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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 1 October 1986, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. CHOUDHURY (Bangladesh)

later: Mr. MOUSHOUTAS (Cyprus)
(Vice-President)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Masri (Jordan)
Mr. Mladenov (Bulgaria)
Mr. Hayden (Australia)
Mr. Ye Goung (Burma)
Mr. Bird (Antigua and Barbuda)
Mr. Srithirath (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Mr. Velayati (Islamic Republic of Iran)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MASRI (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure to extend to you our heartfelt congratulations, Sir, on your election as President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. We are confident that your ability and diplomatic skill will enable you to conduct the business of the General Assembly in a very able manner and that will be a great help to all of us in achieving the positive results that we aspire to at this session. It is a source of particular pleasure that the representative of a friendly country, Bangladesh, with which my country, Jordan, has the closest relations of brotherhood, friendship, co-operation, assume that important international post.

I should also like to extend my thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Jaime de Piniés, who conducted the proceedings of the fortieth session of the General Assembly with extreme skill. His ability to deal with thorny international problems, thanks to his wide knowledge and creative democratic spirit, coupled with firmness and decisiveness, led to the outstanding success of that session. This was only to be expected of such a seasoned diplomat, steeped in multilateral diplomacy and with wide experience in United Nations affairs and activities.

I also wish at the beginning of my statement to convey on behalf of the Government of Jordan our great appreciation and gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his sincere and tireless efforts to enhance the role of the United Nations and help solve conflicts and crises which threaten the security of peoples and deplete the energies of countries. We shall give his proposals and observations on various issues the attention they fully deserve.

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

We share the Secretary-General's great concern to ensure effectiveness of the United Nations and its adherence to its ideals and principles, as well as his sincere desire that its role be enhanced, so that it may remain not only a forum for discussion and the expression of views and positions, but also a means of achieving consensus, and possibly agreements on the serious challenges that face mankind. The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations last year, was an opportunity to evaluate the progress of this vital Organization. In the course of the celebrations emphasis was laid on the importance of action to solve outstanding international problems in a spirit of co-operation and harmony and on the common concern not to allow international crises to get out of hand and escape collective control. It is our view that the crisis in the United Nations and the proliferation of its resolutions are caused essentially by the worsening international situation and the chronic regional conflicts that remain unsolved.

We should not start from a false premise. The real problem facing us is not the proliferation of United Nations resolutions or the expansion of its organs, important and urgent as dealing with such aspects may be. It is the proliferation of the problems besetting the nations of the world and the fact that they remain unsolved. Therefore the sound premise is not the impact of international conflicts on the United Nations but rather the need to settle such conflicts using the machinery in an effective way. The settlement of these conflicts would absolve the United Nations of blame.

We must deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict and the situations in southern Africa, Kampuchea, Lebanon and Central America as threats to international peace and security which sap the resources of the peoples of those regions, rather than treat them as mere items on the United Nations agenda.

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

The situation in the Middle East was dealt with in 1967 by a single resolution, namely, Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which Israel has refused to implement to this day. The United Nations has been unable to force Israel to comply with that resolution. In fact, Israel has escalated its practices and consolidated its occupation, thus forcing the United Nations to keep on reaffirming its resolutions.

The United Nations crisis is part of a world crisis, which is a reflection rather than a cause of the worsening situation of international peace and security. Therefore, the way to start dealing with the United Nations crisis is to implement United Nations resolutions, not to rob them of all force and vigour.

The usefulness and efficiency of the United Nations as a framework for co-operation among States was demonstrated once again when, in spite of the financial crisis imposed on it, it was able to organize the special session on the critical economic situation in Africa. That session was testimony to the need for collective action and multilateral co-operation. It also showed the importance and effectiveness of multilateral action when the will is there.

We see in that a ray of hope that progress can be made towards a collective solution to the economic and political problems in other regions of the world. The United Nations can contribute to the settlement of explosive regional conflicts in the Middle East, southern Africa, Cyprus, Afghanistan and other areas. The Secretary-General is making strenuous and sincere efforts to that end. We support his efforts and call upon others to support and respond positively to them. The United Nations machinery can also be activated to deal with the question of disarmament and the control of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

The eighth summit conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held at Harare has recently dealt with these questions. The countries of the third world emphasized the importance of enhancing the role of the United Nations and the need to tackle the problems that face us in a spirit of co-operation, trust, realism and frankness.

While we continue to believe in the vital need for the existence of the United Nations, we feel, unfortunately, that there is a campaign being waged against this Organization. Although I do not want to go into the details of this campaign, I feel it is essentially unjust and prejudiced. The United Nations can be as strong and effective or as marginal and unimportant as we, the Member States, want it to be. I believe that one of the reasons for its weakness is to be found in the selectivity practised and the double standards observed by some in applying the principles of the Charter, in particular those calling for self-determination, non-use of force in international relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

With regard to the financial crisis facing the United Nations, I feel that we can work together to find appropriate and practical solutions. We can be guided by the views suggested so far and by the outcome of our deliberations and consultations in this regard. I believe, however, that our aim in solving this current financial crisis, which we do not underestimate, should be to strengthen the role and effectiveness of the Organization rather than cast doubt on it or weaken it. For if it were to disappear, an international situation would arise in which force will take precedence over law.

In the context of our commitment to the United Nations and our belief in its importance and effectiveness, we consider it necessary to provide it with adequate means to fulfil its role with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. So far, its role has largely been confined to that of an observer or of a non-active participant. The outcome of the struggle between right and might has been the

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

freezing of the United Nations role with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. In a situation in which the majority would not agree to set aside the principles of the Charter which reject aggression and domination while the minority refuses to permit the application of the provisions of the Charter against the aggressor. Therefore, the role of the international Organization has been confined to affirming the principles without being able to take any practical action in this conflict. There are those who benefit from this state of no-peace, no-war. Therein prevails a situation where the only winners have been those who refuse to give up anything and who would not accept less than everything. The only loser has been the Palestinian Arab people, who continue to languish under occupation.

In this situation, where occupation is being consolidated, and the historical and inalienable rights of the Arab people have remained confined to theoretical reaffirmation, we in Jordan decided to do our utmost to change the situation so that the Arab rights in Palestine may be translated into practical reality, and the principles and resolutions of the United Nations condemning aggression, prohibiting foreign occupation and calling for self-determination may be translated into direct political action, through the formulation of practical solutions to the Palestine problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

We have always been convinced that the mere affirmation of principles, the taking of postures and the issuance of declarations without practical efforts towards the achievement of what we aspire to often constitute a course of action that is no less dangerous than the outright occupation. There has developed a regional situation characterized by demographic and geographical changes in the occupied Arab territories; a state of international laxity and a feeling of inability to take any serious action against the creeping annexation of occupied Arab territories. This has been accompanied by a state of international polarization and rivalry between the super-Powers to control the region's destiny

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

and resources. The situation of the Palestinian Arab people, languishing under occupation, has worsened to an unprecedented degree that gives rise to grave concern.

For all these important considerations concerning the future of the Palestinian Arab people and the preservation of their national identity and of the Arab and Islamic rights in Palestine, Jordan has worked for a comprehensive, just and durable peace settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine question, which is the core of the conflict, through an international conference attended by all parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Such a conference should be held under the auspices of the United Nations on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

We feel that convening such a conference would provide the appropriate framework for negotiation on the basis of international law and the principles of the Charter. We consider that it would be a forum that could not be exploited as an arena either for debate or for polemics. It would rather be a solemn international framework for responsible negotiation and effective action to reach the desired settlement, one in which the parties would be held responsible for their actions before the whole world, and subjected to the scrutiny of the international community. We feel that the outcome of such a settlement should ensure Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, guarantee the historic and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in their ancestral homeland, and guarantee the right of all States and peoples of the region, including Israel, to live in security and peace within internationally recognized boundaries.

Our position has a firm foundation. First and foremost there is our belief in the inevitability of peace, and our national commitment to the Palestinian people,

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

with whom we are linked through a common historical background and the bonds of a common aim and destiny.

In view of this special and distinctive relationship, we are the first to realize the true and sincere desire of the Palestinian people, languishing under occupation, to achieve a just and honourable peace. We therefore oppose the attempts that are being made to confine them to a cycle of violence, rejection and extremism whereby their enemies, that is the enemies of the Palestinian people, may be able to exclude and ignore them, and, even worse, to trample upon their rights under the pretext of combating violence and terrorism.

That is why we have worked, together with our Palestinian brethren, towards the implementation of the Arab peace plan, which enjoys the support of an overwhelming majority, by creating practical machinery for the implementation of this plan. To this end, we signed an agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organization on 11 February 1985, the bases and principles of which continue to constitute the starting-point of our orientation in relation to the Palestine question. It essentially guarantees the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people, in peace-making and peace-keeping. If our efforts have met with obstacles placed by some, this should not provide an excuse for the international community to shirk its historical responsibility towards the Palestinian people and the achievement of peace. We should not allow Israel to use this as a pretext to deny the Palestinian people their legitimate rights and continue its policy of keeping the land, and hence impose, if possible, its version of peace, armed with unlimited political, military and economic support from the United States.

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

The United Nations took on a special responsibility for the Palestine question when in 1947 it adopted the resolution to partition Palestine. The problem became even worse when the international Organization found itself unable to implement its 1948 resolution on the right of the Palestinian refugees to repatriation or compensation. It again found itself powerless when Israel occupied all of the Palestinian territory in 1967. It was unable to implement a comprehensive peace settlement based on the principle of non-admissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and to achieve peace in return for withdrawal. We cannot disregard the responsibility of the five permanent members of the Security Council in regard to this problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict which it caused. In 1947 the views of those States converged on partitioning Palestine - despite rivalries and struggles between them. In 1967 their views again converged on a fundamental concept - the concept of territory for peace - upon which to build a just and comprehensive peace, based on the principle of the non-admissibility of the acquisition of territory by war. That was the principle at the basis of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) - reaffirmed by Security Council resolution 338 (1973), which called for the implementation of resolution 242 (1967) by negotiations between the parties under appropriate auspices.

The appropriate framework is provided by the General Assembly, the highest international authority, in which all the peoples of the world are represented and which is supported by everyone. This is reflected in the call for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. We hope that the Security Council will support that call before it is too late, so that all the parties concerned may negotiate for peace. All those who oppose the convening of the international conference must understand that by their opposition they are only prolonging the Arab-Israeli conflict and, consequently, the suffering and anguish of the peoples of the Middle East, and are exposing the whole region to instability.

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

The emergence of some response on the part of those who have taken positions in opposition to the convening of the conference confirms the fact that the position we took from the beginning is the right one and that the international conference, as proposed, remains the ideal way to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

We in Jordan have never hesitated to condemn and denounce terrorism, regardless of its source or nature. We do not agree that attacks against the lives of innocent people in places of worship or while they are travelling can be condoned as being in accordance with international principles or civilized human behaviour. We do, however, draw a distinction between such shameful acts and the legitimate national struggle waged by oppressed and colonized peoples and their liberation movements; the latter are approved by the principles of international law and in United Nations resolutions.

On the other hand, we feel that attempting to place the stress on terrorist acts, which have recently escalated, instead of working to put an end to the Israeli occupation of Arab territory and achieving peace, can only contribute to increasing the tension already prevalent in the region. The attempt to reduce the Arab-Israeli conflict - with the aggression and occupation of Arab territory that it involves - to a mere problem of international terrorism can logically have only one result: creating new justification for more violence and more terrorism. One of the results of such a trend on the part of some quarters is that terrorism has become an aspect of the absence of peace and the continuation of the current deadlock; and some wish to use this as a pretext for ruling out a political settlement and dissociating themselves from attempts to achieve peace. That can only provide extremist and rejectionist parties with an excuse to exploit situations and encourage terrorism to serve their own schemes.

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

In the Arab Gulf area, the Iraq-Iran war has entered its seventh year, and we still witness international impotence and indifference in regard to Iran's intransigence and obduracy. In spite of the unanimous recognition of the necessity to put an end to that war, the realization that it is futile and that there can be no justification for continuing it, and the possibility that it will spread, Iran continues to reject all appeals for the cessation of this devastating war. Iran has lately coupled its rejection of the various appeals for peace with a dangerous escalation of the war. In contrast to this, Iraq has made a positive response to all the peace initiatives aimed at ending the war. The President of Iraq, Mr. Saddam Hussein, put forward in August 1986 constructive proposals for ending the war with Iran.

In welcoming this move towards peace by Iraq - which is extending its hand to peace from a position of strength - we call upon Iran to reciprocate by making a similar positive move in order that an honourable and just solution acceptable to both parties may be achieved, a solution which would spare the two countries and their peoples further killing, destruction and depletion of resources.

The continuation of that war not only constitutes a danger to the welfare and safety of the Iraqi and Iranian peoples, but also threatens regional and international security. Furthermore, it constitutes defiance of the United Nations and contributes to weakening it. In that regard, we must condemn all attempts designed to prolong and fuel this war, in particular by supporting and backing the intransigent party that refuses to end it.

In sister Lebanon, the plight of the Lebanese people has lasted for over 10 years. It has been worsened by Israel's expansionist policy and its repeated acts of aggression - in particular, its illegal presence in southern Lebanon, which threatens Lebanon's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Israel is using the area as a stepping stone for continued interference in the internal affairs of Lebanon and the whole region. We hope that Lebanon will be able very

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

soon to restore its sovereignty and independence as a result of the complete withdrawal from Lebanese territory of all Israeli forces, thereby making it possible for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to discharge its mandate under Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

Our concern with the deteriorating situation in the Middle East in no way prevents us from paying attention to the deteriorating situations in other regions of the world, be they in Africa, Central America, Asia or the Mediterranean.

We stand firmly at the side of our brothers in the African continent against the racist and colonialist policies of South Africa, manifested in the apartheid régime and the occupation of Namibia. We oppose such policies firmly and strongly and support all the measures recommended and adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the United Nations to put an end to the obnoxious apartheid régime in South Africa and to achieve independence for Namibia in accordance with the United Nations plan on this subject. We are also in favour of supporting the African front-line States materially and politically in their confrontation with the expansionist policy of South Africa.

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

We also support the efforts of the Contadora Group to bring to an end the conflict and tension in Central America, so that the peoples and States of the region may devote themselves to the economic and social development of which they are in dire need.

The principles which govern Jordan's foreign policy of support for the right of peoples to self-determination, resistance to foreign occupation, rejection of the use of force in international conflicts, and adherence to the peaceful settlement of disputes, are the constants of our position towards all urgent regional conflicts, in Kampuchea, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

From this standpoint, we welcome the efforts of the two Koreas towards the reunification of their territory by peaceful means and dialogue, in accordance with the three principles enunciated in the joint communiqué of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, dated 4 July 1973. We welcome their joining the international community. We also support the efforts of the Secretary-General to solve the question of Cyprus.

With regard to the situation in Afghanistan, we hope that the efforts of the Secretary-General, which are aimed at achieving a speedy settlement of the problem, will succeed and ensure the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghan territory, the return of Afghan refugees and emigrants, and the safeguarding of the independence and territorial integrity of this friendly country.

Finally, in this complex and unstable international situation characterized by fluctuations in the relations between the super-Powers, oscillating between from détente and cold war, with the consequent potential for a world confrontation that would threaten all mankind, in addition to a weakening of belief in the principle of multilateralism, and the danger this engenders for the future of the United Nations, which personifies the hope of mankind for a more secure life free from

(Mr. Masri, Jordan)

want and poverty. In view of the worsening of the world economic situation and the tense regional situation in the Middle East - where there is such a bleak international and regional climate that dangerous phenomena are emerging, such as the attempts of the forces of extremism and aggression to dominate the area and the efforts of some to live at the expense of others, rather than coexist with them - in view of all this, Jordan maintains its balanced action and objective and creative thinking, advocating coexistence with all, rather than some living at the expense of others. It is determined to make its voice heard and to listen to others, whether friend or foe, and in the face of all adversities is ready to accept sacrifices in the service of its principles and consistent position.

We do so, armed with a balanced, moderate and objective vision regarding the problems that face us in our region and in the world at large. We work hand in hand with the forces of good, in solidarity with the champions of peace and united with our Palestinian brothers and family to whom we are linked by a distinctive historical relationship.

This is the message of Jordan. I place it before the Assembly, the representatives of the world's States and peoples. It is a message of a peaceful policy based on right and justice and the desire to live and let live. It is a peaceful balanced initiative that should be lasting to achieve peace in a country where it has been absent and render justice to a people to which it has been denied for several decades, namely, the Palestinian people, and eliminate the challenge posed to a nation that will not allow itself to be treated unjustly or treat others unjustly, namely, the Arab nation. Peace and security for all, not peace and security for some at the expense of others.

Mr. MLADENOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from Russian): Allow me first, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the high post of President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. We are convinced that under your able guidance the session will adopt important decisions aimed at strengthening peace and security for the well-being of all countries and peoples.

We live in a complex, contradictory, and at the same time, interdependent world. It is faced with many difficult problems, but the most important is indisputably the survival of the human race and the prevention of a suicidal nuclear war. The world situation remains alarming. The arms race is running at an accelerated pace. Vast reservoirs of distrust and prejudice have been stored up in relations among States. An anachronistic approach, based on reliance upon military force as the main instrument for solving world problems, is still having a ruinous effect on the international climate.

Today, mankind is going through a critical moment of its history. Never before has it been so acutely confronted by the dilemma of choosing to embark upon the salutary road of eliminating nuclear weapons, of disarmament and resolving pressing world problems, or to become a hostage and possible victim of the nuclear elements which it has itself unleashed.

As was recently stated by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the Council of State of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov:

"Nuclear catastrophe is a universal threat. Its prevention calls for the collective efforts of all Governments, States, parliaments, peoples, political parties, mass movements of peace activists, anti-missile movements, scientists and all people on earth, irrespective of class, national, ideological or religious differences."

There is only one way in which mankind can confidently enter the twenty-first

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

century and that is through a policy of peaceful coexistence, co-operation and dialogue among all States. That is the road leading to the future.

