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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 19 December 1986, at 4 p.m.

President:

Mr. CHOUDHURY

(Bangladesh)

- Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development [40]
- Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations: [38] (continued)
 - (a) Report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations
 - (b) Notes by the Secretary-General
 - (c) Report of the Fifth Committee
 - (d) Draft resolution
- Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council [41]

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- Question of Cyprus [43]
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The meeting was called to order at 4.50 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 40

LAUNCHING OF GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

The PRESIDENT: As a convenience to the members of the Second Committee, and in response to a request I have received, I suggest that we first take up agenda item 40, entitled "Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development".

In connection with this item, representatives will recall that on 20 September 1986 the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the forty-first session.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): On behalf of the Group of 77 I request that consideration of agenda item 40, "Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development", be deferred to the forty-second session of the General Assembly and that it be inscribed on the agenda of that session. This request reflects the intention of the Group of 77 to seek an agreement with our partners from the developed countries on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 34/138.

The Group of 77 very much regrets that the international community has been unable to reach an agreement on the commencement of global negotiations. The reasons for that failure are to be found in the unwillingness of some developed countries to respond positively to the call of the Group of 77 for the launching of global negotiations. We, the developing countries, continue to attach great importance to this issue because we consider it a valid approach to the solution of pressing world economic problems in the interests of all countries. The Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries, at their recent meeting at Harare, Zimbabwe, reaffirmed the commitment of developing countries to global negotiations

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

as the most important and comprehensive endeavour of the international community for the restructuring of international economic relations, the accelerated development of the developing countries and the strengthening of international economic co-operation. They requested the Group of 77 in New York to continue its efforts towards that goal. At the same time, they urged the developed countries to demonstrate the necessary political will to enable global negotiations to be launched.

For its part, in accordance with the decision taken at the meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs held at the beginning of this session of the General Assembly, the Group of 77 is resolved to achieve agreement on the launching of global negotiations. We earnestly hope that the developed countries will react in the same spirit. It proved difficult at this session of the General Assembly to engage in serious discussion on this issue. Therefore, after consulting a number of our partners from developed countries, we are proposing that the General Assembly decide to transmit this item to the forty-second session of the General Assembly and to keep it on the agenda.

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): Speaking on behalf of the delegations of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and my own country, I should like to stress that those countries have from the very beginning supported General Assembly resolution 34/138 of 14 December 1979 on global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development and have advocated its implementation.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

This principled position has been continuously confirmed at the highest party and Government levels in the documents of the Warsaw Treaty and the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). At the forty-second session of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance held at Bucharest last month the Prime Ministers of our countries again emphasized the importance of conducting global negotiations within the United Nations with the participation of all States in order to bring about a just solution to the most pressing international economic problems.

Socialist countries have welcomed the constructive provisions of the final documents of the Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Harare last September and of the Declaration of the tenth annual meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 concerning fundamental international economic issues. Along that line, our countries agree with the proposal of the Group of 77 to postpone the discussion of the item until the forty-second session of the General Assembly and to make the issue "Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development" a separate item on the agenda of that session.

The mandate for global negotiations on major international economic issues, as spelled out in General Assembly resolution 34/138, which was adopted by consensus seven years ago, is quite clear: What is required for its eventual implementation is political will on the part of all concerned. In that connection the socialist countries, on whose behalf I have the honour to speak, would like to express once again their readiness and determination to follow a constructive and result-oriented approach.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the Assembly's wish to defer its consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the forty-second session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 40.

AGENDA ITEM 38 (continued)

REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

- (a) REPORT OF THE GROUP OF HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS TO REVIEW THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/41/49)
- (b) NOTES BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/41/663; A/41/763)
- (c) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/41/795)
- (d) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/41/L.48/Rev.1, A/41/L.49/Rev.1)

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now resume its consideration of agenda item 38, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations". In this connection the Assembly has before it the report of the Fifth Committee, A/41/795.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of that report?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly also has before it two draft resolutions, A/41/L.48/Rev.1 and A/41/L.49/Rev.1. I call upon the representative of Bolivia to introduce draft resolution A/41/L.48/Rev.1.

Mrs. CARRASCO (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation submitted draft resolution A/41/L.48/Rev.1, which was circulated officially at this session. It relates to an increase in the membership of the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination (CPC), in order to achieve the broadest possible geographical representation.

Under the preamble to the draft resolution, the Assembly would recall resolutions 3392 (XXX) and 40/237, and take account of the views expressed at this session on the representativeness of the CPC. Under the operative part, it would decide to increase the number of members of the Committee to 36, elected for three-year terms on the basis of equitable geographical distribution.

The future of the United Nations is at stake. The work to be done in the coming decade will be highly important for the proper functioning of the United Nations. In that context, the medium-term plan for 1990-1995 must respond to these concerns, and Member States must participate in that plan on a broad basis and with strengthened and democratic machinery. The draft of the plan will be examined precisely in the CPC during 1988, before it is sent to the General Assembly. That is why it is important that the representativeness of the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination should be appropriately modified as soon as possible.

That goes together with the important programming and budgeting responsibilities that this session of the General Assembly is assigning to the CPC under draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1 - functions that are to complement the tasks already assigned to the CPC in the past by the planning rules.

(Mrs. Carrasco, Bolivia)

A number of delegations have told us that, although they agree with the idea of broadening the CPC, in order to avoid its oligarchical connotations, incompatible with the democratic and pluralistic spirit that should prevail in the United Nations, they believe that both the number of members and the representativeness of the regional groups in the CPC should be the subject of further consultations and negotiations. In order to contribute to the dialogue in a positive way, and taking those views into account, my delegation has decided to defer the consideration of draft resolution A/41/L.48/Rev.1 to the forty-second session. We request that this draft resolution and the item be inscribed on the agenda of that session.

The PRESIDENT: As all members know, draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1 is the result of extensive negotiations. I am pleased to note that it now enjoys the co-sponsorship of 19 Member States, and I wish to extend my wholehearted appreciation to everyone for the co-operation extended in this endeavour. It is my understanding that the Assembly is now prepared to proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution.

In this connection, I have obtained a legal opinion from the Legal Counsel of the United Nations on three draft paragraphs. The legal opinion reads as follows:

"You have requested our opinion on the legal consequences of three draft paragraphs which are under consideration for inclusion in a resolution to be adopted by the General Assembly on the United Nations budgetary process.

These three draft paragraphs read as follows:

"'5. Reaffirms that the decision-making process is governed by the provisions of the Charter and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly;

(The President)

"6. Agrees that, without prejudice to paragraph 5 above, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination should continue its existing practice of reaching decisions by consensus; explanatory views, if any, shall be presented to the General Assembly;

"7. Considers it desirable that the Fifth Committee, before submitting its recommendations on the outline of the programme budget to the Plenary in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and the rules of procedure, should continue to make all possible efforts with a view to establishing the broadest possible agreement;".

"It is our opinion that these draft paragraphs read separately or together do not in any way prejudice the provisions of Article 18 of the Charter of the United Nations or of the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly giving effect to that Article."

That coincides with the views expressed by all delegations.

I concur with the foregoing, and I take it that the General Assembly also agrees with it.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: That statement will be annexed to the resolution.

Before the Assembly proceeds to take a decision on draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1, I wish to convey to it the following information received from the Secretariat:

"Draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1 would, if adopted, have complex implications for the programme and budget of the Organization. It is not possible at this stage - and in particular pending the outcome of the reviews of the intergovernmental machinery and of the structure of the Secretariat - to indicate with any degree of precision what these implications would be. It

(The President)

would therefore be the intention of the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly, both in the context of the reports called for in the draft resolution and in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989, on the detailed implications of this resolution."

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position before a decision is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. SAMUDIO (Panama) (interpretation from Spanish): The opinion of the Latin American and Caribbean Group of States on section C of chapter VI of the report of the Group of 18, on the planning and budget mechanisms, is to be found in document A/41/960 of 8 December 1986, whose purpose was to contribute to the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations.

In that context, it is not acceptable that under the pretext of reviewing the efficiency of that functioning, or under any other pretext, there should be an attempt to detract from the democratic nature of the decision-making process provided for in Article 18 of the Charter. Nor is it acceptable for the Organization's efficiency to continue to be affected by the intentional withholding by some Member States of their contributions to the regular budget, contributions they are obliged to make under Articles 17 and 19 of the Charter.

