and the victims of this situation are the poor nations.

In a world kept on edge by the many hotbeds of tension, man's misdeeds vie with natural disasters, such as drought, hurricanes, earthquakes, hunger and so on, the demand for the indispensable new international economic order in keeping with the exigencies of a world undergoing profound change is unfortunately coming up against a lack of political will on the part of some of the richer nations.

This resistance to a recasting of the structures of relations among States bears witness to the determination of some to perpetuate a system of international relations that has shown itself to be unable to promote a just distribution of well-being and prosperity.

(President Abderemane)

The present economic crisis stems from the anarchy wilfully created by those who control over the world economy. The joint effects of the extreme protectionism practised by the industrialized countries and the collapse of raw materials prices have exacerbated the crisis by perpetuating its evil consequences. That is why we are glad that our Organization has focused special attention on economic issues, with the establishment of an entire network of aid and assistance being channelled through the specialized agencies.

I should therefore like to pay a glowing tribute to the various United Nations institutions that are intervening so effectively in our States in various areas involving the daily lives of our peoples. The successes achieved by those institutions encourage us to grant them more power and means of action.

It is difficult for us to name them all, but the United Nations Development Programme commands our particular attention. Ever since the expanded Programme was merged with the Special Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, with its network of resident representatives, has been placing a considerable role in co-ordinating and distributing aid.

We regret that today, more than ever before, the ideals of peace and justice enshrined in our Charter are continually violated, clearly proving that our collective adherence to the principles of our Charter is constantly being called into question in order to defend interests based on national egoism.

Our Organization indeed has the merit of having survived. It is imperative, however, to perfect it inasmuch as its foundations were laid in the absence of the majority of its present Members. This is another way of saying how urgent it is for us to take appropriate measures to translate into action the fundamental principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.



(President Abderemane)

In a tormented world in which the law of the strongest is often imposed brutally and uncompromisingly, it is now more than ever necessary to acknowledge the primacy of our Organization's role as an arbiter and to abide by its judgements and its resolutions. Only then will it be able to carry out effectively the noble mission we have entrusted to it, namely, the safeguarding of peace and security throughout the world and the bringing about of greater co-operation among nations and peoples.

My country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, faithful to the principles of peace and justice, has no loftier ambition than to serve our Organization and strengthen it, and today it solemnly reaffirms its dedication to the noble ideals embodied in the United Nations Charter.

At this historic moment, as we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of our Organization, all our desires must be fused into one: that the world of tomorrow should benefit all mankind and each of our peoples and that freedom, justice and fraternity should flourish everywhere. Nothing is better for the life of peoples than peace.

Mr. Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, President of the Islamic Republic of the Comoros, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The next speaker is the Vice-Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, His Excellency Mr. Gerald Goetting.

Mr. Gerald Goetting, Vice-Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. GOETTING (German Democratic Republic) (spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation): The fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations provides an opportunity all over the world to review the performance of the Organization to date and to ponder ways and means of establishing long-lasting foundations for peace in the world, the greatest asset of mankind.

(Mr. Goetting, German Democratic Republic)

It is a great honour for me to convey to you, Mr. President, and to the Secretary-General, as well as to all participants in the anniversary session of the General Assembly, warm greetings from the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. Erich Honecker. Along with his greetings he extends sincere wishes for a successful session imbued with a sense of responsibility and realism in accordance with the purposes and principles of the world Organization.

The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations is an appropriate occasion for the socialist German State to reiterate its belief in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is the desire of the German Democratic Republic that this code of conduct, internationally binding on all States, should become the world-wide standard for political action. By the same token, the international community can be assured of our contribution to the reinforcement of the United Nations as the universal framework for international dialogue aimed at developing joint efforts to strengthen peace, to further measures of disarmament and to settle other urgent world problems.

(Mr. Goetting, German  
Democratic Republic)

In the German Democratic Republic the observance of the United Nations anniversary has been closely connected with the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, since the anti-Hitler coalition was the tremendous military, political and moral force which liberated the peoples from the Nazi rule of force and terror. The hard-won victory of the Soviet Union and the other States of the anti-Hitler coalition - indeed, of all anti-fascist resistance fighters - opened up the road to a future of social progress, freedom and human dignity for the German people also. The German Democratic Republic made consistent use of that opportunity. Our people is committed to the bequest of the anti-fascist struggle; its endeavours are in conformity with the historical lessons from the times of the anti-Hitler coalition.

The nations are aware of the fact that the question of war or peace has assumed a nuclear dimension. The intended militarization of outer space would even heighten the danger of a nuclear holocaust. Such an evolution must be stopped for the sake of mankind's survival. The peoples want outer space to be explored and used exclusively for peaceful purposes. This is the aim of the proposal submitted by the Soviet Union on the peaceful exploitation of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization. That proposal, we believe, reflects a keen awareness of responsibility for the maintenance of world peace. A similar approach is expected from the other side.

It is legitimate for international public opinion to look forward with expectation to the forthcoming Soviet-American summit meeting, as well as to the ongoing Geneva negotiations on the whole complex of space arms and nuclear weapons, both strategic and intermediate-range. Positive results would be most valuable for peace and the lessening of tensions. The comprehensive peace programme which Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist

(Mr. Goetting, German  
Democratic Republic)

Party of the Soviet Union, explained in Paris has met with a broad, positive response and is also wholeheartedly supported by the German Democratic Republic. It meets the wishes and hopes of all peoples and addresses their concern that everything should be done to prevent the arms race from spreading to outer space and to terminate it on Earth.

There is a growing awareness that world affairs have reached a point where what we do or fail to do will decide for mankind the question of "to be or not to be". That fateful question is posed in particular to those who are vested with Government authority and political influence, be it in the East or in the West, in the North or in the South. After all, peace in the nuclear and space age is indivisible. We have the option either to survive together or to perish together. Security cannot be achieved through confrontation, but only through co-operation.

Hence the German Democratic Republic has resolutely been pleading for a world-wide coalition of commonsense and realism. It is ready to co-operate constructively and without reservation with all those who stand for peace, disarmament and development.