In the modern nuclear and space age, one can no longer rely on force and on the maxim "might is right" to resolve the different problems in the international arena, nor to ensure the security of anyone. The desire to acquire military superiority, coupled with expansionist ambitions, accompanied by violations of the elementary rules of civilized relations, are in total contradiction with present-day realities. The existence of previously unheard-of means of destruction, capable of destroying every living thing, has put the problems of peace and war, strategy and politics in a different perspective.

These realities require new political thinking and a decisive break from many stereotypes which have determined, and which still determine the positions of certain political circles on these issues. Objective analysis shows that in our time the security of any State cannot be ensured by military-technical means alone. The problem of security has taken on a universal character and a comprehensive political meaning, uniting the various military, economic and humanitarian aspects into a single whole. Peace is indivisible. This truth is valid now as never before. There can be no security for some which would endanger others. In other words, the safeguarding of national security requires that a reliable system of comprehensive international security be established.

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

This position of principle underlies the proposal of the socialist countries, including the People's Republic of Bulgaria, to have the forty-first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations consider the question of establishing a comprehensive system of international peace and security.

In putting forth this proposal, we do not proceed from abstract and Utopian ideas, but from a clear understanding of the imperatives at this juncture of politics and history. In order to guarantee international peace and security, urgent and purposeful actions are needed to curb the arms race, to reduce the military arsenals and to achieve real disarmament. It is imperative to eliminate the existing hotbeds of tension in various parts of the world and not to allow new ones to flare up. It is also necessary to restructure the whole system of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis, to overcome the backwardness of developing countries and to halt their economic exploitation. A comprehensive system of international security includes, as an integral part, active co-operation in humanitarian matters in order to ensure full enjoyment of human rights, above all the right to life and the right to peace, with respect for the sovereignty of States. The adoption by the world Organization of an authoritative document containing the fundamental principles of such a system which would serve as a guidepost in securing the requisite material, political, legal, moral, psychological and other guarantees of security, is the order of the day.

As has already been said, disarmament is the corner-stone of such a system. For every sober-minded person it is perfectly clear that the lessening of the danger of war depends precisely on the state of affairs in that area. Demonstrating high political responsibility, the socialist countries have during the last year alone put forward a whole set of well-founded ideas for reducing military confrontation. In this connection, we should particularly point out the

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

scope, viability and boldness of the programme for the total elimination of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000 as set forth by Mikhail S. Gorbachev on 15 January 1986.

The Soviet Union has submitted a number of concrete and constructive proposals to help reach agreements in the talks on strategic arms and on medium-range missiles. I would also like to note the importance of the initiative on establishing "star peace" in contrast to "star wars" and on turning outer space into an arena of peaceful and fruitful co-operation among States. The socialist countries have elaborated and proposed a comprehensive plan for the reduction of conventional weapons from the Atlantic to the Urals.

Today the question of ending nuclear-weapon tests has indeed become the sole criterion determining the position States take on the most urgent issue - averting the threat of a nuclear conflagration. More than a year has passed since the Soviet Union, rejecting the traditional canons of confrontation, took a wise and farsighted step by adopting a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. The latest extension of the moratorium to 1 January 1987 is a vivid demonstration of the sincerity and seriousness of Soviet policy. This decision represents both a genuine step towards disarmament and a major and effective confidence-building measure. It provides a historic opportunity to rethink outdated concepts and to proceed in a practical fashion to the elimination of nuclear arsenals which is so much talked about and demanded by all peoples of the world. Now, obviously, the problem of verification should no longer pose any obstacles to this aim.

The peace proposals of the socialist countries contribute to improving the international climate and to achieving a breakthrough for the purpose of banning war from the life of present and succeeding generations. They are in accord with the interests of all mankind, with the aspirations of peoples throughout the world

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

and with the officially expressed positions of dozens of countries in support of a world free of armaments and wars.

The international situation remains complicated and tense. Our assessment, however, would be inaccurate if we were to see only dark colours. The awareness of the common interests of the vast majority of States on the planet is emerging ever more clearly as the dominant factor in the dynamic interaction of tendencies in the world arena. On this basis, a broad international consensus is taking shape on the vitally important problems of peace and war, security and disarmament. Peoples have begun to talk with each other on these problems in one and the same language without the need of an interpreter.

A major contribution to the struggle to maintain peace is also being made by the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement. In Harare, at its recently concluded conference, the Movement called for common sense and political realism and for the urgent taking of concrete measures to improve the present situation.

We endorse the proposal that the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement should participate in one form or another in the work of the Security Council. We also highly value the efforts made by the Heads of State of the Six aimed at the immediate cessation of the arms race in its most dangerous and ruinous forms. The success of the Stockholm Conference is an example of the triumph of realism and of a sense of responsibility. The reaffirmation of the obligation of States not to use force against one another and the adoption of a wide spectrum of mutually complementary confidence-building and security measures has undoubtedly strengthened the foundations laid at Helsinki on which the common edifice of détente is built. We would like to expect such results from the forthcoming meeting in Vienna as well. Also on the agenda is the reaching of agreement on banning chemical weapons.

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

Peoples have also placed great hopes in the Soviet-American dialogue. The international community was very pleased to learn of the forthcoming meeting in Reykjavik. This is only natural and understandable. We are talking about those States that are most powerful in military and economic matters, and it is on them, first and foremost, that the curbing of the arms race and the prevention of a third world war depend. Together with other peace-loving countries, we also expect much from the Soviet-American contacts at the summit level. They could reach key agreements having a long-term positive impact in all areas of world politics. Good will and a sober view, freed from the dogmas of militarist thinking, would be sufficient for this to come about. On the whole, the current state of international affairs provides most serious grounds for concern as well as for optimism. The world has begun to think in simple and normal human terms about breaking out of the nuclear deadlock.

The priority which my country attaches to disarmament in no way diminishes for us the importance of resolving the conflicts in various regions of the world. We proceed from the understanding that today issues of international security are inseparable from the peaceful and just settlement of various conflicts which inflict death and suffering on many peoples and which could easily escalate into a global confrontation.

In this connection, we welcome the proposal for convening an international conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. As a first step in that direction, Bulgaria supports, in particular, the idea of setting up a preparatory committee within the framework of the Security Council.

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

The establishment of a just and lasting peace categorically requires the withdrawal of Israel from the Arab territories occupied since 1967, the exercise by the Arab people of Palestine of its inalienable and legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State; it requires also the ensuring of the right of all States of the region to exist in conditions of peace and security.

The problem of Cyprus also remains unresolved. In the interests of the people of Cyprus and of international security that hotbed of tension in the Mediterranean must as a matter of urgency be eliminated. We support the idea of convening an international conference to try to reach a viable and enduring settlement of the question of Cyprus, one that would ensure the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus as a non-aligned State on whose territory there would be no foreign troops and no military bases.

The situation in Central America and the Caribbean basin is also a source of great concern to us. A powerful imperialist State brutally threatens Cuba, persists in its aggressive action against the democratic gains of the Nicaraguan people and flouts the decisions of the International Court of Justice. The People's Republic of Bulgaria is in full solidarity with Nicaragua in its heroic struggle to safeguard its freedom and sovereignty, and welcomes its readiness to sign a regional peace treaty. We support the efforts of the Contadora Group and of the Lima Group for a political settlement of the situation without outside interference.

It is high time the international community took immediate and effective measures to put an end to the illegal occupation of Namibia and to grant independence to its people, in compliance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978), as was also demanded by the General Assembly at its recently concluded

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

special session on this question. Together with the overwhelming majority of Member States, we categorically condemn the criminal system of apartheid in South Africa and South Africa's acts of aggression against neighbouring countries, as well as the support rendered it by its well-known protectors. Comprehensive mandatory sanctions must be imposed on Pretoria as soon as possible, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and an end must be put to that shameful phenomenon.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria also calls for an end to the destructive war between Iran and Iraq and for a peaceful settlement of the issues in dispute.

My country supports the proposals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the withdrawal of foreign troops from the southern part of the peninsula and for its transformation into a nuclear-weapon-free zone for the peaceful and democratic unification of the country.

Conditions also exist for a political solution to the problems relating to Afghanistan and Kampuchea. Such a solution depends entirely on those who have created the tensions around those two countries and are continuing to aggravate them.

Regional initiatives and the elaboration of confidence-building measures among States to secure the inviolability of their borders have a considerable potential for strengthening international security. As already mentioned, extensive positive experience in this respect has already been gained in Europe. The necessary conditions exist for the initiation of a similar process in other parts of the world also. In this connection we see merit in the proposal to include the region of Asia and the Pacific in the efforts to establish a comprehensive system of international security, the implementation of which would decisively facilitate the overall normalization of the world situation.

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

There is need for close co-operation among States in many other areas as well. I would mention one, namely, the fight against terrorism. The black hand of terrorism reaches out into the lives of innocent people and breeds an atmosphere of fear, mistrust and tension. The People's Republic of Bulgaria resolutely condemns and repudiates the hijacking of aircraft, the taking of hostages, assassinations, and accordingly the mass and arbitrary acts of repression that are sought to be justified in their name, all bearing the mark of obscurantism and inhumanity. In many cases, acts of terrorism are the result of such no less outrageous phenomena as occupation, annexation, foreign domination and other forms of violence. Terrorism could be wiped out completely through a resolute struggle against its manifestations and through elimination of its socio-political causes. One of the important problems under consideration by this world Organization is the role of the mass information media in the present-day world. That powerful instrument of civilization must be placed in the service of peace, co-operation and progress.

The various and complex problems facing mankind require collective, concerted action on the part of all States, large and small alike. The United Nations, as the most authoritative and in essence universal international Organization, is the sole forum where all world problems are being addressed in the search for common approaches to their solution.

The overwhelming majority of Member States sincerely support the United Nations and seek to enhance its effectiveness. The People's Republic of Bulgaria fully shares that position. We are, however, concerned at the attempts of certain Member States to impose on the Organization methods of work and aims that are incompatible with its Charter and to create difficulties that would impede the normal and undisturbed activities of Member States. Today we are all responsible for keeping alive and consolidating trust in the United Nations, which like a living organism develops and breathes in a changing political climate. The great

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

demands of the present time require that the United Nations find a proper course of action in the complicated situation that now exists and affirm itself as a mainstay of peace and security. We would like to avail ourselves of this opportunity to express our profound respect to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and to reaffirm our support for his tireless efforts in this area.

As a Balkan State, the People's Republic of Bulgaria devotes particular attention to its relations with the other countries in that part of the world. We are pleased to note that, on the whole, our relations are developing well and in a stable way and are steadily improving. At the same time we must note that attempts have recently been made to undermine confidence and engender tensions in our peninsula. As far as we are concerned, we are opposed to such tendencies and have consistently been exerting efforts to further co-operation in various fields where there are long-term common interests.

Bulgaria is continuing its efforts to transform the Balkans into a zone free of nuclear and chemical weapons. We reaffirm our proposal for the conclusion, with all Balkan countries, of bilateral agreements which would include a code of good-neighbourly relations. Quite recently my country signed an important bilateral document embodying the lofty principles and ideals set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and in the pan-European process. We have also put forth an initiative for the elaboration and adoption by the Balkan States of a treaty on protection of the environment of our peninsula and for the drafting of a joint appeal on that issue to all the countries and peoples of Europe.

(Mr. Mladenov, Bulgaria)

The People's Republic of Bulgaria is doing all in its power to implement the ideals of international peace and security. The Thirteenth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, held earlier this year, charted the basic directions of our foreign policy. We are seeking political dialogue, and mutually advantageous and equitable co-operation, with all those who desire it, and are fighting steadily for the elimination of vestiges of colonialism, fighting against neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid, fighting for respect for human rights, and above all the right to life in conditions of peace and freedom. We are active participants in the work of the world Organization and other international forums, and we contribute to the settlement of regional conflicts and help to resolve pressing global problems.

That is how we see our role in building that just and harmonious world without wars which all nations wish to see.

Mr. HAYDEN (Australia): My country, Australia, is delighted to see you, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, presiding over the forty-first session of the General Assembly. Coming from a major third-world country, you will bring special sensitivity to so many of the problems with which we shall be concerned during this session.

I should also like to express Australia's sincere appreciation to your predecessor, the former Permanent Representative of Spain, for his skill in presiding so effectively over the fortieth session of the General Assembly.

Australia has historical reasons to be conscious of the United Nations, of the grave responsibilities that it bears and the great hopes invested in it. Our nation was the first to have a permanent mission accredited to the United Nations in New York. An Australian was the first President of the Security Council. A predecessor of mine, as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, was President of

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

the Assembly in its third turbulent year. In this forty-first year of the United Nations Australia is reaching the end of its fourth term on the Security Council. It has been a period of high significance, both to the cause of global security and to the effectiveness of the Council itself.

There is another good reason why Australians have been more acutely aware than usual of these developments: 1986 is the International Year of Peace, and Australia has invested great resources into making it more than just a rhetorical event. The concept of peace - what it actually is, what obstacles stand in its way, what its maintenance asks of individual citizens - has been very much on our minds in the course of this year. Australians have reacted to the idea of the Year of Peace in an extraordinarily energetic and committed way, and at all levels in our community, from the most junior of school-children to the highest levels of government.

It is not hard to think of reasons for this degree of interest. Australia is in an area of the world which seems to be growing more attractive in the configurations of great-Power interests and forces. It is in an area which has known great stress from colonization and the winning of independence. It is in an area which has been - for whatever reason - a major killing field over the past 40 years or so.

It is true that Australians have been protected more than most from the worst effects of all this, but they have not been hidden from it. Anxiety about the threat - and even conviction about the inevitability - of nuclear war has been found to be widespread, especially among young people in Australia, as in other parts of the world. This is a terrible heritage to hand on. The early reality of people my age was economic insecurity, if not deprivation. That was bad enough.

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

The experience of young people these days is worse: of terrorism and assassination brought into their homes by television, children starving to death, nuclear explosion and threat. No wonder so many young people are found to be so cynical and pessimistic. They appreciate that - such is the state of the art of war - it needs only the tiniest miscalculation or mistake to set off events that can transform all life into instant archaeology. They fear the consequences when distant, arcane and often seemingly trivial disagreement is taken up and used in the kind of ideological, nationalist or economic competitiveness that has set off two world wars so far this century.

Australians, like other normal people, yearn for an end to this insecurity. Their Government believes that the multilateral process, and this Organization particularly, offer the most effective ways to deal with the tensions and problems that disturb world peace. This forty-first session of the General Assembly in the International Year of Peace is an opportune moment to measure the durability of those tensions, and the problems and the efficacy of the multilateral way of solving them.

The most obviously urgent of these tensions is the instability caused by nuclear weapons. We are on the threshold of developments that could so change the nature of the strategic relationship that it could be many unstable years before the super-Powers are sufficiently confident once more to engage in productive negotiations. The Australian Government believes that it would be highly dangerous to stumble - as we risk doing - into the competitive development of ballistic missile defences and an arms race in space. The discussions last November between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev gave significant impetus to the arms-control process: for instance, the agreement to accelerate negotiations and the call for early progress on matters where there was common ground, such as the

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

principle of reductions in the nuclear arms of the United States and the USSR - appropriately measured - and the idea of an interim intermediate-range nuclear force agreement. Both super-Powers have now put forward a number of detailed proposals for reductions in their nuclear arsenals. Recent meetings have taken place between United States and Soviet arms-control experts. Now we have the welcome announcement that President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev will meet in Iceland next week.

The Australian Government hopes that these developments will pave the way for substantial negotiations and early agreement on deep reductions in offensive nuclear forces. We hope for agreement on practical arrangements and understandings on the issue of strategic defence and the future of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty. We hope that both sides can now show willingness on the issue of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, which the Australian Government considers a most urgent practical step on the road to nuclear arms control. It is in this context of multilateral action and agreement on forms of arms control that I draw attention to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, which the Australian Government supports as a significant step against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Australia also wishes to draw attention to the disarmament provisions of the Antarctic Treaty, which has provided the effective manner in which Antarctica has been managed in support of the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. We re-emphasize our commitment to the existing system for the management of Antarctica and, accordingly, we disagree on this matter with my good friend the Prime Minister of Malaysia. Australia was disappointed that the fortieth session of the General Assembly broke with the tradition of consensus on this issue. This was not due to the Consultative Parties, and we hope that that tradition can be restored at this forty-first session.

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

The fact and the implications of nuclear arms understandably overshadow the issue of the trade in conventional arms. In the Australian Government's view, they should not be allowed to do so. Right now conventional weapons are being used to kill people in northern and southern Africa, Afghanistan, Central America and Cambodia.

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

It is a shameful fact that respectable Members of this Organization are providing the weapons with which Iranians and Iraqis are killing each other. The Australian Government believes that countries contributing to such tragedies should be held accountable for doing so, as with pollution which crosses national borders.

Members of the United Nations should agree not to export defence materials to nations engaged in military conflict or where the potential for conflict is high, or where it is likely to be used to suppress human rights. As a first step and at the very least, all States should release more information on their conventional arsenals and transfers, and subscribe to the Secretary-General's standardized reporting instrument on military expenditures so that a more accurate picture of the problem can be built up.

More than 80 per cent of the world's military expenditure - estimated at more than \$US 900 billion a year and rising - goes on conventional weapons. Outlays on conventional arms by developing countries are estimated as being roughly equal to the development assistance they get from developed countries. Brandt, Palme, the Panel of Eminent Personalities, the Secretary-General: these are among a long list of authorities who have described the contradiction between the demands of militarization and the demands of development; that is, the waste of scarce human, capital and material resources on the arms race. Dwight Eisenhower was a leader in war and in recovery from war. He had good reason as President of the United States to warn that

"every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. The world is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

Thirty years later, the Thorssen report on the relationship between disarmament and development still saw the need to point out that the world can choose to pursue either the arms race or a more stable social and economic order. It cannot do both.

The logic cannot be challenged. Poverty, hunger and disease are major causes of social and political instability. They cannot be tackled effectively when scarce resources are being used for armaments. Experience shows that unrest leads to government repression in so many countries, leading to the spread of authoritarianism. It is no wonder that, in so many countries, democracy has come to be seen as a luxury, the dessert course of economically sound societies. If military spending is such an obviously important ingredient in the economic problems of developing countries, reduction in military spending is an obviously important ingredient in solutions to those problems.

