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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 24 September 1987, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic)
later: Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros)
(Vice-President)

- Address by Sheikh Amine Gemayel, President of the Lebanese Republic
- General debate [9]: (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. van den Broek (Netherlands)
Mr. Genscher (Federal Republic of Germany)
Mr. Fischer (German Democratic Republic)
Mr. Asamoah (Ghana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

ADDRESS BY SHEIKH AMINE GEMAYEL, PRESIDENT OF THE LEBANESE REPUBLIC

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Lebanese Republic.

Sheikh Amine Gemayel, President of the Lebanese Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Lebanese Republic, Sheikh Amine Gemayel, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President GEMAYEL: I should like first to thank all the speakers who have, from this rostrum, expressed their concern over and commitment to Lebanon. I hope that this heightened attention on the part of our friends in the world community will be a harbinger of a new resolve to reverse the course of war and destruction in our land.

Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-second session. Your election is a recognition by the world community of your personal qualities and of the role your country plays in world affairs. I wish you success in your new responsibilities.

I also take this opportunity to thank your predecessor for the leadership role he played in the past year and for the achievements of the General Assembly under his presidency.

The Lebanese delegation has studied with great interest the comprehensive annual report submitted by the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. His analysis of the state of the world, and particularly of the Middle East, deserves the recognition of all who are concerned with the fate of peace. I wish also

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express special thanks to the Secretary-General and to his able assistants for their continued efforts to implement the Security Council resolutions on Lebanon. The performance of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the commitment of the contributing countries are of the utmost importance for peace in Lebanon and for international security in the whole Middle East.

(President Gemayel)

This is my third appearance before the General Assembly. Five years ago, a month after my election as President of Lebanon, I came here with "a message of confidence" (A/37/PV.35, p. 2-5). I was hoping that my country would be allowed to engage in what I then described as a "daring adventure of peace and reconstruction" (A/37/PV.35, p. 2-5). After so many years of war, I then felt I could tell the General Assembly, on behalf of all Lebanese, united as we were in a "sharpened national consensus" (A/37/PV.35, p. 2-5), of our determination to end the bloodshed, destruction, and despair that wracked our country.

Today, I stand here to admit, with candour and sorrow, that our dedication to the cause of peace was, alas, frustrated by superior forces. The Lebanese authorities were overpowered by an ugly war which caused more innocent victims among the civilian population than in the ranks of fighters.

For centuries past Lebanon had been the example of peaceful coexistence between religions, races and cultures which formed a pluralistic, yet harmonious, society devoted to the ideals of liberty and peace. Caught in the cycle of violence that engulfs the Middle East, we ask ourselves today whether those who set out to destroy Lebanon did not, ultimately, intend to destroy the Lebanese experiment and its achievements in the fields of human and political understanding. Lebanon was made to appear doomed to remain a breeding ground for war, anarchy and terror. In a country that itself had become a hostage, citizens of friendly nations were deprived of their liberty and sometimes of their lives. These innocent individuals were used as pawns in a diplomacy of terror, their lives traded cynically as punishment or reward.

Our suffering was made worse by the assassination of Prime Minister Rashid Karame, a great statesman and a man of peace. He was brutally murdered in diabolic plot reminiscent of the assassination of my predecessor and brother, President Bashir Gemayel.

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To add to our woes, the resilience of the civilian population is now impaired by an economic crisis which is destroying the very fabric of our society. For the first time, Lebanon is haunted by the spectre of famine.

I remain determined, as I was five years ago, to pursue Lebanon's struggle for peace and the preservation of our territorial integrity, national sovereignty, unity and independence.

These are days for realism. In this spirit I say that what is at stake is not only Lebanon's very existence as a State, but also the ability of the United Nations to prevent the disintegration of a Member State. The history of this Organization's founding is well known. It was established precisely to prevent the destruction of members of the world community. It was founded explicitly because, in the aftermath of the Second World War, all of us recognized that peace and security are indivisible. It is of this indivisibility of peace that I wish to speak to the Assembly today.

Allow me to be more specific.

It is no secret that a number of Middle East wars are waged both in Lebanon and across its borders through an intricate game of surrogates and proxies. These wars have caused invasions, physical destruction and the dismemberment of Lebanon.

Year after year, the world community has heard us maintain that peace in Lebanon should not, and cannot, wait for the settlement of every conflict in the Middle East. Today it is imperative to go further and say that peace in the Middle East can begin only with peace in Lebanon. Unless we restore law and order in Lebanon, there cannot and will not be peace anywhere in the region.

We are fully aware of what is at stake in the Middle East, from the Mediterranean to the Gulf. We know of the many courageous efforts to initiate peace processes. We are also aware of the numerous resolutions adopted by this

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Assembly year after year. We have subscribed to all of them in the interest of peace, justice and international security. But we firmly believe that the United Nations must approach the Middle East conflicts as a whole - not just one particular aspect of the Middle East question, but all of them together. Peace in the Middle East is indivisible. Peace cannot survive in one place while a war is under way in another. Nor can we allow ourselves the illusion that containing conflicts on the borders of nations is synonymous with resolving them. Lebanon, again, is the typical and most tragic illustration of what I mean. Truce agreements and bilateral peace accords with Israel cannot solve the Palestinian problem so long as the fate of the Palestinians living in Lebanon has not been equitably determined. Similarly, Iran's war in Lebanon must be addressed and immediately resolved in order to attain peace in the Gulf.

At this point I should like to reiterate my support for an international conference to solve the Middle East question. The agenda of the conference as well as its structure should be treated as a matter of extreme urgency. Lebanon insists on being a full partner at the conference, because Lebanon has major problems to discuss in defence of its interests. For, much as we trust the international community, and particularly the Security Council, we face very high stakes. We fear that regional considerations, from which we have suffered so much over the years, might lead us to pay, for others, the price of peace. For too long we have been paying the price of wars not of our making. Lebanon is neither negotiable nor dispensable.

(President Gemayel)

Pending the convening of that Conference, Lebanon finds itself compelled to resort once again to the Security Council. Our goal is to seek implementation of the many resolutions adopted since 1978.

We are referring in particular to resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) of June 1978. Those resolutions mandated the creation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) with the objective of confirming the withdrawal of Israel and establishing an area of peace and security in southern Lebanon. Furthermore, resolution 426 (1978) called for the reinstatement of the 1949 General Armistice Agreement. There should no longer be any pretext for not implementing it since the Cairo agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has now been officially abrogated. Thus there is no longer any ground to oppose the United Nations overseeing security arrangements on the Lebanese-Israeli frontier. Such arrangements, entrusted to a reinforced UNIFIL, would undoubtedly be a credible guarantee of the needed stability.

As this Assembly knows, UNIFIL's mandate has been redefined, in resolutions 498 (1981) and 501 (1982). A timetable for Israeli withdrawals and a joint programme of activities between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Government was called for in resolution 488 (1981) in order to promote the restoration of its effective authority up to the internationally recognized boundaries.

Other resolutions must be referred to, in particular resolution 436 (1978) of October 1978, which called upon

"all those involved in hostilities in Lebanon to put an end to acts of violence and observe scrupulously an immediate and effective cease-fire and cessation of hostilities so that internal peace and national reconciliation may be restored based on the preservation of Lebanese unity, territorial integrity, independence and national sovereignty".

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Finally resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) of June 1982, as well as resolution 520 (1982), demanded

"strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon through the Lebanese Army throughout Lebanon". (Security Council resolution 520 (1982))

In due course the Security Council might have to meet and devise the necessary ways and means to implement the relevant resolutions. The objective must be to ensure the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and enable the Lebanese army and the internal security forces to operate exclusively throughout Lebanon, with the assistance of UNIFIL in accordance with its terms of reference.

The failure to implement United Nations resolutions has prompted the Lebanese to resist with force continued occupation. The General Assembly has itself recognized this right. Yet we have not despaired and shall not despair of securing withdrawals by appealing to international legitimacy.

The 13 years of war that we have survived have demonstrated beyond question that there is no substitute for or alternative to the role of legitimate and accepted institutions. Hence our determination to support our appeal to international legitimacy with a consolidated internal consensus of constitutional legitimacy.

Indeed, all past attempts to bypass the legitimate forces and seek internal and external security arrangements with illegal militias have ended in tragic failures. External powers have come up against the same realities in Lebanon. Their attempts to deal with forces outside the recognized legal institutions of the State have not only resulted in similar failures but compounded their problem.

The agony of State power, of sovereignty unable to exercise full authority, is coming to an end. People are increasingly disenchanted with the divisive sectarian

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forces which have brought Lebanon to the threshold of partition or annexation. A credible central Government, even if challenged by various partitionists and their foreign inspirers, remains the only rallying point for the vast majority of the Lebanese, whatever their religious community.

In this, my last year in office, I am determined to bring to conclusion a constitutional reform which should reunite the Lebanese and enable us all to save our country, secure our independence and exercise our national sovereignty.

I am calling on the international community, and in particular on the great Powers, to help Lebanon disentangle itself from violent interplay amongst the combatants. In so doing we would take the essential step, in conjunction with the international conference, towards Middle East peace. My appeal to the international community is as much in the interest of regional peace as it is in the interest of Lebanon.

If my call is not heeded, let me tell the Assembly where Lebanon is heading. It is on its way towards an economic disaster the first phase of which we are already experiencing. The next phase is likely to be a violent upheaval that will transform not only our liberal economic system, but also the democratic political system on which it is based. When this happens many of the solutions that now seem appropriate will become obsolete. Extremism of all sorts will grow in that fertile ground of despair and the spirit of moderation will be extinguished.

The demands for sectarian partition, which now exist as contingent facts in time of war, will increase, creating havoc in the existing State system of the Middle East.

Anarchy, unchecked by the hope of order and stability, will encourage terrorism and lead to more kidnapping, more hostage-taking, more alienation from rational policies and a wider chasm between the Middle East and the rest of the world.