To make peace lasting and secure it is imperative that States strictly respect the principles of peaceful coexistence set forth in the United Nations Charter. Implementation of the supreme objective of the United Nations - to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war - today requires action, particularly in the following four areas.

First, the prohibition of the threat or use of force should be observed and reinforced by the conclusion of pertinent agreements. States must live up to their obligation to ensure that no war will emanate from their territories. Foreign territories must not be used for acts of aggression.

On behalf of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic I should like to reaffirm solemnly in this forum that my country will make every effort to

(Mr. Goetting, German  
Democratic Republic)

ensure that never again will war be launched from German soil. For the socialist German State, I am in a position to assure you that nothing but peace will ever emanate from its territory.

Secondly, aware of the danger to the survival of mankind inherent in a nuclear war, we believe a treaty on the prevention of such a war is most urgent. It is indispensable that all nuclear-weapon States undertake a binding commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

Thirdly, any attacks against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, as well as attempts to interfere in their internal affairs, must be prevented. All overt or covert actions aimed at destabilizing, undermining or overthrowing the social systems that peoples have chosen for themselves must be halted world wide. Such actions are incompatible with the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter.

Fourthly, the Charter calls for settling international disputes by peaceful means. This imposes on all States an obligation to solve international conflicts exclusively through negotiation. Such disputes or conflicts can only be settled if the right of peoples to self-determination is respected and if all parties concerned, including legitimate liberation movements, take part in the process on an equal footing. Comprehensive sanctions, as provided for by the Charter, should finally be employed against those who perpetrate acts of aggression and must grossly violate United Nations resolutions.

It is one of the foremost policy objectives of the German Democratic Republic that peace, which is so ardently desired by all peoples, be secured with ever-fewer weapons. We are ready to join in the most radical of steps designed to limit or remove weapons of all kinds and to prevent armament in new fields.

(Mr. Goetting, German  
Democratic Republic)

According to the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly the task of ending the nuclear arms race has priority. A most important measure would be a freeze on nuclear arsenals as a first step towards a reduction of those stocks of deadly weapons and their eventual elimination.

The cessation of all nuclear tests has long been overdue. The German Democratic Republic welcomes the decision of the Soviet Union to renounce, unilaterally for the time being, all nuclear explosions. The peoples of the world still hope that the United States will join in this move so that a barrier will be set to the development of new nuclear weapons. This would considerably facilitate the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The German Democratic Republic favours the establishment of zones free of weapons of mass destruction in the various regions of the world as an important step towards the total elimination of those arms. For this reason, it would be ready, on a basis of reciprocity, to make its territory available for inclusion in a zone free of battlefield nuclear weapons, and it is engaged in active efforts for the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe.

The vitality of the United Nations Charter has also stood the test of time on the continent from which two devastating world wars started. The multilateral recognition of the territorial status quo and the respect for the sovereignty of all States participating in the Helsinki Conference, regardless of differences in social systems, have proved to be the mainstay of European security and co-operation. Therefore, attempts to revise the frontiers in the very heart of Europe, which were agreed upon in internationally binding terms, cannot but cause grave concern.

(Mr. Goetting, German  
Democratic Republic)

A turnabout in the world political situation is necessary and possible. This optimism is based on the great social changes which have taken place in all continents over the past four decades and are still going on. More and more peoples have embarked on the road of social progress. We are optimistic because the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has come to play an increasingly active role in resolving the central issues of our time. We draw confidence from the powerful actions of the world-wide peace movement. We feel encouraged because more and more responsible politicians are prepared to display realism and reason for the sake of peace. And not least, our hopes are based upon the existence and the activities of the United Nations.

May this anniversary session and the forthcoming International Year of Peace act as an additional impetus to all States in their efforts to bring about a better world - a world of peace and freedom on behalf of human dignity.

Mr. Gerald Goetting, Vice-Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The next speaker is the Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria, Mr. Fred Sinowatz.

Mr. Fred Sinowatz, Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. SINOWATZ (Austria) (spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation): Mr. President, I do not wish to begin my statement without offering you my sincerest congratulations on your election to your high office. I am truly pleased that you, the representative of Spain - a country with which we have very close and friendly relations - with your long-standing and extensive experience in international affairs, have been chosen to preside over the General Assembly in this its anniversary year.

(Mr. Sinowatz, Austria)

Our presence in this traditional meeting-place for the international community of States naturally takes on special significance this year because of the fact that this forum is now entering the fifth decade of its existence. This is, of course, an occasion for us to take stock and to weigh the successes and achievements of the world Organization against its shortcomings, which are well known to us all. These days we often read and hear of a profound crisis in multilateral diplomacy. Pessimism and a spirit of resignation prevail in many statements. But does criticism of the mistakes or failures of this almost universal Organization really justify doubt about its fundamental objectives?

My personal answer to that question is a clear No, and of this I am personally deeply convinced.

If the Assembly will recall the tragedy of the Austrian people after the decline of the League of Nations, it will undoubtedly understand our feelings of hope and deep trust in this Organization, which was founded in the very year that marked the rebirth of Austria. Hope and confidence in the United Nations as a forum where even the small States of this world can voice their concerns without constraint inspire us even today, when a shadow has undoubtedly fallen over some of the institutions of this Organization.

Clearly we have not succeeded in creating a collective system for the maintenance of peace. But can we allow ourselves to forget the thousands of specialists in the service of the United Nations who, day in and day out, wage an unrelenting battle against hunger, disease and misery under the most severe conditions and in the poorest countries of the world? Can we forget the many soldiers of our Member States, including my country, who day in and day out carry out their stabilizing role in conflicts that would otherwise endanger international security? My answer to those questions is again a clear No born of a deep conviction.



(Mr. Sinowatz, Austria)

But we say a clear Yes to the existence of the United Nations and its capacity to survive. This is not merely utilitarian optimism. I wish to illustrate, by means of a very telling example, that Austria, a country which is so closely linked to the United Nations, is giving earnest thought to the future of this world Organization. On the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, I and eight other Heads of State and Government united their voices in a joint appeal designed to replace a sense of resignation by constructive proposals for the future of the United Nations. I should like to summarize some of the main points contained in that appeal.

First, the Security Council should be more conscious of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and should decide upon specific measures likely to strengthen its capacities.