As it is, developing countries particularly face grave economic difficulties from the plague of protectionism in world trade and the complicated and fragile issue of international debt adjustment. The World Bank has estimated that farm subsidies by members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1986 will total more than \$US 100 billion. This is a policy that, if permitted to continue, will lead to ruin for agriculture-based economies. This, in the main, means the economies of developing countries, which have to make their way at a time when the international economy as a whole is undergoing difficulty, uncertainty and challenge. The Australian Government has been involved in the recent General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) discussions in Uruguay and elsewhere in the cause of fairer and freer trade. We hope that these discussions will continue so that the issues of trade subsidies, and particularly agricultural trade reform, can be dealt with on a basis which is fair and realistic. We also hope that the spirit that prevailed in Uruguay will continue to be applied to the other great problem for many developing countries: the scope and terms of their formidable debt.

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

I should observe that the Australian Government supports the general thrust of the Baker proposals for solution of this problem. We also support the general approach of the International Monetary Fund to adjustment and conditionality, noting that it should continue to be handled with care. Democratic institutions, sometimes at delicate stages of development, should not be undermined by the process. The economic benefits of conditionality have to be balanced against their potential for causing distress and dislocation. There is not a lot of profit, either for debtors or for creditors, in encouraging economic activity in nations whose export markets are closed off by trade subsidization and other protectionist policies. On both the trade reform and debt adjustment issues, the lessons of the events of 50 or 60 years ago should be ominously clear: the results when nations refuse to co-operate can be devastating.

No solutions to great economic problems will work if they do not have the approbation and support of those who are affected by them. No order can endure unless those who are subject to it believe themselves to have a stake in it. This principle applies to other matters on the agenda of this Organization in which Australia has a special interest. It is why the Australian Government continues to condemn the occupation of Afghanistan. It is the reason for our continuing denunciation of Viet Nam's occupation of Cambodia and the atrocities committed in Cambodia by the leadership of the Khmer Rouge. Human freedoms and the agreement of the governed are at the heart of the divisions between the people of North and South Korea. The United Nations once went to war over these divisions. It seems only sensible that, by admitting both North and South Korea, the United Nations should promote the contact and dialogue that will help heal those divisions.

Freedom and the agreement of the governed are highly significant factors in a matter which is of special concern to Australia and our Pacific neighbours: New Caledonia. Australia would like to see New Caledonia join the community of

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

independent nations in the South Pacific as soon as it is realistically possible, with a system of multiracial independence which recognizes the rights of the indigenous Kanak people and other long-term residents, and which maintains the support and good will of France - a point which I have made repeatedly to my good friends in the Kanak movement. Australia supports the call by South Pacific Forum countries for reinscribing New Caledonia on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, and we and our South Pacific neighbours will work to do so at this session. We believe that it will facilitate progress towards self-government and independence, through constructive dialogue with all parties involved, including the French Government, to be reviewed regularly by this Organization.

Freedom and participation are central also in two issues which concern Australia because of their capacity to threaten international peace. I refer to the continuing and deteriorating situations in South Africa and the Middle East. The Australian Government believes that the system by which South Africa is governed represents precisely that which the United Nations was designed to oppose: institutional inequity, injustice, violence, oppression and discrimination. It is surprising, therefore, that the South African situation has not been treated in all the statements made by members at this session so far as what it really is: a threat to fundamental United Nations values. The Australian Government's disgust with the system of government in South Africa and that country's continuing illegal occupation of Namibia is well known and needs no explanation here. We genuinely want to see apartheid eliminated quickly and peacefully before it plunges the region, and areas beyond, into wider conflict. Australia and other Commonwealth countries have tried to persuade South Africa to set such basic reform in train, but without success. We believe that the United Nations should set up a mandatory system of concerted and coherent sanctions which

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

would pressure South Africa into real reform. Certainly those Members that cannot or will not adopt sanction policies should refrain or should be discouraged by this Organization from taking commercial advantage of those who can and will.

Already in this debate we have heard expressions of hope that some progress might be made in 1987 towards finding a solution of the intractable problems of the Middle East. As a country which has drawn new settlers from diverse parts of the Middle East, which contributes to United Nations peace-keeping efforts, which in simple human terms has not failed to be touched by the plight of refugees and the results of conflict and terrorism, Australia shares this hope. Progress can be made only if compromises and accommodations can be reached which take into account the rights and aspirations of all those involved.

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

The late President Roosevelt saw the United Nations as a replacement for exclusive alliances, spheres of influence and other failed expedients. At the time, on the one hand stood the untrammelled influence of the victorious Powers and, on the other, the dispossessed. It fell to the United Nations to try to fill the vacuum of authority between them. There are many who would say that that pattern has not changed in any substantial way. Certainly, the Australian Government sees the Organization as the only viable alternative to the authority that prevailed previously, very often to the great detriment of huge numbers of humankind - the power of the prevailing empire or State. Yet, despite this, and despite the fact that the world is at a stage in its history when fewer problems can be solved by national measures alone, confidence in international organizations seems to have lessened. Reliance on unilateral action seems more attractive to some people.

The Australian Government has some understanding of the impatience expressed about the United Nations and its operations. We would argue that there is room for more efficient administration of the Organization, less wasteful duplication of function and operation and a more rational decision-making process for its budget. In view of its high mission and the poverty and exploitation against which it is struggling, it is quite wrong that the United Nations should be in any way an example of conspicuous consumption. In view of the high expectations of it in every part of the world, it would be a shame if the United Nations were to degenerate into a broadcasting agency for pointless, meaningless and ultimately useless declarations. Australia is among the vanguard of those who seek to make the Security Council more effective. It should, be allowed to act more flexibly, for instance, to play more of a mediatory or preventive role. It should be allowed to work more closely with the Secretary-General. I use the word "allowed" deliberately, because it is clear that the Council is inhibited by two factors: the trend that has turned it into a kind of mini-General Assembly and the failure of

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

its permanent members always to remember the greater responsibility that goes with their privileged position. Australia will assist the Secretary-General in his aim of making the United Nations a more effective Organization as energetically and as positively as it can.

It would be quite wrong to infer from this, however, that the Australian Government has any sympathy with those who act to diminish the United Nations itself and its various organizations. The United Nations has the firm support of the Australian Government. It should not be allowed to become the scapegoat because individual Members fail to subsume their national interests. As Dag Hammarskjöld once said, that is like blaming the storm on the ship. The fact is, that the United Nations is no better or worse than the countries which control its purse-strings. If Member States have cause to quarrel with United Nations procedures or if large nations are frustrated because of the way small nations use the system, the solution is to stay and help the fight for sensible reform, not to walk away from the problem.

There are many thousands - even millions - of people who owe their shelter, their food, their schooling and even their survival to the organizations of the United Nations. The United Nations has achieved steady progress on a whole range of practical matters: environmental control, for instance; conditions of work; literacy; the codification of law; the orderly management of transport and communications. It has been instrumental in winning and protecting individual and national freedoms. It has helped keep the peace between nations. It has promoted in people's consciousness an awareness of the gravity and potential for destruction of the great scourges of humankind: oppression of individuals, poverty and the wastage of resources, the causes of war. It has established and defended a moral climate for the conduct of international affairs. It has become the main platform and protector - for many people, the only platform and protector - of those

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

who feel strong as members of the international community but weak when left to operate alone.

I am not so unwise as to exaggerate Australia's influence on these matters, but I speak as the representative of a nation which feels strongly about threats to the capacity of the United Nations to maintain and defend the rights of individuals and nations in a just and effective world order. I reiterate the pledge given by the Australian Government at the fortieth session of the General Assembly of active, committed and profound loyalty to the United Nations and its ideals. Our Government feels very strongly that the Organization is in danger so long as it refuses or postpones reform, but it believes equally strongly that there is no substitute for the United Nations in a multilateral system of co-operative management of global problems and the maintenance of world peace.

Mr. YE GOUNG (Burma): Allow me first to convey to you, Sir, the warm and sincere congratulations of the delegation of Burma, and my own, on your unanimous election to the high office of President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. We are particularly pleased to see you, a good friend from a friendly neighbouring country, presiding over this session of the Assembly. Your long and distinguished career and your wide knowledge of international affairs and of the practices of the United Nations are a guarantee to all of us that the proceedings of this session will be conducted efficiently and effectively towards a successful conclusion. I wish to assure you of the full support and co-operation of the delegation of Burma.

May I also express our deep appreciation and gratitude to your eminent predecessor, Ambassador Jaime de Piniés, for his able guidance of the historic fortieth session of the General Assembly.

For the past several years the Assembly has been working under conditions of marked international tension. In our view, the world today is less secure and more

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

precarious than the world that the framers of the Charter envisaged some 40 years ago. We live today in a time of uncertainty, and, far from diminishing, tensions and conflicts are on the increase. Although a global war has so far been avoided, the threat of a nuclear conflagration continues to be of growing concern to all mankind.

For all nations, the concept of security is a subjective matter. For a few, security is being sought through reliance on nuclear weapons, and for the majority, the essence is the defence of their sovereignty and independence. At a time of widening disparity between abundance and want, in which the international system has a diminishing capacity for just and equitable co-operation between nations, particularly between the developed and the developing, it becomes increasingly important that the issues of peace, security, economic well-being and social justice, as well as other major issues of global concern, be dealt with effectively through co-operation within the United Nations system. Much depends upon the political will and attitude of States, particularly the more powerful ones. It is therefore clear that the national interests of individual States can best be served by meeting the wider interests of the world at large.

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

The commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations during last year's session of the General Assembly was an important landmark in the history of the Organization. It can truly be considered as an occasion that goes beyond its symbolic significance. It provided a unique opportunity for all its members to give expression to the fact that the United Nations constitutes the best hope for mankind to live in peace and prosperity. To realize that hope it is necessary for its members to participate in the United Nations system with a deeper commitment to its principles. In that context, the Secretary-General said in his concluding statement:

"The commemoration assumed the importance that it did because international relations had reached a critical stage. The time has come to reflect on where a retreat from multilateralism would lead the world." (A/40/PV.49, p. 2)

Mankind has been afflicted by wars since the dawn of history. Yet every human heart has cherished peace, and the need for peace has never been stronger or more compelling than it is now. It was a most propitious omen that the General Assembly at its last session proclaimed 1986 the International Year of Peace. We hope that the political momentum thus created will continue and create conditions favourable to peace in the years ahead.

The United Nations is not a government of nations, nor does it have all the answers to the ills that afflict the world today. But without doubt it can be an effective instrument in our search for solutions to the problems of the world and, beyond that, in building a more peaceful and just system of relations between States.

Time and again it has been said that the diminishing capacity of the United Nations to carry out the functions for which it was intended lies not in the Organization itself, but in the lack of political will on the part of its Members

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Charter. That is particularly relevant with regard to Article 2 (4) of the Charter, which prohibits the threat or the use of force and in relations between States in the interests of maintaining international peace and security, which remains an unattained goal. We find today a situation in which it is becoming increasingly difficult for smaller nations to place their reliance on the Charter to ensure their security.

Security and survival are the foremost concern of our time. This has never been more keenly felt by the world, and the greatest challenge to mankind is to avert the threat of a nuclear catastrophe. The most urgent task of our time is the prevention of nuclear war. International peace and security can be ensured only by meaningful disarmament, for in the final analysis the possession and continued accumulation of nuclear weapons leaves the door open to the risk of a global disaster.

Progress in disarmament negotiations depends largely on lessening mutual distrust, and for all practical purposes the militarily significant States, particularly the two most powerful, have a special responsibility to accelerate the ongoing negotiations.

Meaningful efforts made recently to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race give us a renewed sense of hope that serious initiatives have been taken to avert the dangers arising from the existence of nuclear weapons. We feel that a favourable political climate conducive to better understanding would enhance the prospects of disarmament.

However, we cannot fail to note the lack of consistency in the approach, where efforts made to reach agreements on disarmament are negated by an arms race conducted without respite, which defeats the very purpose of the negotiations.

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

Negotiations at the bilateral level should have a positive bearing at the multilateral level, and constitute a source of encouragement to give the political impetus that is needed for meaningful work in the multilateral context. It is rightly said that international security is the concern of all nations and peoples. Thus negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States cannot diminish the importance of multilateral disarmament efforts.

However, we are in a situation in which multilateral disarmament negotiations are at an impasse. Though the issues of disarmament have been on the agenda of the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament for several years, meaningful results have yet to be attained, and the underlying reason for that is the lack of political will on the part of some Members. A recommitment to negotiations at the multilateral level is needed to remedy the situation. Multilateral negotiations have contributed much to the achievement of disarmament agreements in the past. It is also important to maintain the viability and validity of the disarmament agreements reached so far, to enhance the prospects of further positive measures.

The potential threat of the extension of the arms race into outer space constitutes a new danger. It is inconceivable that the arms race can be halted and effective measures taken on earth unless steps can be taken, while there is still time, to prevent a new dimension of the arms race in outer space.

In view of the operational capabilities that are now being developed, it is a matter of urgent concern that only timely action can prevent the escalation of the arms race into outer space, which could intensify the arms race on earth.

We feel the answer lies in the reduction of nuclear weapons on earth and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It does not appear feasible that the deployment of new weapons systems in outer space can remove the threat that nuclear weapons pose on earth.

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

The situation in Kampuchea continues to be a matter of international concern, as the prolongation of the conflict has serious implications for international peace and security. It inhibits the promotion of friendly relations and co-operation between States within the region.

The fundamental issue is to create conditions favourable to the exercise by the Kampuchean people of their right of self-determination. The restoration of their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity requires the withdrawal of foreign troops and non-intervention by other States in the country's internal affairs.

It is undoubtedly the Kampuchean people themselves who must determine their own future. At the same time, the search for a meaningful solution rests on efforts by the international community, as well as the States concerned within the region. The efforts of the Secretary-General have produced a positive momentum for better understanding between the parties concerned. In the search for a peaceful solution through the process of genuine negotiation and mutual accommodation, it is important to recall what the Secretary-General said in his 1985 report on the situation: that the problems of the region cannot be solved by military means, and that protracted confrontation can only generate further tension and enhance the risks of escalation. (A/40/759, p. 5)

In our consideration of the situation in Afghanistan, we should understand that the underlying problem concerns the fundamental principles on which relations between States must be based. The delegation of Burma endorses the support of the international community for efforts to arrive at a negotiated settlement in accordance with resolutions of the United Nations. The diplomatic process initiated by the Secretary-General is commendable, in that the stage has now been reached at which it is possible to finalize the texts to be agreed upon relating to

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

non-interference in the affairs of States, international guarantees of non-interference and the voluntary return of refugees to their homeland. It is therefore necessary to continue the process in order to reach a just and comprehensive political settlement. Resolution of the outstanding substantive issue of the withdrawal of foreign troops is essential for the achievement of such a settlement.

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

From the time of its inception almost the United Nations has been actively involved in the continuing search for a political solution to the problems of the Middle East. Its activities in the region have been significant. Prospects for a comprehensive solution of the Middle East issue continue to be elusive despite efforts both within and outside the United Nations. The path to peace in the Middle East lies in the willingness of all the parties concerned genuinely to co-operate in the peace process. The present situation lessens the prospects for optimism, as the current year has witnessed a mounting wave of violence in the region.

The problem of Palestine is central to the Middle East problem and therefore constitutes the key to its solution. Needless to say, the principles and framework for a peaceful solution were formulated long ago and have been affirmed repeatedly by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Those principles are the withdrawal of all forces of occupation from the occupied territories in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and sovereignty and the right of all States in the region to exist within internationally recognized borders.

In recent years no country in the Middle East has been more affected by war and devastation than Lebanon. Peace in Lebanon lies in respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the country. This calls for respect for the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, which would enable the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to carry out effectively its mandate in southern Lebanon.

On the conflict between Iran and Iraq, we share the concern of the world community. Despite the efforts of the United Nations, and particularly of the Secretary-General, the war has brought untold suffering and devastation to both

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

sides and has serious implications for peace and stability in the region. Recourse to arms is contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter, and the best hope lies in both parties submitting to mediation or to any other means of peaceful settlement in accordance with Security Council resolution 582 (1986).

The aggravation of the situation in southern Africa continues to be of concern not only to the African continent but also to the world at large. This is evident from the fact that the Security Council has been preoccupied with issues relating to the region on numerous occasions in the course of the present year.

The complexity of the situation has three basic dimensions: first, South Africa continues relentlessly to practise the abhorrent system of apartheid; secondly, its illegal occupation of Namibia, contrary to the aspirations of its people and the will of the international community, continues; and, thirdly, it has further intensified acts of aggression against neighbouring independent States. This policy of destabilization of its neighbours is contrary to the norms of international law and violates the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of those States. The principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other States, which is one of the mainstays of stable inter-State relations, has been ignored by the South African régime.

South Africa, by its blatant occupation of Namibia, disregards all relevant resolutions of the United Nations. It continues to use delaying tactics to place obstacles in the way of implementation of resolution 435 (1978), which constitutes the internationally acceptable basis for the independence of Namibia. The international community has found it necessary to call once again on South Africa to co-operate in good faith to bring about the immediate implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia. The eradication of apartheid and unconditional independence for Namibia would create the conditions necessary for the return of peace to South Africa.

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

The escalation of violence and force in South Africa has led to an urgent international call for the exercise of pressure through peaceful means to make the régime realize the futility of its policies. The World Conference on Sanctions against Racist South Africa, held in Paris earlier this year, considered the situation in South Africa to be extremely grave. It stressed the imperative need to take all necessary action, with a sense of urgency, for the speedy abolition of apartheid and to end the violence in South Africa, the illegal occupation of Namibia and acts of aggression against independent African States. With those objectives, the Conference called for a comprehensive programme of action by the international community and mandatory sanctions against South Africa under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

For four successive years the item relating to the situation in Central America has been on the agenda of the General Assembly. It is evident that solutions should be found within a regional framework through the Contadora peace process, since it is acceptable to all the parties involved in the search for a negotiated peace settlement. It is noteworthy that the Contadora Group has persevered in its efforts to restore peace and co-operation in Central America. The international community can contribute most positively by extending continued support and encouragement.

