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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 6 October 1986, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. CHOUDHURY

(Bangladesh)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Tsering (Bhutan)  
Mr. Van Lierop (Vanuatu)  
Mr. Mtetwa (Swaziland)  
Mr. Qionibarawi (Fiji)

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

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. TSERING (Bhutan): Sir, I have the honour to convey the warm greetings and good wishes of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, to you and all the representatives for the success of the forty-first session of the General Assembly.

May I also extend the warmest felicitations of my delegation to you, Sir, on your election as the President of this session of the General Assembly. Given your outstanding credentials, including long diplomatic service in various parts of the world and in the United Nations itself, there could have been no better choice for this high office. The close and friendly relations Bhutan has always maintained with your country, Bangladesh, is an additional reason that we are delighted to see you preside over the General Assembly.

I wish to place on record our sincere appreciation to Mr. Jaime de Piniés for the manner in which he guided the historic fortieth anniversary session. His fine stewardship of the General Assembly earned for him, and for his country, Spain, the respect of the international community.

Our Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, deserves our highest commendation for his inspired leadership, and for his zeal and dedication in upholding the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. My delegation should also like to express its admiration for his incisive annual reports.

The fortieth anniversary session held last year was a milestone in the history of the United Nations. A gathering of world leaders eloquently reaffirmed their

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commitment to the Charter and testified to the vital importance of a multilateral approach to the world's problems. Constructive action was taken on such issues as terrorism, apartheid, and drug abuse. And there was much genuine cause for celebration - the world Organization, which after all is still very young, had weathered many crises in its history, had a long list of triumphs to its credit, and was again acknowledged as man's best hope for world peace and security.

The glow from that historic session still remains, but in this International Year of Peace, we cannot afford to be complacent, for we are confronted with grave dangers on several fronts.

The crisis in South Africa threatens to explode in a major cataclysm in which all of southern Africa could be plunged in a vast conflagration. The urgency of this situation was forcefully highlighted in the Harare Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement recently. The source of the problem, as all the world knows, is apartheid and the utterly intransigent position of the racist régime in refusing to negotiate with black leaders or accept United Nations mandates. The daily atrocities perpetrated in the name of this latest so-called state of emergency, by which the Pretoria régime shows its complete contempt for international public opinion, boggle the imagination: the arrest, torture, and intimidation of thousands of opponents of apartheid, mass deportations, tight censorship of the news. Little children are being brutally murdered every day.

We denounce in the strongest possible terms South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia. The rights of the people are trampled, their aspirations denied, their natural resources plundered, their leaders imprisoned, their young men conscripted into the South African military. We condemn the "Multi-Party Conference" and other fraudulent schemes for the continued domination of the

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Territory. Security Council resolution 435 (1978), containing the United Nations plan, remains the only acceptable basis for the independence of Namibia. We reaffirm our full support for the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people.

We call for comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa. We deplore the economic blackmail practised by South Africa against the front-line States, and call for financial assistance to these States which are now courageously attempting to free themselves from economic dependence on South Africa.

The situation in the Middle East continues to demand our urgent attention. The plight of the Palestinians remains the crux of the problem. The Palestinians must be granted the right to self-determination, including the right to national self-determination in their homeland.

We call upon Israel to comply with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations by withdrawing totally and unconditionally from all areas occupied since 1967. Only then will a just solution to the Middle East conflicts be possible. We support the security and right to exist in safety of all States in the area, including Israel.

Iran and Iraq remain deadlocked in a bitter war. Neither side has gained any advantage, both have suffered appalling losses in terms of countless human lives and destruction of property. The end result has been untold misery and death. One corollary to all this is that meaningful economic development on both sides has been virtually halted, so that the disastrous effects of this war will be felt not only by the present but also by future generations. We earnestly urge an immediate cease-fire, and call upon both sides to settle their differences by peaceful means.

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We support the rights of the peoples of Kampuchea and Afghanistan to determine their own destiny free from foreign interference, subversion and coercion. We call for political settlements in these two countries based on the withdrawal of foreign troops and restoration of their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status.

The Korean question must be resolved by peaceful means through direct dialogue and negotiation between South and North Korea. The deeply-rooted mutual suspicion and hostility must be replaced with mutual understanding, trust and national reconciliation in order to establish the proper conditions for a peaceful unification of the country.

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In this regard, we support the admission of both South and North Korea into the United Nations, as this will increase the opportunities for dialogue and co-operation between them, and enhance the prospects of establishing a durable peace on the peninsula.

Our greatest challenge remains the nuclear arms race. This has created a climate of fear and instability. Indeed, while the possibility of total annihilation hangs over all, there can be no real security for anyone. The concept of Star Wars, once confined to the realm of science fiction, now threatens to become a grim reality, with the arms race being extended to outer space. Far from strengthening international peace and security, the ever-escalating arms race only serves to aggravate existing tensions.

The lack of progress in the area of arms control is cause for serious concern. We urge the super-Powers to dedicate themselves to a constructive dialogue; the momentum for this must be vigorously revived. While we are fully aware that the practical details of the bargaining require much arduous work, the ultimate goal must always be kept in mind - the goal of disarmament.