Secondly, we wholeheartedly support an active role for the Secretary-General in the resolution of international crises.

Thirdly, the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations provide an important means for the strengthening of international security.

Fourthly, a stable international order necessitates the solution of the pressing economic and social problems of this world.

In addition, I should like to emphasize yet another point, namely, that the United Nations was conceived as a forum oriented towards the future. And I am convinced that the strengthening and renewal of the United Nations, which we all desire, must entail a determined effort to open this Organization once again to the issues of the future. It must again start to deal with perspicacity with future-oriented issues and concerns. Very many of our States are at present undergoing far-reaching social changes. New concerns and new values are being pushed to the fore and will, in the coming years, exert a major influence on political processes.

(Mr. Sinowatz, Austria)

As an example, I would point here to the concern about the protection of the environment - a concern of world-wide dimensions which relates to our very existence, which affects equally all the countries of the world, and whose solution requires broad international co-operation.

We were therefore greatly encouraged by the decision of the Security Council to hold a meeting at the foreign-ministers level. We fully recognize the excellent work done at the United Nations throughout the year by professional diplomats. Nevertheless, we are convinced that in the final analysis it behoves those representatives of Governments that are invested with political responsibility to spark new impulses for this world Organization. I therefore note with deep satisfaction that so many Heads of State and Government have convened here on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. For a small country in the heart of the so-called old continent, this is indeed an encouraging sign.

But let us not confine ourselves to this meeting. Let us continue the dialogue in this unique forum, in good faith, and let us try, through straightforward and frank talk, to make a reality of those goals of the United Nations which today still lie in the future.

The statesmen who are attending this session commemorating the anniversary of the United Nations have not come here empty handed. Their contributions to the debate are the most authentic expression of the views of Member States on the current situation of the United Nations. They reflect both the strengths and the weaknesses of our Organization and point to new directions in which the United Nations could move. Many of them contain concrete and practical proposals in this respect. It would be more than regrettable if this wealth of ideas were to be lost after 24 October 1985 and if our collective evaluation of the 40 years of existence

(Mr. Sinowatz, Austria)

of the United Nations resulted only in yet another publication. As the Secretary-General so rightly put it in his speech on 10 October, the winds of reform are now blowing. Let us derive benefit from them by converting them into a source of energy for our Organization. I therefore suggest that we establish a small task force of experts, which would study the many statements made here by Heads of State and Government and would objectively and impartially examine the various proposals for reform that have been made. I am convinced that the report of such a task force, which should be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, would provide a most valuable impetus to our efforts to strengthen the United Nations.

As Austrians, whose country has common borders with seven other countries, with diverse political and social orders, we know from our daily experience that there is no substitute for personal and intensive contact with one's neighbours.

Therefore, is it really unwarranted for us to permit ourselves to hope for good-neighbourliness in the world - even if that may come about only in the distant future? I do not think so. It is especially in this forum that the great and powerful nations' ability to listen to and understand the desire of the many small States for peace, for development, for social justice and for security can take concrete form. Not only we, but also the world Organization itself, would be grateful for that. In that spirit, therefore, I wish for the United Nations a new decade of fruitful work. The success of this new decade would be the greatest gift that we could give this Organization on its fiftieth anniversary.

Mr. Fred Sinowatz, Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The next speaker is the Head of Government of the Republic of Suriname, His Excellency Lieutenant-Colonel Désiré Bouterse. I now call on him.

Mr. Désiré Bouterse, Head of Government of the Republic of Suriname, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. BOUTERSE (Suriname): On the occasion of the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, it is a privilege for me to address the General Assembly and to see you, Sir, presiding over this important session. Your outstanding personal qualities and diplomatic experience in an increasingly troubled and rapidly changing world will prove to be a valuable asset in ensuring the success of this session.

Forty years ago the founding of the United Nations was a reflection of optimism, faith in the wisdom of mankind and a willingness by the founding nations to create a new and just system of international relations. It was the desire for peace that gave birth to this Organization, as the world conscience had become deeply disturbed after two world wars in which more than 80 million people had perished.

Unfortunately, our contemporary world is dominated by problems of development and by tense economic relations resulting in virtually unresolvable financial and monetary problems. Economic and political entanglements increasingly meet with military responses, which culminate in a perilously uncontrolled arms race. We should by now realize that solutions can be found only in the concerted efforts of all the nations represented here today.

(Mr. Bouterse, Suriname)

In the past 40 years the United Nations has not attained the objectives formulated in 1945. Nevertheless, the meaningful role played by our Organization in international affairs cannot be denied. During the historic process of decolonization in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, this world body fulfilled an important task by rendering firm support to those peoples that were struggling to gain control over their own destiny.

(Mr. Bouterse, Suriname)

We cannot accept the short-sighted, individualistic attitude of privileged States which emphasize only the shortcomings of the United Nations in an attempt to weaken multilateralism. Under conditions of dependency, bilateralism can easily be employed as an instrument to consolidate unequal relations by exerting pressure and even using blackmail to the detriment of the weaker States. Multilateral relations which provide an opportunity for dialogue and negotiations are urgently needed, especially in times of crisis and growing tension. Certain States are taking the attitude of marginalizing themselves from global responsibilities. We deplore the tendency to withdraw from some of the vitally important international organizations, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the disregard of the rulings of the International Court of Justice.

Forty years have elapsed, but new world realities are not yet reflected in our Organization. In order to meet the objectives set by contemporary developments, it is critical that steps be taken within the United Nations system to restructure this world forum. Although the membership of the United Nations has more than trebled, there still exists the right of veto, which gives five States the possibility of making decisions on behalf of the rest of the world without its explicit consent. Their privileged position has often been used against the interests of the third-world countries. The restructuring of the United Nations is long overdue, because we cannot remain passive and allow this Organization to experience the same dreadful fate as its predecessor, the League of Nations.

We are of the opinion that the General Assembly should be given greater power and influence in the maintenance of peace and security.

(Mr. Routerse, Suriname)

With regard to the Security Council, we support the proposals submitted by the Secretary-General in his 1985 report to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization. That decisive instrument for peaceful negotiations must not be degraded to a battleground for political disputes or ideological controversies. Under all circumstances, matters of peace and security must have priority over bilateral, individual interests or futile differences.