The Latin American and Caribbean Group of States considers it appropriate to make the present interpretive declaration in order to confirm its position and to point out that paragraphs 6 and 7 of section II of draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1 are subject to the basic principle contained in paragraph 5 of that section, which reaffirms that

"the decision-making process is governed by the provisions of the Charter and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly".

The informal practice of arriving at resolutions and decisions by consensus, which should not be confused with unanimity, is useful and therefore tends to be employed in all the bodies of the General Assembly. However, as it is not a juridical norm, it is not obligatory and it does not interfere with the right of any Member State to seek recourse to a vote to achieve majority decisions when

(Mr. Samudio, Panama)

necessary. The practice of consensus is conceived of only within a process of decision-making governed by the fundamental rule of voting.

Mr. JESUS (Cape Verde): On behalf of the African Group of States, I congratulate you, Sir, on the important results that you have achieved on agenda item 38. Your efforts, especially over the past three weeks, the patience with which you have endured, by sharing with us the long and sometimes frustrating negotiating sessions, and the wisdom of your guidance were of fundamental importance in reaching a compromise. The Organization owes you a historic debt.

The African States participated in the negotiations fully conscious of their international responsibilities, and were guided solely by the objective of preserving and strengthening the United Nations. Our keen interest and deep involvement in the negotiations reflected our strong attachment to the Organization and the purposes for which it was created.

Africa and the Organization have strong historic ties. The most glorious moments of the continent's modern history - the liberation from colonial rule - are counted as outstanding achievements of the United Nations.

As independent States, we were born with the blessing of the noble principles enshrined in the Charter and, since then, as its members, we have become active participants in the permanent dialogue for the fulfilment of its purposes of maintaining international peace and security and of co-operation for the development and well-being of all peoples.

(Mr. Jesus, Cape Verde)

These historic ties between Africa and the Organization and our strong attachment to its purposes and principles explain and legitimize Africa's strong commitment to the negotiations directed at its efficiency and the strengthening of its functions.

That is why since last year, when the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts was created to review the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, we, the African States, have taken this initiative very seriously, and accordingly have worked very hard to make our contribution to the outcome of that endeavour.

Our responsible firmness at the negotiating table was shown when necessary. The defence of fundamental principles of international relations, including the principle of the sovereign equality of States in the United Nations, had to be dealt with firmly. Our willingness to compromise, shown time and again during the negotiations, was reflected in the flexibility that we displayed and in the many constructive proposals that we made. Some of those proposals were further built upon and later included as important elements of the draft resolution.

Our co-operation with all delegations involved in the negotiations was extensively documented in the careful consideration and accommodation given by the African Group to the positions and interests of all countries and groups of countries. In short, the African Group participated in these important negotiations fully aware of the magnitude and sensitivity of the matter before us, and determined to make every effort to preserve and strengthen the functioning of the United Nations.

(Mr. Jesus, Cape Verde)

Firmly committed as we are to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, we were strongly against the consideration of any question which directly or indirectly threatened those principles or jeopardized the attainment of those purposes. We could in no way endorse positions that would subvert the democratic rights of all Member States, particularly in the General Assembly.

It is therefore with satisfaction that we acknowledge that those legitimate concerns and firm positions of the African States, which, after all, were shared by the overwhelming majority of Member States, if not by all, have been fully taken into account and are duly and clearly reflected in the text of the draft resolution and its annexes.

We come out of these difficult negotiations convinced that all Member States are aware of the utmost importance of the United Nations as an indispensable framework where nations of the world can debate and search for peaceful solutions to their conflicts and where all nations representing the human race as a whole can find agreed solutions to global problems.

The agreement reached on the reforms to be introduced into the Organization, with a view to improving its efficiency in the administrative and financial fields, gives us renewed hope that all countries will, in compliance with their Charter obligations, commit themselves to the dignifying task of preserving and strengthening the United Nations, in the interest of world peace and the well-being of all peoples.

(Mr. Jesus, Cape Verde)

It is a privilege for the African countries, for my country and for me personally to have participated in, and contributed to, the successful conclusion of our work on the review of the efficiency of the United Nations. We very much appreciate the co-operation given to us by all delegations in the course of the negotiations. Their willingness to compromise on such an important matter, matched by that of the African States, made this historic success possible, under your patient, able and efficient guidance, Sir. We therefore support draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1.

(Mr. Jesus, Cape Verde)

As this session draws to an end with this remarkable achievement, I wish to conclude by expressing, on behalf of the African countries, our best wishes for a happy new year to you, Sir, to the Secretary-General, to all representatives and to all members of the Secretariat staff.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/41/L.49/Pev 1 without a vote?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 41/213).

The PRESIDENT: I call now upon the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The resolution just adopted by this Assembly on the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts is of cardinal importance for the future of this Organization as an effective force for progress and for peace. This notable achievement has been possible only because of the spirit of accommodation shown by all Member States. The measures endorsed for the improvement of the financial and administrative functioning of the Organization are without precedent in their scope and detail. I believe they provide a sound basis for changes that will bring new confidence in the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization and facilitate the agreement among Member States on the programmes and budget that is necessary for financial and political viability. The President of the General Assembly deserves great credit for the essential role he has played in guiding the extensive discussions through various forums to a successful result.

There is now much to be done. Implementation of the measures decided upon by the Assembly will be a complex and demanding undertaking, to the success of which I am totally committed. I have already taken steps within my authority to improve resource utilization and I have made preparations within the Secretariat which should permit us to move ahead expeditiously and in orderly fashion to implement the broad measures foreseen in the report of the Group of 18.

(The Secretary-General)

In stating this I must add that a number of important strands will need to be woven into a coherent pattern during the coming year. Some of the measures decided upon by the Assembly require action by intergovernmental bodies. Others which can be implemented by the Secretary-General will need to be carried out with due regard for their relationship to such intergovernmental action. The year 1987 must also see extensive work accomplished on the programme budget for the next biennium, to include a contingency fund and the initiation of preparations for the 1990-1995 medium-term plan. The effect of the prospective reforms will have to be taken into account in the process.

The year 1987 will thus be a year of transition, a year in which we undertake purposefully the reforms that can be quickly begun and lay the groundwork for further rationalization of structures and operations through the reviews and studies that are to be made. Clearly, there will need to be flexibility in the modalities of implementation. In the progress report which I shall submit to the General Assembly this coming May I shall give a full account of what has been accomplished by then and define the approaches which I believe can best be taken in achieving the purpose of the measures agreed upon by the Assembly.

As a result of the far-sighted and painstaking work of the Group of 18 and of the constructive action taken by the Assembly today after thoughtful and constructive deliberation, we have in place the blueprint for a more efficient United Nations. The co-operation and understanding of Member States will be necessary as we build from this the stronger edifice that all desire. I must emphasize, as we end a year of severe financial crisis and enter another, that the major requirement in this respect, now and in the future, is full payment of assessed contributions in accordance with the Charter. The reform measures now to be undertaken must be accompanied by an end to the present financial uncertainties

(The Secretary-General)

if the United Nations is to meet successfully the challenges and opportunities of the future.

In this year, proclaimed by the Assembly as the International Year of Peace, Member States have overcome substantial differences to reach agreement on the means of strengthening this Organization, established to ensure a peaceful world for future generations. I would hope that this same spirit and determination can be applied to lessening the political differences which underlie many of the problems of the Organization, including those in the financial area, and that there will be a common resolve to comply with all of the provisions of the Charter. This hope can guide us as we move ahead in the new year and beyond to bring to reality the measures of reform on which all Member States have reached agreement.

The PRESIDENT: A number of delegations, including certain of its sponsors, have expressed a desire to make statements in connection with the resolution just adopted. In view of the importance of the item under consideration, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to hear the delegations concerned, since they have not yet had the opportunity to speak?

It was so decided.

Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia): First and foremost, Mr. President, I should like to congratulate you on this achievement. Your able leadership, the tireless efforts you made with your colleagues, and the highly commendable co-operation of the Secretary-General and his staff have enabled us to reach the present conclusion.