Nothing less than total disarmament can be acceptable to the international community, and as a first step we join in calling for a complete halt to the testing of new nuclear weapons systems, and a freeze in the production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons. We also call for a halt to the production and proliferation of conventional weapons and a ban on the testing, production, and proliferation of chemical weapons.

One example of an area still desperately in need of assistance is that of sub-Saharan Africa. The crisis there is far from over. Though increased rainfall has alleviated the drought somewhat, mass starvation and disease still threaten millions of lives. Even beyond the immediate crisis, however, the long-term rehabilitation needs of the region must be met.

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We hope that the programme of action emanating from the special session on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa convened last spring will receive the generous financial support of the international community.

The problems of sub-Saharan Africa, which stem in part from colonial legacies and in part from natural disasters, present a striking example of the fundamental injustice of current international economic relations. It is clear that a more equitable world economic infrastructure would have in large measure cushioned the region from such shocks. Trade restrictions, deteriorating commodity prices, reduced and restricted capital flows, and high interest rates, combine to hurt the economies of the developing countries. Indeed, it is often the developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, that suffer the most from fluctuations in the world economy, for they lack the means to adapt to changing conditions. The developed nations cannot flourish at the expense of the developing countries. This can only bring about further unrest, undermine social stability, and in the end adversely affect the developed countries as well. In our interdependent world, we have no choice but to co-operate, rich nations with poor, developed with developing.

To end this overall global economic malaise, we urge the resumption of the North-South dialogue, and the establishment of a new international economic order. The creative partnerships implied would insure equitable economic relations, impart a new dynamism to the global economy, and bring about many social and humanitarian improvements.

The various specialized agencies and affiliated bodies of the United Nations continue to play an impressive role in helping to bridge the widening gap between

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developed and developing nations. My own country, Bhutan, has benefited enormously from these agencies and bodies of the United Nations, which have worked closely with our Government for the socio-economic development of our country. The co-operation of these organizations has affected all aspects of our national life. In particular, I would like to express our deep gratitude to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), for their invaluable assistance.

Our goal is self-reliance, and the work of these organizations has helped to put us on the road to the achievement of this end. We believe that the primary responsibility for a nation's development resides with that nation itself.

I would like to mention that progress on the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the least developed countries has been disappointing. The assistance provided is sadly inadequate to our needs. Bhutan is committed to taking national actions as called for in that Programme. We have developed specific programmes on the district level, initiated a process of decentralization of our development administration, involved our people directly through such organizations as the District Development Committees, instituted major fiscal reforms, and in general demonstrated an active willingness to do our part. Further, external assistance must be forthcoming, however, before we can hope to reach even the beginnings of economic self-reliance.



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Bhutan is an active supporter of the concept of regional co-operation in South Asia. While addressing the Harare summit of the Non-Aligned Movement recently, His Majesty the King of Bhutan said:

"A most positive development in our own region of South Asia has been the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation which was formally launched last December by a summit meeting in Dhaka. The summit manifested the determination of the seven South Asian leaders to work together towards finding solutions to common problems in a spirit of friendship, trust and co-operation. Our Association will promote the objectives of individual and collective self-reliance, and further the cause of peace, progress and stability in South Asia. The second summit will take place shortly and we look forward to building on the progress already made."

Bhutan is wholeheartedly committed to the United Nations in the belief that a multilateral approach to the world's problems is the most effective one. Such problems as pollution or nuclear weapons or global economic malaise can only be resolved by the collective will and action of the international community. As we are all aware, the United Nations is facing today the worst financial crisis in its history. The Secretary-General has taken some initiatives to meet the immediate problems. The Group of High Level Intergovernmental Experts, which was entrusted with the task of reviewing the administrative and financial matters in the United Nation, has come up with a sound report recommending some much-needed reforms. The report, in our view, deserves our most serious consideration.

Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu): Mr. President, I have the honour to convey to you the congratulations and best wishes of the Government and people of the Republic of Vanuatu. Your unanimous election to preside over the forty-first session of the General Assembly is a tribute to you and to the Government and people of Bangladesh. We add our voice to that of those who have already spoken so eloquently of your broad experience, your skills and your dedication to the principles and ideals which unite us in this world body.

We congratulate your illustrious predecessor, Jaime de Piniés, for the outstanding manner in which he carried out the duties of President. We also associate ourselves with the many expressions of appreciation and praise for the work of our Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar.

We are pleased to see that the Secretary-General's health has been restored. It is to be hoped that we, the nations of the world, will ease the burden of his high office by following up our expressions of praise with concrete deeds that are consistent with our Charter and the sentiments expressed by those moving words. Matching our deeds to those words might assure the future good health of our Secretary-General and the United Nations itself. Such a course of action might even assure the good health of our very troubled world.

