



## General Assembly

PROVIS IONAL

A/41/PV.46  
23 October 1986

ENGLISH

Forty-first session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Wednesday, 22 October 1986, at 10 a.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. MATTURI	(Sierra Leone)
	(Vice-President)	
later:	Mr. CHOUDHURY	(Bangladesh)
	(President)	
later:	Mr. KABANDA	(Rwanda)
	(Vice-President)	

- Programme of work
- Critical economic situation in Africa: Report of the Secretary-General [29]

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

In the absence of the President, Mr. Matturi (Sierra Leone), Vice-President, took the Chair.

#### PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I have to announce certain changes in the tentative programme of work announced on Tuesday, 7 October.

Tomorrow, Thursday, 23 October, the Assembly will take up agenda item 27, "Co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity", and begin its consideration of agenda item 21, "International Year of Peace".

Beginning on Wednesday, 29 October, in the morning, the Assembly will consider agenda item 24, "Armed Israeli aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations and its grave consequences for the established international system concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and international peace and security".

On Friday, 31 October, in the morning, the Assembly will take up the reports of the Fourth Committee.

In addition to the items already announced for the morning of Monday, 3 November, the Assembly will also consider agenda item 32, "Law of the Sea".

On Tuesday, 11 November, the General Assembly will take up item 14, "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency".

On Friday, 14 November, in the morning, the Assembly will take up sub-item (d) of agenda item 17, "Election of the members of the International Law Commission" and begin its consideration of agenda item 36 "Question of Namibia".

On Monday, 1 December, in the morning, the Assembly will take up agenda item 11, "Report of the Security Council" and begin its consideration of agenda item 19, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples".

(The President)

On Tuesday, 2 December, in the morning, the Assembly will consider agenda item 34, "United Nations Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy".

## AGENDA ITEM 29

## CRITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AFRICA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/41/683)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at 12 noon. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I therefore request these representatives wishing to participate in the debate to put their names down as soon as possible.

The first speaker is the representative of Congo, who will speak on behalf of the Organization of African Unity.

Mr. GAYAMA (Congo) (interpretation from French): At the beginning of this debate on the critical economic situation in Africa I should like to express our profound regret, as expressed on Monday on behalf of the Group of African States by the Permanent Representative of Benin, Chairman of our Group for the month of October, at the death of President Samora Machel.

On behalf of President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), I have the sad duty recalling to memory once again an illustrious person who was a symbol for the present generation of African leaders, an outstanding, even charismatic, personality whose life was noteworthy for a series of heroic acts linked to the liberation of Mozambique and the struggle for the establishment of peace in southern Africa. Thus, President Samora Machel shares the immortality of such illustrious heroes as Eduardo Mondlane, whom he succeeded as leader of FRELIMO, Amilcar Cabral and Patrice Lumumba. Parted too

(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

soon from his compatriots and many friends throughout the world, Samora Machel leaves a void at a time when Africa has more need than ever of his qualities of courage, clear-mindedness and determination. We are sure, as we extend our most heartfelt condolences to his family and to the delegation of Mozambique, that his sacrifice will inspire the African peoples and spur them on to achieve the major objectives to which he devoted his life.

Unfortunately, there is a tendency sometimes to forget that apartheid is a major cause of the crisis in southern Africa with all the misery it entails and the suffering it causes economically and socially. The elimination of apartheid will be an important measure in promoting peace and development in a large part of Africa.

Some three years ago the international community and the world public became aware of the extremely critical economic and social situation in Africa. This awareness led to the inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly of the item now under consideration, together with general mobilization of effort for which the United Nations, at the initiative of its Secretary-General Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, was undoubtedly the catalyst. The establishment of the Office of Emergency Operations in Africa bears witness to that mobilization, the culmination of which was the adoption at the end of the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, which took place from 27 May to 1 June 1986, in the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

Only a few months after the adoption of this Programme of Action by the General Assembly, there would be no question of carrying out a review and appraisal of it, something which is in fact to be done in the years 1987 and 1988, pursuant to resolution S-13/2 adopted at the thirteenth special session. Nevertheless we wish to emphasize, in the rest of our statement, what in our view will determine the conditions for the implementation and success of this Programme.

I should like at the outset to express, on behalf of the African States, our appreciation of the work done by the Office for Emergency Services in co-ordinating and bringing assistance to the countries and regions of Africa which have been affected, thereby ensuring efficient delivery of the assistance provided by a number of donors, including Governments, institutions, non-governmental organizations and private individuals.

Thanks to the publication of information and to the mobilization of resources, which have been properly channelled through such international organizations as the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, most of the 35 million people who were affected in 1985 and the countries concerned have emerged from the critical situation that would have plunged them into an unprecedented disaster.

Assistance from the world community has therefore made it possible for us to push back the frontiers of famine, epidemic and migration of peoples, which cause untold sufferings, high death rates, impoverishment and certain death.

The immediate tragedy has been avoided, thanks to the large-scale and rapid assistance given, but the fact remains that substantial, even essential, needs remain, witness by the continued areas of famine, drought and disease or harm done to the environment which, if our attention and our efforts are not unstinting, might give rise once again to the situation we saw three years ago.

(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

Therefore, as the Secretary-General points out in his report (A/41/683), the needs that must still be met in order to overcome the famine resulting from the drought total some \$500 million, and several countries continue to experience an alarming emergency situation.

Some 14 million people still need food and other assistance, and 3 million have been uprooted, not counting orphans and children separated from their families, through the tragedy they have experienced and whose number can be counted in tens of thousands.

For the year 1986, we still lack \$25 million in order to cover emergency health needs, and more than double this sum for transport and logistics over all, for which the governments concerned have a vital need in order to strengthen and maintain their capacity for action.

Among the needs for assistance other than food, we should mention the need for a water supply, which is required for the improvement of the environment and the resumption of agricultural production and animal husbandry. A major part of the sub-Saharan zone and of southern Africa is particularly affected by this problem.

If, furthermore, rainfall has been favourable in some other regions and has even fostered agricultural production at an almost normal level, the fact still remains that the restoration of the agricultural sector as a whole will depend on a series of production factors which will require \$124 million out of the \$197 million estimated as a need in this regard.

This rather grim picture of the situation gives some idea of how precarious the situation is and shows that, even if the worst has been avoided, we cannot consider that the problem has been completely solved. Sometimes, paradoxically, catastrophes come about where they are least expected; thus, we have had flooding in areas which for too long had suffered from drought; above all, a wave of locusts and grasshoppers, benefiting from the improvement in the living conditions and in

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the environment, descended on certain regions of western, eastern and southern Africa. This will require vigorous pest-control action, with the invaluable assistance of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations.

At any rate, the limited listing of those scourges is not, by any means, a mere evoking of memories of the past, since Africa is the continent that contains two thirds of the least developed countries, in whose favour the Conference held in Paris in 1983 established a special programme of action, the implementation of which is far from being completed.

We are now dealing with essential lessons to be drawn from the experience of recent years, namely, that the critical economic situation was made possible only by the special vulnerability of the African continent, which still remains prey to other catastrophes. Hence, it is necessary to take serious precautions, which should focus on the maintenance of the United Nations capacity for action in emergencies, on the one hand, and the continuation of efforts at recovery with a view to economic development, on the other.

In this regard, we share the concerns of the United Nations that have been expressed with regard to coping with the requirements of the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the thirteenth special session, especially the establishment of a Steering Committee to replace the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa. This Programme of Action actually reflects the need to undertake basic structural reforms with a view to medium- and long-term action. This is the approach Africa took in adopting its Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990.

To this end, and pursuant to the commitment it undertook to become self-reliant, Africa has set up a standing Steering Committee and has decided to create follow-up machinery on a regional basis in order to allow for the implementation and inclusion in the development plans and national programmes of the decisions

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taken as part of the priority programme, and to ensure the necessary co-ordination with the United Nations system and with other multilateral co-operation agencies.

Agriculture takes pride of place among the commitments made. It requires more than 40 per cent of the resources to be allocated for the priority programme and for the development of Africa. That is why, meeting in Yamoussoukro, in Côte d'Ivoire, last September, the African Ministers in charge of the agricultural sector came up with essential guidelines to be applied in promoting the agricultural sector as a basis for development and a pre-condition for attainment of food self-sufficiency. They also, more specifically, adopted a plan for food self-sufficiency and defined a consistent development programme for agriculture for the next 25 years.



(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

In this essential task the support of FAO remains crucial.