(President Gemayel)

I have not undertaken this exposition merely to define the problem. I am here today to identify a course of action that we must undertake together. I am not making our crisis international; it is already international, because it is regional. I am trying to define the problem, contain it and bring it to an end.

This course of action begins with a programme of organic and structural reforms which will be initiated through the constitutional process. Thus we shall be responding to the ever-growing conviction that no solution to the crisis can or should be sought outside the constitutional process of a democratic system.

A reformed constitution must enable the various Lebanese communities to fulfil an effective and extensive partnership in government. Executive power, exercised through the Council of Ministers, must be genuinely representative of the aspirations of one and all. The changes and needs of the Lebanese society as it has evolved must be accommodated in a manner that will shield us against external exploitation in our domestic affairs. Through a rigorous redefinition of powers and power-sharing any possibilities of hegemony by any group over others should be eliminated.

Although the war was not started by the demand for reforms, I am convinced that it will not end without them. A new Government entrusted with this mission will be formed. That Government will have to disarm the militias and direct strengthened and restructured armed forces to extend legal authority over the land

It is Lebanon's historic mission and a geopolitical imperative that the dialogue between Islam and Christianity should be restored and intensified in our land and among our people, for in Lebanon, and Lebanon alone, this dialogue assume its existential dimension, an interaction within the society that will serve the cause of international understanding.

Islam is today at an important crossroads. Islam should not be viewed exclusively in terms of so-called Islamic fundamentalism, expressing itself in

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violence. There is a rebirth of Islam which cannot be understood from the outside, abstractly; it cannot be approached with fear or flattery, but only through full partnership in life, culture and government. It is Lebanon's destiny to meet this challenge. Our survival and world peace will depend on the success of the response.

Our principal partner in this approach should be Syria, with which relations have often been strained since our emergence as independent States. But there is no reason for the problems between our two countries to continue. Our relations should be normalized. Lebanon is an independent sovereign country, part of the Arab world; and Syria is our closest neighbour in the Arab community. Consequently, relations between Lebanon and Syria should be not only normal but distinctive and characterized by friendship and co-operation, as befits neighbours everywhere. It is in the best interests of both Lebanon and Syria to restore that positive relationship as soon as possible.

The principles for an agreement between Lebanon and Syria have been set. Within the parameters of its sovereignty and independence, Lebanon is ready to go a long way to establish the closest relations with Syria. In saying that, I have the deepest interests of both Lebanon and Syria at heart.

Syria's military presence in Lebanon since 1976 has extended to over 60 per cent of our territory. This has given Syria overwhelming influence in Lebanon, which has not served the better interests of either country. Through its policy of alliances with Lebanese parties and personalities Syria has generated friendships but also enmities. Although regionally and internationally Syria is perceived as a vital actor in Lebanese affairs, it has been established that there cannot be a Syrian solution to the Lebanese question. But I hasten to add that there is no solution to the Lebanese question without Syria.

Specific covenants and treaties govern inter-Arab relations; Lebanon and Syria must see to it that they are respected to the letter, particularly in matters of

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mutual security and strategic interests. The withdrawal of the Syrian Army from Lebanon should and will take place in the context of those covenants.

New relationships should be developed with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). A new Lebanon cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of old. Lebanon will not tolerate on its territory an armed group of any kind. Only the legitimate organs of the State or organized forces operating in Lebanon at the request of the Lebanese Government will be permitted to carry arms. Lebanon is prepared to grant the PLO a presence on its soil for the peaceful promotion of the cause of the Palestinian people, to which Lebanon is committed. In the context of the Arab League, Lebanon will co-ordinate policies relating to the rights of the Palestinian people. Such policies, however, should not violate law and order in our country, nor lead to Palestinian implantation in Lebanon. Vigorous work requiring close co-ordination will have to be undertaken both to repair the damage done to Lebanese-Palestinian relations and to create new and enduring ties.

Finally, the unlearned lessons of the Palestinians must not be ignored by others. Iran must be militarily disentangled from Lebanon. Iran's image in the region and in the world has not been enhanced by its policies in Lebanon or by the acts of violence undertaken by its followers in my country. Indeed, Iran's actions and continued rejection of Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and other Security Council resolutions will further endanger the Lebanese in the south.

All Iranians who are in Lebanon by virtue of Iran's self-bestowed military-ideological commitment and without the permission of the Lebanese Government should leave as soon as possible. Yet, Iran has important religious, cultural and commercial links with Lebanon; those links can be encouraged and strengthened by agreement between the two countries, in accordance with the established norms of co-operation among independent and peaceful States.

(President Gemayel)

If I have digressed into what appears to be strictly internal affairs it is because, as I stated earlier, peace in Lebanon can be attained only by an encounter between the national and the international.

The Lebanese were not free to choose between war and peace. If international peace and security are to be protected against the consequences of continued chaos, violence and terror in Lebanon, the world community must secure for the Lebanese the freedom to choose. I should also like to repeat my firm conviction that peace in the Middle East is indivisible and that peace in Lebanon must be the beginning and not the end.

To those, be they friend or foe, who envision that the withering away of Lebanon is a solution to their problems, let me say this: the disappearance or dismemberment of Lebanon will create more problems, more tragedies, and greater violence. In years past my country was proud to be a haven for peace, a link between cultures. Now it has become a haven for terror; a link between wars.

But it remains my country, and no sacrifice is too great in its defence.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Lebanese Republic for the important statement he has just made.

Sheikh Amine Gemayel, President of the Lebanese Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. van den BROEK (Netherlands): May I join other delegations in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-second session. I am fully confident that the experience and wisdom which is yours will enable you to guide us efficiently throughout the months of challenging work that lie before us.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

My friend and colleague Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Foreign Minister of Denmark, addressed the Assembly earlier this week, expressing the views of the Twelve members of the European Community on some major international problems we are faced with in the world today. The Netherlands fully shares the views he expressed on that occasion.

With satisfaction we note a distinct improvement of the international climate. As a number of speakers before me have done, we warmly welcome the agreement in principle reached last week in Washington by Secretary of State Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze on the complete elimination of longer and shorter-range intermediate nuclear forces. This significant outcome augurs well not only for relations between East and West but for the entire world community.

In this Organization a better appreciation by Member States of the limits and possibilities of international co-operation is emerging. Between North and South there seems to be a growing willingness to listen to each other and to strive for mutual accommodation and practical progress, as was recently evident at the Seventh Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). We observe a new sense of realism or - as some might prefer to call it - of pragmatic idealism. This gives me the feeling that we are gradually leaving behind the days of polarization. I hope that this will prove to be a lasting trend.

Prospects for increasing the relevance of the United Nations therefore appear favourable. As was rightly stressed in a recent thought-provoking report by the United Nations Association of the United States of America, the United Nations needs, within the framework of the Charter, "a sharper definition of goals, a more effective deployment of means and a revitalized mandate". After all, one of the main problems confronting this Organization has been its vague and often

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over-ambitious programmes together with limited possibilities for their implementation. Therefore, I whole-heartedly agree with the Secretary-General when he states in his annual report that pragmatism and vision can go together and that "... a vision without the definition of realistic means of approaching it can lead to disillusionment and cynicism". (A/42/1, p. 17).

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It is striking to see how the United Nations is reasserting the role envisaged for it in the Charter, both with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security and with regard to issues resulting from growing interdependence. On each of those two areas I wish to share some thoughts with the Assembly.

The Security Council has been entrusted in the Charter with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. On the one hand we fully recognize the value of regional arrangements and initiatives for the prevention and control of conflict in various parts of the world. A recent example is the agreement signed early in August in Guatemala City during the summit conference on Central America, an agreement warmly welcomed by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. We hope that its implementation will receive support and encouragement from all quarters. On the other hand we observe that the United Nations has become a key protagonist in the search for viable solutions for the Iran-Iraq war, the occupation of Afghanistan, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the very difficult situations in Lebanon, the Western Sahara, Cyprus, Kampuchea and southern Africa. This clearly indicates the useful role of this universal Organization, in particular through the active involvement of the Security Council and the Secretary-General.

The adoption by consensus of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) testified to this and marked a spirit of harmony amongst the members of the Security Council almost unthinkable two years ago. But the momentum thus created will have to be sustained. The resolution should be implemented immediately and fully. The parties involved may be expected to exercise due restraint so as to avoid escalation and expansion of the conflict. We pledge our support for the tireless efforts of Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar to terminate this tragic conflict. There are no doubt valid reasons for raising the question of the origins of the war

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and of culpability. However, that in no way alters the clear injunction contained in the resolution that hostilities must cease. Insisting on the termination of the war, which has caused so much human suffering and material devastation, cannot be considered as taking sides in the conflict. We want to maintain good relations with both parties. Our insistence follows from the obligation in the Charter to respect the authority of the Security Council.

For centuries, freedom of navigation in international waters has been one of the basic principles of international law. Already in the seventeenth century a distinguished Dutch scholar, politician and diplomat, Hugo Grotius, applied his formidable intellectual talents to this legal principle pertaining to the high seas in his treatise Mare liberum. For the Netherlands, as a traditionally sea-faring nation, freedom of navigation is fundamental. It should be respected also in the waters of the Gulf. In our opinion the United Nations and its Member States should ensure that this now universally accepted principle is upheld. The Netherlands has made it clear that it would like to see the United Nations assume responsibility for the protection of international shipping in the Gulf and that my country would be prepared to contribute to a United Nations operation to that effect if one were to be undertaken. In the meantime, as the threat to the freedom of navigation persists, the Netherlands, after consulting with its partners in the Western European Union, has decided to participate in efforts to keep the waters of the Gulf free of mines, which we feel is to the benefit of all, but such efforts should in no way be considered as a substitute for early and full implementation of resolution 598 (1987).

The efforts of the United Nations to end the war between Iran and Iraq have once again illustrated the need for an improved mechanism for fact-finding. That could greatly contribute to strengthening the role of the Secretary-General in the

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dispatch of his responsibilities with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. We consider it highly desirable that the Secretary-General be provided with adequate means to increase the early-warning capacity of the Organization.