Last year at this time we gathered to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the founding of our Organization. For a brief period, the world's attention was focused on the United Nations and the dramatic activities here at Headquarters. A few observers were drawn to, and mesmerized by, the obvious glamour and excitement of that historic event. Most, however, waited anxiously for the results of our thought and reflection on what had been achieved during our first 40 years and what had not, where we have been and where we are going. For us, and for most of the world, it was less a period of celebration and more a period of critical evaluation.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Today, we are not commemorating a notable anniversary. Therefore, fewer cameras, microphones, flashbulbs and notepads are present. Fewer words are written, fewer said, and even fewer listened to. None the less, what we say and do at this session will be just as important and crucial to the future of the human race as what was said and done at the last session.

This year, the mood is quieter and more subdued. The airports, hotels and restaurants of our host city are not quite as crowded today as they were one year ago. The streets and highways approaching the United Nations are not as jammed with official motorcades, and the general public is not as affected by, and therefore not as concerned with, our deliberations. However, as little has changed for the better since we last met, our current session is, in a very real sense, every bit as dramatic, urgent and intense as the last. A cursory glance around the globe reveals why.

The prisons of South Africa are even fuller than they were one year ago. The refugee camps that house the people of Palestine are even more crowded than they were one year ago. More people have been killed as a result of the senseless and tragic war between Iran and Iraq. In Lebanon, more children have been deprived of the innocence of youth and turned into soldiers as even more death and destruction have been visited upon that once serene land. Cyprus continues to be divided and occupied by a powerful neighbour.

More debt has accumulated in South America, threatening that continent's democratic advances. More firepower and less development aid has been pledged to the people of Central America, and new obstacles have been placed in the path of the Contadora process. A few still speak of the "five" States in Central America, forgetting the existence of Belize, and the fact that it is a home to many refugees and that it, too, is vulnerable to the region's instability.

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The people of Kampuchea and Afghanistan are no closer to being allowed to live in peace and choose their own destinies, free from all forms of foreign interference, than they were one year ago. The people of East Timor, and those of other territories in our region, are no closer to being free to determine their own futures than they were one year ago.

We are no closer to seeing a referendum held in Western Sahara than we were last year at this time. South Africa is no closer to ending its illegal occupation of Namibia than it was one year ago. Certain foreign economic interests are no closer to ending their illegal and immoral looting and pillage of Namibia's resources than they were one year ago.

The illegal traffic in deadly drugs has increased, and more young lives have been ruined, if not ended, as a result. Individual and State terrorism continue unabated in absolute defiance of every known standard of decency and common sense. France continues to test its nuclear weapons in our region, disregarding the objections of the countries of the region and the harm caused to our environment.

Throughout the world, more people are hungry, homeless, unemployed and, as a result, frustrated or without hope. Gaps in real income between nations and between individuals have widened. Everywhere one looks, the rich have become richer and the poor have become poorer. Yet, somehow, in the midst of all of this, the inventory of nuclear weapons has grown larger.

Despite all of this, there is a faint glimmer of hope. For millions of people in every corner of the earth, the United Nations still represents mankind's finest qualities. It symbolizes their dream of justice, equality, and peace. They care little about celebrations and commemorations. Diplomatic dinners and receptions are very remote to them, but the United Nations and its specialized agencies are not. That is why we must make sure that the Organization is not destroyed or emasculated, but instead strengthened and made even more relevant.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

The financial crisis facing the United Nations is, as everyone knows, in reality a major political crisis. As such, it commands our attention and demands, above all else, our candor.

A great deal has been written, and even more has been said, on the subject of the imperfections of the United Nations. Critics point to our lengthy debates, repetitive speeches, strident resolutions, and our frequent waste and inefficiency. The criticisms are not completely without merit. There is considerable room for improvement.

However, one must ask why the United Nations' most vociferous critics do not begin with a candid self-examination. What measures have they taken to correct similar, if not worse, shortcomings in the various national and local governmental bodies of their own respective jurisdictions? Are we to believe that the United Nations is unique in its frequent waste and inefficiency? Is this the only place where there are too many lengthy speeches and too many divisive resolutions? Of course not.

Let us pause for a moment and carefully consider what the most vocal critics have to say about the excessive number of resolutions passed each year. We happen to agree with that criticism. However, it does not go far enough. We should also ask why Cyprus is still occupied; why the Palestinians still can't go home or even call their home their home; why apartheid still exists in South Africa; why Namibia is still not independent; and why so many other questions on our agenda are unresolved.

Had the earlier, more moderate resolutions been implemented, most of those problems would have been resolved, and others might not have arisen. If today's resolutions are more militant, or strident in tone, the fault may not lie

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exclusively with the authors of the resolutions. Those who, while having it in their power to restrain or reform those States that have ignored their obligations under our Charter, have chosen not to exercise that power, must also share the responsibility. Their repeated failure to help us implement the expressed will of the international community has led to the situation they now abhor.

The occasional inability to be exact and concise in our various resolutions is, we agree, a serious and regrettable deficiency. However, it is a deficiency of form. On the other hand, actively frustrating the will of our international democracy in so many instances is a substantive shortcoming. That is even more regrettable.