I have accepted with a heavy heart the resolution just adopted without a vote. Despite its ambiguity, which initially we found difficult to accommodate, I consider your explanation, Mr. President, sufficient to eliminate any ambiguity that might have been created by the terms of the text itself, and believe that nothing in the text will really hamper the procedures adopted by the General Assembly in its normal deliberations.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

That said, let me reflect for a moment upon the circumstances, upon the resolution itself, and upon the atmosphere in which it was considered. Wealth, power and authority have always been the history of humanity. We have passed through eras of war and peace and have reached the era of the United Nations, which was to rationalize wealth and harmonize power in a Charter with checks and balances to accommodate the powerful, the wealthy, the small and the big; to accommodate all circumstances - except the fact that the world has become a small one.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

During the last 40 years more than 100 countries have earned their independence. During the last 40 years we have achieved a great measure of harmony in rationalizing our differences and in reaching agreement on many issues. Having stepped into the forty-first year of the history of the United Nations, we still have two problems on the conscience of the world: the problem of Palestine and that of South Africa and Namibia.

I must stress the fact that - as Members are aware - leadership is not only wealth and power. In essence, leadership is moral leadership. The ingredient of any leadership is the moral power that is inherent in it. Wealth and power without the moral ingredient would not be the right approach to solving problems. The moral of these two problems which remain on our conscience now will always be the responsibility of this great body. I therefore call on all Powers, big and small, in exercising their authority, to live up to the moral responsibility that the founders of the United Nations have entrusted to us. It is that moral responsibility that calls on us today to ensure that the United Nations survives, to live up to our responsibility to the Organization and to pay our dues. We should be ready to reconsider any situation that might lead to failure in this respect.

Mr. President, again I want to congratulate you, the Secretary-General, and all representatives here who have participated in achieving this conclusion.

Mr. GHAREKHAN (India): With the adoption of the draft resolution contained in document A/41/L.49/Rev.1, which has now become resolution 41/213, the General Assembly has taken a historic decision. It is historic not in the sense that it breaks any new ground or lays down new policies or principles: On the contrary, it reconfirms existing principles and provisions. It is historic in the

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

sense that the Organization, which was facing one of the most acute crises in its 40-year life - some even say that it was the most acute crisis - has shown once again that, given political goodwill on all sides, it is possible to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. There was a widespread perception that the very existence of the United Nations was in danger. Every Member, as it were, was on trial. Hence all of us might claim that we have passed the test with at least reasonably satisfactory grades.

At this moment, when perhaps the universal feeling in the Assembly is one of relief, it is not necessary to go back to the beginning and recall the circumstances which gave rise to the crisis. Naturally, we cannot forget those circumstances, nor would it be wise to do so altogether. But our principal preoccupation now should be to look forward, to look ahead to the future - the not-too-distant future, but the foreseeable future.

My delegation, for one, hopes that some of the underlying causes behind the controversy will not recur and that our Organization will once again become healthy, financially sound and administratively even more efficient, fully capable of tackling the social and economic problems facing the international community, in particular the developing countries.

Rarely are we privileged to participate in events of such significance. It is with pride and satisfaction that we are witnessing a tangible expression of the combined will of Member States to renew, revitalize and reinvigorate the Organization. It is pertinent to recall that over 40 years ago we had committed ourselves to the United Nations as an instrument to build a better world, not only for our generation but, more importantly, for future generations. Regrettably, in the recent past, the Organization has been subjected to a severe crisis challenging its very viability. We all know the causes of this crisis. My delegation trusts

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

that this resolution will help ensure that such a crisis will not be allowed to occur again in the future. During the present international situation, it is important to ensure that the United Nations can, both now and in the longer term, be that strong, constructive force in world affairs that is vitally needed in our increasingly interdependent world.

The resolution we have adopted by consensus clearly expresses a desire on the part of all of us to rededicate ourselves to the provisions and principles of the Charter. It is also a reaffirmation of the essentiality finally to uphold the principle of democratic functioning on which the United Nations is based. Without commitment to this basic, unalterable principle, durable solutions to the complex economic, social and financial problems facing the international community cannot be found.

The fact that the sponsors were drawn from all regions of the world bolsters our confidence in the future of the United Nations and its role in the maintenance of peace and security and enhancing international co-operation in different sectors. We hope that the adoption of the resolution will encourage Member States to utilize further the forum afforded by the United Nations in order that it may, in fact, serve as the "centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" for the attainment of these common ends.

We are glad that this resolution reaffirms the principle of according full respect to the authority of the Secretary-General as the chief administrative officer of the Organization. This will surely assist him in performing the duties assigned to him under the Charter. The implementation of this resolution places an enormous responsibility on the Secretary-General and on the Secretariat, which he so ably leads. We are fortunate that the Organization has at its head a person of such high eminence and outstanding qualities. We remain fully confident that the

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

Secretary-General, with his extensive knowledge and expertise, his intelligence and diplomatic skills, will carry out his tasks to the satisfaction of all Member States. It shall be the duty of all of us to extend to him our unstinted co-operation.

Mr. President, I should like to place on record my delegation's deep and most sincere tribute to your leadership in dealing with this sensitive item. It is no exaggeration to say that without the qualities of tact, intelligence, firmness and - very important - humour that you have brought to bear throughout the protracted and, at times, painful negotiations, we could not have achieved the results that we have succeeded in achieving. The many long hours that you personally spent in guiding the negotiations, with the help of your enthusiastic aides, is a testimony to your commitment and that of your country to the United Nations. For me and my delegation it was an honour to have been associated with the decision-making processes of the past two weeks. In short, Mr. President, the confidence that we placed in you on 16 September has been justified beyond our expectations. For all this, we and the Organization remain indebted to you.

Mr. SHAH NAWAZ (Pakistan): My delegation congratulates you, Mr. President, on the adoption of resolution 41/213, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations". Its adoption is indeed a major achievement of the present session of the General Assembly and a reflection of the hope of all the Member States that, as a result, the United Nations will be stronger and, at the same time, more effective in fulfilling the letter and spirit of its Charter.

My delegation supported the initiative taken by Japan at the fortieth session of the General Assembly and welcomed the establishment of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations. Our support of the Japanese proposal stemmed from our conviction that the proposed Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts would not interfere with the prerogatives of the Secretary-General as the Organization's chief administrative officer and might actually assist him in implementing reforms in sensitive areas for which the support of the Member States was imperative.

We were happy to see that the Group of 18 was able to reach agreement on wide-ranging issues affecting nearly all aspects of United Nations work. While we had difficulty with some specific recommendations contained in the report, we found that on balance the report was a useful tool for remodelling the method and content of the work of the United Nations and intergovernmental machinery and for streamlining its administrative and budgetary functioning.

Our belief in the United Nations and our commitment to its purposes and principles encouraged us to dedicate ourselves, in co-operation with all the delegations, to finding solutions to the overriding financial problem confronting the current session of the General Assembly. We have remained involved in this effort from the very beginning of the debate on the issue in the General Assembly

(Mr. Shah Nawaz, Pakistan)

which culminated in the agreement reached last night by the negotiating team under the President's chairmanship.

We also participated actively in the technical considerations given to the report of the Group of 18 by the Fifth Committee and in the work of the Consultative Group, which deliberated over the matter from 12 to 18 November under the chairmanship of the Permanent Representative of Malaysia, Ambassador Yusof M. Hitam. As the President rightly pointed out in the Committee's meeting this morning, it was in that Consultative Group that the various positions were clearly formulated and presented, enabling the negotiating team to conclude its work successfully. We therefore take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Yusof for his contribution to the evolution of a final resolution on this subject.

Mr. President, it was a memorable experience for us to have participated in the deliberations of the negotiating team under your chairmanship. We were able to agree on a text because all of us had moved in a spirit of accommodation and understanding. The text of the resolution just adopted will have an impact on all elements of the functioning of the United Nations, above all on the central issue of the planning and budgetary mechanisms, without detriment to the principles and provisions of the Charter. We are confident that our decisions today will effectively improve the Organization's administrative and financial functioning.

I should like to place on record my delegation's deep appreciation to you, Mr. President, for the able and skilful manner in which you presided over our work and brought to a successful conclusion our deliberations on an issue of great technical complexity and political sensitivity. It is no exaggeration to say that this successful outcome would not have been possible without your imaginative leadership and the commitment and tireless efforts of your dedicated colleagues.

(Mr. Shah Nawaz, Pakistan)

The special ties between our two countries and our close personal relations entitle us to feel a deep sense of pride in your accomplishment.