We warmly welcome his endeavours and those of his Special Representative to bring to an end the continuing Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The invasion of that country was brought about within a period of not more than one week. After almost eight years the time has come for a speedy and unconditional withdrawal of all Soviet troops as a prerequisite of a lasting and peaceful settlement.

Kampuchea, too, still suffers under foreign occupation. We never closed our eyes to the atrocities committed in that country in the past, but they do not in any way justify the continuing occupation of that country by Vietnamese troops.

Coming back to the so-welcome improvement in the East-West climate, the quest for new approaches in the Soviet Union and in the East European countries is creating prospects for a more fruitful dialogue. We should make full use of the opportunities which now appear to present themselves.

After years of virtual stalemate in the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, concrete results are now at last within reach. The agreement in principle, which I mentioned earlier, to conclude a treaty on longer- and shorter-range intermediate nuclear forces opens the way for what may well be a breakthrough of historic dimensions. This will be the first time in the nuclear era that an entire category of nuclear weapons, including some of the most modern ones, is to be abolished.

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We equally hope that an early agreement in this area will have a positive effect on efforts to limit strategic weapons, thus paving the way for the 50 per cent cuts already agreed on in principle between the United States and the Soviet Union. Parallel with such substantial reductions in nuclear weapons, it should be possible to reduce nuclear testing so as to move step by step in the direction of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing. We welcome the decision of the United States and the Soviet Union to resume negotiations on that vital issue.

These developments, unthought of even a year ago, show that hope and realism do not exclude each other.

Realism is necessary in other areas also. The further one progresses along the road towards reductions in nuclear weapons the more urgent it becomes to address the conventional imbalance in Europe. Here, too, stability is needed, which means eliminating asymmetries and reducing the risk of surprise attack. For that reason the 16 countries of the North Atlantic Alliance have put forward proposals for new negotiations aimed at a stable conventional balance at a lower level in the area from the Atlantic Ocean to the Urals.

While it is obvious that certain categories of weapons can best be dealt with in a bilateral or regional context, others require a global and multilateral approach. Chemical weapons are a case in point. A ban on chemical weapons appears high on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, and quite rightly so. The urgency of achieving such a ban is underlined by the actual and potential proliferation of those weapons. My country will continue to play an active part in the negotiations in Geneva, where intricate verification issues remain to be solved.

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Looking at the ongoing arms control and disarmament efforts in general we also note a quantum leap as a result of the growing acceptance of the need for effective verification, including on-site inspection. Here, too, we see a long period of stalemate giving way to a more constructive approach.

We hope that the third special session of the General Assembly on disarmament will concentrate on achieving practical progress and avoid the grand, maybe somewhat over ambitious, designs favoured in the past.

Arms control agreements are essential for better East-West relations. But other elements are equally important. Genuine détente in Europe will, indeed, not materialize without greater respect for human rights in countries where these rights have long been neglected. The Helsinki Final Act, signed by 35 nations, clearly states that respect for human rights:

"is an essential factor for the peace, justice and well being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and co-operation among ... all States".

Accordingly, the follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) currently taking place in Vienna is addressing not only the military aspects of security but also human rights and contacts between people across dividing lines. In Vienna my Government, together with its partners, has proposed a consultative mechanism aimed at improving observance of universally accepted and recognized human rights. We deem it important that participating European countries can meet whenever one of them is seriously concerned about compliance and considers consultations necessary.

Respect for human rights is a universal principle to be applied everywhere in the world. We highly value the United Nations contribution to the cause of human rights. It is our strong belief that the universal nature of these rights

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transcends the boundaries of national sovereignty; in our view, concern about violations can never be seen as interference in domestic affairs. Universally accepted human rights pertain by their very nature to every individual, no matter where that individual lives. Their validity is unaffected by political, socio-economic and cultural diversity. That very diversity in fact increases the need for common standards.

The setting of common standards, of course, is what the United Nations and its Members have brought about. But this is, we feel, not enough. The Netherlands will, therefore, do its utmost to help strengthen mechanisms for their implementation. In this connection, I wish to mention in particular the unique system of rapporteurs of the Human Rights Commission. Moreover, we would hope that the current financial constraints of the United Nations will not diminish the effectiveness of its human rights programmes. New budget cuts in these programmes should be avoided.

While dwelling on respect for human rights, let me say in conclusion that human rights and democracy cannot be seen in isolation from each other. We are therefore happy to see the restoration of democracy in certain countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in the Philippines. We should do whatever we can to ensure that democracy becomes firmly implanted in those countries and that these examples become an inspiration for others.

The attention of the world community remains focused on the situation in southern Africa. Namibia's independence is long overdue. No justification can be found to postpone the day that the Namibian people can take their future into their own hands. Security Council resolution 435 (1978) should be implemented.

In South Africa, every day that passes without clear signs of fundamental change adds to the feeling of frustration, despair and bitterness of those

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discriminated against. This does not mean, in our opinion, that we can afford to give up our hopes for a new South Africa. Change will prove inevitable, but will the course of change be marked by violence and bloodshed, or by negotiations made possible by bold initiatives which will have to create the necessary confidence that is now lacking? What has become of the South African Government's earlier expressed preparedness to embark upon a broad-based dialogue involving the representatives of all sectors of the South African people? How can this ever sound credible with Nelson Mandela and his fellow companions still in prison and prominent political groupings remaining banned?

Political and economic pressure by the international community remains indispensable as long as political freedom remains the privilege of the dominating minority. But our call for justice and our deep felt abhorrence towards the system of apartheid should not be confined to condemnation, political pressure and sanctions alone.

Should we not equally try to reflect on what comes after apartheid? How can a society be brought about in which all South Africans, irrespective of their race, creed or political convictions, can live in peace and harmony and enjoy equal rights? Obviously it is up to the South Africans themselves to determine the exact shape of the new constitutional order, and it is not for the outside world to present a blueprint. But we can try to encourage and facilitate a national dialogue between South Africans. And we feel that the formulation of a number of generally accepted principles may prove helpful in this respect.

What is at stake in these negotiations is not only the removal of apartheid but also its replacement by a constitutional order which embodies the basic principles of freedom and pluralistic democracy and which takes into account the diversity of the South African people. Clearly, the legitimate political

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aspirations of the majority should be met. But is it not also right to consider what steps should be taken to ensure that every South African can look to the future with confidence and a feeling that he will have a say in decisions which affect him? It seems worthwhile to recall here that in paragraph 56 of its report the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group spoke about the need for "adequate and appropriate safeguards and guarantees for minorities" and for a "genuine approach to power-sharing".

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

One can think of a number of principles which seem fundamental to a just and lasting solution, such as suffrage for all, a geographically united South Africa, a democratic and pluralistic political system with adequate minority participation, respect for human rights, protection of minorities and the rule of law, guaranteed by an independent judiciary. Such principles are closely interrelated and therefore mutually reinforcing.

The *raison d'être* of the United Nations does not lie only in the issues of peace, security and human rights that I have just referred to. The challenges posed by global interdependence are equally of concern to the Organization.

Life on our planet is fragile and threatened by many dangers. Many developing countries are particularly vulnerable confronted as they are with an accumulation of problems, such as growing population, excessive debt and a deteriorating resource base. As is so aptly expressed in the title of the report by the Brundtland Commission, what is at stake is indeed "Our Common Future".

The United Nations has always played a leading role in promoting awareness of global issues. Experience has shown that there are many areas in which the Organization can act as a catalyst in dealing with such problems. Action on AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), the spread of narcotics, natural disasters and threats to the environment can all benefit, from a really international approach.

Terrorism and its toll of innocent victims cannot be condoned by the world community. It should be unequivocally condemned by all nations, whatever its motives.

We applaud the outcome of the United Nations International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held earlier this year in Vienna, which was made possible by what we see as a spirit of co-operation demonstrated by all participants.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

The role of the United Nations in promoting development is of particular importance. The Netherlands has always advocated better co-ordination of activities within the United Nations system and strongly supports the United Nations Development Programme. In 1988 my country will again provide approximately 1 per cent of its gross national product, a percentage amounting to more than \$US 2 billion, as official development assistance. A special effort will be made in a number of countries in Central America and the Andean region, which can also help reinforce the process of democratization.

Another essential role of the United Nations is in furthering the rule of law. The existing international legal framework ought to be strengthened. We should like to see more disputes submitted to the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. Our common endeavours to promote development of international law have not remained without success. The law of the sea is a case in point. We hope that the recently concluded agreement on overlapping sea-bed mining claims will contribute to the establishment of a universally acceptable deep-sea-bed mining régime under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We agree with the Secretary-General on the significance of that agreement, which was based on a realistic assessment of common interests and in the conclusion of which my country actively participated.

In today's interdependent world it is our common interest and our common responsibility to make this Organization work. One of the prerequisites for achieving this is respect for the principle of universality. This means that the Organization should be open to all States. We therefore hope that the Republic of Korea will shortly be represented in this forum.

But more than universality alone is necessary to make the United Nations work. We feel encouraged to see a growing tendency towards reform in the United

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

Nations. In the economic and social fields a start has been made on increasing the Organization's efficiency. Interesting proposals have been made in the relevant special commission of the Economic and Social Council. These efforts should not, however, be made dependent on the solution of the financial crisis of the Organization. An efficient United Nations is an end in itself; it should be vigorously pursued, regardless of the Organization's financial situation.

May I make one final remark. It has been said that in matters of foreign policy there are two kinds of problems: those which solve themselves and those for which there is no solution. The United Nations has proved this to be wrong. In quite a few cases it has brought about solutions where none seemed possible. It has succeeded in bringing about solutions where the parties involved saw no way out. I am convinced that the United Nations is an indispensable tool for forging unity where the parties are apart. The Netherlands is determined to remain actively engaged in our common endeavours to this end.