There is no doubt that we should consider changes in some of our practices and procedures, and perhaps even in some aspects of the structure of the United Nations. However, we must be careful not, as the saying goes, "to throw out the baby with the bath water". Change and reform are two-way avenues. We cannot be expected to consider making some changes but not others. Nor can we reform the Organization without a willingness by some of our Members to modify their behaviour and a willingness by other to reform themselves.

The report of the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts is an important document. It is obvious that considerable thought and effort have been expended in its preparation. We commend the Group of 18 for its labour on our behalf. The conclusions of their report merit our careful consideration, as it is obvious that we have reached a critical stage in the history of this Organization and another very critical stage in the process of international co-operation.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

This year, as in past years, we have been reminded of mankind's vulnerabilities and imperfections. In lands as geographically removed from each other as the Solomon Islands and the Cameroons, death and destruction have struck without warning, in the form of an unusually severe cyclone in one instance and of a volcanic gas leak in the other. It is almost as if nature had chosen those harsh methods of delivering a painful reminder of its mystery, its power and the fact that as individual nations we are all vulnerable.

In lands as politically remote from each other as the United States and the Soviet Union, two separate incidents involving imperfect technology and human miscalculation have caused major disasters that have had an impact upon and traumatized people far beyond the borders of those two powerful States. The tragic explosion of the space shuttle Challenger and the equally tragic accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant point to mankind's scientific imperfections and the very thin margin of error between scientific progress and disaster. In a related sense those two accidents also bring to mind the thin margin of error between the policy of nuclear deterrence and the potential accidental nuclear annihilation of the entire human race. They remind us that unless we work together no amount of technology can save our species from its own inventions.

How many more reminders will have to be given before an even greater disaster occurs? What further lesson do we need? Must we see more evidence of the homicidal and suicidal nature of the nuclear-arms race or may we finally say that enough is not only enough but more than enough?

As President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev prepare for their second summit meeting we note the positive step evidenced by the recently concluded Stockholm accord. It is to be hoped that the flexibility demonstrated in the final stages of the negotiation of that accord and the trust and confidence evidenced in

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its terms will enable them to take further steps on the long road to a lasting and stable peace.

The establishment of trust and confidence in Europe is but one dimension of the world-wide search for peace. Trust and confidence in the process of multilateralism must also be evident in our work here at the United Nations, to ensure the continued relevance of the Organization and its value to future generations. Not one of our countries, large or small, East or West, North or South, can afford to denigrate this Organization in word or deed. We all need the United Nations. Some of us simply recognize that we need it more than others of us care to admit.

I now turn to southern Africa. That area, more than any other, tests the will and resolve of the international community. The late W. E. B. DuBois wrote in his most noted passage that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour line". I doubt that this renowned historian, despite his wisdom and acumen, knew how prophetic those words would be. He was born in a society that had only recently ended its own form of legalized slavery. Racism was still prevalent in the land of his birth. Segregation was the accepted code of behaviour. Africa, Asia and the Caribbean were colonized. The peoples of those regions were locked in the grip of those who saw them as mere subhuman producers of raw materials for their hungry factories.

A great deal has changed since his time. DuBois and others managed, through decades of difficult struggle, to overcome the segregationists and change the face and the soul of the land of their birth. Their children now know hope where before they knew only despair.



(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Most of the countries of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean are, through the efforts of their respective peoples, now politically independent. Their children also know hope where once they knew only despair.

Unfortunately, South Africa is a land untouched by the passage of time. Despite its twentieth century technology, its people continue to be victims of the backward attitudes of the nineteenth century. Even in death South Africa's people are victimized. A few weeks ago, at a place called Evander, 177 human beings lost their lives in a gold-mine accident. That disaster could have been avoided but concern for the safety of African miners is not an attribute of South Africa. The company involved identified the five dead whites by name, occupation and marital status and gave details of how many children each had. The 172 dead blacks were identified only as members of different tribes. Even in death they were given no dignity. This was not South Africa's worst mining accident and it is not the worst example of the South African régime's inhumanity. It is, however, a good example of how pervasive that régime's racism is. Recent cosmetic changes are almost meaningless. Despite the efforts of some to paint a different picture, its intransigence and unwillingness to change in any substantive manner are as evident today as they were yesterday.

The apartheid régime is not content with terrorizing the people of South Africa. Its system has also been imposed on the people of Namibia and threatens the survival of each of the front-line States. That régime, in fact, challenges every member of the United Nations.

None of us could possibly accept such behaviour in our own countries. Why, then, do we still permit those storm troopers in Pretoria to call themselves a legitimate Government? Why do some of us still hesitate to align ourselves with the people who seek nothing more than the right to walk the land of their own

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country as free human beings? Why do some of us close our eyes to the fact that the Pretoria régime has already imposed sanctions on neighbouring African States in an effort to make them betray their own principles and their own people? How can those who oppose sanctions claim to be motivated by concern for South Africa's black population when apartheid itself is nothing more than the institutionalization of sanctions against that same population? How much longer must the world wait for some finally to decide to join the battle against this evil? What degree of brutality and callousness will finally move them to action? Must we wait until the next century for their attitudes to catch up with those of this century?