While the world's political situation offers little cause for optimism, the global economic scene is also quite disheartening. The world economy continues to face difficulties. Imbalances in the international economic situation are likely to deteriorate further, with adverse implications for the economies of developing countries. The persistence of such a situation demonstrates that the crisis is not just a temporary phenomenon but the result of long-rooted imbalances in the international economic structure. The perception that expansion of production in

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

the industrialized countries will automatically lead to growth in developing countries now seems to have faded.

The developing countries in general continue to face serious balance-of-payments problems and are unable to stimulate economic development through the medium of domestic policies. They are adversely affected by deteriorating terms of trade, debt problems and falling commodity prices, all of which hamper their prospects of growth and aggravate their indebtedness.

The developing countries are aware of the need to reactivate growth through domestic policies and coherent international economic co-operation in the areas of money, finance, trade and debt. An overall improvement in the situation would come about through sustained expansion of world economic activity, improvement in the terms of trade of developing countries, escape from high interest rates, an upswing in commodity prices and reversal of the increasing trend towards restrictionism and protectionism.

The international trade and payments system, with national economies weakened as they are, has very little capacity for additional strain. An examination of how it may be reordered and restructured to promote better economic performance by national economies is urgently needed. Reform of the trade and payments system is unlikely, given the present arrangements for international economic discussions, which separate from one another the interrelated problems of development, employment, debt and trade and payment balances, the major obstacle being that decisions on international monetary and financial systems remain the exclusive preserve of the minority rich nations.

One of the immediate issues is debt, which can be satisfactorily resolved only in the wider context of reform of the trade and payments system. At the same time, the system itself will inevitably be affected and its long-term evolution heavily influenced by decisions regarding debt in the more immediate future.

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

The developing countries experiencing debt servicing problems have already made substantial policy efforts to reduce external deficits through cutting back imports and reducing growth. Internal adjustment programs made by debtor countries with a view to relieving the acute debt problems, and any other ad hoc measures, would not solve the problem.

From this wider perspective the reordering and restructuring of the international trade and payments system need to be addressed in a constructive, co-operative and comprehensive manner. This calls for the restructuring of international trade, and monetary and development institutions, so that their decision-making process and functioning as a whole could become more equitable, just, and conducive to promoting development and global prosperity. It does not appear that ad hoc policies in a narrower context would solve comprehensively the problems of the developing countries or even those which enjoy substantial advantages from the existing international economic order.

Finally, may I deal with the most overriding issue before us. This session of the General Assembly will give serious consideration to the financial crisis which the United Nations faces. The Secretary-General, in bringing the situation to the attention of the resumed session of the General Assembly last May, said that what is at stake is the operational effectiveness of the United Nations. The consensus of opinion expressed by delegations during the resumed session was that, while the present crisis is one of insufficient funds, it is also one of political dimensions. From this broader perspective, while measures of a financial nature are being taken to alleviate the situation in the short term, the search for long-term solutions requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that needs to take the broad political perspectives into consideration.

(Mr. Ye Goung, Burma)

Although considerations on a more effective use of funds is an integral part of solving the crisis, it has not arisen because expenditure has exceeded the Organization's regular budget. What is of serious concern is the deficit in cash flows, which has been felt over the years due to withholdings of assessed contributions, particularly by some of the permanent members of the Security Council. When unilateral decisions create huge deficits in cash flows, the crisis assumes serious proportions; the integrity and viability of the United Nations system becomes an issue when such actions contradict the obligations of membership.

This session will need to find long-term solutions and to consider the recommendations by the Group of High-Level Experts, whose mandate is to identify measures for improving the efficiency of administrative and financial matters of the United Nations. We believe that concerted efforts by all Member States is urgently needed; only the fulfilment of each Member's obligations would ensure the future of this Organization, which, despite some failings, has also achieved much.

Allow me to conclude by stating that my delegation expresses the hope that, at this Assembly, we shall help to find ways and means of overcoming the many obstacles which stand in the way of resolving the numerous problems that beset us. In so doing we can infuse new life and vigour in the United Nations and reinvest the Charter with its full force of inspiration.

Mr. BIRD (Antigua and Barbuda): Let me begin by extending my congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. This is a crucial convocation, which is confronted with issues never before placed before the Assembly. My sense of discomfort over our capacity to find solutions to the difficulties faced by the Organization is eased only by the knowledge of your own capacity for problem-solving and for bridge building.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

This Organization has faced many trials and survived an equal number of tribulations in the 41 years of its life. But I suspect that it has faced no greater test than the current financial difficulties which hamper its ability to function. No nation represented in this Assembly should allow the United Nations to succumb to pressures spawned by the misguided notion that this great Organization should be weakened; for the Organization, and the Charter which governs its operation, remain as important and vital to the world today as they did on 26 June 1945, when United States President Harry Truman told the closing session of the first General Assembly in San Francisco that "the Charter of the United Nations is a solid structure upon which we can build a better world".

In 1945, the world was reeling from the brutality of a war which left millions dead and many more millions with their livelihood in shreds. The devastation was all pervasive and mankind recoiled from the horror of its self-destruction. The forces of fascism and tyranny, which had unleashed a monstrous régime of terror, had frightened nations, large and small, into the realization that, in Truman's words, "if we had the United Nations Charter a few years ago - and above all the will to use it - millions now dead would be alive".

It was against that background of massive human conflict and destruction that nations found the capacity to co-operate in the creation of the United Nations, and to set out in its Charter the principles of international conduct that could lead to lasting peace and security for all.*

*Mr. Moushoutas (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

In 1986, conditions are not dissimilar. Today, millions are still dying from human conflict and neglect. Tyranny and terrorism still stalk the globe, and tension and fear continue to follow in their shadow. Today, however, we have the United Nations Charter; but do we have the will to use it? To quote the words of the Secretary-General's report: will we "meet our financial obligations under the Charter"?

In June 1945, President Truman said: "if we should falter in the future in our will to use the United Nations Charter, millions now living will surely die".

Those millions have died, for we have failed to use the Charter. How many more must die in the Middle East, in Central America, in South Africa and in terrorist attacks, before we use the Charter? How many more mothers must die from starvation? How many more children must live a life too weak to walk, too sick to cry, too hungry to care that they die, how many more, before we use the Charter?

For small nations, such as mine, this is no empty question; it is a vital issue. Our very survival depends upon respect for the Charter of the United Nations by other, more powerful States; for tomorrow we may be the victim of a stronger neighbour's aggression or, worse still, the casualty of someone else's war.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

But apart from our own self interest in promoting respect for the Charter and in maintaining the work of the United Nations, the smallness of our size in no way diminishes the magnitude of our anxiety over the continuing conflicts in the world, nor does it soothe the searing pain upon our consciousness when we witness the agonizing misery of thousands, world-wide, who suffer from malnutrition and lack of adequate medical care.

In the name of those millions who died in order to bring mankind to the understanding that the United Nations is imperative; in the name of those millions, who have since died while we failed to use this Organization and its Charter to bring an end to wars, I urge this Assembly to turn away from acrimonious debate over the financial crisis in the Organization, which would serve only to weaken the United Nations still further. I plead, in the name of my country, that we should seek, instead, to strengthen the Organization by overcoming its current difficulties through a spirit of genuine compromise. For, as the Secretary-General observed in his report to this session:

"... in a world where the destinies of all countries are almost certain to become ever more closely linked, there can be no substitute for an effective multilateral system in the maintenance of international peace and security and in the co-operative management of global problems." (A/41/1, pp. 2-3)

My delegation holds the view that the report of the Group of High-level Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations presents us with a blueprint for appropriate reform. We would urge the Assembly to accept the Group's recommendations as a foundation upon which we can streamline the Organization.

However, we would also urge those who have withheld their contributions from the Organization to release them promptly for the stability of the world will be

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

threatened if this United Nations is crippled and rendered weak and unauthoritative.

No country or region can guarantee its own security without guaranteeing the security of others. World peace cannot be achieved in circumstances where the globe is only half-safe from threat. If any nation wishes to be secure, it must be ready and willing to share security with all.

The framers of the United Nations Charter were deeply conscious of the necessity for the Organization to play an important role in maintaining international peace and security - "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Chapter VII of the Charter contains a blueprint for an international security system with an enforcement capacity to deter aggression and prevent regional disputes from erupting in armed conflict. It has never been implemented. Yet as we survey the globe, there are incidents of regional conflict on almost every continent; it is estimated that some 150 conflicts have occurred since the Second World War with no less than 20 million deaths.

It is staggering to consider that the world is now spending over \$1.5 million a minute on arms. It takes just 15 days and 15 hours for world military expenditure to match the amount spent on all aid to all developing countries in the whole of 1983. Swords have not been beaten into ploughshares, spears have not become pruning-hooks, and nations continue to lift up sword against nation. And nowhere is this more striking than in the fact that for every 100,000 people in the world, there are 556 soldiers but only 85 doctors.

It is against this background that we must all welcome the agreement made in Stockholm this September between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries allowing for verification and inspection of military activities as well as observation; for, the Stockholm document removes a great deal of the tension and suspicion associated

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

with these military exercises and is an indication that, given the political will, the East and West can stand together on common ground, encouraging mankind, as a whole, to enjoy a sense of optimism over the future of the world. We must all pray that Stockholm was not a false start but rather a bold beginning on the long journey towards a reduction in conventional arms and, more important, genuine limitation of nuclear weapons.

While small countries, such as mine, welcome the relief from tension in Europe occasioned by the Stockholm agreement, we remain troubled that in the absence of global adherence to the principle of the United Nations, we have been forced to protect national security through accumulation of arms and through military agreements with countries equally small and equally disadvantaged. My country, and other countries like mine in the Caribbean, could better have spent our scarce resources on hospitals for our ailing, on welfare for our aged, on education for our young.

It is not right that small countries which have experienced a history of exploitation and whose people have been forced for centuries to endure deprivation and suffering should be weighed down with the heavy burden of expenditure on arms at the beginning of their journey to independence.

But, we cannot deceive ourselves that small though we are, we have not become the subject of attention by adventurers of one sort or another. The numerous examples of mercenary forces mounted to invade small countries, of political opportunists fomenting disquiet, of unscrupulous drug dealers destabilizing our territories, demand that we should not sit by idly. To meet these pernicious elements, and in the absence of a will within the United Nations to address collective security as envisaged in the Charter, small States have been forced to establish the means for some self-protection.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

But, by diverting scarce resources into security, our economic and social development has been retarded.

In 1982, the year after my country took its place as a Member of this Organization, the Secretary-General, in his report, issued a call:

"to reconstruct the Charter concept of collective ... peace and security"

(A/37/1, p. 2)

in order to meet the need of Governments for:

"a workable system ... in which they ... have real confidence." (Ibid.)

Yet four years later we are not even close to achieving confidence in the United Nations capacity for collective security. For the countries with veto power on the Security Council have chosen to frustrate attempts to create the "workable system of collective security" (ibid.) envisaged by the Secretary-General and endorsed by this Assembly.

The result has not brought benefits to anyone: conflicts have ignited like brushfires on the global map and the super-Powers have become engulfed in the flames as each puts support behind one or other of the adversaries. The cost has been high not only to the people engaged in the conflict, but to the people of the super-Power nations, whose Governments diverted money from their own development and spent it instead seeking positions of primacy over each other.

As the representative of a small country anxious to advance its social and economic development and deeply aware that a system of collective security under the umbrella of the United Nations opens an opportunity for genuine global stability, I call upon this Assembly to request the Secretary-General to bring the question of collective security to the attention of the Security Council once again in the hope that the troubled state of the world and the debilitating effect upon all countries, including the super-Powers, will encourage a more productive response.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

As we survey the globe, who could help but be deeply troubled at the state of the world? In some areas of the Middle East, children no longer have a normal life: their only school is an army, their only playground a battlefield. The war between two neighbours, Iran and Iraq, has been raging, with grievous consequences for both. Surely, the General Assembly and the Security Council can use their influence to bring about a complete cease-fire and a peaceful settlement to the conflict by mediation.

Equally, the Assembly cannot be unmindful of the increasing tension in Central America over conditions in Nicaragua. The lives of people have been severely disrupted; there is no longer any routine and each day could be their last. Is that how people should live? Has the time not come for the General Assembly and the Security Council to intervene behind the Contadora negotiating process in order to secure a comprehensive, verifiable and simultaneous agreement to bring true and lasting peace to the area?

In the midst of this disturbing scene of human tribulation, we are heartened by at least one attempt to find a solution to problems by peaceful means: The Assembly should welcome the efforts of the Republic of Korea to resolve its differences with North Korea on the basis of a comprehensive unification formula. We would urge neighbours in other regions to turn away from the battlefield and to seek solutions to their differences at the negotiation table.

My country lies on the route of the most dangerous traffic that the Western Hemisphere has experienced this century: the drug run to the United States of America. In the process of our being used as a trans-shipment point, some of the cargo has been left on our shores, promoting drug abuse and encouraging crime by the lure of big money.

We have all seen the injurious effects of narcotics on societies - the flower of youth emaciated and withered before it has had a chance to bloom, intelligent

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

minds reduced to inarticulate cabbages, life snuffed out even before it has had a chance to sparkle. We are all painfully aware of the injury to economic development which is done by drug abuse among the work force in developing countries. Larger and more powerful States cannot sustain the waste of its human resources. How, then, could we in small States, with fewer people, cope with so perilous a problem?

But the problem is even more ominous, for last year the International Narcotics Control Board reported that evidence exists clearly linking drug trafficking in many countries with the illegal traffic in firearms, subversion, international terrorism and other criminal activities. Since that report, the situation has deteriorated significantly. Our economic development is threatened from within as our young people are nursed into the habit of drug abuse, while our security is threatened from without by gangsters eager to find trans-shipment points to the United States and unmindful of the extent of the action, including murder, which they must take to secure their ill-gotten gains.

It cannot be beyond the capacity of the United Nations to institute mechanisms upon which countries can call for help to rid the world of this all-consuming evil. In this connection, the entire international community should give the strongest support to the proposed international conference on drug abuse and illicit trafficking to be held at the ministerial level next year. But, equally, States Members of the United Nations should give full support to the activities of the Organization in this area.

My delegation would suggest that, following upon the forward-looking resolution introduced by South-East Asian countries and adopted by the General Assembly last year, the scope of the Organization's work should be expanded to include the provision to developing countries, upon their request, of help from

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

a trained and capable international team to investigate and detect drug traffickers within their territories and to police their territorial waters effectively. This suggested new activity could be accommodated through the Central Training Unit for Law Enforcement Officers, which the United Nations has operated since 1972. I would add that the biggest contributors to that Unit should be those countries which are the largest markets for these drugs. For, while we acknowledge a responsibility to be watchful for dangers to all mankind, small countries should not be expected to pay for the eradication of evils bred in the societies of larger and richer States.

Drug traffickers respect no boundaries, and the harmful effect of drug abuse does not question the nationality, ideology or ethnicity of its victims. All our countries have a vested interest in aborting this foul activity. To that end, I call on the General Assembly to give the Secretary-General the mandate to create a global plan to eliminate progressively illicit production of narcotic drugs wherever it occurs. Such a programme must take account of the need to develop alternative means of livelihood for the large numbers of poor people in developing countries who are used to produce these drugs and who are paid only a subsistence income, while the organizers and distributors in the developed countries grow rich and fat.

If we in the Caribbean feel threatened by the activities of illicit drug traffickers, it should also be understood that we feel no less uncomfortable over the rise in the number of nuclear reactors in our hemisphere. Events at Chernobyl have taught us that accidents at nuclear reactors could be as devastating as the explosion of a nuclear bomb. The countries of the Caribbean traverse no vast area and, consequently, the effects of a nuclear accident would waste no time in spreading throughout our region, leaving few, if any, free from harm.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

It is cause for deep concern to us that while more nuclear reactors are being established in our hemisphere, we have no influence over their number, their locations and the levels of their safety. It is in this context that we must ask: At what point does the placement and safety levels of nuclear reactors cease to be a national matter and become an international concern? Is it when an entire island nation is wiped out? Is it when it is too late to prevent hundreds of thousands of people from dying?

We in the Caribbean have good reason to sympathize with our sister States in the Pacific that have been distressed for years over nuclear tests conducted by larger States and the dumping of nuclear waste. We share the deep-seated fears of the Pacific island countries about the long-term medical effects of exposure to radiation and the contamination of the environment, including marine life and food crops, which could be caused by nuclear activity.

In expressing our strong desire for the United States and the Soviet Union to reach agreement in their negotiations to limit nuclear arms, we are mindful that there is also need for agreement in the international community as a whole on nuclear safety. We are aware that just two months ago governmental experts met at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna and settled the texts of two draft conventions in the field of nuclear safety. This is a welcome development and we urge all nations to ratify these conventions as soon as possible.

But it should be understood that these conventions meet some of our concerns only part way. For while the treaties would oblige ratifying States to provide early notification of nuclear accidents with possible transboundary effects, and also would commit them to endeavour to provide assistance in the event of a nuclear accident, they do not set standards of safety nor do they allow for verification.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

For a country like mine, a mere 170 square miles, early notification of a nuclear accident would be a meaningless gesture, for the effects of a disaster on a land the size of ours would be immediate and fatal. It is in this context that my delegation would urge all nations to agree to establish within the United Nations system the means of setting standards for and verifying nuclear safety.

I come now to terrorism. Here again, while the main focus of this iniquity has been in the developed countries, small States find themselves in a sadly vulnerable position. Some of our countries have become the arena for the conflict of others, and we have been forced to take precautions to protect ourselves. These precautions have not been without cost and, consequently, we have been compelled to divert spending from social and economic development projects to take account of this evil of terrorism.

In the Caribbean, our countries depend on tourism, and welcoming visitors from all over the world and offering them the comforts of nature, with which we are blessed in abundance, are important elements in our economic well-being. In this context alone, we cannot afford to treat security at our ports casually. The current situation in the world, in which terrorists strike indiscriminately at innocent civilians demands that we interrupt our own peaceful way of life with extravagant security arrangements for the hundreds of thousands of people who visit our countries every year.

No terrorist organization that so wantonly and cold-bloodedly takes the lives of innocent human beings should believe that it enjoys the respect or sympathy of the world. For it does not. Indeed, the actions of such organizations have lost them - and those who support them - the ear of many nations which might otherwise have given their cause a hearing. Terrorist activity directed at civilian targets achieves no good for anyone, and the time has come for the strongest possible action against those who would foster and promote it.