Mr. GENSCHER (Federal Republic of Germany) (spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation): Mr. President, I offer you sincere congratulations on having been elected to your high office and wish you luck and success in carrying out your responsible task.

At the same time I extend my thanks to Foreign Minister Choudhury for his circumspect and successful guidance of the forty-first session of the General Assembly, which ended a few days ago.

I also take the opportunity cordially to thank the Secretary-General for his untiring endeavours on behalf and in the interest of our Organization. His latest report gives us confidence and a perspective for the future. As in the past, he can count on our unqualified support.

(Mr. Genscher, Federal Republic
of Germany)

The principal task of the United Nations is to maintain and safeguard peace. We begin this session of the General Assembly with hopeful signs of new thinking in West-East relations and in the field of disarmament. Yet the world is still filled with war: war between countries, in which people suffer and die; man waging war on man, for where human rights are violated war is being conducted against man; global terrorism is waging war against order in every form; deadly diseases are waging war on life; mankind is waging war on nature; and what is the hunger and poverty suffered by many nations but the outcome of war on human dignity through man's failure in North and South?

(Mr. Genscher, Federal
Republic of Germany)

In the final analysis, it is always man who threatens man. Our children cannot be blamed for the state of the world, but it is they who suffer most. They expect us to give them a world free from war, free from expulsion, free from fear, free from hunger and disease. Parents all over the world love their children. But are we in the United Nations really doing enough to protect the rights and the future of our children? We want to leave our children a better world, a world in which human dignity and social justice are guaranteed, in which peace prevails and in which the natural foundations of life are protected and cultivated.

But, above all, we must fight against the war inside us as well as that outside us. Peace begins within ourselves; it begins in the mind, with respect for our neighbour and awareness of our responsibility for that neighbour and for all who will come after us.

War strategies must be superseded by peace strategies. We want peace in a comprehensive sense. If we fail in our task, none of us will survive. Hence, the crucial task today is to ensure the survival of mankind. Mankind has become a community in pursuit of survival. No one can steal away from our common fate. A nuclear war would destroy us all.

Contaminated rivers, seas and soil, desertification, dying forests - especially tropical forests - and the widening hole in the ozone layer are all problems that affect and concern us all.

A few weeks ago the world population passed the 5 billion mark. If the present demographic trend continues the world community will number more than 6 billion by the turn of the century. Our children will live to see that day. If we do not act the world's problems will pass beyond our control solely as the result of population growth. Now is the time to set the right course. This is

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the responsibility of every civilization, every religion, every ideology and every political and social system.

The call must be: fight the wars that threaten mankind from all sides. The peace we need is more than the elimination of military conflicts. It implies common responsibility, solidarity and respect for our neighbours. Peace implies making our world human. It implies respecting our natural environment. It implies securing freedom, life and the survival of mankind.

Many people live in poverty, exposed to hunger, ignorance and disease. The prospects for the third world depress us all. Commodity prices are falling. This means that developing countries must continuously increase production, and this in turn reduces prices still further.

In the industrial countries, however, demand is on the wane because markets for certain commodities are satiated and other commodities are increasingly being replaced by new materials. The disintegration of commodity prices is not a temporary market fluctuation; it is a long-term trend.

For most developing countries, however, commodities are still the principal - indeed, in many cases, the only - source of income. Thus their one-sided dependence on commodity exports must be reduced. We must help them to turn their raw materials into manufactures and semi-manufactures of their own. But the diversification of an economy takes time. Until that point is reached, ways and means must be sought of improving existing arrangements, as in the case of the European Community's Stabex model for off-setting shortfalls in export earnings.

Last year the indebtedness of the third world rose by 9 per cent, to \$1.1 trillion. In 1986 over 30 per cent, and in some cases nearly 50 per cent of the income of 22 sub-Saharan countries was mortgaged for debt service. The debt

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problem threatens to explode. It is a threat to the economic, social and political future of many heavily indebted countries, but it also poses a threat to donors. It threatens to undermine the will of North and South to co-operate with one another.

All those concerned, whether in the public or the private sector, need to increase their efforts. Every country should be treated according to its special circumstances. But the general principle must be to make debt-servicing reasonably proportionate to a country's productive capacity.

It is in the true interest of donors to seek in their negotiations with debtors to solutions that will provide a perspective for the future. Hopelessness will crush the best will in the world.

Since 1978 the Federal Republic of Germany has remitted 4.2 billion marks of the debt owed it by the poorest countries. I appeal to all donor countries to follow suit, and I appeal to the socialist countries of the North also to provide adequate development aid, at long last.

Proceeding from future-oriented reform programmes and financed by new loans on easy terms, the economies of the debtor countries must be put back on a course of growth. But diversification and investment in growth sectors will be helpful to developing countries only if the industrialized world opens its markets wide to their manufactures and semi-manufactures and adapts its own economic structure to such new conditions. We are prepared to make that adjustment.

To restrict the role of the developing countries in the world economy to that of mere suppliers of raw materials and energy would be to deprive them of their prospects for the future. The industrial countries must eliminate import

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restrictions and other barriers to trade. They must stop subsidizing branches of industry that no longer pay their way.

They must also reduce agricultural surpluses. The adjustments necessary in the industrial countries are difficult and painful but that can be no reason to keep putting them off.

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Republic of Germany)

At any rate, exports of weapons are not the solution to these problems. On the contrary, they increase tensions and the danger of war, and they squander resources that are needed for works of peace. Weapon exports facilitate neither the necessary structural change in the industrial countries nor the process of economic recovery in the developing countries.

At its seventh session, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) underscored the special significance of peaceful international trade for development. The final act of that Conference indicates the strategies that need to be pursued with regard to finance and indebtedness and trade and commodities, and with regard to the problems of the land-locked developing countries. Now is the time for action.

The industrial countries are undergoing a technological revolution, a revolution that will completely change society. At the moment we have but little idea of the repercussions it will have on the developing countries. Whatever happens, it must not be allowed to divide the world for ever into rich and poor. We cannot allow the great human dream that has inspired all nations, the dream of one just, peaceful and free world, to be outstripped by technological development. On the contrary, science and technology must be the powerhouse for the development of mankind. Only modern science and technology are capable of solving the world's problems of food supply, health, education and energy. Genetic engineering, modern medical research, state-of-the-art information technologies and new forms of energy must be pooled to this end.

AIDS (acquired immune-deficiency syndrome) is a challenge to the whole of mankind. It threatens all nations. My Government is pleased to note that the

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gravity of this problem is increasingly recognized by Governments and by international organizations.

Advanced technology not only provides opportunities; it also entails risks. Chernobyl has demonstrated to the world that the safety of nuclear power stations is the common responsibility of all countries producing nuclear energy. A progressive human society cannot regard nuclear energy as the ultimate solution to the world's energy problems.

The task of eliminating the political, social and moral risks inherent in high technology and science is common to the whole human race.

Genetic engineering can secure adequate food supplies for many billions of people, but it can also be abused to violate the dignity of man if it is used solely as a means of manipulating man, if it encroaches upon each person's individuality. The United Nations is the forum where the best brains in our countries can establish common ethical standards with which to measure the consequences of technological development.

The earth's atmosphere and its high seas are the common property of mankind. They have to be preserved so that the human species can survive. But, like the world's climate, they too are being jeopardized. The Brundtland report has presented a plan for development that is both lasting and environmentally compatible, and it must be taken seriously. The world must be made more acutely aware of these issues and interactions. This is a matter for the United Nations. We should soon consider proclaiming a year of global environmental protection. We should also consider proclaiming the 1990s a decade for the environment to provide the necessary stimulus world wide.

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Republic of Germany)

Everywhere we face problems which we can only solve together or not at all. We have long since entered an age of global domestic policy in which each one of us is dependent upon everyone else. Thus, the importance of the United Nations grows from year to year. It is our common duty to preserve and develop the world Organization. The gap between the concept of the United Nations and its present materialization in a world of nation-States is still considerable. We must all learn to find global answers to global problems. The United Nations offers a wide range of instruments for this purpose. The more determined our efforts to reform the world Organization, the more effectively will be able to use those instruments. I wish at this juncture to thank the Secretary-General for his far-sighted approach to this problem.

Many forms of co-operation can also develop in a smaller framework. Here in lies the special significance of regional organizations. The European Community has shown the world the kind of dynamism for peace that can emanate from regional organizations. For centuries the nation-States of Europe fought one another in wars, which also spread beyond their continent to other parts of the world. Today, war among the 12 members of the European Community is impossible; it is inconceivable.

That is the first and most important task of a regional organization: to make sure that war in its region will be impossible. The more nation-States become integrated the better their chances of achieving that aim. That is why my Government strongly supports all efforts to establish peace in crisis areas originating in the region itself.

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Republic of Germany)

We welcome the signing of the Arias Plan by five Central American countries as a step towards peace and stability in Central America and encourage them on that road. The result of the Guatemala conference is a sign of hope. We give our unqualified support to the nations of Central America in their efforts to secure social justice, to ensure the application of the principles of democracy, to secure independence and to foster peace and co-operation.

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Republic of Germany)

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany is helping the cause of world peace by encouraging co-operation between the European Community and the regional organizations in Central and South America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

The countries of one region can best preserve and develop their cultural identity through joint efforts. The wealth inherent in cultural diversity is the purest source of energy for man's task of safeguarding peace. All nations on earth are, without distinction, civilized nations. Their cultural contribution is indispensable for the creation of a single global society based on justice, peace and freedom. We are serving the cause of peace if we preserve and protect the unmistakable identities of these civilizations. Nations that respect the cultural achievements of other nations cannot be stirred up against one another. Cultural arrogance has time and again been the root cause of catastrophes.

Thus the North-South dialogue, too, needs a cultural dimension. Only if nations start from the basis of their individual culture and cultural exchanges and partnerships with others can they develop the national consciousness that will help solve mankind's common problems.