Turning to our own area, the South Pacific, we draw the attention of the Assembly to the fact that ours is a part of the world that contains many of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. We seldom fail to mention this, because nothing poses a graver threat to the stability and tranquillity of our region and nothing is in greater contradiction of the Charter of the United Nations and its various pronouncements.

In the modern world colonialism is just as much an anachronism as apartheid. What could be more outdated than the notion that the people of any territory are incapable of deciding for themselves who they are, what they wish to be and how they choose to live? That is why the maintenance of colonialism in the midst of the South Pacific region is unacceptable. The States of our region speak with one clear voice on the subject. We are as convinced of this as are the States of other regions that colonialism has no place in their midst.

In August, the Heads of Government of the 13 member States of the South Pacific Forum decided to ask the United Nations to place New Caledonia on its list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. That step had been considered in the past but

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had not been taken. In the past, the Forum countries believed that the administering Power recognized its responsibilities in the area of decolonization and that it would act accordingly. The events of the past year have now convinced us otherwise.

In September, the Heads of State or Government of the 101-member Movement of Non-Aligned Countries supported our regional initiative. At the eighth summit conference in Harare, Zimbabwe, the Heads of State or Government strongly urged the forty-first session of the General Assembly to place New Caledonia on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. They also admitted New Caledonia's independence movement, the Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS) as an observer. Vanuatu, having joined in those unanimous decisions, now anticipates that the General Assembly will itself take appropriate action.

We seek no quarrel with the administering Power and will not be provoked into one. If we are called names or if stones are cast in our direction we will not respond in kind. The principles involved are too lofty, our Charter is too explicit and the various resolutions are too clear for us to allow ourselves to be dragged into such a useless and senseless exercise.

We have been told that this is all our fault. How can that be so? It was not Vanuatu that colonized New Caledonia. It was not Vanuatu that drafted the Charter of the United Nations. It was not Vanuatu that was the author of the various resolutions on decolonization. It was not a representative of Vanuatu who first uttered the words "liberty, equality, fraternity".

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

We cannot take individual credit. Vanuatu is only one of 13 countries in the South Pacific Forum, one of 99 countries and two liberation movements in the Non-Aligned Movement and one of 159 countries in the United Nations.

On another day, we were told that Australia was to blame; on another day, it was New Zealand; on another, Fiji; on yet another, Papua New Guinea; and on other days the Solomon Islands or Samoa. Everyone has been given credit for causing the case of New Caledonia to be brought to the United Nations except the one party which really deserves the credit: the administering Power. It chose not to proceed with what it had promised the colonized people of New Caledonia. Therefore it can blame no one but itself.

We have also been told that economic aid to Vanuatu will be terminated if we persist in bringing the question of New Caledonia to the United Nations. This is a most unfortunate suggestion. Naturally we do not want to see this aid terminated. Vanuatu is, after all, a small developing country. In fact it is one of the least developed countries. However, we will not be intimidated in this way or in any other manner.

Similar threats have been made and carried out against other countries. Vanuatu is not the first and will probably not be the last to be threatened in this fashion. We regret this, but such is life. We have always believed that the administering Power is above such actions. We still hope that it is. However, if it is not, Vanuatu will survive, and New Caledonia will still become independent. Nothing will stop that process.

Finally, we were also told that the Political Declaration by the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was meaningless. "They do not mean it," we were told. "They will change their minds when they get to the United Nations," we heard.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

We find it incredible that anyone should believe that the leaders of the non-aligned countries are not serious when they issue a political declaration. It is unfathomable to us that anyone would believe that they do not mean what they say and say what they mean. How could anyone expect representatives of the non-aligned countries at the United Nations to act contrary to a clear and explicit declaration made by their Heads of State or Government?

More incredibly, how could anyone expect non-aligned Members of the United Nations to forget their own histories and reverse a unanimous summit decision on what is clearly a decolonization question? How could anyone expect any Member of the United Nations to say that the United Nations should not even consider a colonial question? How can anyone question the competence of the United Nations to consider this matter? Who among us is prepared to take the floor and express a lack of confidence in the fairness and objectivity of the decolonization process that we ourselves have established and that we ourselves monitor? Vanuatu would never ask any nation to do anything that is so patently at odds with its own principles and the Charter. We hope that France, the administering Power in New Caledonia, would not consider asking any nation to do such a thing.

France is still our friend. Its representatives and its nationals are in all sincerity welcome in Vanuatu. We anticipate that they will also be welcome in an independent New Caledonia. We fully understand the political constraints and other difficulties facing France in New Caledonia due to the presence of a large settler population. It has faced similar constraints before, as have other administering Powers.

The independence movement and the countries of the region are anxious to work constructively with the French Government in the decolonization process. That is why we wish to have the United Nations play its customary role. What could be more reasonable?

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Indonesia, our large and influential neighbour, is a country we respect. We have always admired its struggle to free itself from colonialism. Everyone knows that we have also on occasion disagreed with some of its policies in our area. Despite these areas of disagreement, Vanuatu has always considered itself a friend of Indonesia and always will.

On most matters we concur. On a few we do not. However, we listen attentively to Indonesia's position on those subjects. We analyse what is said and carefully note the areas in which, as a matter of principle, we do not agree and those in which we do agree.