We shall endorse any proposal aimed at restructuring and streamlining this Organization to bring it into line with present world realities. Let us seek consensus to make the adjustments necessary to maintain and strengthen the United Nations as the principal instrument for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Given the rapidly increasing power of modern armaments, mankind would not survive another world conflagration.

We all agree that contemporary international relations are hardly a reflection of the founding principles and purposes of the United Nations. Non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States and respect for national sovereignty are basic principles of the United Nations. Nevertheless, sovereign nations are still being openly invaded by regular military forces or by armies of soldiers of fortune trained, financed and equipped from outside.

We therefore deplore the fact that Central America's legitimate aspirations to social equality, to political and economic independence and, above all, to human dignity are still completely neglected and at times even bloodily suppressed. Legal pretexts are used to justify the actions of legions of mercenaries originating from former dictatorial and oppressive régimes attempting to regain power at the expense of the people. The Charter of the United Nations is thus constantly violated.

(Mr. Bouwerse, Suriname)

My Government wholeheartedly endorses the serious attempts of the Contadora Group to mediate in order to arrive at negotiated peaceful solutions in the region. The four Contadora countries fulfil an important task in the hemisphere and are living proof that this region can solve its own problems by peaceful means, without any external interference. We are of the opinion that the work of the Contadora Group is a genuine regional initiative, and the only viable option for relieving tension in Central America. We therefore fully support the efforts of the Contadora Group and welcome the advent of the Lima Support Group, which reflects the growing unity in the region.

The integration and unity of Latin America and the Caribbean are indispensable to the attainment of solutions to the difficult, almost insurmountable, problems of our region.

The Republic of Suriname identifies itself with all its brother nations throughout the world, which, in their struggle for national liberation, are fighting against military action and economic coercion. We deplore any violation of a treaty agreed upon voluntarily, in particular when employed as a means of economic coercion. We speak from experience.

At this fortieth anniversary of the United Nations we still cannot welcome in our midst a free South Africa, liberated from apartheid. The world community should no longer merely condemn what has already been qualified by the United Nations as a crime against humanity. The time has come to take effective action to eradicate apartheid from the African continent. Every basic principle embodied in the Charter of the United Nations is persistently violated by the apartheid régime.



(Mr. Bouterse, Suriname)

Therefore, the eradication of that racist régime is a test case for the Organization, which is criticized by some Members for its ineffectiveness. Let us stand united to prove that we can implement the principles we have agreed upon and meet our responsibilities and moral obligations towards the peoples of southern Africa now.

The world economic crisis which we are experiencing particularly undermines the economies of the third world. The developing nations, with their vulnerable economic systems, have a small margin of safety. They are the first victims and the last to recover. Growth rates are continuously declining. This poses a serious threat to social and political stability in the developing countries of Latin America - a continent richly endowed with natural and human resources - which is still underdeveloped and where the majority of people remain underprivileged.

The advanced countries should demonstrate a sense of realism and understand that the era in which they could raise their standards of living at the expense of others is past.

We should finally accept the challenge of our collective responsibility and enter into a constructive dialogue to establish a new international economic order.

The problems of external debt have reached ominous dimensions. Can anyone expect us to repay those loans when that would result in sustained poverty, unemployment and recession? The debt problem, which is further characterized by a net flow of capital from the developing nations to the rich North, is a mere continuation of a despicable system instituted during colonial days. We of the South are forced to sacrifice our economic growth, because in order to repay our debts, exports have to be increased and imports curtailed. North-South relations will be determined for decades to come by the manner in which the creditor countries handle the current debt crisis.

(Mr. Bouterse, Suriname)

We are witnessing an unabated arms race, with an imminent threat of destruction by a growing arsenal of nuclear weapons. The deplorable intensification of the arms race assumes even more dangerous proportions because of the growing tendency to resort to the use of force rather than dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In dealing with those threats we are considering not only moral issues, but, indeed, the very survival of mankind.

On this fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, 40 years after the first nuclear bomb took the lives of thousands of innocent people, I call upon the Member States finally to opt for a workable system of arms control, the immediate reduction of the existing arsenal of nuclear arms, the prohibition of their testing and their elimination.

Forty years after the founding of the United Nations, my country will celebrate the tenth anniversary of its independence next month. On this occasion the Republic of Suriname reaffirms its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations. It is the view of my Government that our Organization and the principles it stands for must be strengthened and maintained, since the United Nations is an important institution in defence of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of all States.

We are grateful for the efforts of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Presidents of the General Assembly for their valuable contribution to the success and achievements of this Organization of States in pursuit of the maintenance of peace and security in the world.

It will depend on the States gathered here whether or not the proclamation of 1986 as the International Year of Peace makes a substantial contribution to realizing those goals.

Mr. Désiré D. Bouterse, Head of Government of the Republic of Suriname, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The next speaker is the Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, His Excellency the Honourable R. Premadasa.

Mr. R. Premadasa, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. PREMADASA (Sri Lanka) (spoke in Sinhala; English text furnished by the delegation): On the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, I should like to extend to the world community my greetings and good wishes and those of His Excellency J. R. Jayewardene, our President, the Government and the people of Sri Lanka.

The United Nations Charter embodies the seven noble principles of avoiding destruction and decay as expounded by our Great Teacher, Lord Buddha. It is only by adhering to those principles that we can find solutions to the problems that the whole of mankind confronts today.

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

(continued in English)

Mr. President, we are meeting to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the birth of the United Nations. On this occasion, it is both symbolic and appropriate that you preside over this General Assembly. The recuperative capacity and endurance of your nation, Spain, encourage us all. Sri Lanka welcomes your elevation to preside over our deliberations.

The United Nations Charter represents the highest ideals of mankind. By design, accident or coincidence, the Charter enshrines seven conditions of communal stability promulgated by Lord Buddha a little over 2,500 years ago. These seven conditions are known as Sapta Aparihaniya Dhamma - the seven noble principles to prevent deterioration and decline. A nation which follows them will prosper rather than tumble over the precipice of decline. It advocates harmonious assembly, peaceful consultation, negotiated compromise, recognition of values and traditions, adherence to moral principles, upholding the honour and wisdom of elders, and the free movement of peoples between realms. As a nation committed to those noble principles, we in Sri Lanka hold the United Nations in high esteem.