Regional organizations in the third world are the best way to ensure that their members are not drawn into the West-East confrontation. This is also the great mission of the Non-Aligned Movement, which is a growing factor of stability in the world. Genuine non-alignment offers third-world countries in particular a great opportunity to preserve their identity and consolidate their independence.

We are all aware of the magnitude of the world's problems. This being so, we know we cannot solve political, social, religious and ideological differences in one gigantic leap. These differences exist and we have to live with them. But

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that should not stop us, notwithstanding all the differences of principle and ideology, from doing what we can to safeguard world peace now.

There is a growing awareness of this. The seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), like last year's special session of the General Assembly on Africa, has given encouraging signs that North and South are capable of disregarding positions of principle and concentrating on what is necessary and feasible at the present time.

We must now take this opportunity to move forward. Security Council resolution 598 (1987) is an encouraging sign of common responsibility for global peace. The special significance of that resolution lies in its unanimous adoption. It can serve as an example for the settlement of other regional conflicts as well.

We strongly support resolution 598 (1987) and the Secretary-General's efforts to establish peace on its basis. That resolution affords Iraq and Iran an opportunity to embark on the road of peace. With Iraq having stated its approval, I urgently appeal to Iran to implement the resolution fully.

War has been going on in Afghanistan, too, for nearly eight years now. We expect the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces from that country and put an end to the suffering of the Afghan people. No one apart from the afflicted people of Afghanistan should gain advantage from the Soviet withdrawal. Consequently, the conditions for the genuine independence and non-alignment of the new Afghanistan must be established now.

We also call for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Kampuchea so that this country may exercise its right to self-determination.

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Republic of Germany)

The new, fundamental developments between West and East with their far-reaching consequences for world peace have only become possible through both sides opting for co-operation. The clearest manifestation of that willingness are the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union aimed at the global elimination of their intermediate-range nuclear missiles. For the first time, agreements are being made between West and East which not only limit but actually remove arms. This marks a turning-point in history.

We Germans greatly encouraged this development and we welcome the result - this great agreement - with relief. It enhances security and stability in Europe. My Government has viewed its role in this process not merely as that of an interested spectator. We have played an active part in achieving this success as a country aware of its responsibility for peace. Through our advocacy of the "double-zero solution" we have paved the way for the world-wide elimination of intermediate-range missiles.

I endorse the statement Chancellor Kohl made on this subject on 26 August 1987 that, by the time the American and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear forces have been removed as agreed, the German Pershing Ia systems will also have been phased out.

This agreement is still a long way from completely solving the problem of nuclear disarmament, but it represents the first, and thus the crucial, step towards the great objective to which the nuclear Powers committed themselves before the world in the nuclear-test-ban Treaty.

A process has been set in motion which must be made irreversible. Further steps must, and will, follow. We deem it essential that the United States and the Soviet Union should now concentrate on a drastic reduction of all strategic

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offensive weapons and in so doing also consider the further application of the Treaty on anti-ballistic missiles (ABM).

In the Western Alliance we will move ahead with the preparations for negotiations on nuclear missiles with a range of less than 500 kilometres. We will vigorously pursue the negotiations on conventional stability in Europe. The statements issued by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact afford a good basis for such negotiations.

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A convention globally banning chemical weapons is overdue. That convention must now be concluded. We cannot permit an ever larger number of countries to manufacture or procure these ghastly weapons of destruction. The best protection against their proliferation is their global elimination and their global prohibition.

In our efforts to achieve that aim, we are not facing an insurmountable wall. New thinking that stems from the knowledge that we can only survive with one another, not against one another, governs our actions more and more. No nation can have a greater interest in the success of all these negotiations than that of the Germans, for most weapon systems are concentrated in their country - on both sides of the dividing line - so they would be the first to be threatened with extinction.

The agreement on intermediate-range nuclear forces will provide the spark the effects of which will be carried well beyond the confines of arms control. Both sides will draw from that agreement the energy and the confidence to extend their co-operation to all fields where such co-operation is currently possible. That will be a major step towards the political objective of the North Atlantic defensive community, which is to establish solid structures for peace in Europe through co-operation between West and East in all areas and on the basis of a reliable defence capability.

The fact that we can cherish this hope today is the result of the discernment and the constructive approach of both sides. That had already become clear at the summit meeting of the United States and the Soviet Union in Reykjavik. There, the two super-Powers showed that they are conscious of their responsibility for mankind's survival. In this they deserve the support of all peace-loving people. We must not stray from this path.

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Republic of Germany)

The signposts to a better future are not the prejudices and enemy-images of yesterday but the will of nations, the will of every individual, to live in peace and dignity. Only in that manner shall we fulfil our responsibility for the future of mankind.

The era that was dominated by hegemonic aspirations, the era in which the world risked being pulled into the vortex of a never-ending arms race, is drawing to a close. This process cannot be stopped; it is paving the way to a better world. In such a world there can no longer be any room for the old enemy-images. If we dismantle our weapons we must also dismantle those enemy-images. On a global scale and in Europe we must create reliable systems for maintaining security on a co-operative basis, as well as mechanisms for the early detection and management of crises. The Federal Republic of Germany will assist in this task in the North Atlantic alliance and in the European Community. We shall do everything in our power to promote the process of European union and to strengthen our alliance, the aim of which is to prevent war.

Our desire to achieve the union of the twelve European democracies, our desire for co-operation with our Eastern neighbours, is a manifestation of the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany for peace in Europe. We are aware of our responsibility; we shall use all our energy and every opportunity in working for a better Europe, a Europe based on peace.

The position of the twelve members of the European Community of international issues and on the Community's internal development was presented by the Danish Foreign Minister two days ago. The Single European Act, which entered into force on 1 July this year, is significant for the international community. The Twelve wish, as is stated in the preamble to the Act, to make together

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"their own contribution to the preservation of international peace and security in accordance with the undertaking entered into by them within the framework of the United Nations Charter".

To that end we intend to establish a common Community foreign policy.

The completion of the European internal market, scheduled for 1992, will greatly increase the Community's strength. Significant steps towards a common monetary policy and towards the aim of converging the economic and financial policies of its members will have to follow, as will steps towards the creation of a technological community. That is the road to European union.

To our neighbours in the East we extend the hand of wide-ranging co-operation - envisaged in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) as the course towards the establishment of a peaceful order in Europe. At the CSCE follow-up conference in Vienna we are not merely seeking progress in matters of security: we are also seeking progress on the realization of human rights, on humanitarian issues, on economic exchanges, on the exchange of science and technology, on the exchange of information and culture. West and East can give each other a great deal through co-operation; through confrontation they can deprive themselves of progress entirely - they can lose everything. Through co-operation we seek to build confidence, to serve mutual interests and, in a positive sense, to create dependencies that will make peace and co-operation irreversible.

We do not want to bleed one another to death through the arms race, nor do we want to cripple anyone economically. The political and military division of Europe is bad enough. We must not divide Europe economically and technologically when there are already gulfs to be filled and walls to be climbed. Our aim is to help achieve genuine progress in all fields. If the Soviet Union opens up to the

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world, it will find a reliable and constructive partner in the Federal Republic of Germany. The Treaty of Moscow affords a basis for such co-operation as well as the necessary perspective. We shall have recourse to that Treaty, aware of the central importance of German-Soviet relations, which have an impact on the situation in the whole of Europe beyond their bilateral relationship.

If, after decades of confrontation, it were possible today to reach a turning point in the East-West relationship it would be a mistake of historic dimensions if we were to let the opportunity pass. All must shoulder their responsibility.

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Republic of Germany)

Twelve years after the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) we can declare: a process has been set in motion leading to a peaceful order in Europe. My country has made substantial contributions towards this goal through its accession to the European Community and the Western defensive alliance and through the unprecedented Franco-German partnership.

We have cleared the way for a new West-East relationship by means of the Treaty of Moscow; the Treaty of Warsaw, which established the basis for a new beginning with the Polish People's Republic in the awareness of the special quality of the German-Polish relationship following the vicissitudes of their history; and also through the treaty with Czechoslovakia and the Basic Treaty on Relations with the German Democratic Republic.

Not only is there no feasible alternative, there is no responsible alternative to this process. We always perceive Europe as a whole; we want to improve the situation in the whole of Europe. We realize that the wheel of history can never be turned back, only forward.

Part of this perspective for Europe's future is the relationship between the Federal Republic of Germany and the other German State, the German Democratic Republic. Both States are firmly integrated in their respective alliances. But precisely this fact makes it possible for them to campaign in their alliances for co-operation throughout Europe. The differences in their two value-systems are fundamental. Nevertheless the two German States are agreed: never again must war originate on German soil, only peace.

There is still disagreement between the two German States as to the future of the German nation. The Federal Republic of Germany remains committed to its aim of

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working for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation will regain its unity through free self-determination.

The visit to the Federal Republic of Germany by Mr. Erich Honecker, Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, demonstrated the intention of both German States to render a major contribution to stability in Europe by improving the quality of their relations and through their efforts to promote disarmament. Through these efforts we are also serving the welfare and interests of the people.

Mr. Honecker's visit revealed not only fundamental differences but also a willingness to co-operate with one another. We Germans, too, must live with the disparities that characterize the world, and above all Europe, even though they affect us more than other nations. But these disparities must not prevent us Members of this great world Organization from meeting our responsibility for peace and the survival of mankind.

Common international responsibility also means a common responsibility to combat terrorism, to combat racism and to prevent violations of human rights. Today, now, this must be the great common denominator for all nations who have committed themselves to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The community of nations are becoming increasingly aware that terrorism is a threat not only to political enemies but also to one's own country. We can conquer terrorism only if its perpetrators are unable to find refuge anywhere in the world. But we shall be able to rid ourselves of terrorism for good only if we also remove its causes, and there are many.

The Middle East crisis, for instance, may keep on spawning violence. Consequently, peace must at long last be established in Lebanon on the basis of freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

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Republic of Germany)

The Middle East conflict, as we have seen in the course of past years, cannot be settled by force, only by negotiation. We therefore advocate an international conference on the Middle East, which must proceed from Israel's right to exist within recognized and secure borders and from the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people.