Nothing is static. Only evolution is a constant. We have never feared to let Indonesia know where we have disagreed. Similarly, we do not fear to let it know where we agree. We do so today once again as a candid friend.

We are pleased by the ability of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea to address some of the problems that have arisen along their border in a positive and conciliatory manner. As a Melanesian State sharing a rich cultural heritage with other Melanesian peoples, Vanuatu appreciates the measures taken to assure the survival of cultural diversity and ethnic pluralism in our region. We commend Indonesia and Papua New Guinea for the steps they have taken in this regard. Both deserve a great deal of credit and support for these initiatives and those to follow.

On East Timor, we support the Secretary-General's attempts to bring about an acceptable solution. His humanitarian efforts merit the support of the entire international community. The negotiations between Portugal and Indonesia are an encouraging sign. As we have always stated, we will support the genuine wishes of the people of the Territory, nothing more and nothing less.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Ours is a monumental task. The United Nations is charged with considering and resolving major issues some of which seem in one form or another to have vexed mankind almost from the beginning of recorded history. There are still no easy answers or quick solutions to any of these issues.

Just as nature's process of creating oil or precious minerals took centuries of agitation and ferment of various elements, so too will the process of creating a better future take years of effort by every nation represented in this Hall, and some that are not yet represented here. We have begun that process. Let us continue it, and let us bequeath to future generations the ability and the means to improve upon the humble efforts of this generation.

Mr. MTETWA (Swaziland): Mr. President, first and foremost allow me to convey fraternal greetings from His Majesty King Mswati III to you and to all the Members of the United Nations. Further allow me to convey my delegation's warmest congratulations to you on your well-deserved election to the presidency of this forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are indeed delighted with your election to the helm of this august Assembly, for we feel deeply convinced that, with your wide experience and prudent leadership, this Assembly will be eminently equipped to tackle effectively the many pressing problems facing mankind in the present decade.

Swaziland's delegation brings special thanks for the remarkable role played by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Perez de Cuellar, in having brought to the attention of the Security Council matters which in his opinion threaten international peace and security.

(Mr. Mtetwa, Swaziland)

Today we live in an unstable world, a world threatened by all kinds of conflicts, be they inter-State or global. It is therefore incumbent on us as Member States of the United Nations to uphold our Charter and interpret its provisions with the utmost care.

Peace and security seem to be elusive nowadays. Many nations tend to be indifferent to resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. Should such a trend persist, Armageddon will soon befall the world, and peaceful economic development and good-neighbourliness will be things of the past.

The world is in dire need of complete disarmament. The accumulation of weapons of mass destruction by nations large and small threatens humanity's very existence. While many people worry more about a nuclear holocaust of some sort, let us remember that many of the wars fought in the past resulted, and those being fought today are resulting, in the loss of millions of lives through the use of conventional weapons.

We have over the years witnessed gross violations of the Charter. Such violations run counter to civilized conduct and are a direct cause of tensions around the world. My delegation hopes that those nations that have succumbed to the temptation to disregard the Charter will desist, for the sake of peace and security.

My delegation is concerned, further, about the prevailing State terrorism and related actions by Member States aimed at undermining the socio-political system in sovereign States. Such acts have been, and still are, a tremendous threat to international peace and security. Therefore, my delegation appeals to all Member States to refrain from, and to combat, international terrorism and similar actions aimed at destabilizing and overthrowing other Governments.



(Mr. Mtetwa, Swaziland)

Respect for human rights is of crucial importance to the world. It is sad that we still hear of torture, disappearances and wanton killing in some parts of the world. The international community has a duty to encourage respect for human rights. Racism, racial discrimination, apartheid, exploitation of child labour and the like are all violations of human rights and must be condemned and discouraged.

The elements of instability in the world economy can be resolved only by the maintenance of a rapid tempo of recovery by the developing countries, based on the flexibility of the developed countries.

The world-wide recession has had a serious impact on Swaziland's economy. Our economic and financial performance has deteriorated and inflation rates have averaged around 15 per cent, while interest rates have declined significantly. Unemployment is on the increase, as the production and manufacturing sector continues to stagnate. The 50 per cent drop in the value of our currency has doubled our debt-servicing burden.

I wish to reaffirm my Government's policy, which is dictated by pragmatism rather than political and ideological realism. The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland, however, remains committed to the principles enshrined in the Charter, particularly those principles concerning the self-determination and independence of peoples under colonial rule or any other form of oppression. The Kingdom of Swaziland reiterates its commitment to the settlement of disputes by peaceful negotiation and the non-use of force. It is my Government's objective to uplift the economic and social welfare of mankind in unity, freedom and love for one another. We are convinced that if such an atmosphere prevails future generations will enjoy the fruits of peace, unity and stability.

Swaziland, as a peace-loving country, is greatly perturbed by the current situation in world politics. The situation in the Middle East continues to plague the deliberations of the international community.