Today mankind is caught in a maze of confusion, controversy and confrontation. We are living amidst forces of hope and despair. Technology has offered our world material benefits of unprecedented magnitude. We are delicately balanced on the edge of the dreadful abyss, a vast unchartered depression inhabited by the shadows of nuclear holocaust, senseless violence and mass starvation. Yet, these shadows conceal a greater and more frightening truth - that we ourselves are the architects of these fearful prospects.

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

What has gone wrong? Have we failed to harmonize our material prosperity with moral fortitude? Are we not blessed by Mother Nature with sufficient resources to meet the needs of the entirety of mankind on this planet? Frank Buchman once said that there was enough in the world for everybody's need, but not for everybody's greed. He asked, "If everybody cared enough, would not everybody have enough?" Is this not true? It was Lord Buddha who expounded the universal truth that the root cause of all sorrow and all fear is greed. Even though we have come together as a world body, are we caring for and sharing with each other? Is this not the crisis we are facing today? If so, is not this crisis moral rather than economic? If we resolve the moral crisis, will not the economic crisis resolve itself?

Throughout the history of the United Nations humanity has lived under the dreadful shadow of the rapidly increasing nuclear mechanisms of destruction and the conventional arms race. The destructive capacity of the nuclear arsenals are estimated to be 6,000 times that of all the fire power of the Second World War. Global military expenditures are rapidly approaching \$US 1,000 billion annually. It is indeed a miracle that the world has been spared the misery and the near total destruction of a third world war. The full credit for this must go to the United Nations.

I need not emphasize the immorality of the colossal expenditure on armaments in a world with scarce resources that is yearning for development and human survival. Beyond the elemental wrongness of these outlays are three derivative concerns. They are the fatality of weapons accumulation, the concentration of destructive power in the hands of a few nations and the diversion of scarce resources and talents into the industry of death. All these could result in the extinction of human life and add to human deprivation. Mahatma Gandhi expressed this in the following words:

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

"Bombs will not be destroyed by counter bombs, even as violence cannot be destroyed by counter-violence."

We at the General Assembly have a unique opportunity to remind the nuclear super-Powers of their special responsibility for the arms race and of their fundamental obligations concerning peace. Within a few days the leaders of the United States of America and the Soviet Union will be meeting in Geneva. It is not our desire to intrude on bilateral discussions. However, to the extent that those discussions also affect our lives, it is imperative that the voice of all peace-loving States be heard, and heard clearly.

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

Let us not miss this opportunity. Let us resolve here and now, firmly and clearly, to present a special emergency resolution to President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev. Let us by resolution appeal to them to recognize the most volatile situation faced by the super-Powers and the benefits that will accrue to themselves and the whole of mankind from diverting such military outlays to peaceful and humanitarian efforts; to agree to a reduction of military expenditure by 10 per cent each year for five consecutive years beginning from 1986-87; to apply a significant portion towards the reduction of the international debt of the poorer nations.

Let us accept this resolution with minimum debate and maximum support. Let us empower the Secretary-General to carry this message to Geneva and report to us on its reception. I appeal to all peace-loving Member States to join me in this urgent motion for peace.

What we seek is not merely the release of around US\$ 60 billion for annual debt relief; what we want is an investment to safeguard and improve life. What we offer is the beginning of a new global pact between those who have resources and those who represent the political and commercial market-places of the future. What we demand is an end to a system whereby the security of the many is hostage to the ambitions of a few.

To the leaders of the super-Powers we say this: do not make your consideration or acceptance of our proposal conditional on reciprocity. Have the courage to break the escalating cycle of the arms race. What you may lose militarily you will gain in the goodwill of the peoples and the nations around the world. And goodwill is a greater source of strength than armaments, a greater incentive for commerce and investment than bombs, a greater bond of political friendship than security pacts.

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

Forty years ago, when the United Nations was conceived, the definition of international violence was largely restricted to conventional forms of war. In recent times new malignancies have expanded that definition.

The twin problems of terrorism and drug abuse have emerged as the two scourges of our time. It is a sad commentary on our time that these two scourges are intertwined and mutually supportive. Terrorism, which has made life insecure for many a peace-loving nation, goes hand in hand with the transport and promotion of narcotics and dangerous drugs. These in turn are nurtured and nourished by the arms trade.

We live in an age of international terrorism in which aggression entirely within the boundaries of a nation State is often inspired and sustained by external networks of support, as all members know. Hijackings, political murders, destruction of life and property, with the declared goal of destabilizing legitimate Governments, are now regular occurrences. Open societies which cherish individual liberties are particularly vulnerable and are most easily threatened by acts of terrorism.

We in Sri Lanka speak from the vantage-point of our own sad experience. A small group of terrorists who believe in the bullet and not in the ballot and have secured shelter outside our borders have caused immeasurable harm to innocent men, women and children. They have desecrated shrines and murdered priests and nuns, students and teachers, the sick and the aged. Scarce resources have had to be diverted from vitally needed development projects to ill-affordable security purposes. Each and every significant political party, be it of the Government or the opposition, has condemned terrorism, and yet it persists.

We agreed fully with our Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, when he recently said:



(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

"As a human being I have a feeling of shame. I think that what the terrorists are doing all over the world is not only a crime, but also an act of cowardice."

I would like to propose the following steps to wipe the terrorist menace from this globe. Let us resolve that an international conference on terrorism be convened with a view to formulating an international plan of action to eliminate terrorism from this globe. Let us join together in a true spirit of liberty, equality and justice, pool all our resources and take collective action through the establishment of an international agency committed to the total eradication of terrorism.

Stark poverty, with its manifold consequences, continues to haunt a major section of mankind. Hunger and disease, aggravated by natural catastrophes, have plunged entire populations into untold misery. Millions of people without the minimum means of livelihood and without adequate food and shelter await redress.

Members are aware that a large portion of the time and energy of the United Nations has been focused on leading issues in the areas of economic development and equity. We are now at the mid-point of the Third Development Decade. More than 10 years ago an earlier General Assembly called for the creation of a new international economic order.