If terrorism is inimical to any order, racism is the most terrible deprecation of human dignity. A régime that rules in the name of race must be opposed by the conscience of the world in the name of humanity. The Western democracies are a community oriented to common values and based on equal dignity for all. In view of this, we condemn the violation and mockery of human rights in the Republic of South Africa. We call upon the South African Government to create at last the conditions that will enable black and white to meet at the conference table and commence the dialogue that is so urgently needed. Apartheid must be totally eradicated: it is not capable of reform.

The state of emergency must be lifted, the political prisoners, first among them Nelson Mandela, must be released unconditionally and the banned organizations of the black majority must be allowed to operate again. If this is done, there is still hope that the violence that is bound to keep on producing yet more violence can be stopped. With regard to Namibia, we demand the application, at long last, of resolution 435 (1978), without any ifs and buts.

We condemn violations of human rights wherever they occur. A particularly horrific aberration of State authority is torture. It is not an instrument with which to fight one's political opponents. Least of all it is a means of administering justice. It is the most abhorrent and barbaric manifestation of injustice. By means of the United Nations Convention against torture, the world has taken a big step forward in the development of its political culture.

(Mr. Genscher, Federal
Republic of Germany)

By virtue of its Charter, by virtue of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the human rights covenants and its human rights institutions, the United Nations is a citadel and a bulwark of human rights. The exercise of civil, economic and social human rights is essential in the construction of a better world. A high commissioner for human rights and a court of human rights would be able to protect and promote these rights.

Only on human rights and the right of self-determination of nations can the universal house of peace be built. They are its foundations. That is why my country reaffirms to everyone before this world Assembly its pledge to respect every nation's right to self-determination and to defend human rights all over the globe.

And with the same earnestness we pledge ourselves, by dint of our policy of peace at home and abroad aimed at developing peaceful relations with our neighbours and all nations on earth and at making peace with nature, to safeguard life on this planet and the survival of mankind for this and all future generations.

Only when there is life is there freedom and human dignity. To preserve it must be the aim of our Organization.

Mr. FISCHER (German Democratic Republic) (spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation): It gives me much pleasure, Comrade President, to extend to you hearty congratulations on your election to preside over the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-second session and to wish you every success.

We appreciate the judicious work of the President of the General Assembly at its forty-first session.

I wish good health and energy to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, in his responsible post. We very much appreciate that during his visit to the German Democratic Republic last June we had fruitful talks serving the purposes of the United Nations.

The forty-second session of the General Assembly is being held at a time when ever more people have come to realize that the conventional posture of States on the political, economic and military issues and their own old habits of dealing with the environment and nature are no longer adequate to guarantee the survival of human civilization.

With the world's population now exceeding 5 billion, there is growing evidence that in this age of nuclear weapons and high technology the politics of the arms race and confrontation and the pursuit of selfish interests are bound to multiply and in the end dangerously aggravate the numerous conflicts and crises that already exist in the world. The risks of such policies are becoming increasingly incalculable. This fact alarms peoples on all continents and stirs all those who feel responsible for the fate of humanity to search for alternatives.

To assure the future of mankind it is necessary, first and foremost, to avert a nuclear inferno; to agree immediately on a world-wide halt to the arms race; to lead purposefully that halt to a comprehensively controlled process of reduction of forces and armaments; to refrain from militarizing outer space; to forgo the deployment of arms and forces in places where there are none; to settle peacefully

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existing conflicts; and to promote coexistence among States and peoples and arrange for their co-operation with a view to solving the global issues facing mankind, such as the preservation of the foundations of life on this planet, the eradication of underdevelopment, hunger and disease, and the elimination of living conditions that are incompatible with human dignity.

Seven decades ago, immediately after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the young Soviet State addressed its Decree of Peace to the world. Amidst the conflagration of the First World War that call was something entirely new, unusual and unique, giving fresh vigour to the yearning for peace. Since those times, the safeguarding of peace and the transition to disarmament have become the main concern of world politics. Chiefly owing to the initiatives taken by the socialist countries, the non-aligned States, the Group of Six and, last but not least, thanks to the activities of the United Nations and the vigorous action of the world-wide peace movement, there is growing awareness that peace in our time can no longer be achieved by arming against each other, but can be ensured only with each other. To give fresh dynamism to the efforts in favour of a secure peace, arms limitation and disarmament requires common sense and realism. To that end all States must live up to their responsibility.

At their Berlin summit held last May the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty submitted a comprehensive programme of disarmament which also provides for measures for strict verification and confidence building. That programme is based on the analysis of what is necessary and feasible to build a lasting peace with ever fewer weapons; and it is the logical conclusion from the common Soviet-American perception "that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought"; that any war between the Soviet Union and the United States of America, whether nuclear or conventional, must be prevented.

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That is what, we recall, General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan stated as a result of their meeting at Geneva in November 1985. It is in this context that the German Democratic Republic appreciates the efforts made and the results achieved in the Soviet-American talks at the foreign-minister level which ended last week and went a long way to bringing the world closer to genuine nuclear disarmament. Pursuant to its objective to secure peace with ever fewer weapons, the German Democratic Republic has used all its possibilities, and will continue to do so, to contribute to bringing about a double-zero solution without ifs and buts,

In the view of the German Democratic Republic, the agreed conclusion and the implementation of an accord between the USSR and the United States of America on the global elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter range missiles permit a start on disarmament proper. Some day historians will certainly describe that step as a turning-point in international and State-to-State relations. It therefore deserves absolute priority and every support. It is only too understandable that now there is a resolute call for the signing and implementing of the accords, because it is common knowledge that, regrettably, there are forces willing to foil this.

Along parallel lines, efforts must be intensified to reduce drastically the number of offensive strategic weapons whilst strengthening the anti-ballistic missile Treaty régime and preventing an arms race in outer space. This would also benefit the further strengthening of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At the same time it is imperative to bring about a world-wide prohibition of chemical weapons and a general and complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests.

Threatening potentials and "nuclear deterrence" are not only incompatible with a reasonable code of conduct consistent with our nuclear and space area; they are

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also a highly dangerous anachronism. The strategy of so-called nuclear deterrence by no means creates a greater measure of security, but is rather a stumbling-block to rapid progress on nuclear disarmament. An alternative has been offered by the document on their military doctrine the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty adopted at their Berlin summit. That entirely defensive doctrine is fully consistent with the principles embodied in the United Nations Charter concerning the non-threat or non-use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

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The allied socialist States declare: that they will never in any circumstances initiate military action against any State or alliance of States unless they are themselves the target of an armed attack; that they will never be the first to employ nuclear weapons; that they have no territorial claims on any other State, either in Europe or outside Europe; and that they do not view any State or any people as their enemy.

The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty have proposed to the member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that they enter into consultations on their respective military doctrines. That, too, could open up a way which would lead finally to a non-offensive capacity on both sides. Military imbalances that have emerged regarding any kind of weapon must be reduced through disarmament by the side that has the advantage over the other, in order to restore the balance at a lower level. That would be better, and less costly, than to stick to the principle of counter-deployment, which in the end has always sent the arms race spiralling upwards.

For the socialist States, verification of all agreements on arms limitation and disarmament is indispensable. What they want is verification without loopholes that includes necessary on-site inspections.

The German Democratic Republic, situated as it is in the heart of Europe, has been working above all for a lessening of military confrontation and the strengthening of security on the European continent, since any conflict at the divide between the two most powerful military alliances with the highest concentration of destructive potential would be fatal for humanity as a whole. Security must be strengthened there through global and regional efforts. Yet we do not wait for global solutions. Together with the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic,

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the German Democratic Republic has put forward proposals aimed at the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free corridor and a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe. Their implementation would not hamper but facilitate global solutions. Likewise, we attach great importance to the proposal made by the highest representative of the Polish People's Republic, Wojciech Jaruzelski.

The translation of these initiatives into reality would constitute at the same time a direct contribution to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process, which plays an indisputably essential role in promoting confidence and co-operation in Europe - a role that is increasing, as borne out by the follow-up meeting in Vienna. The German Democratic Republic is working for the successful conclusion of that meeting.

Over the years the Helsinki Final Act, that code of peaceful coexistence, has become a solid foundation for State-to-State co-operation in Europe. It was that positive regional experience from the CSCE process that encouraged the socialist States to submit their proposal to create a comprehensive system of international peace and security. We would expect the current session of the General Assembly to build on the exchange of views already begun, to which General Secretary Gorbachev's article of last week made an impressive contribution, and to lead it towards an intensive dialogue about such a system that would include political, military, economic, humanitarian and ecological aspects. That would be in accordance with the mandate which the world Organization must fulfil by virtue of its Charter.

For every people peace begins on its own doorstep. For this reason, and because of a well-understood historical responsibility, the overriding issue of a secure peace in our time was the central theme of the visit that Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany

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and Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, paid to the Federal Republic of Germany recently. As the leading representative of the German Democratic Republic stated at the end of his visit:

"The results and agreements reached are a success for the policy of common sense and realism, they benefit the people and peace."

The most important result of that visit, which is certainly of concern and interest to all States and peoples, was the agreement, as underlined in the joint communiqué,

"that the relations between the two States must remain a stabilizing factor for constructive East-West relations. It should generate positive impulses for peaceful co-operation and dialogue in Europe and beyond."

That remains possible provided the two sides - as they have agreed - proceed strictly from realities, show political will, reason and realism, and continue to normalize their intergovernmental relations. That is the only way to honour the obligation undertaken by the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany to do everything to ensure that never again will war, but only and always will peace, emanate from German soil - an obligation that the two German States have reaffirmed.

That visit has rightly met with a remarkable international response, as its realization reflects the general growing awareness that today one cannot any longer have peace for oneself alone and that it is no longer the quantity or quality of weapons that is decisive in ensuring peace, but only the quality of the policies pursued.