(Mr. Mtetwa, Swaziland)

My delegation is very much aware of the situation in Lebanon. Therefore, we commend the Lebanese people for their untiring efforts to pursue their socio-economic and political development. My delegation remains firmly convinced that peace in Lebanon can be effected only by the complete withdrawal of all foreign troops from its territory. Only then will the Lebanese be in control of their destiny.

The ongoing war in the Persian Gulf is also a matter of great concern to the international community. My delegation humbly urges all the parties concerned to exercise moral restraint and resolve their differences by peaceful means.

On the question of world peace and security, it is important to refer to the sensitive political situation that continues to divide North and South Korea. The reunification of Korea is a matter to be decided by the Koreans themselves in direct inter-Korean negotiations. It remains for the United Nations to continue to encourage the resumption of those talks without pre-conditions or external interference.

In South-East Asia the protracted occupation of Kampuchea by foreign forces continues to deprive the people of Kampuchea of their right to self-determination. The present activities of the invasion force have compelled many thousands of people to flee their homeland into neighbouring Thailand. That in itself has aggravated the refugee problem and is a big burden on Thailand's economy. The Kampuchea problem poses a grave threat to regional peace and security.

With regard to the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan, my delegation fully supports the decision of the General Assembly calling for their withdrawal. We hope that such a withdrawal will constitute the essential first step towards the normalization of the situation.

(Mr. Mtetwa, Swaziland)

My delegation wishes to thank and congratulate the Secretary-General and all concerned for their relentless efforts in seeking a peaceful solution to the Namibian question. My delegation believes that the Namibian question should be settled on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

On the question of apartheid, my Government and the people of Swaziland abhor apartheid and believe that it must be dismantled. Swaziland is unswervingly committed to the principles of non-racial democracy, non-alignment and complete respect for human dignity, justice and peaceful coexistence with all.

My delegation is gravely concerned at the large number of refugees in Africa, and is also cognizant of the economic and social burden imposed on African countries of asylum, whose weak economies suffer the negative effects of the situation. Swaziland falls in that category. My delegation welcomed the holding in 1984 of the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, the objective of which was to find lasting solutions to the problems of refugees. My delegation urges the international community, the United Nations and its specialized agencies to provide the necessary co-operation in implementing projects approved by the Conference. Swaziland urges all countries and international organizations to assist in the relief and rehabilitation of refugees now in large numbers in this small Kingdom.

(Mr. Mtetwa, Swaziland)

My delegation also relies on the support measures adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity with a view to granting financial and material assistance to the southern African States. Therefore my delegation will appreciate prompt action by all States, international organizations, the United Nations and its agencies.

Finally, I wish to reaffirm Swaziland's trust and faith in the United Nations. The United Nations remains the only appropriate international forum for finding solutions to the major world problems of today. Therefore it is incumbent upon all of us as States Members to renew our commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Mr. QIONIBARAWI (Fiji): Sir, my delegation joins others in warmly congratulating you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at the forty-first session. We also compliment your predecessor, Mr. de Piniés of Spain, on his distinguished leadership of the fortieth session.

The year 1986 has been designated the International Year of Peace. We sincerely hope that the eloquent rhetoric and lofty sentiments so characteristic of recent debates will be translated into genuine and meaningful action. The privileged position of the permanent members of the Security Council imposes on them the primary responsibility for setting the example. In particular, on the two super-Powers rest the heaviest obligations to the world community. Therefore we greatly welcome the summit meeting of the two leaders due in a few days' time.

In the quest for peace and a world free of nuclear weapons, interlocking nuclear-free zones can play a prominent role. To this end the 13 independent countries comprising the South Pacific Forum at their 16th meeting in Rarotonga in July last year adopted the South Pacific Nuclear-Free-Zone Treaty.

(Mr. Qionibarawi, Fiji)

So far ten members of the Forum have signed the treaty, and four have ratified it. We expect the treaty to come into force before the end of this year. The treaty will make a tangible contribution to disarmament efforts, to arms control and to the promotion of international peace and security.

At the 17th South Pacific Forum meeting, held last month in Suva, Fiji, the members expressed the strong hope that the nuclear-weapon States would acknowledge the concerns and aspirations of the peoples of the region by signing the Protocols when they were opened to signature. In this regard, the Forum expressed pleasure that some States eligible to sign the Protocols had already indicated that signature would receive prompt and favourable consideration.

While the nations of the South Pacific are attempting to ensure that their region remains nuclear-free, we are deeply concerned that, in the face of our long-standing, strong and unanimous opposition, the Government of France defiantly continues its nuclear testing programme at Mururoa. How much longer can a country that professes to be a world leader in its respect for international law and obligations continue to act so arrogantly? If, as France maintains, nuclear testing is so vital to the security interests of the Western alliance, perhaps the United States might consider allowing France to use the Nevada test site. On the other hand, if the tests are as safe as claimed, then there is good reason to move testing to its Mediterranean island of Corsica or to mainland France itself.