Let me also congratulate the Group of African States at the United Nations for its outstanding contribution to the success of our joint endeavours at both the political and technical levels. Above all, the role played by the representative of Cape Verde, Ambassador José Luis Jesus, merits our special recognition and generous tribute. He has demonstrated extraordinary negotiating skills and qualities of statesmanship that deserve fulsome praise.

Equally, I wish to congratulate Ambassador Reid of the United States and his colleagues for their flexibility and readiness to negotiate which made this agreement possible.

All of us have worked hard during this session of the General Assembly to evolve recommendations that would ensure the future of this Organization. Let us hope now that we shall continue to work together to ensure that they are implemented in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Charter for the betterment and strengthening of this Organization.

Mr. GUMUCIO GRANIER (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): Bolivia wishes to reiterate its support for the role of the United Nations, for the work of the Secretary-General, and for the Organization's administrative and financial efficiency. We endorse the statement by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States made a few minutes ago by the Ambassador of Panama.

None the less, my Government is concerned by the trend in international forums to seek consensus - or unanimity - even though it may sometimes result in a document of dubious value. A more accurate term might be "undemocratic", because the democracy which we try to preserve in our countries is based on the will of the majority, as expressed by the vote. Adoption by consensus, on the other hand,

(Mr. Gumucio Granier, Bolivia)

imposes criteria that mask delegations' positions. This is obviously inconsistent with the pluralism which should prevail in the international community.

At its fortieth session the General Assembly adopted resolution 40/237 without a vote so as to demonstrate unanimous support for changes in the Organization's administrative and financial functioning. My delegation, though not in agreement with some of the provisions of the resolution, did not formally oppose them because they were procedural in nature and we wished to be flexible. But now my delegation finds that the way in which the report was dealt with at this session - both in the plenary Assembly and in the Fifth Committee, under agenda item 38 - was partial and somewhat confusing. In the Fifth Committee factual, technical findings were discussed that did not make it possible for States Members duly to formulate their objections to the report as a whole or to its individual recommendations. Hence it might have been thought that on the first five chapters of the report on which there was unanimity among the experts who prepared it there might also have been unanimity among the Member States. That is not the case. Indeed, in respect of the 67 recommendations contained in the first five chapters the Bolivian delegation stated that it did not agree with 18 of them and that it found seven of them unacceptable, specifically recommendations 6, 7, 24, 25 (3), 27, 37 (3) and 61.

In this connection we reiterate that, although the resolution just adopted - document A/41/L.49/Rev.1 - decides that the Secretary-General and the competent bodies should implement those recommendations, so far as the recommendations of the Group of 18 are concerned my delegation records its reservation that it does not agree with the aforementioned criteria.

(Mr. Gumucio Granier, Bolivia)

I reiterate that the lack of efficiency resulting from the Organization's financial crisis is the responsibility of neither the Secretary-General nor the staff of the international civil service. My delegation does not agree that the international staff is overpaid or that it has too many privileges. On the contrary, the international civil service should be given every support and all the incentives needed so that it can accomplish its work.

My delegation stresses that if draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1 had been put to a recorded vote, we would have abstained on the draft resolution in general and voted against paragraph 6 for reasons of principle.

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): On behalf of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Socialist Republic of Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, I have the honour to explain their principled position on questions concerning the report of the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations.

The countries I have the honour to represent have supported the resolution on the report of the Group of Experts although the document before us does not fully take into account all our ideas and interests. The resolution, which contains useful recommendations, is the result of lengthy and difficult consultations. They have been successful thanks to the untiring activities of representatives from all groups of States in various negotiating bodies and the active and constructive contribution made by the socialist States. I should like to take this opportunity to express to you, Mr. President, the special thanks of the group of States on whose behalf I have the honour to speak for your wise and apt guidance of the negotiations.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

The support our group of States has given the recommendations agreed upon is an expression of the principled commitment of our States to the United Nations and to the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter. It is an expression of the interest of the socialist States in a strong and efficient United Nations, which has to contribute to averting the danger of a nuclear inferno, to ending the arms race on earth and preventing its spread to outer space.

The priority of these vital questions of mankind, which in the nuclear and space age have become questions of survival, was clearly underlined at the meeting of the highest representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States in Reykjavik, and they will remain on the agenda until they are settled.

What is imperative now is to invigorate, in the United Nations too, the policy of result-oriented political dialogue and of establishing a world-wide coalition of common sense and realism. There is urgent need for the United Nations also to overcome social and economic injustice, poverty and hunger, to implement human rights and to eliminate oppression and exploitation. Today we need the United Nations more than ever before as a centre for dialogue, understanding and co-operation.

At this juncture I once again assure the General Assembly that the socialist States on whose behalf I have the honour to speak are profoundly interested in the potential of the United Nations to be used more effectively, which in our view can be achieved by, inter alia, making its proceedings and its main bodies more democratic. We stand for an all-round strengthening of the political, legal and moral positions as well as of the authority and effectiveness of the world Organization, and will do our utmost to help overcome the Organization's short-term and long-term problems.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): I have the honour to make a brief statement on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community.

Mr. President, the Twelve have watched with admiration your skilful and untiring efforts over the last weeks to achieve a satisfactory solution to this issue. Those of us who have had the privilege of working under your personal direction have especially come to appreciate your determination, your common sense and your good humour. The Twelve would like to pay a personal tribute to you and to your staff for unflagging efforts on behalf of us all and for the sake of the Organization itself.

The resolution deals with issues of major importance: the administrative and financial efficiency of the United Nations and the planning, programming and budgeting process of the Organization. It is no exaggeration to say that those issues were examined intensively. We can recall no other single report that has commanded so much of the time, effort and interest of delegations.

The views of the Twelve on the report of the Group of 18 were set out in the plenary in October. We believe that the resolution we have just approved represents a careful, balanced approach to a complicated and intractable set of problems. For our part, we never expected negotiations to be easy, and so it has proved. Naturally, the resolution does not satisfy all Member States fully in all respects. But we accept the outcome as an essential stage in the improvement of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations.

The negotiations over recent weeks have demonstrated the ability of Member States to make common cause for the sake of the Organization in order to enhance its efficiency and reinforce its effectiveness. The manner in which those negotiations have been carried out - in the spirit of pragmatism and mutual accommodation, accompanied by a firm determination on all sides to uphold the Charter, its principles and purposes - is a good augury for the future of the

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

United Nations. It is now for us, the Member States, to continue along the path that has been so well defined. The Twelve will follow with the utmost interest the implementation of this resolution, beginning in 1987. They wish to reassure the Secretary-General of their continuing co-operation in his task of overseeing this process and to reaffirm their political and financial commitment to the Organization.

The Twelve wish to pay tribute to the Government of Japan, the originators of the process which has led to this juncture and to the Group of 18 and its Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Norway.

Finally, we wish also to commend the dedication, the professionalism and the goodwill shown by all those who have taken part in these negotiations. All of us together have demonstrated how countries with very different interests and goals can come together for the common good.

Mr. GBEHO (Ghana): Now that we have a resolution that reflects the will of the General Assembly, our difficult task has come to an end. Apart from approving those agreed measures recommended by the 18-member Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts, the document gives recognition to a tradition of making decisions by consensus in the budgeting process of the United Nations and strengthens the role of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination in adopting the budget. The road towards the resolution has been long and arduous, but, if it creates the necessary environment and understanding that would ensure the Organization's viability, then those agonizing hours that went into the formulation of the resolution would not have been in vain.

Again, this document not only represents an impressive and important achievement in multilateral diplomacy; it also bears testimony to the good sense and commitment of Member States to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Threatened with the spectre of a collapse of their United Nations, Member States have stood firm and, by sheer tenacity of purpose, have also worked hard to achieve what can become an important milestone in the history of the Organization.