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

I turn now to South Africa. The Secretary-General has observed that:

"Only the total elimination of apartheid will restore peace to South Africa and to southern Africa as a whole". (A/41/1, p. 12)

This observation is an echo of the cries of many South Africans, black and white, who yearn for the day when their country will be free from the repression of apartheid, from illegal imprisonment, from police torture and from State-sanctioned slaughter of young and old alike.

Unfortunately, the wailing voice of suffering, rising from the unrelieved brutality of South African jails, has been unable to reach the ears of those in the strongest position to bring an end to this wretchedness of apartheid. Thus, despite the overwhelming support for mandatory economic sanctions against the South African régime, there are those who hesitate to act and others who refuse to do more than pay lip service to abhorrence of apartheid.

Yet, in June of this year, the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group whose attempt to negotiate a peaceful settlement in South Africa was aborted by the disdain of the South African authorities, pointed out in their report that if South Africa:

"comes to the conclusion that it would always be protected from economic measures, the process of change in South Africa is unlikely to increase in momentum".

That same Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group concluded that if the non-white people in South Africa came:

"to believe that the world community will never exercise sufficient effective pressure through other measures in support of their cause, they will have only one option remaining: that of ever increasing violence."

If we are to set store by the findings of this Group, the compelling conclusions must be that the Governments which now refuse to impose sanctions on

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

South Africa are helping to keep apartheid alive, and are pushing the non-white people of South Africa into seeking to secure their basic human and civil rights by means of violence and death.

The late Prime Minister of India, Mr. Nehru, wrote that:

"there is no easy walk to freedom anywhere and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death again and again before we reach the mountain tops of our desires". There should be no mistake about the fact that the black people of South Africa are prepared to walk that valley time and again for their freedom. The choice before the Assembly, and ultimately before the members of the Security Council, is either to help all of South Africa to reach the mountain tops of democracy and justice, or to plunge the country and all its people into a river of blood. My country opts for democracy; we choose freedom and justice for all in South Africa. We urge all others to do the same by agreeing to the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory economic sanctions against this foul and reprehensible régime.

We are in the final months of the year which we designated International Year of Peace. But it has not been such a peaceful year, for conflicts have continued unabated in many parts of the world. The signs of a desire for peace came not from Governments but from the spirit of brotherhood and kinship in ordinary people. People who marched against nuclear weapons, people who gave freely and gladly to relieve the suffering of the starving in Africa, people who protested against apartheid. These people rose above the narrow confines of their nationality, ethnicity and sovereignty and, surveying the conditions of other lands, recognized themselves in other peoples.

As we stand on the threshold of the twenty-first century, Governments might consider taking a cue from those ordinary people who did so much this year to promote peace. In this regard, we might remind ourselves of the words in the

(Mr. Bird, Antigua and Barbuda)

Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system:

"That since wars began in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;

"That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;".

It is in this context that I would urge the Assembly to endorse the proposal of UNESCO's twenty-third General Conference for the proclamation of a World Decade for Cultural Development. For we will not erase suspicion and mistrust among all nations until we promote understanding and appreciation among all peoples.

The Economic and Social Council has placed a resolution on this matter before the General Assembly for consideration. Let us not close the door on this century and enter the next without some attempt to construct the defences of peace in the minds of men. Let us put an end to ignorance of each other's way of life, let us take the opportunities for peace into the next century and let us leave behind the failures of war.

Mr. SRITHIRATH (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): I should like to begin by warmly congratulating Mr. Choudhury on his well-deserved election to the presidency of this session of the General Assembly. My delegation considers this to be a tribute to his country and to him personally. His wisdom and diplomatic qualities assure us that our work will be crowned with success.

My delegation also wishes to express its satisfaction at the outstanding way in which his predecessor, Mr. Jaime de Piniés, discharged his heavy responsibilities during the previous session.

We wish to pay a tribute to the patience and devotion with which our Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, has worked to create conditions favourable to the strengthening of international peace and security and the promotion of international co-operation for development.

As we meet today once again in this prestigious Hall we cannot help but cast a backward glance at the achievements of the fortieth session, which was, as we all know, a commemorative session, and at those of the present year, which has been proclaimed the International Year of Peace. While there has been a trend towards a reduction of tension in certain parts of the world, the international community has witnessed a resurgence of acts of aggression, overt or covert intervention and other forms and practices of State terrorism carried out by the warmongering imperialists and their staunch allies against certain independent, sovereign States in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The hopes of the people of the world that were raised last November by the Soviet-American summit meeting have come to naught. That meeting did not provide the expected momentum towards a reduction of tension in international relations or a slowing down of the arms race, particularly with respect to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt that survival in the nuclear age is the most crucial, pressing problem for all mankind.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

The Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes and firmly supports the new initiatives and constructive and realistic proposals put forward by the Soviet Union for the gradual and total elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000. Furthermore, the Soviet Union, despite the negative attitude and opposition of the United States Administration, has extended its unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests three times. It is vitally necessary for the other side to reciprocate. Equally commendable was the proposal recently made by the countries members of the Warsaw Pact substantially to reduce armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe. Regarding the prevention of the militarization of outer space, the Soviet Government also recently put forward a comprehensive programme for the exploration and international exploitation of outer space for peaceful purposes for the well-being of all mankind.

In order to free our planet Earth from the threat of a nuclear holocaust that would destroy all forms of life and human civilization itself, it is the most sacred duty of the peoples of the world to step up their stubborn struggle against the unbridled nuclear and conventional arms race here on Earth and the extension of the arms race to outer space. Accordingly, the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes and firmly supports the Declarations of New Delhi and Mexico by six Heads of State or Government, as well as the activities to promote peace and disarmament carried out by mass organizations throughout the world. In this connection, it is very much to be hoped that the Soviet-American negotiations in Geneva on limiting nuclear and space weapons will have concrete results and that the Geneva Conference on Disarmament will make substantive progress in the negotiations on the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and on a convention completely prohibiting chemical weapons.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

We hope that the American side will show greater realism and abandon once and for all its plans to achieve some hypothetical military superiority by persuading its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and others to join in its so-called Star Wars programme and seeking unilaterally to revoke the SALT-II agreements of 1979. In this connection, we should note that the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, at their eighth summit meeting in September in Harare, appealed urgently for an end to the unbridled nuclear arms race and all projects designed to extend the arms race to outer space. My delegation warmly welcomes the initiatives of the Socialist countries concerning the establishment of a general system of international peace and security encompassing the political, economic, military and humanitarian fields, an item which has been included in the agenda of the current session.

Tension and bloody conflicts, with their toll of death and suffering, have become almost the daily lot of the world today. Their causes are well known to all.

In the Middle East, the Zionist occupation forces continue with impunity to repress and oppress the defenceless populations of the Palestinian and Arab territories which have been occupied since 1967.

Southern Lebanon and its population continue to suffer from the exactions of and the atrocities committed by the Zionist troops, which refuse to withdraw from the area, in flagrant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions of 1978 and 1982. Israel's arrogant and intransigent attitude can be explained by the fact that it receives comprehensive support from its "strategic ally" and those in other imperialist circles.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic reaffirms once again its consistent stand with respect to the settlement of the Middle East problem, at the heart of which lies the Palestinian question. The Lao Government will firmly support any

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

comprehensive, just and lasting settlement that ensures the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable national rights, including its right to create its own State in Palestine, and the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. We firmly hope that, in order to achieve that goal, the International Conference on Peace in the Middle East can be held as soon as possible, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It is unfortunate that so far the United States Government and Tel Aviv have categorically rejected the convening of that Conference.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

The world was deeply outraged by the acts of provocation and armed aggression committed last March and April by the United States Administration against Libya, an independent and sovereign country, a Member of the United Nations and of the Movement Non-Aligned Countries. Those acts have been universally condemned. The Lao Government and people wish to reaffirm their steadfast support for and solidarity with the Libyan people and other Arab peoples in the region who have thus become the victims of acts of provocation, intimidation and aggression at the hands of Zionist forces and their absolute protector.

We cannot, of course, allow ourselves to be unmoved by the grief and destruction which the Iran-Iraq conflict has inflicted upon the peoples of those two countries, members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and of the United Nations. We sincerely hope that a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution can be found to that tragic conflict, which has gone on far too long.

A régime of unspeakable terror and oppression continues to hold sway in South Africa as a result of apartheid, a most savage and inhuman system of racial discrimination which the white minority in power there has institutionalized as a principle of government. The Lao Government and people have always been associated with the noble efforts of the international community to do away with this anachronistic endemic scourge once and for all. It was that same racist Pretoria régime that was responsible a century ago for the misfortunes of the Namibian people, whose territory it continues to occupy illegally. The position of my Government in this respect is well known. We consider that the accession of the Namibian people to true independence in a united Namibia can be achieved only through strict and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). It is essential that the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its special session devoted to that question, which ended successfully barely 10 days ago, should now be scrupulously implemented.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Having themselves experienced colonial oppression in the past, the Lao Government and people wish to reaffirm their support for, and solidarity with, the heroic people of South Africa under the leadership of the African National Congress on the one hand and the valiant Namibian people under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization, its sole and legitimate representative, on the other. The same support also goes to the peoples and Governments of Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and the other front-line States that are struggling in the same noble cause as well as in the defence of their independence and sovereignty and of the territorial integrity of their respective countries.

The threats to peace and security in Central America have recently increased by a disturbing degree. In this connection the International Court of Justice recently declared illegal the acts of armed provocation and economic and commercial blockade which the United States Administration has committed against the heroic Government and people of Nicaragua. A just, lasting and mutually acceptable settlement to the crisis in Central America can, we feel, be achieved only through implementation of the peace initiatives drawn up within the framework of the Contadora Group and the Lima Support Group.

The Government and people of the Lao People's Democratic Republic wish to reaffirm here their support for and unswerving solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and the Sandinist government in their struggle to preserve their independence and sovereignty and the territorial integrity of their country.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

We also reaffirm our sympathy with and firmest support for the Government and people of Cuba, our brothers, who are still waging a tireless struggle to preserve their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Our sympathy and solidarity go also to the people of Puerto Rico and the other peoples in that region who are struggling heroically for self-determination, independence and true democracy in their respective lands.

The region of South-West Asia has unfortunately not remained free of tension. I refer in particular to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which has been the victim of an undeclared war waged by the aggressive circles of imperialism and regional and world reaction. The Lao Government and people energetically condemn this whole series of acts of state terrorism and reaffirm their unswerving support for and solidarity with the Government and people of Afghanistan in their tireless efforts to preserve the precious gains of the April Revolution and to find a just political solution to the situation with respect to that country.

In the region of the Indian Ocean, the intensification of the military presence of imperialism and the strengthening of the air and naval bases at Diego Garcia constitute a grave threat to the peace and security of the coastal and hinterland States. It is essential, therefore, that the International Conference on the Indian Ocean be convened without further delay in order to turn the region into a zone of peace.

The situation in Asia and the Pacific region as a whole, and more specifically on the Korean peninsula, is scarcely stable. The introduction by the United States of nuclear weapons into South Korea, not to mention the division of the peninsula and attempts to perpetuate the existence of two Koreas, constitute a grave threat to peace and security in the region and an obstacle to the peaceful and independent reunification of the Korean nation.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

With respect to the strategic interests in the Pacific area, my delegation is firmly opposed to the resumption of nuclear tests and attempts to deploy imperialist nuclear weapons. These represent grave threats to the security of the peoples in that region.

With respect to the fate of the peoples in colonial territories and those under trusteeship, my country is opposed to any procedural manoeuvres by the colonial and administering Powers to bring about the annexation of Micronesia and New Caledonia. We support the courageous struggle being waged by those peoples to achieve true independence for their territories.

I should like now to refer to the problems of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia, a region which includes my own country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The underlying causes of the instability and tension in the region are all too familiar for the simple reason that they have been referred to from this rostrum by a large number of delegations, including my own, over the last seven years.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

In leading circles of imperialism, expansionism and great-Power hegemonism a dim view is taken of the success of the revolutionary process in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. They wish to reinstate in Pnom Penh the criminal gang of Pol Potists and their lackeys, against the sovereign wish of the suffering Kampuchean people.

The international community has a duty to protect the legitimate interests and inalienable fundamental rights of the Kampuchean people, whose endeavours to bring about the renaissance and miraculous national consolidation of the country deserve respect and admiration.

Success achieved over the past eight years by our three peoples - Lao, Vietnamese and Kampuchean - in the work of national defence and reconstruction and of strengthening solidarity and co-operation with socialist and other countries of the world committed to peace and justice constitutes a fundamental factor guaranteeing the peace and stability of the region. The three countries of Indo-China have already on several occasions reaffirmed their intentions, most specifically in the communiqué issued by the thirteenth conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Laos, Viet Nam and Kampuchea, held in Hanoi from 17 to 18 August last. On the one hand, it referred to the adoption of the measures necessary to make South-East Asia a zone of peace, friendship and co-operation, on the basis of the total withdrawal of foreign troops from the area and the cessation of all foreign interference. On the other hand, it proposed a solution to the Kampuchean problem. In this connection, it should be recalled that the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea is ready to negotiate with Khmer opposition groups or individuals on the basis of the military and political elimination of the Pol Pot clique, together with the withdrawal of Vietnamese volunteer forces from Kampuchea, in order to bring about national reconciliation.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

We welcome the significant statement made last June in Manila by the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the establishment of an international tribunal to try Pol Pot and other criminals responsible for the crime of genocide in Kampuchea. That realistic and honest proposal must evoke a favourable response from all members of the world public committed to peace and justice.

The relations between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Thailand are not free from difficulties. A large number of problems have arisen between our two nations during recent years and have not yet been appropriately resolved. However, the constant demands of the Lao and Thai peoples for normal relations are becoming increasingly pressing. That is why the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic believes that it is time to talk and is prepared to do everything in its power, at both the governmental and the local level, to create conditions favourable to the strengthening of mutual understanding and trust between our two peoples, in order to bring about a resumption of negotiations and the speedy normalization of all areas of Lao-Thai relations, and to contribute to ensuring peace and stability in the area. Similar action by the Thai Government will always be welcomed.

Relations between my country and the People's Republic of China have not improved. However, the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic attaches great importance to its long-standing friendship with the Chinese people and accordingly calls for normal relations and good-neighbourliness on the basis of respect by the People's Republic of China for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, non-aggression and non-interference in our internal affairs and peaceful coexistence.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Consequently, we hope that instead of persistently espousing an erroneous approach to the problems of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia and to the problem of Kampuchea, the international community, particularly the United Nations, may make a constructive contribution to promoting the irresistible process of dialogue which has already begun, however cautiously, among the countries of Asia directly concerned.

It is interesting to recall that the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries, at their 1983 summit Conference in New Delhi and the Harare summit last September, spoke out clearly on this matter. In this connection, it seems to us that the item entitled "The question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia" has been on the agenda long enough. That is why, to spare this session of the General Assembly an atmosphere of tension, acrimony and useless polemics, it would be preferable not to discuss this item but to focus rather, on the underlying problem relating to the overall situation in Asia and the Pacific.

I should now like to say something about the close relationship between disarmament and development. People of good faith accept without reservation the fact that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between these two realities. Only those who refuse to put an end to both the conventional and the nuclear arms race challenge the existence of such an organic link.

There can be no doubt that if only a tiny fraction of the astronomical sums devoted annually to military expenditure throughout the world could be freed it would suffice to relieve the suffering and poverty of a sizeable number of children, women and old people in Africa, Asia and Latin America, or even the world as a whole.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

In this connection, my delegation has learned with disappointment and regret that it was the negative, uncompromising attitude of certain Western Powers that prevented the convening this year in Paris of the United Nations Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

Similarly, my delegation is concerned at the financial crisis of the United Nations, which in our view results from the premeditated decision of certain imperialist Powers artificially to create that situation.

The peoples of the world have an urgent and legitimate need to live in peace and security, free from conflicts and tension, frustration and poverty. Unfortunately, the peoples of the developing countries, particularly the least developed nations, are today suffering as a result of both acts of aggression and destabilization, and measures of economic, commercial and financial pressure imposed by imperialist and neo-colonialist Powers.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

More often than not it is the least developed and land-locked countries that suffer from the harmful effects of the hostile and reprehensible trade policy carried out against them by their neighbours, the transit countries. They continue to suffer from the harmful effects of the world economic crisis, compounded by the resurgence of protectionist measures resorted to by the great majority of the market-economy countries. The policy of high interest rates, the deterioration in the terms of trade, the crushing burden of external debt, the drying up of soft official development aid flows and, lastly, the reverse transfer of financial resources are all factors contributing fatally to the impoverishment of developing countries and particularly the least developed. Accordingly, it is not surprising that the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots" continues to grow. It is high time the developed market-economy countries reconsidered their unreasonable and selfish position and agreed to become actively and sincerely involved in the efforts of the international community to initiate global negotiations leading to the implementation of a strategy for restructuring international economic relations on a just and democratic basis. Let them not lose sight of the fact that the establishment of the new international economic order on a just and equitable basis, would work to the benefit of all the peoples of the world.

In recent years there have been many disturbing events, which have resulted from imperialism's policy of interference, aggression, attacks and the plundering of natural resources. However, the peoples of the world, strengthened by their faith in the future and by the sustained efforts they are making in the quest for peace and social progress, have fought side by side to foil that policy. It is gratifying to note that this view of events was confirmed by the recent summit Conference of the non-aligned nations.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

My delegation hopes that this session, which has begun in an atmosphere marked by the optimism of the International Year of Peace, will prove to be capable of successfully carrying out the noble task entrusted to it by mankind.

Mr. VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran) (spoke in Persian; English text furnished by the delegation): I have great pleasure in extending to Mr. Choudhury of Bangladesh our congratulations on his well-merited election as President of the General Assembly. I am confident that his wise guidance, as well as his cultural and intellectual experience, will enable this Assembly to become an initiator of decisions significant for the human community, decisions leading mankind to worship and obey one God and to prevent aggression and the domination of some by others.