The process of decolonization and the self-determination of dependent peoples has yet to be completed in our region, the South Pacific. At their Suva meeting last month, the 13 independent South Pacific Forum countries reaffirmed

(Mr. Qionibarawi, Fiji)

"support for the peaceful transition to an independent New Caledonia in accordance with the innate, active rights and aspirations of the indigenous people and in a manner which guarantees the rights and interests of all inhabitants of this multiracial society",

The Forum members agreed to seek the reinscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Harare summit conference of non-aligned countries fully endorsed this call and urged the General Assembly at the forty-first session to act accordingly. I renew that plea and sincerely hope that the joint efforts of the South Pacific Forum Members of the United Nations will receive unanimous support when the matter is brought before the Assembly.

In the same spirit, the South Pacific Forum noted that the peoples of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Palau and the Northern Marianas have already exercised their right to self-determination, some of them many years ago. They have requested the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. Forum members respect their wishes and urge prompt termination of the Trusteeship Agreement over Micronesia, in accordance with the Trusteeship Council resolution of 28 May.

As our contribution towards maintaining peace and towards achieving an acceptable and lasting solution in the Middle East, Fiji has provided troops for the United Nations peace-keeping operations in Lebanon since 1978. My Government welcomes the decision of States which had formerly withheld payment to begin now paying their assessed contributions to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon but urges them to make good their arrears. We also urge all countries to pay fully and promptly their assessed contributions, as defaulting by any State, and especially by major States, results in a most unfair burden on troop-contributing

(Mr. Qionibarawi, Fiji)

countries and particularly on the smaller developing countries. It is to us painfully ironic that, while many large and wealthy nations, for whatever reason, owe the Organization vast sums, the troop-contributing countries are owed more than \$250 million. For my small country, a debt of \$18 million is no light burden.

We believe that the report of the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts on the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations is a valuable basis for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization. We particularly support the recommendations which aim at streamlining the institutions and structures within the United Nations system. We fully endorse the call for rationalizing the roles and functions of overlapping agencies. In the final analysis, however, it is the political will of Member States which will determine whether the present financial crisis is resolved and the Organization put on a firmer footing.

My Government is deeply distressed at the tragic events unfolding in South Africa. We sincerely hope that good sense may yet prevail and the escalating violence brought to an end. We are in full accord with the measures agreed on by the Commonwealth and urge the still-reluctant countries to join this initiative.

(Mr. Qionibarawi, Fiji)

South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia and its persistent defiance of the United Nations plan and Security Council resolution 435 (1978) cannot be tolerated much longer. The international community and the people of Namibia cannot be forced into impotence by the unwillingness of the few to take effective action.

We strongly deplore the aggressive actions of States which threaten to undermine the sovereignty and integrity of other nations. Along with many others, my Government's deep concern about the situation in Kampuchea remains unchanged. We endorse again the call for a comprehensive political solution which would secure the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces and enable the Kampuchean people to determine their own destiny through free and fair elections. We believe the eight-point proposal put forward by the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea contains all the necessary elements for a just solution.

We also reaffirm our Government's support for the widespread call for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan and the restoration of the genuine independence and sovereignty of the Afghan people.

My Government also welcomes the recent resumption of contact between North and South Korea. We fully support the admission of the two Koreas to this Organization, pending their reunification.

It is tragic that a solution to the Palestinian problem remains so elusive. Any just and durable settlement must, in our view, incorporate the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland as well as the right to existence and security of all States in the region, including Israel.

My Government also fully supports the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Cyprus. In our view, the mission of good offices under the auspices



(Mr. Qionibarawi, Fiji)

of the Secretary-General appears to offer the best hope for a viable solution to the Cyprus problem.

My Government also strongly applauds the Secretary-General and his staff for their strenuous and untiring efforts at mediation in the many trouble-spots around the world. Progress is not easy, but we exhort them not to waver in their valuable peace-keeping role.

The problem of drug abuse is one of the most serious of the modern world, afflicting nations large and small, rich and poor. The international community must act speedily and decisively, and in total accord, to eradicate this scourge. We strongly support the holding of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and hope that firm and effective co-operative international action will result.

International terrorism is manifesting itself in more and more horrifying forms. We condemn all acts of systematic violence to achieve political ends, which result in the maiming and killing of innocent people. Greater co-operation among nations must be fostered to stamp it out. At the same time the underlying causes must be urgently addressed.

Ever burdening foreign debt, increasing protectionism and depressed commodity prices continue to plague the economies of much of the developing world. While some attention is given to these problems in the larger regions, the smaller countries, and particularly the small island countries, tend to be overlooked. Most of the smaller Pacific Island States are seriously lacking in natural resources. For all of us the sea represents a vital asset, much of which, because of a lack of technology, expertise and capital, we are unable to exploit adequately. We seek a fair and equitable deal to enable us to tap these resources

(Mr. Qionibarawi, Fiji)

and thereby acquire the means to give our peoples a better standard of living. To this end, we people of the Pacific believe strongly in self help, but all our efforts will be nullified unless we are given reasonable trading access to developed markets.

My delegation assures you, Mr. President, of our full co-operation during your tenure of office. We are hopeful that history will judge the forty-first session of the General Assembly to have been one of the most productive, and as one that achieved far-reaching solutions to the more urgent problems besetting the world and our Organization.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.