The visit of the Head of State of the German Democratic Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany illustrated that constructive political dialogue is possible and can indeed be fruitful even when international conditions are

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complex. Dialogue remains an indispensable tool for mutual understanding and in the search for specific ways to reduce confrontation.

Our policy of good-neighbourliness does not leave out Berlin (West). It is based on the quadripartite agreement and thus on the strict observance of the legitimate rights and interests of all concerned.

The dangers to world peace arising from seats of tension and conflict are a matter of great concern, since the faintest spark could engender a world-wide flare-up. The German Democratic Republic holds that any dispute or conflict should be brought up and settled at the negotiating table, that is peacefully, through dialogue, with all participants on an equal footing, and on the basis of strict respect for the United Nations Charter. The German Democratic Republic appreciates the relevant efforts made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on behalf of the Security Council. We would expressly encourage him to persist in them.

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Resolution 598 (1987) of the Security Council is a good basis for the peaceful settlement of the conflict between Iran and Iraq. We endorse the appeal addressed to all States to refrain from any act which might lead to an extension to other regions or to an internationalization of that conflict. Any show of military strength is incompatible with that aim, as it is bound to exacerbate tensions in the Gulf. The draft declaration entitled "Enhancement of the effectiveness of the principle of non-use of force in international relations", drawn up by the Special Committee, should be adopted at an early date and, above all, translated into practical measures.

The Middle East conflict remains, now as before, unsettled and the Palestinian people continues to be denied the establishment of an independent and sovereign State; yet there is a growing response to the proposal to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East in which all interested parties would participate, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Direct arrangements by the United Nations Security Council for a negotiating mechanism could bring such a conference nearer. This approach could pave the way to a lasting peace for all States of the region.

The German Democratic Republic believes that the implementation by all parties of the Central American peace plan signed in Guatemala on 7 August is an appropriate means of settling the conflicts in Central America peacefully and putting an end to the overt and covert war against Nicaragua.

The German Democratic Republic welcomes the initiatives taken by the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union for a political settlement of the situation that has developed in the region. The process of national

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reconciliation which the Afghan Government has initiated must no longer be affected by foreign interference.

World public opinion is deeply disturbed about the increased brutality and aggressiveness to which the South African régime of apartheid resorts vis-à-vis the country's black population and the neighbouring States. The peoples in southern Africa demand self-determination and the eradication of racism and apartheid, which means peace at home and a peaceful environment. It is time now that the United Nations plan for the granting of independence to Namibia be implemented.

The German Democratic Republic supports the insistence of the summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity on the imposition by the United Nations Security Council of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the régime of dyed-in-the-wool racists in South Africa.

A representative international conference on Cyprus, to be held within the framework of the United Nations, is, as before, necessary for the settlement of the Cyprus question. The presence of foreign troops on the island impedes the search for solutions that might be acceptable to all sides.

The German Democratic Republic follows with sympathy the dialogue that is developing between the three States of Indo-China and the States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and hopes that it will be a success.

The German Democratic Republic expressly supports the demand for the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, in keeping with its foreign policy of welcoming and promoting all regional initiatives for zones of peace, security and co-operation.

With regard to the lessening of tensions on the Korean peninsula, the German Democratic Republic supports the pertinent constructive proposals put forward by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

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Peace and disarmament, social objectives and the elimination of underdevelopment are today more closely intertwined than ever before. This, too, was underlined in the document entitled "On the elimination of underdevelopment and the establishment of a new international economic order" adopted by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty at their Berlin summit in May 1987. Is it not alarming to note that every minute 28 children die of hunger and avoidable diseases while in the same span of time - as was the case in 1986 - \$US 1.7 million is spent on armaments? The International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development held recently furnished ample proof that the continued arms race is the main reason why fewer and fewer funds are provided to alleviate the situation of more and more people who are socially disadvantaged.

We are satisfied to note that the outcome of that Conference has made it abundantly clear that disarmament is the first prerequisite of development. As the Soviet Foreign Minister has convincingly pointed out, the developing countries' indebtedness has an increasingly negative impact on international relations. At their Berlin summit the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty called for a global and just settlement of that problem.

The United Nations is an appropriate body to promote the democratization of international economic relations. The German Democratic Republic advocates agreement on mutually acceptable principles which would ensure a predictable operation of the world economy. That is precisely the aim of the initiative proposed by the socialist States to draw up a concept of international economic security.

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The German Democratic Republic stands for increased co-operation among States for the implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is guided by the precept that the fundamental human right is, above all, the right to live in peace.

The German Democratic Republic promotes the enjoyment of human rights and speaks out firmly against the gross and mass violations of human rights by the practice of apartheid, racial and social discrimination, genocide and fascism.

This world Organization has a multitude of issues to resolve that are crucial for the existence and survival of humanity. It is invaluable as a forum for dialogue, negotiation and co-operation. In saying this we do not overlook the fact that its effectiveness and that of all its bodies, the strengthening of its role and authority, the enhancement of its effectiveness, the binding character of its resolutions as well as the implementation of its decisions depend on the co-ordinated co-operation of all its Member States. If that co-operation is lacking, the strength of the United Nations is bound to be limited. Let me assure this Assembly that the German Democratic Republic will do all it can to help carry out the tasks that face this world Organization.

Mr. ASAMOAH (Ghana): On behalf of the people and the Government of

Ghana, I extend to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-second session. Your election is testimony to your high personal qualities and an honour to your country.

To your immediate predecessor, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, I extend sincere congratulations on the excellent work he did.

A year ago to this day, the United Nations opened on a gloomy note. There was an unjustifiable questioning of confidence by some Member States as the Organization faced a serious financial crisis. However, the Organization has survived the threat to its future as a force for peace and multilateral co-operation.

Perhaps nowhere is multilateral co-operation more urgently required than in the solution of the critical economic problems facing Africa. And this was recognized in the adoption last year of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development.

In spite of the bold and politically risky economic reform programmes adopted by African countries prior to and in response to the Programme, there is little evidence yet that our developed partners are responding with the necessary resource flows crucial to the success of the Programme. The Secretary-General of the United Nations himself had occasion during the recent Economic and Social Council session to express concern about the inadequate support the international community has given to Africa's efforts.

External factors that exacerbate the African economic situation remain unaddressed. The prices of primary commodities on which many African countries depend for their foreign exchange earnings have fallen to their lowest level. The anticipated growth in world trade has not occurred largely because appropriate policy measures to stimulate demand have not been pursued. Africa's efforts to

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expand the export sector through price incentives and the rehabilitation of infrastructure have been counter-productive because the increased volume of primary commodity exports has created an oversupply and exerted downward pressure on prices. Yet some powerful industrialized countries refuse to join multilateral schemes for stabilizing prices and earnings of developing countries from primary commodities.

In this context we welcome the decision of the Soviet Union to sign and ratify the Common Fund Agreement within the framework of the Integrated Programme for Commodities. We urge all countries that have not yet signed the Agreement, particularly the leading industrial countries, to overcome their initial reticence and join the Fund.

If the current steady decline in primary commodity prices is halted, it will go a long way to redressing the deteriorating terms of trade between the developing countries and the developed countries. Losses suffered by the developing countries, including sub-Saharan African countries, from adverse terms of trade in 1986 alone amounted to \$94 billion. This represents effective transfer of resources from poor countries to the rich industrialized countries; it is unconscionable and indefensible.

That there are severe constraints imposed on the development efforts of African countries by external indebtedness is recognized by all. The debt-service burden is severely hampering the ability of Africa to pursue growth-oriented adjustment policies. Figures supplied by the United Nations system indicate that Africa's debt stood at \$200 billion in 1986, while debt-service payments actually made by Africa between 1983 and 1985 averaged \$6.4 billion annually, representing about 44 per cent of gross domestic product and almost 200 per cent of their export earnings. There are some countries with critical debt-servicing ratios of about

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100 per cent of export earnings and above. For the next three-year period, debt-service payment per annum is expected to increase to \$11.5 billion.

This huge transfer of resources from the most impoverished continent has been at a great cost to socio-economic development. Investment and import programmes have had to be curtailed drastically. No statistics can aptly describe the misery and deprivation that have been caused. Relief must therefore be swift and adequate.

However, the strategy pursued by the donor community and the international financial institutions has primarily been geared towards averting any serious disruption in the financial system rather than alleviating the debt burden. In this connection we recall the consensus resolution adopted by the General Assembly last year on the sort of elements that must go into any strategy for a durable solution of the debt problem.

That resolution rightly recognized the vulnerable position of Africa. The international community, pursuant to the provisions of that resolution, pledged to take additional measures to alleviate the continent's onerous debt-service burden. We wish to express our gratitude to Canada, Sweden, the United Kingdom and other countries which have converted some African debts into grants. We also note with appreciation the initiatives of the Interim Committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Paris Club to get the creditor countries and institutions to grant significant debt relief. For a meaningful impact, we strongly urge greater debt-relief measures, including the spread of repayment over longer periods than the 20 years being suggested. We appreciate that national legislative and administrative procedures for granting debt relief have to be observed. But in view of the urgency of the need, we urge the international community to expedite action.

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At the same time that this huge transfer of resources from developing to developed countries is taking place, the flow of resources and development finance to the developing countries has declined or stagnated. Private lending has dwindled to a trickle compared to the levels attained a few years ago. Only a few developed countries have attained the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product in development assistance to developing countries.

The theme for the recently ended seventh meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VII), that is, revitalizing development, growth and international trade in a more predictable and supportive environment, through multilateral co-operation, could not have been more appropriate. It focuses on the main areas where new policy initiatives are required. In my delegation's view, UNCTAD provides a unique forum for building international consensus on the interrelated issues of money, finance, trade, resource flows and development.