The intergovernmental and international infrastructure has undergone dramatic transformations, thanks to the development of modern communications. We are now faced with a new phenomenon, namely, the international community, or international family. Complicated links are formed among the members of this family, and the clash of their interests and motives has led to further sophistication. Meanwhile the United Nations is the only organ which can make a substantial contribution to the establishment of a wise and just order for this troubled international family. The crucial and heavy responsibility of this Organization, therefore, should not be undermined. In order to have a clear view of the path we must take in future and to correct our mistakes, we are obliged to consider the achievements of the United Nations in the past four decades in the light of the realities prevailing in the world today.

Now, many people in the world pose the questions, "what has the United Nations done so far?" and "what services has this Organization, with great publicity,

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

expenditure and structural changes, offered for the benefit of the international community?" We are of the opinion that certain achievements have been made by this Organization.

First, favourable ground has been established for international communications in all fields, from the political and economic to the cultural, scientific and technical. This has in turn helped to form the view of a unified international family for the whole of humanity regardless of differences in race, colour, culture or language.

Secondly, success has been achieved in combating colonialism. Resolution 1514 (XV) was a loud outcry by man against colonialism. Today colonialism no longer exists in most of the countries which have gained independence. This is a praiseworthy and valuable contribution.

However, it is unfortunate that the old colonialism has been replaced by a more dangerous one, namely, neo-colonialism, which has forced many newly independent countries into yielding to the multi-faceted domination of powerful countries. It is of paramount importance that we go to the root causes of this problem and see why neo-colonialism has been so effective. There is no doubt that technical and industrial backwardness, coupled with economic underdevelopment, have been decisive in paving the way for the establishment of a new system of domination and neo-colonialism. The efforts made by the United Nations in this respect have been substantial, although unsuccessfully in many cases. The creation of specialized agencies, the initiation of South-South co-operation and the adoption of the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order have been among the most important and comprehensive of these initiatives.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

Although more than 12 years have passed since the adoption of the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, it has not met with any success owing to the staunch opposition of the industrially developed countries. Under-development has paved the way for neo-colonialism. At the same time, the success of the big Powers in enslaving other nations has been due mainly to the fact that within the international community no just order prevails in relations to guarantee the national security, independence and territorial integrity of Member States. Today, the logic of force and the order of domination govern international relations, and it is for that reason that we should be concerned about international peace and security. The United Nations has not only been inactive in the face of such a threat, but it has even in many instances acquiesced in them.

Today, the balance of power rather than the rule of law has been accepted as the basis and only possible method of safeguarding security, not only nationally, but regionally and globally as well. The recourse to the threat or use of force, aggression, the occupation of the lands of others by force and the infringement of sovereignty are all being utilized without being met by any serious opposition on the part of the United Nations and other international forums. We must acknowledge that in many instances the United Nations has even gone so far as to contribute to the legitimization of such methods. Is it not true that, in practice, the maintenance of the status quo and even submission to changed situations created by acts of aggression have become the general rule in international relations? Law based on human values and justice should play the determining role in relations among members of the international community.

In this connection, the world arms race makes sense: it is a race to reach military superiority - qualitatively and quantitatively - in order to establish favourable situations through the use or threat of force.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

Another example of submission by the United Nations to the logic of force is inherent in its Charter and in the procedural mechanism of the Security Council. The Charter has an unjust tendency to preserve the interests of big Powers. A clear example is the notion that international peace and security should be safeguarded by the former Allied forces. Ironically, world peace is today imperilled by those very same Powers.

The right to the veto is no more than a mockery of the international community and has cast a shadow upon all the other gains and achievements of the Organization, which cannot take any practical and concrete step against oppression as long as the policy of submission to force is embodied in the Charter. The Council's bitter experience in recent years proves our claim. The United Nations has not taken any outstanding and effective action with regard to infringements of national sovereignty and independence in many countries, from Latin America to Africa, in the Middle East, Iran, Libya and Afghanistan. In some instances, we have even witnessed the Security Council openly seeking to save a defeated aggressor and have watched it go so far as to issue a communiqué in defence of that aggressor and against the victim.

The situation that prevails is such that the existence of this mentality in the Security Council has led some of those with veto rights to attempt to employ financial leverage to carry the same rights over into the Assembly. What else can be the meaning of the American blackmail now being exerted? Is the Organization a corporation in which voting rights are determined in accordance with the national income of each State Member, or is it a forum with the weighty responsibility of making decisions about international issues, a forum in which all Members enjoy equal voting rights? I hope the present session of the Assembly will give a clear and decisive answer to that question.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

If the United Nations is unable to fulfil its main objective - the preservation of the independence and territorial integrity of all Members and the maintenance of international peace and security - it should at least support those nations determined to resist aggression of any kind. That is the least we are entitled to expect from this international forum. Backing liberation movements and lending support to those countries that have gained independence through long years of struggle and popular revolutionary uprisings should constitute fundamental duties of the Organization. Should we not expect the United Nations to take up the crucial job of defending such young revolutionary States?

One of the most vivid illustrations of my point is provided by the Islamic Revolution in Iran, which was subjected to various forms of pressure from the very beginning of its entering onto the path to victory. I do not intend to delve deeply into history at this juncture. The last disgraceful chapter of foreign domination in our country was opened by the coup engineered by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1953 and the return to power of the puppet régime of Pahlavi. The Iranian nation never submitted to that oppression, and it initiated a resistance that bore fruit in 1979.

There is no need to mention here the fact that during the course of those two and a half decades of struggle thousands of the best of our country's sons sacrificed their lives for the sake of their lofty goals and nothing was immune from the clutches of the oppressors. Our natural resources were plundered; our language and culture were metamorphosed and our economy grew ill and parasitic. The Islamic Revolution inspired a new movement within the Islamic world and among the down-trodden, with its message of resistance to any manifestation of domination. The lesson was a lesson of sacrifice in the cause of independence, justice and truth.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

This aroused concern among the Powers seeking domination, which began to engineer and foment plots and conspiracies. Various foreign-sponsored attempts at coups were foiled by the unified defence of the Muslim people and with Divine blessing. We even faced direct American military intervention in Tabas, followed by sanctions and a full-fledged propaganda war.

All those conspiracies were nipped in the bud, but the United Nations took no effective and positive action. Does none of those crimes have anything to do with the fundamental duties of the Organization? Sometimes some event of limited magnitude gives rise to a great hue and cry in the Organization, which calls for a special session of the the General Assembly, an extraordinary meeting of the Security Council, giving rise to the adoption of resolutions, one after another, and to expressions of condemnation, regret and the like. But if Iran is subjected to foreign intervention, to naked aggression or to an economic blockade, nothing seems to take place. The long series of conspiracies finally led to an all-out Iraqi military aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and it has now been six years since its inception.

There is no doubt that one of the most dastardly plots carried out against the Islamic Revolution is the full-fledged, premeditated Iraqi aggression against Iran. Since the Second World War, this is unprecedented in magnitude and in the military force employed. On 22 September 1980 over 12 Iraqi divisions and several independent brigades opened a blitzkrieg against Iran from land, sea and air. Civilians were taken prisoner by the invading forces. Tens of thousands of square kilometres of our land were occupied during the first days of the invasion. Several thousand cities and villages, large and small, were razed to the ground and some cities like Qasr-e-Shirin and Naft-e Shah are still occupied by Ba'athist troops.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

It is not hard to realize what are the main motives and purposes behind the invasion by the Iraqi régime. There is no need for complicated theories. It is sufficient to review the aggressor's attitude in the military, political and propaganda fields. The fact that the enemy troops advanced into the heart of our country as far as they could clearly shows that Iraq was not merely going to solve a border dispute unilaterally. The statements of the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, left no doubt that the Iraqi régime was seeking to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran. Maps published in Iraq, some of which are included in academic books, showing the annexation of parts of Iran are clear proof that the ruling régime in Iraq was determined to occupy a large part of our homeland. In other words, the Iran-Iraq war has been nothing but naked aggression to trample underfoot the independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country. In addition, it has been an invasion against a revolution.

The timing of the aggression also deserves due attention. Iraq, in a simple and naive calculation, thought that Iran was shaky following its revolution, that the army had been dismantled because of revolutionary transformations, that the situation was unstable, and that therefore there was a golden opportunity for the régime in Iraq to take advantage of all those elements and invade Iran. The Iraqi régime then committed the crime with full confidence in victory and without the slightest fear of international forums. It was completely sure that the logic ruling in international relations would favour the aggression and make the new situation acceptable.

Faced with such aggression, our nation had only two options: either yielding to force and abandoning its revolution, dignity, independence and sovereignty or resisting the aggression. We did not receive our revolution as a gift from any of the Powers. It was, rather, the result of self-sacrifice and long years of

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

struggle by thousands of men and women. Aggression against the revolution was tantamount to violating the very existence of every individual in our nation.

From the first day of the invasion, when the enemy was at the peak of its feeling of superiority, to this day, when it is regretful and frustrated, we have kept saying one thing and have sought to translate it into action: the aggressor must be condemned and punished, and peace should be established between the two countries and in the region on the basis of justice.

In the course of our sacred defence we have relied upon God Almighty and ourselves, and we shall continue to stand on our own feet. In conveying the result of this success to other nations facing aggression I say that the peoples of the world should rest assured that if they are determined to fight any aggression against their homeland, independence and national sovereignty they will secure victory, even if they are alone. Every aggressor, whether it be Hitler or Saddam, is doomed to the same destiny.

The Iraqi régime not only has committed a crime against humanity and international peace by its military aggression, but also during the past six years has committed numerous war crimes, in defiance of all the norms of international law. It is regrettable that although a United Nations report explicitly referred to the physical abuse of Iranian prisoners-of-war in Iraqi camps and made recommendations, no change has occurred in that regard. Attacks on civilian quarters and the war on cities, resulting in the martyrdom of thousands of men, women and children, constitute another war crime in Iraq's long list of violations of international law. The agreement of 12 June 1984 did not last long and the Iraqi régime again resumed attacks on residential areas, as stated in United Nations documents. That crime is continuing today.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

Attacks on civilian airliners are rare. The international community has seen a Government openly and officially issue a note of 17 March 1985 and in practice resort to that notorious crime. The latest incident was the shooting down of a civilian airliner of Asseman Airlines over the southern Iran city of Ahwaz, when 40 passengers were brutally murdered.

Another inhuman crime committed by Iraq is the repeated use of chemical weapons. Following the distribution of the United Nations reports of 1984 and 1985 in which the use of chemical weapons was confirmed, it was openly stated in document S/17911, which reflected the observations of the Secretary-General's team in Khuzestan Province, that Iraq had used chemical weapons repeatedly and extensively. The report constitutes an important international document, and this is the first recorded case since the creation of the United Nations of a report on violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 in which the violating country is clearly named. Unfortunately, due attention has not been paid to that important document. Although some Western countries and a group of their allies, as well as some non-aligned and Islamic countries, such as Pakistan, have adopted positions in the face of that Iraqi crime, and although the Security Council, in its statement of 21 March 1986, condemned the Iraqi régime, no position comparable to the dimensions of the inhuman acts committed by Iraq has yet been adopted. Consequently, since the Security Council statement was issued, Iraq has on five occasions - on 22 and 23 March and in April and May 1986 - deployed chemical weapons both on the battlefield and against civilian areas.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

The Security Council has a heavy responsibility vis-à-vis the problem. If a small country such as Iraq can permit itself heedlessly to violate one of the most important international conventions, now again before the Conference on Disarmament, what is to guarantee other existing or future conventions? The international community expects the Security Council to adopt a resolution once again condemning the Iraqi régime's continued use of chemical weapons and openly urging the régime to pay due attention to the matter. The Council should also call on all countries strictly to refrain from the export to Iraq of such chemicals and know-how as can be used for the manufacture of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

It should also apply strict regulations in the case of anyone who refuses to comply with such universal demands. In addition, taking into account the impact of Iraq's repeated use of chemical weapons and the consequent weakening of the 1925 Protocol, all countries should be urged to call for the implementation of the provisions of that Protocol.

Another especially important task that should be carried out by the United Nations is the conduct of the necessary investigations to determine the source of the supplies of chemical weapons to Iraq. There is, of course, a slight probability that mustard gas is produced in Iraq with imported substances, but nerve gas, use of which was confirmed in the United Nations report of 1984, is a complicated chemical weapon and is most definitely supplied to Iraq by those countries that possess the technology. We have evidence enough to prove that.

Let me take this opportunity to touch upon one of the main shortcomings of the present international order. The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council, within the framework of political regulations and relations, with the responsibility of dealing with violations of international laws and regulations that endanger world peace and security. Unfortunately the international community lacks an independent and strong judicial body, and the International Court of Justice does not have a well calibrated and automatic duty in this regard. In any country, as soon as a crime is committed the judicial body goes after the perpetrator, whether a personal complaint is lodged or not. But on the international scene, the way of dealing with violations or crimes against peace and humanity is at best limited to political condemnation. Which judicial organ is responsible for the investigation of the Iraqi violation of international law? We are of the opinion that the International Court of Justice seated in The Hague, for instance, should deal independently with Iraqi infringement of the 1925 Geneva

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

Protocol, no matter whether Iran files a complaint or not. We sincerely hope that those who wish international relations well will seriously seek to overcome this shortcoming and present practical proposals in this connection.

There is no doubt that the naked aggression carried out by the régime ruling over Iraq against the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has entered its seventh year, and the repercussions of that aggression have imperilled regional security and presented a serious threat to international peace. Today the war is one of the gravest issues facing the international community, and the attitudes of States with regard to it can be divided into three categories.

The first category comprises those countries that have extended their utmost support to Iraq by providing lethal weapons and economic and financial help as well as political assistance. They include primarily the super-Powers and their cronies, which resort to deceitful rhetoric and slogans, saying "Bloodshed is abhorred by mankind; you should seek to solve your problems through negotiated peaceful means." In practice they themselves give unabated and relentless support to the aggressor, thus contributing to the prolongation of the war. Had our disputes been territorial or financial, negotiations would have made sense. But Iraq initiated the war to topple the legitimate Government, which came to power through a popular uprising. They did whatever they could. Nobody would be so naive as to sit at the same table with such aggressors. The only thing that concerns those Powers, it seems, is to find a way to save the defeated enemy. In the meantime, none of these recommendations forced the occupation forces out of our territories. Our people had to assume the task themselves. I sincerely ask the Secretary-General, the President and all the representatives to show us even one instance in which the Iraqis withdrew from even one part of the occupied lands through a unilateral initiative. We recovered our lost territory inch by inch at

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

the cost of the blood of our loved ones. In this context, not even the most naive of simpletons could say that Iraq had peaceful aspirations. Allow me to be more direct here. The Islamic Revolution established in Iran a system free of domination by the super-Powers after Iran had been turned into a stronghold of American domination in the region. The policy of non-alignment is being carried out and experienced in the true sense of the word in the Islamic Republic, and other countries are gradually coming to understand this situation better and are becoming more sympathetic towards it. Those who support the Iraqi régime are motivated by their desire to counter such a trend.

The second category comprises those countries that have adopted a neutral stance towards the two countries by expressing abhorrence of the war and the bloodshed. Our question to those countries is this: If their own lands had been trampled by foreign invaders, what position would they have expected others to take? Would they not at the very least expect condemnation of the aggressor and a call for its punishment? Moreover they should not make a distinction between themselves and other members of the international community. These friends should know that if aggression is legitimized and the aggressors come to realize there is always a way to escape the consequences of their crime, we should expect further invasions. Those countries, then, increase their own chances of becoming prey to aggression. On the other hand, it is not possible to live in an international community without accepting responsibility, and all members are in duty bound to contribute to the preservation of international peace and security. As aggression poses the most dangerous threat to peace and security, it is the part of wisdom to condemn and punish the aggressor in order to save world peace.

The third category includes those countries that have during the course of the imposed war gradually moved towards a position of justice. That is praiseworthy, but more effective momentum is needed. At the same time, since this represents a

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

movement towards justice, it should not be manifested solely in bilateral relations. We place greater priority on adherence to international principles based on justice than on the strengthening of bilateral relations. Condemnation of the initiator of aggression responds to the expectations of a nation that has been victimized; but, more than that, it will respond to the conscience of human society.

We believe that the war is drawing towards an end with the punishment of the aggressor régime of Iraq. This will be a positive step for peace in the region and ultimately in the entire international community. For those countries and organizations that have failed to fulfil their obligations in regard to the Iraqi aggression there is little time left to make up for the past. We declare here that according to all international law and regulations, responsibility for the war cannot be divided. To refer to the initiation of the war and its continuation as two independent responsibilities and a legal situation is contradictory to the most fundamental of international principles. Iraq is responsible for the war - both for its initiation and for its continuation: and, of course, those who have continued to support Iraq are also accomplices of the Iraqi régime.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

More time would be needed to go into the details of the chronicle of the imposed war and the crimes committed during the course of it. In addition, we believe that the important point, which deserves due attention by this forum, is the future of the sensitive, important and strategic Persian Gulf region. Our region is in no way able to tolerate another devastating war. The Iraqi-imposed war destroyed vast, valuable resources in our region. All the countries in the area must be able to mobilize the possibilities available to make arrangements for the establishment of a durable and permanent peace that guarantees regional security, as well as the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each individual State. There are encouraging signs now that reflect the possibility of establishing strong friendly relations among the countries of the region. We should strengthen these hopes and contribute to their fulfilment. We are fully prepared to make our contribution now in the interests of the long-run strategic security of the region.

There is no doubt that this end cannot be achieved unilaterally, but if those States prefer to continue to support the doomed régime of Saddam Hussein, rather than consider such arrangements, they are putting their own national interests in jeopardy. With the elimination of the roots of aggression, our nation and region will possess all the factors and elements needed for the establishment of lasting peace. One of the most crucial tasks of our countries is to achieve this position and as soon as we have we shall be able to eradicate the sources of foreign intervention.

Planning for future security is not merely confined to the Persian Gulf. It is also necessary in connection with the continued occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, which has unfortunately created a climate of rising tension in the

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

region, endangering its peace and security. As stated by the Islamic Republic of Iran at the outset, the Geneva talks not only failed to break this impasse, but provided a pretext for the presence of the occupation forces and deception of international public opinion, and this has had adverse effects on the Afghan situation. It is now more clear than ever that the occupation of Afghanistan, which took place under the pretext of solving the problem of the Afghan people caused by foreign threats, has itself imposed a greater burden on the downtrodden people of that land. To make the situation even worse, it has provided suitable grounds for the Western Powers' strengthening their presence in the region.