Those of us from Africa who took part in this historic effort had no illusions about the magnitude of the problem when we began the negotiations. It was our commitment to the Organization that sustained us. As the Group of 18 pointed out in its report, over a number of years the content and level of the budget of the Organization had been plagued by disagreements arising out of dissatisfaction with aspects of the Organization's management and administrative functioning. Those problems were compounded by shortcomings in the planning and budget procedures of the Organization. Instead of an integrated process through which wide agreement could evolve on activities to be financed from the budget, the procedures lacked the dynamism that would ensure this measure of agreement. Member States felt that they were not sufficiently involved in the budget process and could only pronounce on it at a very late stage.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

In this regard, the adoption of the resolution should restore Member States' confidence in the process. For, apart from recognizing the Member States' attachment to a full respect for the provisions of the Charter, its principles and its aims, the resolution introduces a system that will enable Member States to be involved, in a structured manner, in the planning, programming and budget procedures from the very beginning and throughout the process. It also makes possible the establishment of guidance to the Secretary-General by Member States on the over-all level of resources to accommodate the activities of the Organization during the biennium and on priorities. By calling for strict application of existing rules and regulations by intergovernmental bodies concerned and by the Secretariat, the resolution facilitates the chances of achieving an improvement in the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization, which would contribute to the strengthening of its effectiveness in dealing with political, economic and social issues. The novel idea of an outline with which the budget process starts and with which Member States would be actively associated through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination should ensure the necessary participation which the previous procedures lacked and which gave rise to so much mistrust and dissatisfaction.

An initial agreement by Member States - on such elements as a preliminary estimate of resources to accommodate the proposed programme of activities during the biennium; priorities reflecting general trends of a broad sectoral nature; real growth, positive or negative, compared with the previous budget; and the size of a contingency fund expressed as a percentage of the over-all level of resources - had the merit of assisting the process in a positive way, and Member States should give it a try.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

It is also our hope that the process of decision-making as agreed during the negotiations and as reflected in the present resolution will promote that degree of understanding and spirit of compromise that should underlie our individual efforts at creating a better world.

In my earlier statement on this item I ventured the hope that Member States would not let this opportunity slip by to come together to take those decisions that will result in a United Nations capable of enjoying the wider confidence and cohesion required by the global imperatives it was created to meet. Today's adoption of this historic resolution leads me to believe that the appeal has not gone unheeded. It has demonstrated the strength of our attachment to the survival of the world body.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me pay tribute to your wisdom, your patience and your indefatigable spirit in guiding to a successful conclusion these most delicate and complex negotiations. In thus seeing us rescue the Organization from the brink of financial collapse, you have saved not only the United Nations but also the interests of humankind. We are honoured to have been associated with you in this regard.

Our appreciation also goes in equal measure to all those who have been associated with this giant effort, especially those members of the individual delegations that, in various ways, made it possible for this historic resolution to see the light of day. We thank all of them and are happy to be associated with this historic occasion.

Mr. KIKUCHI (Japan): On behalf of my delegation I should like heartily to welcome the adoption of draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations". As a delegation which, just over a year ago on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, initiated the proposal to set up the Group of High-Level

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

Intergovernmental Experts in an effort to revitalize the Organization and renew confidence in the United Nations, we feel particular satisfaction at the consumation of that effort. From the beginning to the end of our arduous negotiations, our initiative was motivated by a genuine desire to review and improve the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, without, of course, prejudice to the Charter of the Organization - no more and no less than that. My delegation feels most gratified that this basic objective has been fully accepted.

The resolution just adopted contains more comprehensive and constructive measures for reform than any similar efforts in the past. The resolution is a product of the intensive efforts of all delegations to secure the future of our Organization by establishing a common ground acceptable to the entire membership.

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

Mr. President, it is because of your tireless efforts, initiative, enthusiasm and imagination that what has been perhaps one of the most difficult and painstaking series of negotiations in the recent history of the United Nations has met with success.

I recall that during the general debate on the report of the Group of 18 in this Assembly Hall, I appealed to you, in view of the report's vital importance and its implications for the future of the United Nations, to guide our deliberations in this House personally, so that we might arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. This you graciously agreed to do because of your deep commitment to the cause of the United Nations.

My delegation would like to pay a special tribute to you, Sir, and to all of the delegations to the United Nations for the high level of statesmanship that has characterized these negotiations. In particular, my delegation appreciates the positive attitude shown by the African delegations. I would be remiss if I did not also mention the great contributions made by two of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, who at one stage or another of our negotiations played an important role, under your mandate, Mr. President - namely, Ambassador Yusof Hitam of Malaysia and Ambassador George Maciel of Brazil.

The United Nations has taken an epoch-making step forward towards administrative and financial reform. But all of us know that what is more important than adopting a resolution is its implementation. Realizing as we do that this is no easy task to fulfil, we have to implement the resolution fully in order to increase the efficiency of this world body and, indeed, to secure the very survival of this universal Organization. The eyes of the world will henceforth focus on how the United Nations as an organization is going to put the contents of our resolution into practice. In this connection, my delegation

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

welcomes the statement just made by the Secretary-General, in which he expressed his full commitment to the speedy and effective implementation of the resolution.

My delegation sincerely hopes that Member States and the Secretary-General will work together to effectuate the speedy and effective implementation of this resolution, so as to preserve and strengthen this irreplaceable world Organization. I should like to place it on record that the Government of Japan will spare no effort in co-operating with this endeavour.

Mr. WALTERS (United States of America): On 15 October I stood before you, Mr. President, and the Member States assembled here to deliver the United States statement on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations. At that time I said that the United Nations was at a critical juncture and that United States concern about the United Nations and resulting criticisms of it reflected the deep-seated attachment of the United States to the ideals of the Organization.

I urged delegations not to sacrifice the possibilities of the future but rather to seek practical improvement and structural renovation so that we all might turn this time of crisis into an era of renewal. I explained that efforts of the United States at promoting reform were devoted to restoring and strengthening the important contributions that the United Nations had to make to international peace, freedom and progress.

Having said those things, I am particularly pleased to be here today for the adoption of this resolution. It is a tribute to the United Nations and its ideals and to the Member States that engaged in its formulation throughout the Assembly's extensive debate and during the long weeks, days and hours of negotiation under your expert guidance, Mr. President. The reform measures embodied in this resolution represent hope for the future of the United Nations and, more

(Mr. Walters, United States)

importantly, for the people whom we here in this House represent.

We all owe a great deal to the Government of Japan, which first advanced the idea of the Group of 18, to the members of that Group and to its Chairman, Ambassador Tom Eric Vraalsen, Permanent Representative of Norway, for their devotion to the Organization, for their individual and collective ingenuity and for their willingness to stand behind their convictions. None of what we have accomplished during this session of the General Assembly would have been possible without their efforts.

The United States believes that the adoption of this resolution is the beginning, not the end, of a process of reforming and improving the United Nations in the interests of all its Members. Central to this process, in our view, is the use of consensus in establishing the framework for the United Nations budget. Guidance given to the Secretary-General in this area will now reflect broad agreement among the membership. As has been suggested, it is unhealthy for an institution when Member States which contribute 75 per cent of the funds of the United Nations still feel compelled to vote against or abstain on the United Nations budget in order to express their disagreement with the level or type of expenditures.

As a result of what we have achieved today, Member States, through good-faith negotiation, will now act by consensus on the important budget issues that previously proved so divisive. This is fundamental, indeed absolutely essential, for the long-term viability of the United Nations. Were this new process to break down, we would find ourselves back where we started, in a situation unacceptable to all of us.

What we have done has turned rhetoric into reality. We have turned a crisis of credibility into a demonstration of what the United Nations may achieve when

(Mr. Walters, United States)

Member States work towards agreement on important and highly sensitive issues. Member States should not forget what we have all accomplished. What was thought impossible by many has been made possible by all. If this is done today, it can be done tomorrow.

Before I conclude, Sir, I wish to express the deep gratitude and appreciation of the United States delegation and the American people that it represents in the United Nations for the superb way in which you have executed your responsibilities as President of the General Assembly. Without a doubt, your judgement, wisdom and perseverance have served Member States admirably throughout this session, and particularly during the successful consideration of this very sensitive and very important issue.

Mr. STRÖMHOLM (Sweden): As a co-sponsor of resolution 40/237 of 18 December 1985, which led to the establishment of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, Sweden is pleased with the outcome of the deliberations under item 38 at the forty-first session of the General Assembly. My delegation welcomes the fact that it was possible to reach consensus in the negotiations, under your personal direction, Mr. President, during the past weeks. It recognizes, with appreciation, the tremendous efforts and good will that have gone into this process.

In this connection, my delegation pays a tribute to Japan, as the initiator of this process, as well as to the High-level Group itself and to its Chairman, Ambassador Vraalsen of Norway. The Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs stated on 25 September 1986 that the recommendations of the Group constituted a good basis for work on reforms.