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

The high optimism of those times has given way to a sense of despair as results have been painfully slow in coming forth. Many nations, especially the poorer ones, have stagnated, or even retrogressed, rather than progressed in recent years.

There are many reasons for this sustenance of backwardness. The flow of capital has been limited. Industrial goods have cost more. Industrial markets have contracted. Currencies have fluctuated widely. High technology has reduced the comparative advantages of labour. Access to major markets for goods is threatened through growing protectionism. Commodity prices have been unfavourable. This bleak economic landscape is darkened by the dominance of recession throughout the world for more than a decade.

Smaller and poorer countries like mine feel these blows with extreme severity. We do not have a cushion of financial reserves to soften our economic hardships. The cumulative result is that the third world faces a grave danger, the danger of economic recolonization. We are threatened with the loss control over our economic destiny.

Several conditions contribute heavily to this dependent situation. The debt burden of the poor countries is well in excess of \$US 800 billion. The debtor nations are not in a position to honour interest payments, let alone amortization of capital. Those countries have three alternatives: enforcement of extreme austerity, unilateral collective default or mutually agreed rescheduling of obligations.

We see a major rescheduling of obligations as the most effective and fair response. However, such a rescheduling should be part of an overall global economic adjustment. Let us resolve to appeal to all rich countries to treat this as a matter of grave urgency. Let this accommodation include reconsideration of interest rates, an increase in the grant component of assistance, organization of

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

new capital flows, stabilization of commodity prices and currencies and guaranteed access to markets.

Five years ago, when I addressed the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, I proposed the declaration of an international year of shelter for the homeless. That proposal has since been accepted by the world community and the year 1987 has been dedicated to that purpose.

When some people speak of housing and shelter they tend to give a restrictive interpretation, greatly underestimating its real benefits. To them, housing and shelter mean only a mere roof above their heads. This is a misconception. Housing not only provides protection from the elements but also shelters all the factors that go to improve the quality of life of individuals, who form the families. Families make up societies, and societies build up to nations. Nations finally constitute the global community. That is why I consider housing to be not only a basic human need but also a key to human development. In essence, housing is central to the fulfilment of man's aspirations to a better life.

Health and sanitation, agriculture, industry, employment, water supply and environmental quality - all these factors which go to improve man's living conditions undergo qualitative changes with housing development. In this manner, housing will provide the initiative and drive for total development, both physical and human.

Addressing the eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, held in Kingston, Jamaica, in April 1985, I appealed to the world community to consider the establishment of a global housing and shelter bank which would channel international resources into local programmes and place funding and payments on a sound financial foundation. I appealed for 1 per cent of military outlays to be diverted for housing.

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

One the even of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, 1987, let us rededicate ourselves to the cause of shelter. Let us canvass steadily for the establishment of a global housing and shelter bank for the benefit of the millions who have no roofs over their heads, especially in the developing countries.

The actual accomplishments of the United Nations have been considerable, but they are not enough. Many brave and skilful men and women, led by five dedicated Secretaries-General, have served this Organization well. Yet overall performance measured against the expectations and the possibilities has been, from our viewpoint, less than satisfactory.

Many point out that this institution is only as strong as the collective commitment of all its Members. Others claim that law without the capacity for enforcement is enfeebling. Some perceive the imperfections and limitations of our Charter and call for its revision. Most observers criticize a groaning and overlapping bureaucracy in which the means have overtaken the ends and the establishment has swallowed the objectives. Several smaller Member States believe that the presence of the veto is both undemocratic and allows for obstruction of majority views.

There are significant elements of accuracy in each of these assertions. If we are to make the United Nations a more effective working body, Member States must address these shortcomings. Yet in many ways they are symptoms of a deeper affliction. I believe that a more correct perception of the protractive and stagnating tendencies that characterize the United Nations is that its problems arise primarily from a lack of leadership.

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

For many years, the Heads of Government of Member States have allowed a devaluation of the United Nations to occur. Diplomatic representation, however competent, is no substitute for the personal presence and active involvement of those who lead national administrations. If the United Nations is to realize its full potential, power must reinforce diplomacy.

I propose that each year on the eve of the General Assembly an informal and closed session of Heads of Government takes place. Such meetings, if developed into a regular tradition, could examine the most critical items before the General Assembly and arrive at some consensus. A review of the operations of the United Nations itself could become a feature of those gatherings. In that way, leaders with national decision-making authority would bring that authority to the level of international decision making. If we want to make the United Nations work, we must work at making the United Nations. I urge that the Secretary-General soon convene a small group of qualified persons to examine the feasibility of implementing this proposal.

The pathway to the future presents us with the same choice that the world faced in 1945 - the choice between life and death. If the trend of the past is the destiny of the future, we may survive but we shall not prevail. If we have the moral determination to engage in self-examination we can overcome our flaws and expand our vision. We can then supplement our knowledge with the wisdom that leads us to an age of peace and prosperity.

We at the United Nations must strive hard and rededicate ourselves "to the creation of a world in which rich nations help developing ones and big nations do not bully small ones", as eloquently put by Richard Livingstone.

Those of us who are in search of truth and non-violence find refuge in the teachings of the Great Gautama the Buddha. The life and the thought of the

(Mr. Premadasa, Sri Lanka)

Enlightened One evoke a blessing that is particularly appropriate for this occasion and which I shall share with you: May all beings be well and happy.

Mr. R. Premadasa, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the Government of the Kingdom of Norway, Mr. Sverre Stray.

Mr. STRAY (Norway): The founders of the United Nations envisioned a world Organization that would harmonize the actions of nations and prevent war through a global system of collective security. Various machineries and procedures were established for settling disputes between States. The Security Council was given the authority to apply the military and non-military measures required. Provisions for the use of that authority were laid down in the Charter.

Unfortunately, developments since then have proved the difficulty of fulfilling those goals and expectations. The United Nations soon came to reflect the divisiveness of a troubled world.

It was recognized right from the beginning, however, that international peace and stability is something more than a mere absence of armed conflict. It requires justice and fair social conditions for all. We find recognition of that fact expressed in Article 1 of the Charter, which declares that one of the purposes of the United Nations is

"To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."