Generally speaking, as was said here by the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo:

"... we, the peoples of Africa, are resolved to take every step required, both nationally and internationally, to bring about economic recovery, and growth and development in Africa, and to achieve the long-term development targets laid down in the Lagos Plan of Action." (A/41/PV.17, p. 12)

Only last week the Pan-African meeting of Planning Ministers in Addis Ababa, held under the aegis of the Economic Commission for Africa, was concluded. Its goal was to try to harmonize policies in accordance with the priority recovery programme.

When at the beginning of our statement we discarded the idea of trying to take stock of the significance of a programme of action which was started only this year, we had in mind the conditions and the real chances of success of this unique endeavour: the adoption by the United Nations of a programme of action geared towards one group of States on one continent. Once again we would like to refer to the prediction of President Sassou-Nguesso:

"The greatest challenge which must now be faced is the implementation of the ... United Nations Programme of Action. The special session gave rise to an encouraging consensus ... but the unanimous support for the Programme was not immediately accompanied by any specific offer of finance." (A/41/PV.17, pp. 13-15)

In the same statement the current Chairman of the OAU observed:

"Africa agreed to make all these efforts at a time when the international climate was unfavourable and when multilateral co-operation was at its lowest level.

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"Indeed, there have been substantial losses in its commodity markets because of the deterioration in the terms of trade and it has been obliged to spend up to 50 per cent of its export earnings to pay the interest on its debts, at a time when public aid for development continues to decrease. Africa thus has become the continent of negative transfers, because it is the victim of a growing imbalance which is caused by the continuing unfavourable trade situation." (A/41/PV.17, pp. 12 to 13-15)

In other words, the international community has certainly committed itself to improving the international economic environment in order to support the efforts of structural adjustment and development made by Africa but how are we to give concrete form to the efforts of such a commitment, essential in order to ensure its vital success? We know that special efforts have been made internationally to face up to the challenge posed by the Programme of Action for the economic recovery and development of Africa. The high-level meeting held on 9, 10 and 11 October last in Stockholm is a more than encouraging expression of the will of several countries and bodies to intervene in favour of Africa. The fact remains that we must be determined to overcome some major obstacles in the areas of financing, trade and debt essentially in order to reduce the area of uncertainty and increase the stability of the Programme, the main features of which have already been laid down.

Indeed, like a number of developing countries, several African countries have concluded agreements with international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund in order to carry out the structural adjustments required by a harsh international environment.

The fact remains, as some members of the Group of 77 were unhappy to point out, prices for commodities, still the main resource for most African countries remains at an inadequate level, which precludes any immediate hope of effecting domestic savings. The trade situation further exacerbated by protectionism on the part of many developed countries and the still unfavourable terms of trade.

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In 1985 Africa's debt reached \$175 billion, a figure which might have been bearable on a continental level but which actually was intolerable in terms of the real capacity for production and repayment of the African countries. The problem of the worsening of Africa's indebtedness and the growing difficulties in debt servicing may seriously compromise the efforts currently under way. That is why the OAU, supported by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77, is appealing for an international conference on African external indebtedness. We express the hope that the international community will soon rally to this idea, before the end of the five-year period 1986-1990.

The implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action and the Programme of Action for Economic Recovery and Development require an inflow of financial resources provided for by the Programme of Action of more than \$128 billion, of which \$46 billion must come from bilateral or multilateral external sources.

In the spirit of the new partnership between Africa and the international community, in particular with the major economic partners of our continent, we firmly hope that everything will be done by all involved in order to support the determined effort already made by African Governments, as was shown by the resolution adopted by the African Ministers in Addis Ababa, a resolution which calls for an effective implementation of commitments entered into and for a common endeavour in order to move, as President Sassou-Nguesso said

"... to move on from the stage of emergency aid to structural assistance, which will make it possible for in-depth action to be pursued, a sort of action which frees people from the nightmare of famine and poverty."

(A/41/PV.17, pp. 18-20)

Mrs. LANDRY (Canada) (interpretation from French): At the outset of this debate on Africa, as a Minister of the Canadian Government permit me to convey to the representative of Mozambique the heartfelt sympathies of the Canadian Government. The death of President Samora Machel is a tragic loss for Africa and for the world as a whole.

(Mrs. Landry, Canada)

On 1 June we adopted the "United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990". The end of the programme is still a long way off, and now, less than five months after its inception, it is too early to make even an initial assessment. Nevertheless, this "political contract" between the Africans and the other Members of the United Nations, even at this early date, appears to be a remarkably appropriate programme. This is due to the lucid and thorough analysis conducted by the Africans themselves.

We are all committed; we are all determined to do even the impossible to ensure that the spectre of famine never again casts its shadow over Africa. There is no doubt whatsoever about our collective resolve. What we want to measure today is the progress we have made since 1 June, because we feel that the time for devising strategies and policies is over. And we must now ask the question: Have we moved on to action?

Within these very walls, Canada made a commitment to devote as many resources as possible to Africa; to lighten the debt burden of the poorer countries; to enhance support for those countries that are trying to adjust; to improve the quality of our aid to Africa; and to give the women of Africa the place that is rightfully theirs.

These commitments are already being acted upon.

In 1986-1987 alone, we shall allocate more than \$900 million for the transfer of money, goods and services from Canada to Africa. And this budget will be increased during the subsequent years.

We offered the countries of sub-Saharan Africa a moratorium on repayment of loans granted as official development assistance and, by so doing, we are helping to give a desperately needed margin for manoeuvre to those countries demonstrating

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a genuine will to reform. We are prepared to apply that measure, by periods of five years, until the year 2000.

We examined our aid programmes in the same light in which the Organization of African Unity (OAU) looked at Africa. We gave them a new direction in response to the fundamental problems. Nowadays, our efforts focus far less on the construction of new infrastructures. In Senegal for example, we shall allocate no more than 2 per cent of our programme to this kind of development instead of the 37 per cent we were allocating early in the decade; in Ghana, where two-thirds of our funds used to be for the construction of infrastructures, our programme now focuses on maintaining and equipping existing facilities.

Our programmes are essentially aimed at the major objective of food security. Drought may well prove inevitable, but famine must and can be avoided and we intend to make sure that it is. And the measures taken to this end will henceforth be determined through consultations with our African partners and the international community.

Moreover, participation is one of the fundamental principles underlying the design of all our projects. We are working at the grassroots. We are trying to make the people become the artisans of their own development.

If participation is an appropriate idea with regard to Africa, I believe that it is equally so with regard to North America and Europe. In our countries, too, the people must become active partners in building a world that we will all have to share. A year or two ago, getting the people to participate was no problem; everyday, there were concerts and support campaigns providing proof of their involvement. But now that the cameras have turned to other subjects, we must institute mechanisms to encourage the people to continue their support to Africa.

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In order to intensify the participation of all those who wanted to be involved, we launched the Africa 2000 initiative. This is a 15 year commitment to which we have allocated \$150 million for the next five years, and which has several components.

Thus, we have established the Africa 2000 network to secure the participation of the Africans, especially their non-governmental organizations, in social forestry projects. We have now reached the final stages of development jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), under whose auspices this multilateral initiative has been placed. We hope that other donors will join us.

We also founded Partnership Africa-Canada (PAC). We contribute \$75 million to that association comprising some 50 Canadian non-governmental organizations, each making its own contribution.

Moreover, we have set up a special fund of \$25 million for integration of African women in development. We want to make it easier for them to have access to credit, to training and to health care. I myself attended the recent United Nations Conference - Nairobi Conference on the role of women, in 1985 - and I therefore attach considerable importance to the application of the principle of the integration of women in development. Other components of Initiative Africa 2000 are designed to provide encouragement to sectors that traditionally have not been involved in international co-operation, for example, private enterprise, municipalities and so on.

We share the OAU's conviction with regard to the principle of co-responsibility. We want to give as much support as possible to those countries that want to reform. By means of aid programmes, we are striving to lighten the burden of countries courageously coming to grips with the necessary adjustments.

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For example, Ghana and Zambia are currently benefitting from such programmes. Quite recently, a fund of \$30 million was allocated to Tanzania to help it to implement its new policies.

Our Government, mainly owing to the fact that it belongs to the two large families of the Francophone world and the Commonwealth, also contributed \$35 million to the universal immunization campaign, of which Africa will be a major beneficiary.

Other projects of benefit to the African continent will undoubtedly result from the next Francophone and Commonwealth summits, both of which will be held in Canada in the coming year.

(spoke in English)

I believe that Canada has made some good decisions and taken some effective action in its assistance to Africa over the past couple of years. But in the final analysis, neither Canada, nor, for that matter the industrialized nations as a whole, can solve Africa's problems. Only Africans can do that.