(Mr. Strömholm, Sweden)

My delegation believes that the examination of the report made by the Fifth Committee during the current session has proved to be useful and helpful for the Assembly in taking a decision.

The Swedish delegation regards the resolution just adopted as a response to a generally recognized need for reforms in the financial and administrative areas. At the same time, it is obvious that the review of the Group of 18, as well as the Assembly's deliberations, has been undertaken during a period in which the United Nations faces a severe financial crisis.

With respect to the wider picture, the Swedish Government believes that a revision of the present method of assessing contributions is an essential reform which should be included in a comprehensive solution of the problems facing the United Nations. It remains the conviction of my Government that a more even apportionment of assessments would reflect, better than at present, the fact that the United Nations is the instrument of all nations. The Organization would be less dependent on contributions from any single Member State. This, in turn, would be likely to improve the balance and coherence in the functioning of the world body, thereby enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness.

Reform means change for the better. All institutions benefit from reform now and then. The resolution just adopted marks a beginning. The implementation of the reform measures rests with Member States and with the Secretary-General and his programme managers in the Secretariat. The Swedish Government believes that the exercise of the authority and responsibilities of the Secretary-General, as chief administrative officer of the Organization, will be the decisive factor in the years ahead. Management skills and a high degree of professionalism will be required to secure an efficient, effective and viable world Organization.

(Mr. Strömholm, Sweden)

In that context, I wish to underline the importance of a strong financial control function, in the form of an efficient Office of Financial Services, headed by the Controller.

With respect to the role of Member States, let me assure the Assembly that Sweden will participate as actively as possible in the follow-up and implementation of the reform measures adopted by the Assembly.

Let me also reiterate the well-known position of my delegation that unless all Member States fulfil their financial obligations under the Charter, by paying in full and on time their assessed contributions, the United Nations will continue to face serious problems.

Once again, Sir, I pay my tribute to you for having brought this item to a successful conclusion. Sweden was pleased to join in the consensus decision.

Mr. MUDENGE (Zimbabwe): I wish to convey my delegation's appreciation to you, Sir, for the determined manner in which you have directed the negotiations on this important item. The Assembly is much indebted to you and to all the negotiators.

My delegation's commitment to genuine reform of the United Nations and to raising the level of efficiency and effectiveness of our Organization has been stated on many occasions. It was in a spirit of actively supporting this reform process that my country agreed to serve on the Committee of 18 and the Committee of 27. There is much in the report of the Committee of 18 and in the resolution that my country welcomes and is happy to support and promote. I do not intend to single out those recommendations that we can live with. They have largely to do with the proposed administrative improvements.

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

My delegation believes that to most of us here the main purpose of the exercise we have gone through has been to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system. However, we are aware that there were other efforts that were not necessarily aimed at promoting the democratic character of this body. This was, is and will continue to be a cause of anxiety to most of us. It is for that reason that Zimbabwe wishes to place on record its understanding of the crucial paragraphs 6 and 7 on the budgeting process, which have a potential for subverting the democratic principles governing the Organization.

It is our understanding that the existing practice of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination in reaching decisions is to do so without a vote. It is therefore our interpretation that the phrase "existing practice of reaching decisions by consensus" when applied to the Committee's present practice can mean only the practice of coming to decisions without a vote. Otherwise, it has no meaning at all. It is also my delegation's understanding that the Committee cannot be said to have a single practice of arriving at its decisions. Consequently, we take it that the word "practice" in the English text is used in the plural form, just as is the case in the unofficial language of the text, and therefore the Committee is not being restricted by paragraph 6 to following any one practice.

Zimbabwe recognizes that in the English language "consensus" has at least three meanings. First, it may be taken as being synonymous with general agreement - or unanimity, for short. Secondly, it may designate a judgement arrived at with the concurrence of most of those concerned. That is, it reflects the majority view. Finally, it may be equated with group solidarity, sentiment and belief.

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

Given this array of possible interpretations of "consensus", my delegation is of the view that the only interpretation that is in consonance with paragraph 5 is its second meaning: a judgement arrived at with the concurrence of most of those concerned - that is, it reflects the majority view.

Zimbabwe therefore rejects as invalid any interpretation that seeks by the purported codification of a delaying mechanism in the decision-making process of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to derogate from the operational provisions of the Charter and the General Assembly's rules of procedure.

With those few observations, we hope that those who have brought us here by withholding their assessed contributions will now accept their obligation to the Organization. For if that does not happen, this will have been an exercise in futility, significant only in that the sharks have had an opportunity to taste blood.

Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): The resolution we have just adopted can undoubtedly be regarded as one of the major achievements of this forty-first session of the General Assembly. I therefore join those who have spoken before me, and pay a warm tribute to you, Mr. President, for the laudable and dedicated efforts you have exerted to help us arrive at the present consensus. Our sincere appreciation goes also to those delegations that have worked closely with you in the negotiating group throughout these past agonizing weeks.

I would be less than honest if I were to say that my delegation is entirely satisfied with the text before us. However, being realistic, Sir, we concur with you that under the present circumstances draft resolution A/41/L.49/Rev.1, which we all know was the result of long and painstaking negotiations, represented the best possible compromise at this time. It is clear that what we have achieved today is but a first step in our effort to address the complex issues of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations. As recommendations 16 and 25 of the report of the Group of 18 clearly suggest, and as is now indicated in section I of the resolution just adopted, quite a number of the recommendations of the Group of 18 - for instance those in chapter II of its report, on the intergovernmental machinery and its functioning, and in chapter III, on the structure of the Secretariat - imply the need for further studies or reviews before final decisions can be taken. We expect that the studies or reviews that are going to be made will take into account not only the views of the Group of 18, but also the views expressed by delegations during the debate on agenda item 38.

In that regard, my delegation maintains its view pertaining to the structure of the Secretariat, namely that any fundamental change affecting the status of Secretariat units established by intergovernmental decision should have the approval of the relevant intergovernmental bodies and cannot be left solely to the discretion of the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

In conclusion, let me express the hope that the major steps we have just agreed to take will indeed lead to the strengthening of the role of the United Nations and to achievement of the objectives of its Charter. To that end, I deem it appropriate to reiterate what I have already stated in our earlier debate on this item: that in the context of resolving the current financial crisis the effort to enhance the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations must be accompanied by a renewed commitment of explicit support for the Organization by all Member States, in accordance with their Charter obligations.

Mr. RAHMA (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): Now that the General Assembly is about to suspend its forty-first session, having adopted by consensus draft resolution A/41/L.49, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", my delegation wishes to congratulate you, Mr. President, as well as the other Assembly officers, the members of the Group of 18 and all those who participated in the various groups set up to collaborate in the formulation of the report, on your fruitful efforts to produce a resolution acceptable to all concerned.

Everyone must support the efforts of the Secretary-General; there must be greater adherence to Charter provisions and to General Assembly rules of procedure if we are to ensure peace and security to all those who believe in enhancing the role of our Organization. By the same token, mutual trust and good will are vital if we are to achieve the noble purposes of the United Nations Charter. The best way to attain that goal and to breathe more strength and effectiveness into the United Nations, is for all Members to fulfil their Charter obligations. Only thus can the Organization achieve its purposes in today's world - a world beset by preparations for bilateral, regional and international conflict.

(Mr. Rahma, Oman)

Only through persistent, sincere efforts to provide all people with a life of dignity, peace and security can the United Nations eliminate the spectre of war.

Mr. KITTANI (Iraq): On 15 October last, my delegation had occasion to present its views on the fundamental issues underlying this item. I shall not repeat them now, especially since previous statements this afternoon have made this redundant. Instead, I wish to share with members some thoughts for the next 12 months. I wish briefly to address four or five points.

If the euphoria so clearly manifested this afternoon in this Hall is not to disappear into thin air - as did the euphoria present here for two weeks during the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the Organization - at least some of the hopes I am about to express must be realized. First, nothing, in my humble opinion, would enhance the chances of translating the important resolution we have just adopted into reality so much as immediate action by those Members that are in arrears in their contributions to the regular budget - illegally in arrears - to end their delinquency without any further delay and promptly meet their obligations to the budget of the United Nations. I hope they will do so. That would open the door upon a new era of co-operation in the implementation of the resolution just adopted. The Secretary-General has again made an urgent appeal in that regard, and we endorse it.