Ghana wishes to emphasize today, as we did last year, that in an increasingly interdependent world, the rest of humanity will not remain for long insulated from Africa's misfortunes. We therefore renew, once again, our appeal to all to translate the international gestures of solidarity demonstrated at the special session of the General Assembly on Africa into practical support.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

I now turn to the political scene. Deserving of particular attention is South Africa's continued destabilization of the front-line States of Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe, in utter disregard of the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. This is intended to terrorize those countries into denying support for the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia and to increase the racist régime's dominance of the subregion.

No display of brutal force by the apartheid régime will solve South Africa's mounting domestic problems, the solution of which lies in the adoption of meaningful steps totally to eradicate the apartheid system. The necessary steps include the release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners and the initiation of meaningful talks with the legitimate black leadership, with a view to sharing power democratically. The recent encounter in Dakar between a number of anti-apartheid South Africans, mainly white Afrikaaners, and the African National Congress and their subsequent visit to some West African capitals, including my own, shows the way to a better future for South Africa.

While the system of apartheid persists, the overwhelming majority of the international community supports the isolation of South Africa - economically, politically and socially - as a way of inducing change. We continue to believe that sanctions will hasten the demise of apartheid if the international community exerts co-ordinated and mandatory international pressure on the racist régime, as is possible under Chapter VII of the Charter. The choice has been made, because it is the only peaceful method left if that country is to avoid a major disaster. We appeal to those countries whose economic and other interests make them refuse to follow the rest of humanity to reappraise their positions.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

The unsettled question of Namibia's independence continues to pose a serious challenge to the international community. It is unacceptable that South Africa continues to occupy Namibia well over two decades after the United Nations declared its presence in that Territory illegal. This fact in itself seriously undermines the credibility of our Organization, a situation which we should all work to correct. For this reason, the failure of the Security Council to send a collective and unambiguous signal to the South African authorities after its debate of 6 to 9 April on the Namibian independence question is a matter of deep regret. The negative votes cast by two permanent members of the Council and the several abstentions only served to strengthen South Africa in its continued stubbornness and refusal to co-operate in the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

It is even more regrettable for a permanent member of the Security Council to continue to link Namibian independence to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. The Namibian independence question is a decolonization issue and therefore cannot be linked with a domestic affair of an independent country. Ghana maintains that the people and Government of Angola have the legitimate right to make whatever practical arrangements they think fit for the defence of their country, particularly arrangements necessitated by South Africa's repeated acts of aggression and interference in Angola's domestic affairs. We therefore totally reject the linkage theory and reiterate Ghana's support for the conclusions of the 1986 special session of the General Assembly on Namibia, particularly the call for the isolation of South Africa economically and politically and the immediate implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

There are other areas of tension in Africa which deserve close attention, but let me single out Western Sahara and Chad. It is regrettable that, in spite of

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the decisions taken by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Non-Aligned Movement and the 1975 World Court opinion upholding the primacy of the right to self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, Morocco continues to hold on to the Territory. Ghana reiterates its support for the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and for the right of the Republic to sovereign existence. We again call upon Morocco to enter into negotiations with the POLISARIO Front, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the OAU and the United Nations, to resolve this matter.

On the conflict between Chad and Libya, Ghana wonders whether Chad's interest is best served by raising the matter here in provocative terminology that sets the tone for acrimony. It is as though Chad is repudiating the strategy of the OAU Heads of State or Government, which is aimed at avoiding escalation of the conflict through acrimonious debates, in favour of recourse to quiet diplomacy and mediation for the settlement of the dispute. We do not believe that the interests of Africa and the dignity and integrity of the OAU will be advanced by creating the opportunity for mischief by those whose interest lies in fanning conflict for their own national interests, unrelated to the Chadian or Libyan interest in preserving their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Ghana emphasizes the need for the application of peaceful methods in the resolution of the question of sovereignty over the Aozou strip. This is a question that lends itself to adjudication by the World Court, and Ghana would urge Chad and Libya to follow that course if the mediation efforts of the OAU prove ineffective. There is a need for the conflict between Chad and Libya to be brought to an end. We must recognize that a situation of this nature gives imperialist forces the opportunity to divide and weaken Africa and to subvert the course of the African revolution, of which Libya is a strong pillar of support.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

In the Middle East the cycle of violence has continued unabated, particularly in Lebanon. Ghana has over the years been involved in United Nations efforts to help the Government of Lebanon to restore normality to the area. It is our hope that the Government of Lebanon will be successful in this uphill task. Meanwhile, we appeal to all the factions and countries involved to assist in bringing peace to Lebanon.

The situation in Lebanon is basically a reflection of the continuing problem of a homeland for the Palestinians. Peace in the Middle East will continue to elude us for as long as justice is denied the Palestinian people. Their aspirations can never be suppressed by force of arms. It is our view that all parties, including the Palestinians, under Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership, should participate in an international conference called for the purpose of settling the Middle East problem. We call once again upon Israel and its supporters to listen to reason.

Ghana is concerned about the continued stalemate in the Cyprus situation and pledges its support for the Secretary-General's efforts to resolve the conflict. We believe in a unified and independent Cyprus, free from external interference, and the resolution of intercommunal conflict through peaceful dialogue.

I now turn to the regrettable war between Iran and Iraq. This war, which was occasioned by serious political and strategic miscalculations, is causing enormous human and material losses and has involved the use of chemical weapons and attacks on merchant shipping, in flagrant violation of international law.

Security Council resolution 598 (1987), unanimously adopted last July, may not have met all the concerns of the parties, but it provides a basis for continuing the search for peace. We appeal to both sides to give the provisions of the resolution a trial. We also urge all Member States, particularly the major Powers,

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to refrain from provocation and the threat of aggression, which would aggravate tension in the area.

The situation in Central America, particularly the attempt to subvert the Nicaraguan revolution, continues to cause concern to the Government of Ghana. One would have thought that a region afflicted with serious economic problems would be left free to pursue development and the welfare of its people. Regrettably, the region has had to ward off constant interference in its affairs in a manner that leads one to ask whether the principles enunciated in the Charter, particularly those relating to non-interference in the internal affairs of States, have lost their meaning.*

* Mr. Moumin (Comoros), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

Again, in a constructive spirit, we say to our American friends that financial logistical support for the rebels, popularly referred to as contras, is ill-advised. That action, taken together with the covert assistance being channelled to the Savimbi bandits, poses a serious threat to the independence and territorial integrity of the countries of the third world. It is a new dimension in the attempt to undermine the right of the peoples of the third world to self-determination. Happily, there is hope that the countries of Central America are waking up to the need to take their destiny into their own hands and to avoid manipulation by external forces.

Ghana endorses the Guatemala agreement as the most enlightened development of late. We appeal to all parties to enter into serious dialogue within the framework of that agreement to establish peace.

Ghana's attachment to the principle of self-determination compels us to maintain an objective stance on the conflicts in Afghanistan and Kampuchea. We note with satisfaction that the ongoing mediation efforts by the Secretary-General's representative have resulted in a considerable narrowing of positions on the timing of the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. It is our hope that the current momentum will not be lost and that intensive efforts will continue to arrive at an acceptable timetable. We also hope that the call for reconciliation announced by the Afghan authorities to encourage the return of refugees, to participate in the reconstruction of their country will be taken up by the opposition and that the supplying of weapons to the rebels will accordingly cease. Similar developments in Kampuchea would augur well for peace in that country. We appeal again to the parties involved in these conflicts to resort to the peaceful settlement of disputes.

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The same attachment to the principle of self-determination compels Ghana to denounce the recent plebiscite held by the Government of France in New Caledonia. The result cannot be regarded as truly representative of the wishes of the people. The regrettable events that preceded the plebiscite, the refusal by France to involve the United Nations in the event, the outright condemnation of the process by neighbouring countries, the alleged participation of residents whose commitment to permanent domicile in the Territory is questionable and, above all, the non-participation of the indigenous Melanesian population raise serious questions about the legitimacy of the outcome. We urge the Government of France to appreciate the fact that a peaceful solution, perceived by the international community as reflecting the wishes of the people of the Territory, is possible only within the framework of the United Nations and in accordance with the established guidelines and practices of the Organization.

We also believe that the problem of Korea should no longer be considered a peripheral issue. It is a problem that should be resolved through peaceful dialogue by the Koreans themselves, without outside interference. We are happy to note that some encouraging steps have been taken in this direction and we hope the two Koreas will adopt a flexible attitude to ensure the reunification of their motherland.

I turn to arms control and disarmament, which are more topical than ever as a result of the conclusions just reached by the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. Expenditures on the acquisition of arms have reached staggering levels. The spectre of nuclear annihilation hangs over our heads. The enormous resources now devoted to arms production could be

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used to narrow the gap between the affluent and the poor. The Final Document adopted a fortnight ago, shows us the way and therefore deserves the support of all nations.

In this regard, it is gratifying to note that an agreement between the United States and the USSR on the elimination of shorter- and medium-range nuclear missiles is within reach and that progress on other fronts seems likely. This is a great leap forward on the road to the achievement of one of the fundamental objectives of the United Nations - that is, a world without war.

The fiscal problems of the United Nations remain unresolved. This is surprising in view of the assurances given by several delegations following the unanimous adoption of a series of recommendations for administrative and financial reform of the Organization on the basis of the report of the Group of 18. That unanimous resolution was the result of intensive negotiations. It is even more regrettable since even before the adoption of the resolution the Secretary-General put into effect a package of measures to confirm his commitment to reform.

As we stated last year, the financial problems of the United Nations are politically motivated and directed at the weakening of multilateral co-operation, merely because some Member States are unable to manipulate the Organization in their own ideological interests. We appeal to those who for one reason or another are still withholding funds from the Organization to reappraise their positions. The United Nations - and, indeed, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and all the other affiliates of the Organization for that matter - does not claim perfection. But the answer, in our view, is to seek reform of these agencies, not to undermine their existence. We once again call upon all Member States, especially the founding and influential Members of the United Nations, to respect their pledges to uphold the principles of the Charter.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm my Government's commitment to the United Nations system and its ideals. We in Ghana continue to view the United Nations as a unique experiment in human co-operation. We must secure its future.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.