And the main reason why I can look at Africa's future with measured optimism, rather than despair, is the response that Africans themselves have shown to the trauma of the 1984-1985 crisis.



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The most hopeful sign for Africa is the new outlook that has been evident there recently. First the regional institutions and now many Governments have shown during this decade a new realism, a willingness to look at Africa's problems objectively, to put aside some long-standing preoccupations and to take some difficult, even courageous, decisions that can help to reverse present trends, especially the ominous long-term decline in per capita food production.

By the middle of 1984, before the rest of the world had taken any real notice of the crisis, 16 African Governments had already either raised the ceilings on the prices of farm products or removed them altogether, while 10 had announced plans to reform ineffective Government agencies. In many parts of Africa controls were already being centralized, subsidies reduced and attention paid at last to smallholder agriculture.

Then Africa made history of the best kind when the Governments of Africa, at the 1985 summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), produced their own coherent, far-sighted analysis of Africa's problems and the most promising solutions. The OAU proposals were comprehensive and continental in scope; they were practical rather than abstract, tough-minded rather than self-indulgent. They included an endorsement of co-responsibility, in order to link reform and assistance, proper emphasis on agricultural policies and investments and recognition, at long last, of the vital role of women in development.

By the spring of 1986 a score card on Africa compiled by an international aid agency confirmed the progress towards realism, noting, for instance, that 11 countries had considerably reduced Government spending and 10 had devalued their currencies.

In Africa not only had the rains returned, but a wave of reform was sweeping the continent. Governments were increasing agriculture's share in their meagre

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budgets; putting all possible resources into food production, and updating policies with an impact on agriculture.

It is important to recognize fully that those were not easy things to do, that they involved giving up long-cherished goals and taking political risks. But those changes represented a strong, heartfelt response by Africans tired of a quarter of a century of disappointment and decline and ready to cast off old constraints and follow new paths.

(continued in French)

In short, this will be Africa's version of the green revolution, with improvements in the crops that feed most of the people, with more irrigation and research into dryland agriculture, with access to credit and technology for the small farmer.

I look forward to seeing over the next few years the rebirth of a green Africa, the emergence of a vital new Africa, which is being built, even now, with co-operation from Africa's friends, but mainly through the work and in accordance with the views of Africans themselves. Canada will do everything possible to ensure that its programmes of development co-operation complement Africa's own efforts.

But where does the international community stand? The African crisis was both tragic and salutary. Like so many other human dramas, it brought out the best in people and nations. It may also have shown us a way to avoid the impasse at which the international community could find itself.

There are many lessons to be drawn from the emergency aid operations in Africa. We have seen what can be done, with determination and a spirit of solidarity, outside the traditional framework when everyone participates and when we listen to those directly affected. I have learned some significant lessons from

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the recent special session and I intend to apply the principle of flexibility, openness and leadership that in my view derive from that experience. We must above all be flexible so that we may adapt to the specific conditions of the various countries, and especially to their individual manner of managing co-ordination at the national level. We must also be open so that we may involve all the parties concerned, not only the United Nations agencies, but also the non-governmental organizations and bilateral and multilateral donors. And we must foster the emergence of the leadership that will enable the African Governments to play their rightful role in guiding that co-ordination, with the support of the United Nations.

Canada is proud to be playing a special role in that mission through Ambassador Stephen Lewis, who recently became personal adviser to the Secretary-General and to whom we shall give our full support. We shall continue to stress the absolute necessity of consultation, and of co-operation at all levels, in Africa and at home.

A healthy African economy is vital to the health of the world economy. It will require vigilant international co-operation. Evidence of this willingness to co-operate is becoming increasingly manifest. The recent start of a new round of multilateral negotiations on international trade, at Punta del Este, is one example of this. Those negotiations should succeed in countering protectionist measures and fostering more open markets. In this respect, Canada and Africa share common interests, particularly with regard to agriculture.

(spoke in English)

We are meeting to discuss Africa's recovery. I am pleased to have been able to tell the Assembly about some very positive steps and promising initiatives that Canada has taken regarding its development co-operation with Africa. I am deeply encouraged to know that Africans have gone so far, so fast, towards taking their destiny into their own hands, and I am hopeful that the international community has

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chosen a sound strategy and will offer the support that will be needed over the long run - because, with Africa taking the lead through reform in many fields, there is an obligation on all of us to follow through with more of the right sort of help, especially for the poorest countries, so that those reforms can take root.

In 1988 we shall be evaluating and passing judgement on our execution of the Programme adopted on 1 June. Even sooner - in 1987, at the forty-second session - we shall have a first report to consider. But we already know that words are not enough. It is time for action.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the European Community and its member States. As we turn to the problems of Africa, Mr. President, with your permission I should like to repeat to the representative of Mozambique, and through him to the Government and people of his country, our condolences on the tragic death of President Machel. His death is a sore loss to his countrymen and to the international community as a whole. President Machel's gifts of statesmanship will be greatly missed by all of us. His family and his people have our deepest sympathy, as do the families of those who died with him.

The scourge of famine which has struck many countries of Africa is one of the major tragedies of recent years. It has focussed attention on the problems of Africa - problems which go beyond the immediate phenomena of drought and famine. Much time and effort has been dedicated to tackling these issues in the United Nations itself and the agencies. It is entirely right that this should have been done. And it is encouraging that the international community has worked together to produce practical and positive results. As the Secretary-General has said in his report,

"the African people and the international community can recall with pride that a major tragedy was averted". (A/41/683, para. 23)

We are, however, still far from being able to relax our efforts. We have correctly tackled the problems of Africa on two levels - the meeting of immediate food and survival needs; and the longer-term development policies, without which the health, security and well-being of the peoples of Africa will not be ensured. Our efforts here are made with the aim of and in the hope that, as Mrs. Schoo said in her statement on our behalf at the recent special session of the General Assembly,

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

"African countries will never again have to go through the disastrous consequences of famine". (A/S-13/PV.1, p. 63)

Only by attention to long-term development plans which take proper account of the agricultural sector will that be achieved.

Specifically the United Nations has been involved in the emergency through the work of the agencies and funds and through the co-ordinating role of the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa (OEOA). For the longer term the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, adopted by consensus at the special session in May, sets out the approach to be followed by the African countries and the international community.

Today we are first of all considering the emergency - the response and the lessons to be learned from it, what is still to be done and the future role of the United Nations.

It is clear from the Secretary-General's report that a great deal has been achieved. We shall never know the exact figure, but millions of people are alive today because of, and further generations will have cause to be grateful for, the outcome of this co-operation between African Governments and the international community, a notable feature of which has been the role played by non-governmental organizations. In 1985 emergency aid totalling over \$3 billion met the bulk of the needs. Some six million tons of food aid was provided. As a result, the food emergency has been largely overcome. Those are impressive statistics. We are glad that through the bilateral efforts of Member States and through Community funds we have been able to play a major role in meeting these needs. For the eight most-affected countries alone, these efforts in the areas of food and

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rehabilitation will reach some \$1.4 billion for the period December 1985 to the end of this year.

We are encouraged to note that there is cause for hope in developments over the last year. The harvest in 1985-1986 reached record levels despite the drought during the previous season, so that taken as a whole sub-Saharan Africa was self-sufficient in coarse grains. Some impressive surpluses in a number of countries show the potential of African agriculture given the right circumstances and the right encouragement. None the less, although the drought-related famine has virtually ended, some significant problems remain in the area of non-food help. Internal problems have also hindered the distribution of food in some countries. For those countries still in the grip of emergencies, the European Community and its Member States have continued to respond. In Ethiopia, for instance, pockets of serious need remain despite considerable improvements, and some Member countries have shared the cost of a recent air-drop of emergency supplies. All of us in the Community continue to watch with concern the events in, among other areas, the southern Sudan, where large numbers of people are at risk. We stand ready to offer further help there. Elsewhere, pests are posing a major threat to the next harvest. We have already contributed towards control measures and shall do more if necessary.

The role of the United Nations in the emergency was examined in some detail at the joint meeting in July of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) and the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination (CPC). The present report gives us further information. There is no doubt that the United Nations system played an important part. In the first place, it was essential to co-ordinate efforts within the United Nations system with donors both official and non-governmental, and to

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link this to the work of recipient Governments. This was especially so in some hard-hit countries such as Sudan and Ethiopia. The report also underlined the need for and value of resident co-ordinators.