The United Nations has in this context achieved important results in the fields of health, education and science, transport and communications, the care and

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

protection of refugees, the care of children, human rights and labour relations, to mention just a few. Past experience has proved that global co-operation is not beyond human capability. Global solutions can indeed be designed and made to work.

The United Nations has existed and functioned in a socio-political environment which has undergone revolutionary and fundamental changes. We have witnessed geopolitical, technological, economic and social changes of historic importance in a global context. The Organization has played a significant role in the decolonization process and the new nations have, with a few exceptions, quickly taken their rightful place in the Organization. The United Nations has today become the natural meeting-place for the community of nations.

Our Secretary-General has encouraged all Member States to use the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations as an occasion to recommit themselves to the goals and objectives of the Charter.

Such a recommitment implies above all that we abide by the decisions taken by the competent organs of the United Nations, particularly those relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes and the maintenance of international peace and security. An erosion of the authority of the Organization in this field is detrimental to all of us. Recombitment also implies that we refrain from misusing the United Nations and its organs for short-sighted national political gains.

In our era of growing political and economic interdependence, in which international decision making has become more difficult and more complex, all nations - small and large - have a stake in strengthening the United Nations and making it as effective and responsive as possible. This is a challenge to us, the Member States, and to the Secretary-General and his staff.\*

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\* Mr. Agius (Malta), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Stray, Norway)

To achieve this we shall all have to display a high degree of realism, show respect and understanding for differing viewpoints and act in a spirit of compromise and co-operation. We have to recognize that viewpoints and interests differ from nation to nation and that no country can claim that its solution is the only valid one. To disregard this, to make intemperate demands and to aim for the unachievable is to invite struggle and confrontation. Such a course of action will not only cause deadlock, frustration and bitterness: it will erode and do damage to the concept and mechanisms of global co-operation.

My Government, together with the other Nordic Governments, has submitted several proposals and ideas for strengthening the Organization. Our attention has first and foremost been focused on the Security Council and the office of the Secretary-General, for the purpose of making the United Nations a more effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security. Our views coincide to a large extent with those expressed by the Secretary-General in his annual reports to the General Assembly. We support his efforts to strengthen the peace-keeping and peace-making capability of his office. We would support more frequent use by the Secretary-General of his good offices and his powers under Article 99 of the Charter to bring situations threatening the maintenance of international peace and security to the attention of the Security Council. We would encourage the development of a wider and more systematic capacity for the Secretary-General for fact-finding in potential conflict areas.

We would also encourage the members of the Security Council to continue to consider the procedural and substantive aspects of the Council's work. The statements made during the Council's ministerial meeting four weeks ago ought to provide a basis for progress in the efforts to improve the Council's work.

In the same vein, the statements made during the course of this anniversary debate could provide an opportunity to give a political impulse to economic issues



(Mr. Stray, Norway)

as well. In this connection I would suggest, for consideration, that the Secretary-General be requested to prepare a report on the many proposals and ideas presented. Such a report could provide the basis for a special session of the Economic and Social Council at the ministerial level to take concrete action.

We, the community of nations, are living through a difficult period in international affairs. We are experiencing major structural changes in the world economy, important shifts in global and regional relationships, a revolution in technology and communications, threats against the planet's ecological balance, and the increasing use of terror against innocent civilians - to mention only some of the characteristics of our time. Many of today's problems can be solved only through multilateral co-operation. This constitutes both a challenge to and an opportunity for the United Nations. We sincerely hope that the Organization will emerge from the present period of evaluation and consolidation with renewed strength and vigour. On that basis, and on the basis of a more realistic assessment on the part of the Member States of the possibilities and limitations of the United Nations, the Organization will continue to play its rightful role in generating ideas on, and promoting solutions to, many of the pressing issues on the global agenda. The Norwegian Government will do its utmost to promote such a development.

The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the President of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Shah Mohammad Dost. I now call on him.

Mr. DOST (Afghanistan): Forty years ago, as a result of the greatest war effort ever undertaken by man for the defence of freedom and human values, Hitlerite fascism and Japanese militarism were brought to their knees. The great victory was achieved, however, at a heavy cost: tens of millions of human beings dead and thousands of cities, towns and villages ruined. The catastrophic

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

proportions of the death and devastation left behind by the war were indeed a shocking experience, leaving no doubt in the minds of responsible people that if man were to live in happiness, if his civilization and material and spiritual achievements were to survive and flourish, it was necessary to eliminate the possibility of another war.

Out of that realization came the end of the greatest ordeal man had ever gone through and the birth of the United Nations. Its Charter embodied the lofty hopes and aspirations of all mankind for a safer and better world for all.

Unfortunately, however, the Charter - a most significant international document representing the transcendent interest of all Member States - is not yet fully implemented, owing to the lack of political will on the part of imperialism and its inclination towards unilateralism for the pursuit of narrow-minded and short-sighted self-interest at the expense of other nations.

Notwithstanding the negative position of imperialism, the general trend of events in the world arena since the war has been towards the achievement of the lofty ideals on the basis of which the United Nations was founded. The emergence of the socialist community as an indomitable fortress of peace and progress and a staunch supporter of the national and social liberation movements helped, to a great extent - through its policy of peaceful coexistence and detente - the struggle for the attainment of the objectives of the United Nations.

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

The decolonization process set in motion by the United Nations a quarter of a century ago resulted in the breaking up of the militarist colonial system, bringing scores of new sovereign Members to the Organization. This has enhanced the role in world affairs of the United Nations as a truly universal body.

By denying imperialism opportunities to implement its policies of intimidation and diktat, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has assisted the United Nations to bring about significant consensus on many topical issues before the Organization. The peace movement, now a world-wide phenomenon, has broken ideological and political barriers in the course of its struggle to end the arms race and achieve disarmament.

It is regrettable that we should be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of this Organization at a time when, as a result of the policy of all-out confrontation and the unbridled arms race pursued by imperialism, the world is tottering precariously on the edge of the abyss of nuclear catastrophe, which threatens not only the whole of civilization, but also the very existence of any form of life on earth. Nothing could be further from the dreams and ideals of the authors and signatories of the United Nations Charter.