In practice, when we say "Member States" we mean the executive branches of the Governments of those States, for the United Nations always calls itself an intergovernmental organization. My second hope is that Member States - and their executive branches in particular - will do everything in their power to counter the constant "United Nations-bashing". I hope that, if today's achievement means anything it means that every Member Government will do everything in its power to restore confidence in the United Nations and in the credibility of the Organization,

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

and to make extra efforts actively to counter, within its national boundaries, those forces that are out to destroy the United Nations and that continuously tell us that there is no constituency for the United Nations in their country.

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

I always thought that in each country the strongest constituency for the United Nations was precisely the executive branch of that Government which is responsible for undertaking the obligations on behalf of that State under the Charter.

The third point I should like to emphasize once again is the enormous role of the Secretary-General in this very area of administrative and financial reforms. It is our hope and prayer - and our appeal - that the Secretary-General will not be deterred: on the contrary, that he will be encouraged to exercise fully his Charter mandate, as well as other mandates given to him by the General Assembly, and that he will be encouraged to play an active part, with the full co-operation of Member States, instead of their constantly trying to deprive him of that which is rightfully his under the Charter. We look to the Secretary-General and his colleagues in the Secretariat to guide us actively and to tell us what is needed to carry out not only these reforms but others, as I mentioned on 15 October, which were not even referred to by the Group of 18.

On this point, in less than two weeks the Secretary-General will begin a new term with a unanimous and enthusiastic mandate from the Assembly - spearheaded, incidentally, by the five Permanent Members of the Security Council. That, indeed, puts us all - the Permanent Members, especially - under an obligation to give the Secretary-General what he has asked for in order to carry out his mandate in his second five-year term of office.

The fourth point I want to make is by way of a reminder. I hate to sermonize, but administrative and financial reform and efficiency important and laudable though it be, should never in the context of the United Nations be seen as an end in itself. It can only make sense as a means to an end, because in the final

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

analysis the success or failure of the Organization will never be measured by how much money it has spent, whether it is slightly less - as it is now - or slightly more than the cost of a nuclear submarine. Its success or failure will be measured by the ability or failure of the Organization to solve, and to remove from our agenda chronic political, economic and social items - items that have the persistent habit of not going away. For that to be achieved, and for the United Nations to be a success and really efficient, we have to turn a new page. As so many of my colleagues have said this afternoon, we must bear in mind that the United Nations is important to every Member State, and some of us have to adopt new attitudes in order to make the United Nations work towards the solution of these problems.

In conclusion, nothing would please my delegation more than to come back next year and see the adoption of this draft resolution without a vote have a material effect on the budget itself. Nothing would please us more than to see the major contributors, and others, who now pay 75 per cent of the budget, vote enthusiastically for the next budget.

Finally, I am not going to congratulate you, Sir, but I want to tell you that we in Asia take particular pride in the fact that it was under your presidency, a representative of the Asian group, and due to your indefatigable efforts, infinite patience, understanding and courtesy, that this resolution was adopted.

Mr. TELLMANN (Norway): My delegation would like to add its voice to the expressions of satisfaction with the resolution which has just been adopted by consensus this afternoon. It represents the end result of a long, and occasionally arduous and complex process which has occupied much of the attention and energy of

(Mr. Tellmann, Norway)

our Organization over the last 12 months. We hope and trust that the adoption tonight of the draft resolution contained in document A/41/L.49/Rev.1 will mark the beginning of a reform process that will lead to greater efficiency in the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations.

We would also like, as so many other delegations have done, to pay tribute to you, Mr. President, for the most able and competent way in which you have guided our negotiations.

The implementation of this resolution will necessarily require great skill, perseverance and sensitivity on the part of everyone concerned. I can assure you, Mr. President, and through you the Secretary-General that my delegation will always be ready to assist in any way we can to achieve this goal.

Finally, I will not fail to convey to the Chairman of the Group of 18, Ambassador Vraalsen, the kind words which have been expressed by various delegations concerning the conduct and work of the Group of 18.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker on this item.

AGENDA ITEM 41

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT: I understand that there is no request to consider this item at the present session.

If this is the case, may I take it that the Assembly decides to include the item in the provisional agenda of the forty-second session?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 43

QUESTION OF CYPRUS

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that, on 20 September 1986, the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the present session but deferred a decision on the allocation of the item to an appropriate time in the future.

It is my understanding that it would be desirable to leave the Question of Cyprus open at the present session.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that understanding and decides to retain the item on the agenda of its forty-first session?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 44

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The PRESIDENT: I have received a request to the effect that this item be retained on the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to retain this item on the agenda of the forty-first session?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 45

CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROLONGATION OF THE ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

The PRESIDENT: In connection with agenda item 45, I have received a request that it be kept on the agenda of the current session.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides to retain this item on the agenda of the forty-first session.

It was so decided.

PENDING APPOINTMENTS

AGENDA ITEM 33 (continued)POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

The PRESIDENT: In connection with agenda item 33, I should like to draw the attention of members to resolution 41/35 F of 10 November 1986. By paragraph 5 of that resolution the Assembly established the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa. By paragraph 6 the Assembly authorized me to appoint, in consultation with the Chairmen of the regional Groups and the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, 11 Member States as members of that Group on the basis of equitable geographical distribution and to ensure representation of oil-exporting States and shipping States.

As it will be necessary to hold further consultations on this matter, may I consider that it is the wish of the General Assembly to entrust the President with pursuing this matter in accordance with the provisions of resolution 41/35 F?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 115 (continued)

PATTERN OF CONFERENCES

The PRESIDENT: With regard to agenda item 115, I should like to draw the General Assembly's attention to resolution 41/117 B adopted on 5 December 1986.

I should like to inform members that, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of that resolution I have consulted with the Chairmen of the regional Groups and have appointed, on the basis of an equitable geographical balance, the following 22 Member States to serve on the Committee on Conferences for a one-year term beginning on 1 January 1987: five from Africa - Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, Senegal and Tunisia; four from Asia - Cyprus, Indonesia, Japan and Sri Lanka; three from Eastern Europe - the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the German Democratic Republic, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; four from Latin America - Argentina, the Bahamas, Chile and Mexico; and six from Western European and other States - Austria, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: In the light of the action already taken at its 53rd, 96th and 101st meetings, as well as at the present meeting, the General Assembly has decided to retain on the agenda of the forty-first session the following: agenda item 38, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations"; agenda item 43, "Question of Cyprus"; agenda item 44, "Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations"; agenda item 45, "Consequences of the prolongation of the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq"; agenda item 62 (d), "Comprehensive programme of disarmament"; agenda item 140,

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"Current financial crisis of the United Nations"; and agenda item 146, "Judgment of the International Court of Justice of 27 June 1986 concerning military and paramilitary activities in and against Nicaragua: need for immediate compliance".

With those exceptions, therefore, we have concluded our consideration of all the items on the agenda of the forty-first session.

CLOSING STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: At the inaugural meeting on 16 September 1986, as representatives will recall, I stressed the need for a "better United Nations for a better world". It was a reflection of the ardent aspiration of millions of people around the world whose hopes were enshrined in the Charter of this institution. It has been nearly three and a half months since then and during this period all of us have worked hard. As the current phase of the forty-first session draws to a close, perhaps it would be appropriate for us to ponder for a moment on our efforts and take stock of our collective endeavours.

It would be in order, I believe, to ask ourselves: Are we any closer to our goal than when we set out? To my mind, the short answer is yes. Our labours in the pursuit of our objectives in the past few months have not been in vain. When we began, the United Nations was confronted with a crisis of confidence. While the crisis has not dissipated in its entirety, a modicum of confidence in the system has been restored. This was attained through the relentless efforts of all representatives. For this the United Nations system owes you all a deep sense of gratitude.

I should like to summarize briefly our work during the current session and bring out into sharper relief the most significant features. The forty-first

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session of the United Nations General Assembly was faced with 146 items on the agenda. That was doubtless a formidable list, but as a result of co-operation and mutual understanding on the part of all delegations it was possible for most committee work to be concluded by the end of November. Furthermore, this was done without any curtailment of substantive discussions on any of the items. It was made possible by the dedication and commitment of the committees and their Chairmen. Only some issues before the Fifth Committee continued to be considered into December, but all representatives are aware of the reasons therefor.