Secondly, the provision of consolidated statistical information was helpful in keeping donors aware of the overall picture and thus playing a role in effective resource mobilization. Thirdly, problem-solving, particularly in the area of logistics, was another area of positive activity. Finally, and certainly not least, the creation of the OEOA not only as a medium of co-operation but also as a symbol of United Nations involvement was a positive move and one which we warmly welcomed.

The analysis of these activities in the report provides useful guidelines for future action. Lessons can also be drawn from factors not mentioned in the report, such as the initial difficulties in organizing and staffing the OEOA and the need for greater attention to creating a credible and effective public information effort by the United Nations. The fact is that public interest and concern in donor countries was first aroused by national media.



(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

It is clear from the report that in responding to the emergency sufficient attention was paid to the provision of food but not enough to getting it to the right places. Furthermore, although most of the non-food aid needs were met in 1985, there are still some substantial deficiencies for 1986. Particularly disturbing is the shortfall in agricultural inputs, and attention needs to be paid to this aspect. The report is right to draw attention to these problems. It does not, however, mention a further important factor, namely, the domestic situation in some affected countries, which has impeded relief work. This has particularly affected distribution.

Looking to the future we have noted the Secretary-General's decision to disband the OEOA. This seems correct, given that it was conceived as a temporary office and that co-ordinating machinery now exists in the form of the African Task Force and more generally the Joint Consultative Group on Policy. It is important that the experience gained should not be lost and that there is a way to re-establish an OEOA-type operation should the need arise again. Lessons have been learned as far as early warning procedures are concerned. There is a need to make provision to maintain the information-gathering function of the OEOA. We also believe it is essential to provide a focal point in the Organization able to accept information and to increase coherence throughout the system. Last night the Secretary-General announced measures along these lines, of which we have taken note.

In the field of public information there is a need to pay more attention to educating the public on the importance of development. We have seen the ready response to a presentation of hardship and suffering. But development needs have a lesser emotional appeal and are harder to present. However, if the momentum for change is to be maintained this should be an important aspect of the work of the United Nations and the agencies.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

The most important point now is to move to strengthen longer-term development. In this connection, the special session and the United Nations Programme of Action are key indications that we are moving in the right direction. African Governments have recognized for some time the need for structural change and for increased emphasis on agriculture. The special importance to be accorded by each African country to population policies within the context of long-term development is also essential. The decisions taken at last year's Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) were courageous. The United Nations Programme of Action encapsulates that determination and the will of the international community to help them.

We recognize the positive gains which have been achieved in the recent past. However, there is no room for complacency. Success now depends on the one hand on actions and reforms to be undertaken by African Governments, and on the other on the efforts of the international community in meeting the commitments to support and complement these efforts. This will be a complex process. The latest step was taken at the Ministerial session of the Economic Commission for Africa at Addis Ababa last week. We are committed to initiating a review of this process at the forty-second session of the General Assembly. However, there are already signs that the right decisions are being taken. Several countries have undertaken adjustment programmes which have led to the release of new funds, much of the new structural adjustment facility has been committed and World Bank non-project lending to Africa is scheduled to rise considerably. Success will depend also on the maintenance and acceleration of growth in the world economy. The role of industrial countries in creating the conditions for a higher level of sustained growth was recognized most recently at the Development Committee meeting last month.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

At the special session emphasis was laid on the importance of follow-up mechanisms. The Secretary-General has recently announced measures to be taken by the United Nations. We welcome the decision to set up a Steering Committee and the fact that it has already begun its work. We are encouraged that the Secretary-General has already met the President of the Congo, in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU, to discuss future action. Close contact with the OAU is essential. The response is in line with the Programme of Action, which calls for such mechanisms to be simple, operational and designed to strengthen existing institutions. It is vitally important that we do not overload the already hard-worked administrations of African Governments with new layers of consultative organization which might have the effect of hindering rather than promoting co-ordination.

It was recognized at the special session that work at the country level would be the key. Here co-operation with the World Bank and with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will be crucially important. In this context, we look forward to renewed efforts by local representatives of UNDP to develop the valuable work that they have already begun in organizing the methods of co-ordination most appropriate to their countries. African Governments themselves will determine their preferred mechanisms, whether these be fully developed round tables and consultative groups or other avenues of contact between them and donors. In this way the international community will be able to gain an understanding of how African countries intend to carry through the policies outlined in the United Nations Programme of Action and plan appropriate support.

The European Community has continued since the special session on Africa to help those countries undertaking, with the encouragement of the International

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

Monetary Fund and the World Bank, reforms of the kind spelt out in the United Nations Programme of Action. By participating in the World Bank's special facility for Africa or by providing funds alongside it, the Twelve are making available very considerable sums to support the courageous economic decisions of African countries undertaking structural adjustment in addition to their other official development assistance activities. In this context, the Twelve have also assisted, or pledged to assist, individual African States in the area of foreign indebtedness, thus demonstrating their support for the decisions of the special session.

The fact that on 1 June we adopted a Programme of Action which runs to 1990 is an indication that the United Nations intends to maintain its interest in the development of African countries. The involvement so far has been a positive indication of multilateralism at work. It has enhanced the reputation of this body and it has helped in a very practical way by saving the lives of millions of people who faced a tragic death from starvation and disease. We will now only make their future secure if we face up to the need to promote the longer-term development of Africa. This is vital, not only to lessen the impact of any future natural disasters, but also to ensure a decent standard of living for the peoples of Africa. I think it is clear from our actions so far that we take that commitment seriously.

Mr. JONCK (Denmark): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the five Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

Allow me first to extend to the representative of Mozambique, and through him to the Government and people of Mozambique, our sincere condolences on the tragic death of President Machel. His death will be a great loss to his country, as well as to the international community.

The critical economic situation in Africa has been a matter of concern to the international community now for several years. Attention has been called not only to a famine of unprecedented proportions but also to some long-term structural development problems of fundamental importance to the African continent.

Although substantial relief assistance is still required, it is hoped that we have now reached a turning-point. The acute economic disaster that Africa has been facing over the past few years has been brought under control in most countries in 1986. Therefore we have reason to hope for some improvements in the prospects for the African continent. This has been the result of both natural developments and human intervention.

With massive support from the international community, the African countries have managed to steer through the worst effects of hunger and starvation. Nature has helped out with reasonably good rainfalls in the past two consecutive years, making possible a one-third increase in sub-Saharan cereal production. While rains were not sufficient everywhere and pressing humanitarian concerns remain, most African countries have been able to shift their attention from the problems of hunger and emergency assistance to rehabilitation and development.

An outline for action in this regard is provided by the consensus on policy reforms and other steps which were achieved at the special session of the General Assembly on the critical economic situation in Africa. There is a pressing political, economic and social need to relaunch the development process in Africa. It should not be forgotten that low-income Africa is poorer today than in 1960.

(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

There has been a fall in per capita income between 1980 and 1986 of about 12 per cent.\*

An emergency situation still prevails in a few countries, but by and large the emergency food aid needs for 1986 are covered. However, several countries are still faced with considerable non-food emergency-related needs, which, if not met, will leave them vulnerable to new calamities in the future. Thus, there is no room for complacency. The international community must consider how to respond to the pressing humanitarian needs in the remaining countries at the same time as the long-term development needs are addressed.

At this turning-point, with the major emergency operations behind us, the international community should use the opportunity to assess its experiences with emergency co-operation. In the view of the Nordic countries, the experience has clearly taught us that there is a profound need to maintain and improve within the United Nations system the capacity to respond rapidly to emergency situations.

The crisis in Africa necessitated the establishment of a new mechanism, the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa. The excellent performance of that Office clearly demonstrated the value of an effective emergency capacity in the United Nations. This becomes all the more evident when we read the Secretary-General's report prepared for this session of the General Assembly. Effective emergency assistance depends on a good system of co-ordination, which can gather data, prepare the relevant information about the assistance needed and assist at all levels with the solving of problems, particularly to ensure the channelling of emergency assistance to disaster areas.

Now, with the dismantling of the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, is important that the experience and capacities which that Office and the

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\* The President took the Chair.

(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

participating organizations have developed be preserved in the existing United Nations bodies in order to improve the capacity of the United Nations to respond to future emergencies. Therefore we note with pleasure that the Secretary-General states in his report that he is committed to taking the necessary measures to ensure the capacity of the United Nations to respond in an effective and timely manner to future emergencies. We look forward to receiving proposals by the Secretary-General to that effect.

Looking to the future, the special session of the General Assembly in May this year will be the centre-piece of my comments.