Thousands upon thousands of deadly nuclear weapons, infinitely more devastating than the two bombs dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are being manufactured and added to the awesome arsenals of the world.

Moreover, it seems that the land, water and air of the planet Earth may no longer be sufficient to satisfy United States imperialism's craze for piling up ever greater means of mass annihilation. Plans are already under way to turn outer space into a United States military arsenal. The "star wars" plan is not an innocent defensive initiative, as its proponents would like us to believe, but an incomparably dangerous surge in the arms drive designed to achieve military superiority for the United States.

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

The "star wars" plans being pursued in the face of Soviet proposals on international co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization, and its declaration of moratoriums on the deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe and on the testing of all nuclear weapons, as well as the praiseworthy proposal by the Soviet Union for a mutual 50 per cent reduction in the number of nuclear missiles capable of reaching each other's territory, are going to add a very dangerous dimension to the already abominable and unjustifiable arms race conducted by the United States imperialism throughout the last four decades.

The arms race, although the most dangerous factor, is unfortunately not the only manifestation of the deteriorating situation in the world in which the United Nations functions. From South-East Asia to South-West Asia and the whole Indian Ocean, from Palestine and the Middle East to South Africa and Namibia, and from Central America to the whole of Latin America, imperialist policies, aided and abetted in certain parts of the world by hegemonism and local stooges, have not only brought about bloodshed and destruction but have also impaired the ability of the United Nations to adopt on behalf of the international community effective measures aimed at putting an end to aggression and occupation and at correcting past injustices.

In spite of the commendable activities of the United Nations in providing assistance to the development efforts of the developing countries, the world economic situation leaves much to be desired. The burden of foreign debt and debt servicing, together with the disadvantages of the present international monetary system, have sapped the limited financial potential of those countries for reinvestment and economic growth. And yet the advanced capitalist countries continue in the United Nations to oppose the establishment of a new and just international economic order.

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

Comparing the realities of today's world with the hopes and aspirations of the authors and signatories of the United Nations Charter, it is not difficult to see that a lot remains to be done to give effect to the valuable provisions of the Charter.

In the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan the victory of the national democratic April revolution under the leadership of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan has brought about the conditions necessary to do away with the grim legacy of the past. The revolution, which arose from the feudal and pre-feudal conditions characterized by the oppression and exploitation of the masses, from the failure of the ruling classes to solve urgent social and economic problems, and from the poverty, disease, illiteracy and ignorance which had been the lot of the Afghan people, has already brought tangible results in transforming the life of the people of Afghanistan.

The last phases of the just and democratic land and water reforms are being successfully implemented all over the country. In spite of the destructive undeclared war against revolutionary Afghanistan, economic growth has already surpassed the levels of the pre-revolutionary years and scores of economic projects have been launched. The campaign against illiteracy has already enabled more than a million people to read and write. Educational institutions have been expanded and free public health services have been increased.

The new revolutionary order has ensured under the law the democratic rights and freedoms of the individual and the full equality of all the nationalities, tribes and ethnic groups of the country. Revolutionary democratic legality has been ensured. Full freedom of religious beliefs and rites and respect for the sacred religion of Islam, safely enshrined in the fundamental principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, are strictly observed, and the full equality of women with men has been guaranteed by law.

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

The recent Loya Jirgah, or grand assembly of the People, in which more than 2,000 elected representatives from every corner of the country participated, once again demonstrated the popular nature of our revolutionary State. The Jirgah discussed in a democratic atmosphere the domestic and foreign policy of the State and gave it its seal of approval. The High Jirgah of the Tribes, with the participation of over 3,700 representatives from the whole tribal area, dealt with the urgent question of ensuring the security of our borders and adopted very important decisions on various national issues and on peace and security.

Unfortunately, however, we have not been able so far to work towards achieving the noble goals of our revolution in conditions of peace. The undeclared war imposed on the people of Afghanistan by imperialism, hegemonism and the revolutionary forces of the region has forced us to allocate considerable human and financial resources, which are badly needed for the attainment of our peaceful human goals, to the defence of the independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country.

The enemies of our revolution, after all their futile efforts, are not yet ready to come to grips with reality. They are not yet ready to understand the simple fact that the revolutionary process in Afghanistan is irreversible. The free-born and valorous people of Afghanistan, through their heroic defence of their revolution, have proved that no evil power on earth is capable of making them abandon the path they have chosen for their happiness and the happiness of the coming generations of the Afghan nation.

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

It would be wise if our neighbours who have opted for confrontation abandoned their unproductive and dangerous approach for one conducive to security, stability and tranquillity for all our peoples. They should keep uppermost in their minds the interests of their peoples, which are best served by peace and co-operation, not by confrontation and hostility.

The enemies of our people are trying to use the United Nations as a forum for interfering in the internal affairs of our country. An immediate end should be put to such hostile attempts. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has sincerely and constructively participated in the Geneva talks, through the intermediary of the United Nations Secretary-General and his representative, to facilitate the achievement of a political settlement. The best way in which such a settlement could be achieved is certainly through direct talks.

From this rostrum we should like to make the following appeal to our neighbours: let us compete in constructive work, in building our countries and in raising the living standards of our people. We invite them to face up to that challenge and abandon the path of confrontation, which brings nothing but misery and waste of precious resources. Let us test this approach and taste its fruits.

What is needed is political wisdom on the part of the ruling circles of neighbouring countries, which dictates that they should abandon their intransigence in favour of direct and sincere negotiations aimed at reaching an early political solution. Truth and justice are on our side. That is why we are not afraid to sit down at the negotiating table. Why are others afraid of direct talks?

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, as a free, independent and non-aligned country, through its own free and independent judgement on world issues, is firmly committed to the aims and purposes of the United Nations and to the norms and principles of its Charter. Alongside peace-loving, progressive humanity, we shall continue our just struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism,

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

racism, including zionism, racial discrimination and apartheid and for peace, security, freedom, disarmament and co-operation between nations, for peace and progress for all, and for friendship between all nations and peoples.

Let us work in unity and redouble our efforts for the cause of peace. In peace and peaceful co-operation we can live and coexist. In peace we can prosper and progress and ensure our happiness and the happiness of coming generations.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.