Our regional security can no longer be held hostage to super-Power rivalry. The Afghan issue cannot be solved in the context of the interests of a super-Power. The just conditions set forth by the Islamic Republic of Iran are more valid than ever. The unconditional and immediate withdrawal of the occupation forces, recognition of the Afghan people's right to self-determination, voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees and non-intervention by foreigners in the internal affairs of Afghanistan must constitute the essence of any solution to that country's problems. Afghanistan is in dire need of stability, which can be achieved only through the establishment of an independent, non-aligned Government, that enjoys the support of the majority of the population. It is natural that the foreign policy of such a Government would require friendly relations with all regional countries and good-neighbourliness.

Because of the direct impact of the situation in Afghanistan on our national security and the practical problems it causes for our country, such as the continuing influx of Afghan refugees, we follow the situation carefully and with great concern. Our country, in spite of the Herculean problems it faces emanating from the sensitive and historical situation, is sheltering nearly 2 million Afghan

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

refugees. At the same time, it is the international duty of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to deal with this matter more seriously. It is evident that any success in this field will be possible only through the more active participation of all countries.

If Afghan refugees still nourish in their hearts the hope of one day returning to their homeland, for Palestinians such a hope is gradually fading. In 1967 and 1973 attempts were made to strengthen the idea of an all-out struggle against the occupation régime in Palestine, but today, with the divisions among Arabs and within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), one hardly hears about such struggles, even in slogans. The treacherous Camp David Accord has unfortunately left its impact on some Arab and Palestinian leaders and, except in a few countries in the front line of the struggle against Israel, the policy of appeasement has become the dominant policy in our region. The appeal of certain independent countries, and some from the United Nations who formally claimed to be part of the anti-Zionist struggle, for Israel to recognize the PLO as a party to talks constitutes an insult to 40 years of struggle by the people of Palestine.

The treacherous act of the King of Morocco, who issued an invitation to the Prime Minister of the régime occupying Palestine, greatly contributed to the advancement of the compromise process. The Fez plan is based on a position that can lead only to the further entrenchment of Israel in occupied territories. The visit of Peres to Morocco, which took place under the pretext of the Fez plan, could be the beginning of a sad end to the Palestinian destiny if there is not firm resistance by the people of Palestine and non-aligned Arab and Muslim countries. In the present circumstances, in which the whole of Palestine and major parts of Arab countries are under Israeli occupation, any compromise move which increases hope of the continued existence of a Zionist régime will cause immense increases in

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

United States economic aid to, and political, military and arms support for, Israel, in accordance with their strategic alliance. Thus, Israel continues to exist not as a State but as the greatest United States political, economic, military and even nuclear base in the Middle East. This will certainly constitute an ever increasing threat to peace, security and stability in the sensitive Middle East region.

For this very reason, we cannot accept any peace plan that includes direct or indirect recognition of the Zionist entity.

To those who believe that the establishment of an international conference advocating recognition of the PLO by Israel and the United States will secure the political interests of Palestine, I wish to say that only through the struggle against the occupying régime in Palestine can Palestine regain its freedom. A conference between the aggressor and the victim is another way of compromising with Zionism.

The question of Palestine is at the root of the Middle East crises. Therefore, a short-term settlement could only aggravate the situation. A just and comprehensive peace can be realized in this region only after the expulsion of Israel from Palestine and all Arab lands and the return of Palestinians to their homeland to establish an independent State therein.

The heroic experience of the Muslim people of Lebanon in struggling against the Israeli occupiers and expelling them from the major part of their homeland should be a good lesson for those who consider compromise to be the only option for the Middle East. In conditions that enabled Israel to entertain the thought that it had finished Lebanon and could include it in the list of its occupied and annexed territories, the people of Lebanon started a great mass movement that

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

forced Israel and its supporters to withdraw. It is true that Lebanon, owing to certain internal differences and disruptions caused by the war, has not yet been able to establish comprehensive, strongly based security, but the Zionist régime will never again dare to encroach upon that land.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

We declare our full support for the security and territorial integrity of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders, and we uphold the right of its people to exercise full sovereignty over the whole country. We are confident that the people of Lebanon will be able to expel the remaining occupation forces from their homeland. Moreover, we call on the United Nations, in keeping with the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to protect the civilian population of this country from the barbarous and inhuman acts of the occupation forces.

Special attention should also be paid to the efforts made by the Zionist régime that threaten the security of African countries and are aimed at expanding its influence in this tyrannized continent. Israel's co-operation with the racist régime of South Africa is rapidly expanding in the economic, military and nuclear fields. We strongly caution that the establishment of relations between some African countries and the Zionist régime will strengthen the foundations of the apartheid régime. We propose that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) take urgent measures to uproot this cancerous tumor from their continent.

Unlike the question of Palestine that is suffering from division, difference of opinion and compromising policies, a consensus exists among all countries - with few exceptions - on the question of South Africa. This consensus, which is accompanied by extensive movements especially at the international level, has laid the groundwork for the intensification of the pressures being exerted on the racist régime of South Africa.

The various gatherings that have been convened throughout the world - such as the meetings in London recommending military sanctions and in Oslo recommending oil sanctions, as well as the international conference in Paris on sanctions against the racist régime of South Africa, followed by the OAU summit in Addis Ababa and the Non-Aligned Conference in Harare, Zimbabwe - all have contributed to the

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

implementation of the resolutions on South Africa adopted by the United Nations and other international organizations.

The Non-Aligned Conference in Harare adopted certain practical and concrete proposals. The proposal made by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the establishment of a fund to help the combatants inside South Africa, the fund for the front-line States and other similar proposals should receive the prompt support of the United Nations and of all Member States. The present session of the General Assembly should enhance such activities. The intensification of the struggle of the people of South Africa is promising serious changes in Pretoria.

The racist régime of South Africa is indisputably the root cause of all the tensions in South Africa. So long as apartheid is not totally eliminated peace, stability and security cannot be established in this region. People in South Africa should enjoy the right to a system composed of all races, with equal voting rights for everyone regardless of race and colour of skin. The very idea of apartheid constitutes a crime against humankind and an insult to the world's conscience. With such a definition of apartheid in mind, one ask why the countries that fought during the Second World War against a similar notion, are not now ready to cease supporting the apartheid régime. Is there any justification for the United States policy of "constructive engagement" - a policy aimed at protecting the racist régime of South Africa and safeguarding United States national interests?

In addition to crimes committed within its own borders, the apartheid régime is spreading its crimes to other States in southern Africa through subversive and terrorist acts, and the dispatch of paid agents to those countries. During the past year, these acts were intensified especially against Mozambique and Angola. The régime of South Africa is still encroaching upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lesotho and Botswana. Air raids and economic pressure, as

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

well as subversive acts carried out against Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Swaziland are all indicative of the fact that the régime in South Africa will never voluntarily submit to international decisions.

The illegal, colonial occupation of Namibia by the South African régime, which is recognized as aggression against the people of Namibia, is continuing. Eight years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), calling for the independence of Namibia, there has been no practical progress for its implementation. Once again we voice our condemnation of the racist régime of South Africa, and reaffirm the inalienable right of the people of Namibia to national independence, self-determination, and the territorial integrity of their homeland. On the other hand, we believe that the Namibian people's armed struggle, led by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), should continue and be strengthened. The decision adopted at the Vienna International Conference for the Immediate Independence of Namibia, and the recent special session of the General Assembly on Namibia, should be given due attention by all countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran has encouraged the opening of a SWAPO representation office in Tehran. Similarly, political support for SWAPO should be continued at the international level.

We believe that the internal struggle in South Africa should be strengthened and that more pressure should be applied on the régime there through invoking Chapter VII of the Charter and implementing Security Council resolution 283 (1970), calling for the imposition of political, economic, military, nuclear, cultural and sport sanctions on the South African régime. Unfortunately, the unco-operative approach of certain Western countries is the principal cause for the continuation of apartheid and the régime's occupation of Namibia and acts of sabotage and conspiracies against its neighbours.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

There is no doubt that despite such manipulation, the racist régime of South Africa cannot be kept in power for long, disregarding the desire of the whole people of South Africa and Namibia. Those who sacrifice humanitarian principles for the sake of their personal financial interests will finally end up in disgrace.

Latin America and the Caribbean region are still suffering from the vestiges of dependent military governments, huge economic difficulties and encroachment upon their sovereignty. In the past year, the danger of United States direct military intervention and aggressive acts against these countries has intensified.

In spite of the efforts of the Contadora and Lima Support Groups and their proposals for the settlement of Latin American problems, there has been no progress. However, these efforts have had a positive impact elsewhere. The fact that members of the Contadora and Lima Support Groups have been able to organize themselves and adopt a common stand on the most sensitive issues of their region, despite their existing political and ideological differences, is a promising movement towards true independence for Latin America as a whole. I hope such common measures will gradually lead to a comprehensive organization of Latin American countries.

Unfortunately, owing to certain complexities in the Asian continent, there still seems to be no possibility for the creation of a comprehensive organization representing all countries of the continent. But if existing regional organizations are strengthened, we may one day be able to create a unique organization by integrating them.

We also hope that the crises in Asia will end in desirable and just solutions, so that the foundation is laid for relaxing tension and expanding co-operation and unity among the countries in this continent.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

On the question of Cambodia, we believe that the presence of foreign troops in that South-East Asian country undermines its peace and stability. At the same time, however, we share the concerns of the people of Cambodia about the inhuman and barbarous acts of the previous régime, especially when viewed in their true historical context.

On the Korean problem, we still believe that the two Koreas should try to work out a formula for their reconciliation and eventual unity, so that peace, security and stability may be enhanced in that region.

Through the expansion of the existing bases and the creation of new ones, the military presence of super-Powers in the Indian Ocean increases the probability of the recrudescence of tensions and clashes among super-Powers. Fifteen years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, certain countries still insist on the preservation and expansion of their bases and on their continued military presence. That has frustrated the efforts of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. We support the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean at the earliest possible time. To that end, we hope that the Indian Ocean littoral States, especially the South-East Asian ones, will overcome their minor differences of opinion and work for the establishment of peace in the Indian Ocean through co-operation and co-ordination.

On the other hand, the Persian Gulf, as the natural arm of the Indian Ocean, is also exposed to the permanent rivalries of the two super-Powers. Tension in the Persian Gulf has been constantly escalating because of, on the one hand, the Iraqi aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran and, on the other, the intensification of the United States military presence in the countries of the region; the presence of the United States fleet in the Sea of Oman as part of the destructive and aggressive structure of the "Rapid Deployment Force" - which, under

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

a new development, is to be called the "Central Command"; and the creation of new military bases in Persian Gulf littoral States. This important and strategic waterway, so vital for the stability of the economy of the world, should become a non-military and non-nuclear region and a zone of peace free of chemical weapons. We are working for long-term security in the Persian Gulf. We hope that by putting an end to Iraqi aggression we shall be able to achieve that objective, in close co-operation with other countries in our region.

During the last year, we have witnessed a tragic recrudescence of tension in the Mediterranean region. Continued military rivalries between the two blocs, the intensification of military presence, expansion of military bases for use by foreign fleets, at a time when countries in the Mediterranean region have been trying to transform that region into a zone of peace: all that is indicative of the fact that the intention is for aggression to move from fluvial borders to the hinterland of littoral States.

Aggression against Libya started with a series of provocative acts and military exercises in the Gulf of Sidra, and culminated in an extensive air raid upon Libya, including the bombardment of cities and residential areas - and thus turned into outright military aggression. In spite of efforts made by the United States illogically to invoke Article 51 of the Charter, the overwhelming majority of countries in the international community deemed the United States aggression to be a flagrant violation of Libyan sovereignty and territorial integrity and expressed their solidarity with Libya in its defence of its independence and sovereignty. Thus, the statement of the seven industrialized countries and the European Economic Community which used allegations of terrorism as a pretext to justify their actions, reflected in fact a position adopted by a small minority of countries, a position contrary to that declared by the rest of the countries of the

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

world. The decision in question is devoid of any value and credibility. Hence, Libya emerged from this aggression more determined than ever before to continue its revolutionary policy against Israel and the United States.

In view of the numerous acts of aggression that have taken place during the past year, the present session of the General Assembly should include in its agenda an item on the important principle of the non-use of force and aggression, and should devote some time to investigating its various dimensions. Preparation of a convention on the non-use of force and aggression has been pending in the General Assembly since 1974 because of obstacles created by certain Western countries. The adoption of a resolution containing the necessary recommendations to prevent the continuation of aggression should be seriously considered in the General Assembly. The Political Declaration of the Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries officially calls on the General Assembly to take up measures to ensure the adoption of a universal declaration in this regard. A more thorough study by this body of the issue of terrorism is necessary.

Resolution 40/61 was adopted with certain modification that were made in order to bring the United States to accept a legal framework. The United States did officially accept that framework. Nevertheless, it resorted to the chimerical pretext of terrorism in order to embark on unprecedented aggression. But we believe that the present session of the General Assembly should look deeply into the question of terrorism, and particularly State terrorism and its causes. The Islamic Republic of Iran considers that the third-world countries are the main victims of terrorism acts, either sponsored by Governments or carried out by individuals or groups. But since those countries do not have access to the international mass media, including the press, the many cases of terrorism there do not receive the attention they deserve. On the other hand, sporadic cases in Western countries are given ample space in international news reports.

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

For many long years the people of Iran have been the victims of Government-sponsored terrorism carried out by the imposed former puppet and dependent régime. In the aftermath of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the people of Iran have again been the target of terrorists, who have been provided with all facilities by Western countries and the United States. The Islamic Republic of Iran condemns all forms and dimensions of terrorism, including Government-sponsored terrorism, and reserves the right to struggle for the liberation movements. It also calls on all countries, especially the Western ones, not to give any help to terrorist groups and to do their best to strengthen the existing conventions.

We believe that in the present international situation the economic crises have a greater link than at any time before to the mad arms race. No substantive solution has been found to economic problems, particularly those pertaining to the third-world countries in regard to debt, falling prices of raw materials and underdevelopment; yet the arms race has gained momentum. The aim of the arms race is to increase spheres of influence and further polarize international relations and exacerbate groupings. That fact is the root cause of most of the problems of our time. In many fields, the speed of proliferation is so great that talks on disarmament cannot even cover them. International conventions relating to a cessation of the arms race and the production and use of weapons are increasingly being violated. The increased use of chemical weapons is an example. Not only are the expenses for the arms race imposed directly or indirectly upon the third-world countries, but these nations are dragged into internationally fabricated tensions and consequently become the main markets of the merchants of death. This dual plundering of economic resources has in turn exacerbated the trend of the underdevelopment and economic dependence of the third-world countries. The

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

continuation of this vicious circle is extremely detrimental to mankind. I hope that the General Assembly will be able to take serious steps to prevent the continuation of this trend, which could be fatal.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting. Several representatives wish to speak in exercise of their right of reply, and I shall now call upon them.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to ten minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. de KEMOULARIA (France) (interpretation from French): I do not want to prolong the work of the Assembly for more than a few minutes and I shall certainly not take up more than the allotted ten minutes. This afternoon I listened with due attention to the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia. I should merely like to comment briefly on some points he made.

With regard to New Caledonia, he expressed his country's concern about everything relating to freedom and to the consent of those governed. I should like to reassure him and remind him of the fact that these noble concepts have been the basis of my country's institutions for two centuries.

Finally, with regard to progress towards autonomy that the representative of Australia considered desirable, I should like to remind the Assembly that the territory he mentioned enjoys broad autonomy within the French Republic. New Caledonia is governed by freely elected councils in which all political trends participate without exception.

With regard to the independence that the speaker hoped for, it is for the people of New Caledonia, and for them alone, to take a decision in the matter.

I would remind the Assembly once again, in this connection, that a referendum providing for independence as one option will be organized in New Caledonia in 1987. The referendum must take place calmly, free of all forms of external pressure.

Mr. SUMAIDA (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): A short while ago, the representative of Iran, Mullah Velayati, repeated once again, as is his delegation's custom, a series of lies and contradictions which have come to be a characteristic of the policy of the tyrannical clique ruling in Iran.

It is their custom at the beginning of their gibberish usually to quote verses from the Holy Koran to prove to those who are aware of their lies that they really represent Islam and belong to that most holy of religions. At the beginning

(Mr. Sumaida, Iraq)

of his statement, as usual, the representative of Iran quoted a Koranic verse and spoke of belief in God, while Iran's behaviour and actions are the very antithesis of God's worship and the teachings of Islam that they claim to follow. In the Koran Islam exhorts its followers in the following terms:

In the Holy Koran Islam says:

"But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace," (Awfal, verse 61)

Can they claim that they do God's bidding conveyed in this verse? God also tells the true believers:

"If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of God;" (Hujufati, verse 9)

And what of that holy bidding? Several Islamic groups have tried to mediate between our two Muslim nations and Iran stonewalled on every occasion.

The truth is that the Koran prohibits infighting between Muslims. Islam also prohibits fighting during the holy month, and Iraq, at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, requested Iran to stop fighting during that holy period but Iran has always refused.

The Iranians who have been using thousands of children on the battlefields, literally as cannon fodder by herding them into minefields, to explode land mines with their innocent young bodies, can they really claim to be Muslims? What sort of Islam do they follow when mercury is thrown by their bigots in the faces of women if women dare to show their faces on the street? What sort of Islam do they follow when they murder prisoners of war on the battlefield? The latest crime of this sort was at the beginning of last month when, in a battle on the island of Majnoon, they managed to take some prisoners. When we recaptured that position we

(Mr. Sumaida, Iraq)

found that the soldiers and officers taken prisoner had been tied with ropes and shot on the spot. How can they claim to follow Islam when they commit such crimes?