The Nordic countries supported the convening of the special session, which underlined the critical economic situation as one of the greatest and most urgent challenges to the international community. The special session took place at a crucial point in time. The approach of the African countries in their contribution to the special session reflected their readiness to seek new avenues and to make a firm commitment to policy reform. Hence the adoption by consensus of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 was a very positive outcome of the special session. It emphasized the determination of both the African countries and the international community as a whole to seek an urgent solution to the problem of African recovery.

The Nordic countries warmly welcome the United Nations Programme of Action and urge all parties now to concentrate on its effective implementation. After all, the real success of the special session, besides improved prospects for the African countries, will depend on the genuine willingness of all parties concerned to carry out the commitments undertaken.

Implementation, of course, takes time, and full implementation within as short a time as five years may not be achievable; but it is important that all parties urgently do their utmost. Policy reforms can and should be initiated at the

(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

national level without delay, supported by and in co-operation with the international community.

We have noted - and we appreciate - the serious efforts already undertaken by a number of African countries. Many Governments are trying to reduce the size of their public sectors and to improve their management. Governments are also endeavouring to reduce price distortions in their economies. Rewards are in some cases beginning to show. This should encourage others to follow suit.



(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

It is worth noting that as a reflection of this progress the number of countries declared eligible for the World Bank's Special Facility for Sub-Saharan Africa has increased, bringing the total to 20 by mid-1986.

The efforts of the African countries will be jeopardized if they are not supported adequately by the international community. Let it be said that the international community has already for many years extended considerable support to the African countries, but one of the main conclusions of the special session was that the African countries need additional external resources. The international community committed itself to make every effort to provide sufficient resources to support the African efforts. The time has now come for the international community to carry out its part of the joint responsibility.

It is encouraging that disbursements to Sub-Saharan Africa under the International Development Association (IDA) and the Bank's Structural Adjustment Facility has increased considerably and is expected to be over 80 per cent higher in the period 1986-1990 than the average in the period 1983-1985. Furthermore, the Nordic countries welcome that the target of \$12 billion, the eighth replenishment of IDA (IDA-VIII) now is within reach allowing in the longer term sustained high disbursements to African countries. In our view the minimum of 45 per cent of the IDA-VIII funds to be allocated to Sub-Saharan Africa should be raised to 50 per cent.

Of similar importance are the negotiations for a general capital increase in the African Development Bank. In recognition of the critical need of African countries for development financing in support of adjustment programmes the Nordic countries support a substantial increase in the Bank's capital.

(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

Increased transfer of resources must also take place on a bilateral basis. According to the World Bank those figures do not paint a very rosy picture. The high level of disbursements to sub-Saharan Africa in the last few years is mainly due to substantially increased food aid. It is important that this level be maintained by converting the emergency aid to long-term aid. Additional efforts on the part of bilateral donors will be needed, in order to fill the financing gap highlighted by the World Bank.

The record of the Nordic countries in this respect is well-known, and I can assure you that the Nordic countries as well, will, in the future bear their part of the responsibility. We must, however, voice our concern for the prospects of real increases in official development assistance (ODA). Total ODA flows are stagnating and for the industrialized countries the annual projected growth of about 2 per cent in real terms is less than the expected growth in gross national product. That would mean a fall in the ODA/GNP ratio and a backsliding from the targets to which industrialized countries have committed themselves. The Nordic countries strongly urge the major industrialized countries to increase their ODA, which could release a substantial amount of resources to African countries.

The debt burden of African countries represents a special and very serious obstacle to their development. The debt of African countries may not be large in nominal terms, compared to the debt of other major debtor nations, but the burden of debt and the debt service are as heavy because of generally weak economies and their dependence on a few primary commodities.

Many African countries, as I previously stated, are making courageous efforts in restructuring their economies, thereby demonstrating their determination to alter economic and financial policies and to cope with their debt problems. The

(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

Nordic countries are aware of the sacrifices these adjustments demand from the people affected. We generally believe that a solution to the debt problems of the developing countries must be found within a long-term comprehensive framework supporting sustained growth with specific measures tailored to the needs of each individual country. In this context we recall a number of encouraging signs over the last two years, which to some extent have eased the debt burden. World economic growth has resumed, although at a modest pace, interest rates have been reduced, and oil prices have come down. Unfortunately, the positive effects have to a large degree been outweighed by the fall in commodity prices and worsened terms of trade. For many of the poorest African countries, where the debt servicing burden has reached an unsustainable level, debt relief should be considered. In this context, I should like to mention that some of our countries are actively considering additional ODA contributions specifically designed to help the poorest debtor countries reduce their debt burden. The Nordic countries will call in particular for a full and urgent implementation of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) resolution 165 (S-IX) and recommend that special emphasis be given to total or partial debt cancellation for the least developed countries.

The Nordic countries have at earlier stages repeatedly stated their support for the general priorities in the African Priority Programme for Economy Recovery (APPER).

Agricultural development has for many years been given priority in our development co-operation with the developing countries, and we look forward to a continued partnership with the developing countries in the follow-up of this essential part of the United Nations Programme of Action. Likewise, we shall

(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

continue to give our support to human resources development and the protection of the environment, inter alia, through the fight against drought and desertification.

Finally, with respect to priority sectors in APPER, let me express our satisfaction with the increasing emphasis in many African countries on population policies, which have our full support.

The special session emphasized that many of the problems facing African countries cannot be solved at the national level but require cross-border co-operation.

The Nordic countries have steadily increased their co-operation with the countries of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) and have recently initiated a new approach to co-operation between our two regions. In January this year a joint declaration on expanded economic and cultural co-operation was signed by the Nordic and SADCC countries.

The declaration seeks to deepen and broaden the established tradition of co-operation between the two regions, namely, in the areas of trade, production and financial mechanisms. It represents a mutual commitment to move beyond traditional donor-recipient relationships and to seek new avenues of co-operation between the two regions. The initiative and the declaration also aim at promoting regional co-operation among the SADCC States, as well as between the SADCC region and the Nordic countries.

This relationship should also be seen in a political context. The SADCC countries have developed their own co-operation both in response to and in spite of severe difficulties. Not only do these countries suffer from the same economic problems as the rest of Africa, but in addition they are saddled with the burden of proximity to South Africa.

(Mr. Jonck, Denmark)

Destabilization of its neighbours is increasingly becoming a feature in the policies of the South African Government. The aggregated costs of the destabilization of the SADC countries have been estimated by the SADC secretariat at \$10 billion in the period 1980-1985.

Effective measures to alleviate this negative impact on the SADC countries of South African destabilization should be urgently considered by the international community. The Nordic countries are prepared to increase their support to the SADC countries.

This brings me finally to the question of follow-up by the United Nations system to the United Nations Programme of Action. The Nordic countries welcome the follow-up arrangements recently announced by the Secretary-General. A particularly useful step is the establishment of a Steering Committee that will be responsible for organizing and stimulating the action by the United Nations required for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action. We emphasize in this context the importance of bringing other interested entities of the United Nations system actively into the work of the Steering Committee in order to ensure a comprehensive and coherent approach by the whole system.

Two years from now the Member States of the United Nations must report to the General Assembly what they have done in implementation of the Programme of Action. Also the efforts of the international organizations will be reviewed. We hope that this review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action at the forty-third session of the General Assembly will, we hope, turn out to be a striking illustration of the achievements of international development co-operation and particularly the effective and catalytic role of the United Nations system.

Mr. LI Luye (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation, like other delegations, wishes to express to the delegation of Mozambique our deep condolence on the tragic death of President Samora Machel.

The United Nations has made great efforts and played a commendable role in mobilizing the international community to deal with the critical economic situation in Africa. The present situation in Africa requires that we redouble our efforts and take further concrete and substantive actions to assist in the rehabilitation and development of the African economies.

Two years ago, at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa was adopted by consensus. This Declaration bears witness to the severity of the economic situation in Africa and to the political will and collective determination on the part of the international community to resolve the critical economic situation in Africa. The solidarity and relief efforts rendered by the international community, for a time, took the form of a world-wide campaign on a fairly large scale. Governments of all countries, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and people from all walks of life including even the children have all participated in this campaign, which has undoubtedly helped the Governments and people of African countries to overcome difficulties, and tided them over a hard time.