I must at this point convey my deep appreciation to all representatives for heeding my appeal with regard to the necessity of conforming to schedules and work programmes. In some meetings the requirement of a quorum was dispensed with. We succeeded in underscoring the importance of punctuality. In terms of the number of resolutions, we were able to achieve mergers where possible, consensus where desirable, and reductions where practicable. Our main thrusts were on the rationalization of work and the displacement of quantity by quality. I feel that on both counts our success was commendable. These were no mean achievements.

This session marked the culmination of the observance of the International Year of Peace. We held a commemorative meeting to celebrate the adoption of the International Covenants on Human Rights. An important action on the part of the General Assembly was the reappointment of our distinguished Secretary-General to a second term of office. The Assembly pronounced itself emphatically and in unequivocal terms against the abhorrent practice of apartheid, gave a clarion call

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for a durable and comprehensive solution to the problems of Palestine and the Middle East, urged the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and Kampuchea, deliberated upon the situation in Central America, and gave its verdict in favour of the immediate independence of Namibia.

(The President)

Peace, as you well know, is not just the absence of war. It is the global ambience of harmony in the interrelationship of States and nations. It is heartening to detect the general intellectual acceptance of the indivisibility of peace. I have noted with considerable happiness the widening belief that the acquisition of weaponry, nuclear or otherwise, does not enhance security. This is a major step forward in the conversion of disarmament from an idea to a faith. In our deliberations on disarmament, on which we have adopted 65 resolutions, we have been able to stress the most pressing issues such as the need for, inter alia, a comprehensive test ban treaty, adequate security measures for non-nuclear States, reduction of budgets for weapons procurement, and commitments to non-proliferation both vertical and horizontal.

On the economic and social front, our achievements have been noteworthy. A significant feature of the resolutions on economic and financial questions is that as a result of rationalization of work their number was reduced by nearly half, and all but 10 were adopted by consensus. The resolution on the external debt problems of developing countries is particularly worthy of mention, because no agreement on the matter was possible in previous years. No less important is the adoption of the consensus resolution on food and agricultural problems, which provides directions for joint efforts by the international community for further progress in the area. The 26 resolutions and three decisions relating to the International Campaign against Traffic in Drugs reflect our concern on these important issues.

A deepening financial crisis loomed large over us as the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly commenced its work. While the crisis is still very much with us, there is also a keen sense of urgency to overcome. I am happy to note the positive response of the Member States to the many appeals by the Secretary-General and by this Assembly. I am also gratified that the Secretary-General is continuing with his short-term economy measures.

(The President)

In our consideration of the report of the High-Level Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, there has been a positive indication of the desire on the part of the Member States to arrive at a broad agreement. The resolution adopting the recommendations of the Group and introducing a significant innovation in the budget procedure of the Organization bears ample testimony to this fact. The adoption of that historic resolution, implementation of which will now begin, where possible, without delay, can truly be considered an achievement of this session of which all of us can be justly proud.

Allow me to digress for a moment, only to enter a caveat. One cannot afford to be unduly complacent over this. We still have a long way to go. The changes introduced in the budgetary process in an effort to seek the much eluded broadest agreement will have to undergo the acid test of practicability. I earnestly hope that Member States will approach this challenge with vision and a sense of commitment.

In my inaugural address I underscored the need to strengthen the role of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General as vital instruments to secure peace and promote development. Further experience during this session has convinced me of the need first to examine this question closely and come up with concrete proposals on how the objectives could best be achieved. Secondly, there exists a requirement for strengthening and broadening the role of the United Nations itself and a systematic approach towards making its deliberations more purposeful and result-oriented. Finally I feel we must reverse the trend increasingly gaining ground in the system to judge issues not on their merit but by individual and group interest. This tendency has the potential for eroding the effectiveness and the moral weight of the world body, and must be halted without further ado.

(The President)

Perhaps we should at this point briefly review the place of the United Nations system in the body politic of contemporary international society. The founding fathers of the Organization had a vision of a new strife-free world. They crafted the Charter ever so carefully to serve as a fundamental law of inter-State relations. They sought to set up a framework of rules and code of a behaviour for nation-States. But, as the classical Greeks used to say, one never steps into the same river twice; everything is in a state of flux. The system was born on one set of assumptions, which was replaced almost immediately by a new set of political realities. This required and continues to require continuous readjustments, and the success of the world body largely depends on our ability to effect these.

The public commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter is nearly universal. The membership has proliferated rapidly, and today, ironically, some of its intramural problems are accentuated by its own success in achieving a primary aim - decolonization - for the larger the membership, the greater the likelihood of differences.

What has the United Nations been able to achieve in our times? How has it served the global community? The queries merit an analytical response.

First, the United Nations has provided for all of us a grand parliament of nations. Both the strong and the weak countries profit from its function as a barometer of global public opinion. It is a forum for all States, big and small, to air their views. For instance, the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly was addressed by 13 Heads of State, seven Prime Ministers, eight Deputy Prime Ministers and as many as 103 Foreign Ministers. It allows for the expression of pent-up emotions, which reduces the potentialities of actual conflict. It provides a platform to commend good actions and condemn bad ones. It holds out the benefit of multilateral diplomacy for the smallest of States that

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would otherwise be denied these interactions. Many a crisis has been resolved in its corridors, even before detection by the media.

Secondly, it provides security insurance for the weaker States. The fear of international opprobrium, and at times action, often precludes the strong from aggressing against the weak. To newer States, recognition by it, or its membership, is a seal of legitimacy, a symbol of sovereignty. I recall how a major foreign-policy goal of my own country in the first couple of years following independence was simply to be able to join this Organization.

(The President)

Thirdly, It is a source of support to the development endeavours of the global needy. The specialized agencies have done yeoman's work in this respect. This includes technical assistance to projects, expansion in food production, succour to refugees, eradication of contagious diseases, protection of the rights of women and children, human rights in general, provision of disaster relief and much more. In fact, some of the United Nations signal achievements have been in social, economic and humanitarian spheres. This is also the forum where the development debate is gradually gaining momentum. It has been said that much of the insecurity of the world is connected with the division between the rich and the poor countries. If that be so, the United Nations is the place where positive contributions to broader security are possible, however painful and laborious the process.

Fourthly, the United Nations is an intellectual confluence of varied minds, a meeting-place of a conglomeration of politicians, diplomats, professionals, scholars, researchers, men and women of learning and letters from all over the world. They apply their minds to the issues and problems that confront us - military, diplomatic, legal, social, humanitarian, scientific and technical. They debate and discuss and record their views and findings. The Secretariat, which is itself a microcosm of the wide world, produces an incredibly vast plethora of documentation, which must be a joy to researchers in many fields.

There are undeniably areas where the United Nations has disillusioned us. It has not succeeded in providing the collective security as envisioned in the Charter. It has not been able to prevent many wars from breaking out in different parts of the world. It has not succeeded in negotiating disarmament, either nuclear or conventional. It has not managed to redress the imbalance between the world's rich and the poor. The list can be long, if you wish, but perhaps one should bear in mind that the fact that the United Nations has had least success in

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these areas indicates that efforts in those spheres should be redoubled and not lessened, and that more, not fewer, resources should be allocated to them.

It is my bounden duty to convey my sincere thanks to all of you for your co-operation and your contribution to our work. May I, on your behalf, express our deepest gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar for his unswerving support and counsel. I am in debt to Mr. William Buffum, the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs, whose advice and guidance were of invaluable help to my work. I wish to commend the untiring efforts of the Vice-Presidents, the Chairmen and the Rapporteurs of the different Committees and their bureaux, who have significantly contributed to what we have achieved. Thanks are also due to a host of Secretariat functionaries, seen and unseen - conference officers, editors, interpreters, translators, secretaries, typists, security personnel, messengers, caterers and cleaners - who have provided us assistance in every possible way.

We are about to adjourn our work for this phase of the current session. We are about to return to our homes and usher in a New Year. I hope for all of you it is both happy and prosperous. I convey to you all the greetings of the season.

I hope we go back with a deepening commitment and a firmer belief that the United Nations is a fine idea. It is, therefore, an institution worth preserving. It requires your support and sympathy to survive and succeed. I am positive that these would be forthcoming. I thank you all.

SUSPENSION OF THE SESSION

I hereby declare the forty-first session of the General Assembly suspended.

The meeting rose at 7.20 p.m.