The truth of the matter is that they mumble verses of the Koran, but do not understand them, just exactly as the Koran puts it:

"that of a donkey which carries huge tomes" (Jumu'a, verse 5)

Mullah Velayati referred to the Iranian revolution which has encouraged other revolutions in the world. What Iranian revolution? Iranian chaos? What has it encouraged so far? It encouraged nothing but terrorism the world over. Iran operates camps for the training of terrorists and exports them ready-made to the whole region and the world at large. The latest event in Kuwait is full proof of this, as is what is happening in Lebanon and several other countries. All this exposes their part in that crime and shows them to be the sponsors of terrorism. This is the revolution they boast of.

In his statement, or rather his gibberish, the representative of Iran referred to an alleged "premeditated Iraqi aggression". He would have us believe that Iraq is responsible for starting the war and its continuance. I do not wish to enter into polemics on this issue because not much time is allowed us for a reply. However, I would merely refer to the statement of the Foreign Minister of Iraq, in which he reviewed the many hundreds of Iranian acts of aggression and violations of our borders which preceded the war as well as the numerous Iranian acts of terrorism inside Iraq, which were aimed at Iraqi officials and institutions in Iraq. Those acts were committed by members of the Iranian community which was living on sufferance in Iraq at the time. They were recruited by the present rulers of Iran.

As for starting the war, Iraq has challenged Iran here in this forum, in Harare and in New Delhi to agree to the setting up of a committee made up of Member

(Mr. Sumaida, Iraq)

States of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement or the Organization of the Islamic Conference to determine who started the war. If Iran feels that Iraq started the war, why does it reject the idea of setting up such a committee to investigate the issue? Why does it reject the idea of a neutral committee that would investigate thoroughly and examine documents and facts to determine who started the war? Why does it reject mediation? As for the continuation of the war and the responsibility for it, I do not think that anyone in this body is unaware of the fact that Iran is the one responsible for continuing the war.

On 28 September 1980, only four weeks after the beginning of the war, the Security Council adopted a cease-fire resolution which Iraq accepted and Iran rejected. Since then Iran has adamantly rejected all the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. It has also rejected all mediation efforts by Islamic and non-aligned countries alike.

The representative of Iran said that Iraq sought to overthrow the régime in Iran. This is a new lie, a paradox indeed. I challenge the representative of Iran to mention one statement of any Iraqi official in which there is a single mention of the wish of Iraq to overthrow the Iranian régime.

The PRESIDENT: I beg the indulgence of the representative of Iraq.

I take it that the representative of Iran has asked to speak on a point of order, and I call on him.

Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): I rose on a point of order because, according to my watch, the representative of Iraq has exceeded the ten minutes allowed him and I thought it necessary to mention it.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the representative of Iran that, according to the official clock which was set immediately when the representative of Iraq started to speak, he still had two minutes left.

I regret the interruption of the representative of Iraq, and I call on him to continue.

Mr. SUMAIDA (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): As I was saying, this is indeed a new paradox. It seems that Iranian time is different from the time everywhere else in the world. What the representative of Iran is asking the international community to do is to refrain from calling for an end to the war. How paradoxical it is for a representative of a country to come to this Organization and criticize the call for an end to the war. It seems he does not know that the very Charter of this Organization prohibits war. That is another of Mullah Velayati's contradictions today.

He speaks of Iraq contravening international law -

The PRESIDENT: I am sorry to interrupt the representative of Iraq. I would kindly ask him to conclude his statement.

Mr. SUMAIDA (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Thank you,
Mr. President.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): Whenever this delegation exercises its right of reply, it makes a serious effort to base itself on the contents of the statement to which it replies, thus putting the record straight and remaining within the domain of a right of reply.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Such was not the case when the delegation of Pakistan exercised its right of reply last evening. Some misleading observations were made that totally distorted the contents of the Afghan delegation's statement. Phrases and sentences, which appeared nowhere in our statement, were attributed to us. A careful reading of the verbatim record will clarify this point.

The representative of Pakistan made some other remarks, however, which warrant a response. He said that, "not a single soldier from any foreign country, besides the Soviet Union, is present in Afghanistan today". The Assembly would note that in an undeclared war waged by proxy and in an operation funded not by a defence department but by an intelligence agency, the imperialists and their assorted allies would not, as a matter of course, use soldiers of their regular armed forces. The essence of neo-globalism and the not-so-disguised slogan of supporting the so-called "democratic forces and freedom fighters", have led to increasing reliance of imperialism and their local subservients on renegades, bandits and mercenary legions. Such are the cases in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Angola and Kampuchea, to mention but a few. A glance at the legal definition of aggression and mercenarism will erase all aspersions cast by the representative of Pakistan on the true nature of those bandits and mercenaries.

He also talked of an unacceptable régime. Suffice it to say there are many in this Assembly who would, no doubt, agree with us that the representative of Pakistan has probably the least authority to discuss the acceptability of régimes.

The allegation that there is "a plan to uproot large numbers of tribesmen from their ancestral homes", is also an absurd, totally baseless and completely unfounded charge.

It was also said that the assertion of grossly exaggerated numbers of refugees is preposterous. The only independent and United Nations-related survey of the camps, which was conducted by the United Nations Research Institute for Social

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Development, has revealed the striking gap between the statistics provided by Pakistan and the actual number of the residents of the camps. What sounds truly preposterous is the expectation that the Assembly might believe the spurious figures fabricated in certain well-known quarters to serve their own political ends.

It was claimed that the daily cost of maintaining "refugee" camps stands at \$2 million a day. There may be some confusion in this regard, because it is the maintenance of mercenary training camps and their arming that costs the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) alone around \$2 million a day. On the other hand, even if we assume for a moment that Pakistan's statistics pertaining to the number of refugees are accurate, then the daily expenditure of \$2 million should have raised by 200 per cent the living standard of the refugees compared to the standard inside Afghanistan.

There are many other points to which I wanted to refer, but as this is my second exercise of right of reply, I shall conclude now.

Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): I shall respond briefly to all the nonsense that members have heard from the delegation of Iraq. I wish to make one point very clear, namely, that the Charter of the United Nations does not permit any aggressor to launch a war of aggression and then to plead for peace when defeated. We always hear such arguments from the Iraqi delegation, but they will not find any support here, definitely not in the Charter of the United Nations.

Another point: which country has been condemned for the use of chemical weapons, for attacks against civilians, for attacking civilian aircraft and for threatening civil aviation? Everybody definitely will name Iraq; at least the documents of the United Nations name Iraq.

I believe it is a waste of time to try to respond to what we have heard from the Iraqi delegation. It is necessary now - and this is the right time - to

(Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

concentrate on post-Saddam Iraq, the liberated Iraq, the peaceful Iraq, the free Iraq.

We believe, first, that Iraq will be free only when Saddam goes and that our region will be free of the scourge of war only when Saddam goes. My country also will be totally free from the burden of this war when President Saddam goes.

Another point: the Muslim people of Iraq are the only people who can make decisions regarding the nature and the quality of their government. The future of Iraq should be determined only by the Iraqi people.

My next point: the international community is now shying away from condemning the Iraqi régime for its war of aggression against us; it is shying away from establishing an international tribunal to punish the aggressor not only for its aggression but also for its war crimes. I can assure the Assembly that when the Iraqi people have the chance, when Iraq is liberated, then those people will establish their tribunals and by that time the international body should not have any legitimacy over those tribunals.

(Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

The decision would be that of that tribunal. I am sure that, when they are liberated, the Muslim Iraqi people will not share their victory with the international community.

But the international community still has time. It can condemn Iraq, the Saddami Iraq, for using chemical weapons and for all its crimes and indeed for its war of aggression against us. The Islamic Republic of Iran would be very proud even now to shake hands with the people of Iraq - of course, after they have been liberated from the claws of President Saddam Hussein.

I should also express my delight and pleasure at seeing the representatives of the Baathist régime headed by Michel Aflak, a well-known non-Muslim - even an anti-Muslim - return to Islam. It is good to hear them. They also recite verses well from the Holy Koran. I just want to remind them of two other verses. One says:

"Kill him wherever you find him."

The other verse says:

"Fight against them until the roots of the trouble are eradicated, until there is no more persecution."

That is the verdict of the Holy Koran. I think it would be advisable for the members of the Iraqi delegation, when they have finally decided, thanks to the message of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution, to go back to the Koran, to read it more thoroughly. Their language is Arabic; they have no trouble with reading it; they just have to understand it.

Mr. FARMER (Australia): I speak with reference to the remarks made earlier in this debate by the Permanent Representative of France, to whom we listened attentively. His remarks were measured and eloquent, as we have come to

(Mr. Farmer, Australia)

expect from him, but his statement does not alter the views of Australia or of the other member countries of the South Pacific Forum, the regional organization involved, that important matters relating to the future of New Caledonia should involve the United Nations. This Organization has played an historic role in the passage of non-self-governing territories to self-determination and independence. It should in our view also be involved in the case of New Caledonia. We believe this process can be undertaken positively and constructively through dialogue involving all parties, including France and the United Nations. We believe it should be undertaken in a way that maintains the good will of France and recognizes the rights of the indigenous Kanak people and other long-term residents of New Caledonia. Harmonious consideration in the United Nations of the situation in that territory could in our view contribute to those ends.

Mr. FAREED (Pakistan): Regrettably, the Kabul representative continues to make observations that tend to create misleading impressions regarding the situation in Afghanistan. My delegation categorically and emphatically rejects all the allegations we have just heard from the Kabul representative.

First, the reality of the foreign military intervention in Afghanistan and the resistance to it cannot be denied or obscured by misrepresentation. A large foreign force, numbering over 120,000, has been engaged in an unsuccessful attempt to suppress the Afghan people for almost seven years. That is proof enough of the indigenous character of the liberation struggle. The Kabul representative must surely know by now that it is not so-called interference that inspires the common man to take up arms to wage a war of liberation for seven years, if need be even longer, and to be prepared to make the supreme sacrifice, laying down his life for the just and noble cause of freedom and independence.

(Mr. Fareed, Pakistan)

Secondly, the Kabul representative must also surely know by now that the heroic and brave people of Afghanistan, to whom our foreign minister paid a tribute, are the vast majority which oppose foreign occupation and domination of their homeland and not those who collaborate and acquiesce.

Thirdly, regarding the number of Afghans who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, let me say it is a tragedy for even a single national of a country to be forcibly uprooted and obliged to seek refuge in another country. Whatever the exact number of refugees - and in this context I should like to draw his attention to the figures provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - 3 million - that does not diminish in any way whatsoever the gravity of the crimes being committed against the Afghan people. I can only request the Kabul representative to work towards ensuring that each and every proud Afghan who would rather be in a refugee camp than under a régime imposed and supported by a foreign element shall be able to return home in safety and honour.

Fourthly, in regard to the amounts he mentioned -\$2 million a day - let me remind him there are 3 million refugees and if this is divided by 2 million it comes to roughly sixty cents a day, which does not take into account educational and medical facilities, which my Government is providing to the Afghan guests.

Fifthly, the responsibility for looking after its own nationals lies with Governments themselves. When a Government is unable to ensure the safety and honour of its population, let alone provide normal support and sustenance, that Government can no longer claim to represent its own nationals. The Kabul representative should have been thankful to the Government of Pakistan and many other Governments and international agencies which have temporarily taken over the responsibility of providing food and shelter to his kith and kin. Instead he has

(Mr. Fareed, Pakistan)

levelled unwarranted, unsubstantiated and totally false accusations. Let him not talk about what régime is acceptable and what régime is not. The people of Afghanistan are daily giving their blood to prove their point.

Finally, my foreign minister has already reaffirmed the genuine desire and firm commitment of the Government of Pakistan to seek a political solution to the situation in Afghanistan based on the principles approved by this Assembly on seven previous occasions. It is in that spirit that my delegation has been engaged in the indirect proximity talks under the aegis of the United Nations. We hope that the foreign troops will be withdrawn from Afghanistan at an early date to make a political settlement possible.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on representatives who wish to exercise the right of reply a second time.

Mr. SUMAIDA (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I apologize for speaking again and for responding to the Iranian representative, who has once again contradicted himself before this Assembly. He flagrantly interfered in the internal affairs of Iraq and persisted in the aggression implied in the idea of overthrowing the legitimate Government in Iraq. He spoke of "liberation" and "the liberation of Iraq". Iraq is a free and independent country, a country which freely expressed its will and chose its President, Saddam Hussein, who is the elected leader of the ruling party, the Baath, in Iraq. He has been elected repeatedly by the Iraqi people to lead them. Saddam Hussein is the President and symbol of Iraq, a symbol of its independence, dignity and freedom; a symbol of the stand Iraq itself has taken against the Persian tyranny and aggression, the aim of which is hegemony of the whole region, beginning with Iraq.

(Mr. Sumaida, Iraq)

The country that really needs to be liberated and freed from the nightmare in which it lives, from racism and bigotry, is Iran, which must liberate itself from Khomeini, the throwback who wants the area to regress 500 years into the past; Khomeini the extremist; the bigot Khomeini, who lives on blood and thrives on murder.

It is interesting to see that while we quote verses from the Koran calling for peace, the Iranian representative quotes verses with the intention of inciting killing and bloodshed. That is the prevailing logic in Iran.

Proof of that extremist régime's backwardness and bigotry is that it castigates Iraq for having a Christian, Michel Aflak, among its leaders. This shows clearly that it discriminates against other religions and minorities. That is the true situation in Iran. Its leaders want to fight everyone who is not like them.

The Iranian people are calling for freedom from the bigoted extremist régime, which has immersed Iran in a whirlpool of bloodshed and destruction. A few days ago it was mentioned in the press that there are currently in Iran 2 million war maimed. Who bears responsibility for those 2 million? It was Khomeini, who has brought destruction upon his country by his bigotry and backwardness.

Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): I had not intended to embroil myself in this unnecessary argument. The war's history is very well known to everybody. I do not think that representatives have forgotten the more than two years of very painful occupation of an important part of my country by Iraqi forces.

I wish to return to a very important point about the post-Saddam liberated Iraq. We hope that in the relations between the post-Saddam liberated Iraq and the entire region peace will prevail, because we very sorely need peace. By the same token, we need to fight all aggressors fiercely; we have no choice. Defence is a

(Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

religious, moral and Charter obligation. It was in this context that I quoted the verse from the Holy Koran: "Fight them wherever you find them." We must fight them, because we must liberate ourselves, our people and our land and we must defend our honour.

We have been under occupation by the aggressor Iraqi forces, and we are the only authority that can decide what to do about those aggressor Iraqi forces. Just as nobody listened to Mr. Hitler when during the last days of his reign he pleaded for peace, so we do not listen to the call for peace from the aggressor Iraqi forces.

The other point that I should like to mention is that the Iranian people, in defending the country in the context of the present war have the opportunity to express their views even about the war. They can oppose the war. The other day the representative of Iraq quoted Bazargan, the former Prime Minister, as criticizing the Government's war policies. Is that degree of democracy and freedom available in Iraq? Can one think of any other country which, when attacked and while defending itself, permits individuals to express freely their opposition to the war policy of the Government which is defending itself? I think we should be proud of that, and we are.

I wish we could hear the voice of the Iraqi people. They are forced to run away. At least 500 of them are in Iran and many more are in the United States, England and the Arab world. One does not see many Iraqis if one goes to Iraq, and that is because they have run away from President Saddam Hussein. When Iraq is liberated, the General Assembly will hear the true message of the Iraqi people, not only about the war but also about the other issues which the gentleman representing President Saddam Hussein is now putting forward.

The PRESIDENT: The Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization has asked to be allowed to reply to the statement made by one of the speakers in the general debate. I call on him to make a statement in reply on the basis of General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX), of 22 November 1974, taking duly into account the ruling made by the President of the thirty-first session and the precedents established in similar circumstances during subsequent sessions of the General Assembly.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)): This might seem to be one of my hardest tasks, but just to set the record straight I wish to remind my good friend the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the Palestinian people still hope to return to their homes and demonstrate that not by wishful thinking but by maintaining and escalating their struggle against the occupying Power.

It is no accident that the occupying Power has been promulgating laws that forbid a Jew even to talk to Palestinians and members of the Palestine Liberation Organization. If that is an indication of anything it is an indication of the increased impact of our struggle against the occupying Power.

The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that since 1973 one has hardly heard about struggles, even in slogans. Just to put the history straight, perhaps he has forgotten that in 1982 we, together with the patriotic element in Lebanon, stood firm for more than 18 days to confront 120,000 Israeli troops engaged in aggression against us and bent on eliminating our people. It was not the aim of the Israelis alone to eliminate us; it was also mentioned in the Security Council by a representative of the United States of America. Thus, any denial that we took a heroic stand against the Zionist invasion of Lebanon must not be permitted. I wish the representative of Iran would recall those facts and perhaps think again about the history of the matter.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

When the occupying Power expels our elected mayors from the occupied territories, blows them to pieces and imposes on our people mayors and municipal representatives, that is only another indication that our people under occupation are daily involved in action, whether it be peaceful or violent. Israel has admitted very bluntly in the Security Council that there were more than 600 attacks against the forces of occupation during the period January-August 1985 - only he has to dig up the record.

The campaign to eliminate our people in the refugee camps continues to this very day. When one of our refugee camps at Rashidiyeh, near Tyre, is subjected to heavy bombing, shelling and machine-gun fire to eliminate the Palestinians, that is yet another indication that the Zionist entity and its friends are continuing their attempt to eliminate our people.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Why are they attempting to eliminate us? Because we are not dealing in slogans. We are there at the front, on the battlefield, to defend our right to survival in freedom. Again, sometimes facts of history escape some historians.

If we agree to and support fully the convening of an international peace conference, it is not a trade-off. We are not saying, "Recognize the PLO, and that is it". I wish to remind him that he should look up the resolution adopted in this Assembly, resolution 38/58 C. The invitation to participate in the international peace conference is not only to the PLO. It has very specific guidelines, and I am sure that he himself would not oppose them. The specific guidelines are the total withdrawal of Israel from all occupied territories and the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine.

I had to remind him of these facts and again to assure him that we Palestinians are not living on hopes, that we are fighting and shedding blood and tears and using machine-guns when need be, but we should not and will not leave the olive branch in the deep freeze. We carry both. That is how we address the international community, for our struggle is not for destruction and elimination. Our struggle is for survival in freedom, in peace, in dignity, in our own independent Palestine.

The meeting rose at 8.05 p.m.