Today, two years later, there have been some encouraging developments. The gross output of agricultural produce and that of the food-grains of Africa have both registered increases thanks to the improved climate and the relatively abundant precipitation in most regions of Africa over the past year, which have lessened the effects of drought to a certain degree. However, we must not fail to note that, although on the whole the severe emergency has subsided, there still exists a critical food shortage in the vast area south of the Sahara, where famine

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

and malnutrition remain a serious threat to millions of people, and a dozen countries are still in urgent need of emergency relief, among which Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Angola are beset with exceedingly dire hardship. Statistics revealed in the World Economic Survey show that over 18 million Africans, including the drought-affected and displaced people, need relief aid well into 1986. Countries where the situation has somewhat improved are still susceptible to a crisis which may be caused by any adverse change in climate, because of their inadequate infrastructure and insufficient capacity to withstand natural calamities and tackle the ensuing critical situation. Therefore the development of the situation leaves no room for optimism on our part and requires that we continue emergency relief efforts to assist the African countries south of the Sahara. In addition to the food aid, non-food aid in large amounts should also be given, coupled with assistance in improving their transportation and storage facilities. Meanwhile, additional measures should be taken to accelerate the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the agricultural and industrial sectors of those countries with a view to enhancing their capacity to deal with emergency situations.

As the Secretary-General pointed out early in 1984, the challenge with which Africa was confronted was twofold, being both an imminent issue of survival and a problem of medium-term and long-term development. The international community, in helping the African countries overcome the immediate serious difficulties, should not overlook their development requirements. It was gratifying that a special session of the General Assembly on the critical economic situation in Africa was held last May, during which the deliberations on the economic crisis besetting the African continent were unprecedented both in breadth and depth. Participants took

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

an almost unanimous view with respect to ways and means of effecting a radical change in the current African economic conditions, and adopted by consensus the "United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990".

We note with appreciation that the Secretary-General, in endeavouring to organize and promote effectively the implementation of the Programme of Action in the United Nations system, has established a Steering Committee at Headquarters. Governments of some donor States have already taken or are taking measures in pursuance of requirements set forth in the Programme of Action, including increase in aid and debt rescheduling in favour of the African countries.



(Mr. Li Luye, China)

We must, however, be clearly aware that much has to be done before the Programme of Action can be fully implemented. At present, the creation of favourable external conditions for the African countries to readjust their policies and develop their economies is of particular importance. Regrettably, however, efforts made by the African countries are seriously compromised by such factors as the deterioration in terms of trade, the decline in commodity prices, a sharp decrease in the inflow of resources and a mounting debt burden. Today, the quantum index of total imports of many African countries is lower even than levels reached in the 1970s. This has resulted in a gross inadequacy in making use of the already limited agricultural and industrial capacities. In such circumstances, how is it possible to restore the development process? How can the African countries improve their capacity to resist natural calamities and develop their economies by relying on their own efforts?

We hold that the current African economic situation requires that we take urgent measures in favour of African countries in the following three respects: an increase in the inflow of resources on concessional terms; a lessening of the debt burden; and the stabilization of export income. We note with concern that many African countries find themselves unable to shake off the crushing debt burden which bears so heavily on them. The total amount of external debt composed of both the short-term debt and the accumulated arrears increased by sixfold from 1974 to 1985, which compels the African countries to devote a total of one half of their export income to debt servicing, and more than one half in the case of certain countries. The twenty-second session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) reiterated the call for a conference on the external debt of Africa. This merits positive consideration by the parties concerned, in view of the seriousness and unique nature of the debt problem of Africa.

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

The Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, as a focal point of the emergency relief efforts of the United Nations system, has over the past two years carried out numerous tasks in supplying information, playing a co-ordinating role and giving commendable support. Today, as I pointed out earlier in my statement, despite the somewhat improved economic conditions in Africa the overall situation remains critical, which calls for continued emergency relief efforts. In this regard we have taken note of the fact that new arrangements have been made by the Secretary-General to ensure the capacity of the United Nations to respond in a timely way and effectively to future emergencies.

The Chinese Government has all always regarded it as its unshirkable international obligation to help our African brothers. We maintain the view that this help is mutual, for the recovery and development of Africa are a support for the Chinese people, and a prospering Africa is conducive to world peace and prosperity. The Chinese Government, in the light of conditions in its own country, exerted enormous efforts in helping Africa when it was in an emergency economic situation and it will likewise do its best to contribute to the African peoples' efforts in rehabilitating and developing their economies. The Chinese Government is ready to join Governments of African countries and those of other countries in a persistent and persevering effort for the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

Mr. JOSSE (Nepal): At the very outset, my delegation wishes to record its appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the critical economic situation in Africa (A/41/683). The Secretary-General's report provides not only excellent information on the critical economic situation in Africa but also an objective picture of the international response and the current situation. It thus serves as a basis for our observations.

(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

My delegation applauds the international community for its generous response in providing food aid to overcome the drought-related emergency which affected 20 African countries during 1985. We also record our appreciation to the donors that responded so splendidly in providing essential non-food needs in such critical areas as logistics, health, water supply and sanitation, relief and survival requirements, priority agricultural and pastoral inputs and aid to refugees and returnees.

We are naturally elated that a human tragedy of major proportions was averted. We cannot but admire the strength, versatility and courage that the African peoples demonstrated in coping with an emergency of truly epic dimensions. We share the Secretary-General's view that this is the most encouraging aspect of the African emergency, as it underscores the great human capacity that exists in Africa for growth and development.

We are pleased to learn that the overall situation is very much improved as compared with what it was a year ago. We are, however, concerned that substantial relief assistance is still required. This is emphasized by the fact that some 14 million people are still in need of relief food and non-food aid, while over 3 million people are still displaced and therefore are in need of help to resume productive lives. We are thus concerned that while the food-aid requirements for 1986 have been largely met through donor commitments, an estimated gap of \$300 million for non-food emergency-related assistance remains.

Conscious of the present need for integrating short-term assistance programmes in efforts to attain longer-term recovery and development goals, my delegation appeals to the international community to respond to the non-food requirements identified in the Secretary-General's report.

(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

My delegation has taken serious note of the new and potentially grave threat posed by locusts and grasshoppers, particularly in western, eastern and southern Africa. We welcome the creation of a special Emergency Control Locust Operation in Rome to co-ordinate the efforts of donor and African Governments.

My delegation endorses the validity of the five "lessons" enumerated at the end of the Secretary-General's report. We especially emphasize the importance of setting up early-warning systems so that adverse trends - economic as well as physical - can be monitored on a continuous basis and thus provide for the crucial lead time to cope with emergency-related problems in the future.

(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

Hence, we commend the nine member countries of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference on their decision to establish such a mechanism to prevent a recurrence of disastrous crop losses resulting from five years of drought. Such a step, in our view, represents a fine example of South-South co-operation and is worthy of emulation in other parts of the world, including South Asia, the home of one-fifth of the world's population. We fully share the Secretary-General's assessment that, while the drought precipitated the African economic crisis, it was the inherent weakness of African economies that was responsible for its severity. Therefore, we cannot but fully endorse the view that the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990, adopted by the General Assembly at its thirteenth special session, provides the framework for rehabilitation and medium- and long-term development of Africa.

Representing, as I do, a least developed country that has itself experienced a drought this year, we can well appreciate the dimensions of the problems of development and external assistance in Africa. We therefore appeal to the international community faithfully to implement the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990.

It goes without saying that any effort to render the international economic system more responsive to the needs of the third world, as a whole, would also have a most salutary effect on African economies. Finally - although my delegation will be speaking on this at greater length soon - we cannot emphasize too strongly the need for the immediate dismantling of Pretoria's abhorrent racist policy of apartheid, the source of so much exploitation, misery, violence and underdevelopment on the African continent.

Mr. REED (United States of America): Before I begin my statement on the critical situation in Africa, I should like again to express the heartfelt condolences of the American people to the delegation and people of Mozambique over the tragic loss of President Samora Machel and all those on the aircraft. The President's death is a blow to the aspirations of the proud and courageous people of Mozambique. Africa has lost one of its most important and influential leaders.

As we discuss the critical economic situation in Africa, I should like to recall the constructive attitudes that prevailed in June of this year at the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, when the historic Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990, was adopted by consensus. The United States is pleased on many accounts with the outcome of the special session on Africa. The United States is optimistic about the future prospects for coping with the critical economic situation in Africa. The special session charted a new course for Africa based on partnership and mutual understanding.

Since June, a number of steps have been taken which will help translate the objectives of the special session on Africa into concrete results. Most important, many African Governments have begun to define their most critical problems and have taken concrete steps to implement economic reforms, including commodity price adjustments and other agricultural incentives which will stimulate growth. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has established a Steering Committee to be chaired by Director-General Jean Ripert, and Ambassador Stephen Lewis of Canada has been asked to advise the Secretary-General in a personal capacity. The Organization of African Unity, the Economic Commission for Africa, as well as several United Nations programmes and agencies, have held meetings specifically focusing upon the follow-up to the Assembly's decision on the Programme of Action.

(Mr. Reed, United States)

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, at their recent meetings, gave consideration to the critical economic situation in Africa.

The World Bank has created a special facility for Africa which is funnelling increasing resources to that continent. Trust fund reflows will also contribute substantially, and reflect a commitment by the international community to enhance the efforts to assist the African continent. The recent decision on the eighth replenishment of the International Development Association will also increase the flows to the neediest countries of Africa. We should not forget the Herculean efforts of non-governmental organizations. They have been the mainstay of efforts to help the people of Africa help themselves. They have mobilized resources in the times of greatest need, and their often unrecognized efforts have contributed probably more than could have been contributed by any governmental programme or international assistance. The international community is clearly responding to the appeals made during the special session on Africa.

The United States commends all those who have acted so far to define how they can best contribute to the success of the Programme of Action. Proper implementation of the Programme of Action will require a substantial effort and sacrifice by all concerned. The United States believes that it is essential that the process be conducted efficiently and effectively. We will do all we can to provide assistance and co-ordination.

The international community has expressed strong support for the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. The United States intends to continue to play its part and to co-operate with African Governments, the Organization of African Unity, the Secretary-General and others in seeking to solve African economic and social problems and to improve conditions on that important and strategic continent.

(Mr. Reed, United States)

I would like to outline how the United States of America will support the economic recovery of Africa. The United States will focus its assistance on four of the highest priorities emphasized in the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development: economic restructuring, agricultural growth, human resources development, and famine preparedness.



(Mr. Reed, United States)

As the special session emphasized, economic restructuring is the number one priority for the African continent. While each country will employ different means to achieve this goal, the special session recognized that an increased role for prices, markets and the private sector to spur income and development was fundamental. African Governments are starting to create the environment in which citizens can prosper. The United States of America pledges to work with Africa to deepen and broaden our partnership.

In order to encourage the economic restructuring process, the United States had developed the African Economic Policy Reform Program, which, along with the Baker initiative, is directed to accelerating policy reforms. We are also supporting the World Bank Special Facility, and our proposal on the IMF Trust Fund reflows will result in significantly increased funds to the lowest-income countries of Africa. However, growth will not come from foreign assistance alone, or even primarily from foreign aid. Leadership by African nations is critical to manage resources efficiently and carry out the essential economic restructuring.

Our second priority is agriculture - the principal engine of growth, prosperity and, indeed, survival. A renewed commitment to agriculture and the fundamental need for a favourable policy framework to support small-farmer production and marketing were keys to the hallmark special session on Africa. Much progress has been made recently. Capitalizing on that progress will require a greater commitment to agricultural research on improved technologies. In that regard, the United States takes this opportunity to renew its commitment to donate some \$1 billion for agricultural research, spread out over the next 15 years.

For the development of Africa's human resources, child survival is the key. The United States commitment to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) as well as our partnership with non-governmental organizations has been very effective in

(Mr. Reed, United States)

implementing those programmes. The United States recently offered UNICEF an additional voluntary contribution of \$51 million to help its child survival programme. Just last week the United States Congress increased the amount of resources devoted to child survival by 50 per cent. In total, America will devote \$242 million to health and child survival programmes in 1987.

We also pledge to continue our efforts to support and encourage the availability of family planning services so that we can help African nations implement their own commitment to increased attention to population growth rates.

The role of women in the development process is also an essential element of the African equation. The United States assistance programme will always be tailored to take full account of the valuable contribution of women to the development process in Africa.

An essential element of the United States assistance programme is famine preparedness. American support for regional organizations in the Sahel and in southern and eastern Africa will continue. Our remote-sensing projects are invaluable in helping African nations chart weather and crop conditions and prepare for emergency situations should they arise.

It is satisfying to note that the critical drought situation in Africa has improved and that the number of countries still facing an emergency has decreased significantly. The United States Government contributed over 300,000 tonnes of food at a cost of over \$200 million. Nevertheless, we believe that the international community must remain vigilant until the critical emergency in Africa is totally eradicated. We encourage the Secretary-General to direct his efforts to that end. In that regard, the problems presented by locust infestation present a particular threat. We hope that all the lessons learned in coping with the food emergency in Africa will be utilized as valuable inputs for addressing this new and pressing problem.

(Mr. Reed, United States)

I must note that as we debate the issue here we are also marking the final days of the functioning of the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa - OEOA, as it is usually called. Under the leadership of Bradford Morse, Maurice Strong and the dedicated staff, OEOA has reflected the United Nations at its very best. Under the United Nations banner, OEOA can proudly say that its efforts have saved the lives of literally millions. An entire generation in Africa is better for the noble and effective work of OEOA against seemingly insurmountable odds. The work of OEOA should serve as a beacon to us all.

Although my friend Bradford Morse has left the United Nations family officially, I was pleased to learn that his next endeavour will keep him closely involved in the problems of Africa. Maurice Strong recently organized a North-South round-table seminar to discuss the follow-up to the special session on Africa. I wish them both the best of luck as they continue to contribute to the solution of African problems.

We are also pleased to learn that the Secretary-General has set in place new arrangements to ensure that those countries with needs still resulting from drought conditions will continue to receive the services formerly provided by OEOA. In this regard, we appreciate the Secretary-General's note of 20 October, which lays out those arrangements in detail.

Here, let me emphasize the great importance that our delegation attaches to the efforts to ensure that the momentum established during the special session in June is maintained. The United States will participate actively in the follow-up efforts. We hope that the debate in the Assembly today will reaffirm the commitment we all share to see that Africa's needs continue to be met. We believe that the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank will play central roles in those follow-up efforts. We pledge to work closely and actively with those institutions.

(Mr. Reed, United States)

The solutions to Africa's critical economic situation are not simple. A turnaround will not be achieved in a day. African leaders and donors alike face many obstacles in the years to come. We are engaged in the struggle together. The peoples of Africa, and their many friends throughout the world, await with hope our actions to implement the commitments made at the historic special session. Let our efforts be worthy of their aspirations.

Mr. MOYA PALENCIA (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish first, on behalf of the people and Government of Mexico, to pay a heartfelt tribute to the memory of the President of Mozambique, Mr. Samora Machel, and his close assistants who recently lost their lives. President Samora Machel played an outstanding role in the emancipation of Mozambique and in the struggle for the social recovery of his country. The history of contemporary Africa and the freedom movements of all continents will show that his work served as a luminous example to countries still under colonialism.

We are taking part in the debate on the item now before the General Assembly as an expression of Latin America's deep concern about and broad solidarity with the African continent.

We wish to place it on record that the critical economic situation in Africa continues to be a matter of special significance to the United Nations. Despite the progress made in concerting international efforts to alleviate the crisis in Africa, we are aware that, as we have repeatedly stated, the task of economic and social recovery in that region must represent an active, constant, long-term commitment. The final solution to the problems of Africa will be achieved only when Africa as a whole renews its process of accelerated and continuous development on sound bases. That was the sentiment at the special session of the General Assembly devoted to the critical economic situation in that continent. The holding of that special session and the results achieved by it must be counted among the major contributions of multilateralism, despite the attacks that have been levelled against the United Nations.

In this forum we have decided to support Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, drawn up by members of the Organization of African Unity, as well as the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. The application of the Programme of Action is now under way, as we are

(Mr. Moya Palencia, Mexico)

informed in the Secretary-General's report in document A/41/683. We note with satisfaction the actions that the Secretary-General has taken and the way that the infrastructure and necessary co-ordination have been established by the United Nations to fulfil the General Assembly's mandate and to help African countries overcome the emergency and the crisis.

Nevertheless, we are concerned that there are no positive signs with regard to the elements that are essential to a solution of the problem. I have in mind the fall in commodity prices, which has led to a further deterioration in the terms of trade, thereby making it difficult to obtain what is necessary to solve the problem in the long term. The economies of the region are still very vulnerable to changes in external factors. We must avoid another emergency.

The statistics are clear: Between 1974 and 1985 there was a seven-fold increase in the total accumulated foreign debt of the region, which reached \$175 million. External indebtedness constitutes approximately 50 per cent of the region's product. Subsistence sectors generate between 60 and 80 per cent of gross domestic product, and, what is more, one out of every five Africans depends on imported food to subsist.

We share the Secretary-General's concern about trends in the mobilization of resources needed to solve the problems. We hope that official development assistance will soon reach the required levels.

Africa's potential must be fully developed so that it can contribute to the general well being. The efforts of the region and each one of its countries must be supported within an appropriate international framework.

The problem posed by the persistence of apartheid must be solved. The international community must exert additional efforts to ensure that that system is eliminated. Also, the independence of Namibia must be attained as soon as possible.

(Mr. Moya Palencia, Mexico)

We must all co-operate in achieving those aims. We shall thereby contribute to eliminating tensions in the region and providing a better climate for development.

International co-operation must be intensified in order to support long-term development factors.

We believe that for Africa, as for Latin America, the crucial problem is to achieve the high level of economic development that will enable our societies to attain better standards of living and well being and to have the opportunity of contributing to the forging of their future.

Mr. MAKSIMOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the delegations of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, as well as the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.\*

The position of the socialist countries on the critical economic situation in Africa was set forth in detail in statements made by the individual delegations of the foregoing countries and in their joint statements at the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to the critical economic situation in Africa. We are fully aware of the aspirations of the African countries to carry out the Organization of African Unity's Priority Programme for African Economic Recovery, 1986-1990. A pre-condition for the implementation of that Programme is the central role of the State in the overall management of the economy and in ensuring the balanced development of the major sectors of the economy. Indeed, the

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\*Mr. Kabanda (Rwanda), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

important role of the State sector is rightly pointed out in the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, contained in the annex to resolution S-13/2, adopted by the General Assembly at its thirteenth special session. We also understand why African countries are focussing special attention on agricultural recovery as a basis for food self-sufficiency.

Any real solution to the problems of backwardness requires a comprehensive approach to social and economic development, including industrialization as a basis for an independent national economy. It was precisely that approach that was approved by the African countries in the Lagos Plan of Action and in the activities of the Industrial Development Decade for Africa.

The socialist countries believe also that, if Africa is to solve its economic problems, radical measures must be taken to eliminate the root causes that have been inherited from colonialism and spawned by neo-colonialism, including those mentioned in the Secretary-General's report in document A/41/683.



(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

These measures must be closely linked to the solution of the problem of disarmament and to the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security, an essential part of which would be a system of international economic security, all of which would allow for the release of additional resources for the purpose of peaceful development in African countries as well.

As the representative of the Group of Eastern European States has already pointed out, in our appraisal of the results of the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly on the critical economic situation in Africa and of the Final Document, we found that the document did not give a sufficiently clear analysis of the external factors hindering the development of African countries and did not allow for more effective recommendations for actually overcoming the underprivileged status of the African continent in the world's economic system. Furthermore, it presented the framework for the economic development of those countries in isolation from the social problems of the continent. Nor, unfortunately, did the Final Document take into account the many important provisions approved in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States or in the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order.

The socialist countries condemn attempts to use the critical economic situation of African countries in order to interfere in their internal affairs and foreign policies. The United Nations must not be, and will not be, an accomplice to such a policy. The approach of the socialist countries with regard to the States of Africa is based on other principles: true equality, full respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, and mutual advantage.

While consistently supporting the struggle of the African countries to eliminate their subservience in the world capitalist economy, the socialist

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

countries are developing equitable and mutually advantageous co-operation with them, and are lending them significant assistance, and, in practice, are helping them to establish truly independent economies and to strengthen them.

With the assistance of the States members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), by the year 1986, approximately 1800 industrial enterprises and other types of facilities had been constructed in Africa; and over the past 20 years more than 55,000 citizens of African countries have obtained an education in higher- and middle-level specialized institutes of the States members of CMEA. From 1960 to 1984, the volume of the foreign trade of States members of CMEA with the countries of Africa increased more than 20 times and the overall assistance given by socialist States to countries of the African continent increased 50 times.

The socialist countries give a great deal of non-reimbursable assistance to the States of Africa in their efforts to overcome drought and other catastrophes, inter alia, by providing foodstuffs, transport equipment, medicines and so forth, and also by sending them experts in health care, education, agriculture, geology, energy, transportation, and so on. The socialist countries will continue to lend economic, technical and political support to the efforts of the countries of that continent as they attempt to achieve genuine economic independence.

In this connection, the States members of CMEA intend, in particular, to expand the scope of mutually advantageous trade and economic co-operation with interested African countries, taking into account their plans and priorities. We are prepared to promote the further development of established forms of mutually advantageous divisions of labour, giving special attention to the construction of industrial enterprises in interested countries, on a compensatory basis. There will be further development of co-operation with interested African countries to

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

increase the supplies of products necessary for recovery in their national economies and to increase the exports of raw materials, semi-processed goods, and other types of products from their national economies to the socialist countries. We will continue to lend assistance by training national experts, by developing agriculture, by preparing long-term plans for social and economic development, transport and communications, and by developing systems of education, health care, science and culture.

The participation of all States is necessary if we are to solve the complex economic problems of Africa. To this end, it is necessary for all countries, without exception, to comply, in actual practice, with the progressive provisions of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the International Development Strategy, and other United Nations decisions on the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and equitable basis.

The participation of the international community in solving the problems of that continent must be carried out with full respect for the sovereignty of African States and for the development paths their peoples have chosen. This should be the ultimate goal of further United Nations activities to help overcome the critical economic situation in Africa.

Mr. VELAZCO SAN JOSE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): We wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Mozambique on the tragic loss of President Samora Machel and his colleagues. The people of Mozambique have lost their beloved leader and the African peoples one of their most prestigious sons.

The item on the critical economic situation in Africa is of fundamental importance, and we are pleased to note that it was included on the agenda of our

(Mr. Velazco San Jose, Cuba)

forty-first session. Although it was only a few months ago that we held the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly to consider this question, it is our view that the extreme seriousness of the situation which the African continent continues to face calls for a periodic examination of the way in which that situation is developing and of means that may be available to us to find an appropriate solution to the problems and interests of the African peoples.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report on the critical economic situation in Africa (A/41/683) and, in the main, we agree with his assessments and conclusions.

(Mr. Velazco San Jose, Cuba)

There is no doubt that the pressing problems which African countries have confronted and continue to confront are the result of a number of factors which have come together and compounded one another. First of all, we cannot fail to mention the effects of colonialism, which prevailed on that continent for more than a century, on the economic and social structures of the African countries, subjecting them to the needs of the consumption and trade of the colonial Powers and not to the legitimate interests of the peoples of the region. Thus many of those countries, on attaining political independence, found themselves with totally distorted structures.

The international economic situation that under-developed countries as a whole have had to face as a result of the economic crisis that has afflicted and continues to afflict the world economy and has affected the African countries in particular because of the vulnerability and weakness of their economies is also a factor which plays a determining role in the current critical situation of the continent. The Secretary-General in his report refers to some of the conditions which have an impact in that regard:

"These included, inter alia, a prolonged and general recession in the industrialized countries, which resulted in stagnation of aid flows to African countries, a continuously growing burden of foreign debt-servicing, lower returns from the export of agricultural and other basic commodities whose world market prices kept on falling, while the cost of imported fuel and manufactured goods kept on rising." (A/41/683, para. 5)

Ecological deterioration and especially the effects of the prolonged drought in the Sahel have made the situation more complicated and in the short term have led the international community to offer increasing emergency aid.

Of course we must also mention the consequences of the policy of apartheid practised in South Africa by the shameful Pretoria régime and its continued

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destabilizing acts of aggression against neighbouring States. Obviously, those who have been the hardest hit by such practices are the front-line countries, but there is no doubt that the very existence of the apartheid régime casts an ugly shadow over the entire continent and contributes to a worsening of the economic and social conditions there.

Thus we see that the critical economic situation in Africa has been brought about by a variety of elements: some are circumstantial and others structural in nature, but in any case they must be resolved. While many of the problems which African countries face internally are structural in nature, equally so is the prevailing unjust international economic order which must be abolished without further delay and replaced by a new, just and equitable international economic order for the good of Africa, as for that of the third world as a whole.

Moreover, the international community must give all possible assistance to the African continent. The resource flows must reach levels in keeping with the financial flows required by Africa to meet its pressing emergency needs and to enable it to follow more quickly an independent path of development. However, this assistance and these resource flows cannot be subjected to any conditions. My delegation has repeatedly stated and would reiterate once again that the use of resources as a means of pressure to try to impose on the receiving countries particular structures or policies is impermissible. We have rejected that practice in the past and we continue to reject it now.

Cuba has always in practice shown its steadfast solidarity with the African continent by every means that its limited resources allow. We are ready to continue to do so and we urge the international community to act in unison and with full respect for the sovereign equality of States and to work with determination to

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contribute to the solution of Africa's economic problems, as doing so would achieve a victory for mankind and signify a new impetus and vitality for the world economy as a whole.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.