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Forty-second session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 6 October 1987, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic)

- Address by Mr. Kenneth Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia
- General debate [9]: (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Van Lierop (Vanuatu)  
Mr. Farah (Djibouti)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. KENNETH KAUNDA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

The PRESIDENT: This morning the Assembly will hear an address by the President of the Republic of Zambia and Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Kenneth Kaunda.

Mr. Kenneth Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia, 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 Republic of Zambia and Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, His Excellency Mr. Kenneth Kaunda, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President KAUNDA: On behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and on behalf of Zambia, I join all other speakers in congratulating you, Ambassador Florin, on your well-deserved election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-second session. In doing so, I want to assure you of the co-operation of the African Member States, and at the same time register our strong appreciation for the work done by your predecessor, Mr. Choudhury, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh.

Further, I congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, on his outstanding and excellent leadership of this Organization. I also feel very honoured to express our special and deep gratitude to him for his presence at and valuable contribution to the twenty-third OAU summit meeting, held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27 to 29 July 1987.

I would have preferred to carry a lighter and happier message on behalf of Africa, but that is not so because this session is taking place against the background of a worsening international situation. While the arms race rages on,

(President Kaunda)

we are today witnessing with increasing frequency and intensity the creation of more hotbeds of tension in the world.

Africa is gravely concerned about this. We therefore hope that this session will help find solutions to some of the numerous problems confronting the world. We firmly believe that this can be done only through collective, concerted effort. That is the basis of our commitment to the United Nations. That is why we are here, sharing our concerns with the rest of the Member States.

A little over a year ago, at its thirteenth special session, the General Assembly unanimously adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. That Programme is a unique framework for co-operation between Africa and the rest of the international community to bring about Africa's economic recovery. Convinced that such a task should begin in earnest and without fail, African Heads of State and Government collectively adopted in 1985 Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990, and pledged to assume primary responsibility in its implementation.

By adopting the United Nations Programme of Action, the international community endorsed Africa's Priority Programme, acknowledged the need to create a more supportive international economic environment, and pledged to make every effort to provide sufficient resources to support African development initiatives. On our side, we committed ourselves to respect, at the national level, the priorities of Africa's Priority Programme, to continue vigorously to pursue appropriate policy reforms and fully to mobilize domestic resources for the successful implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action.

We have made strides during the past months of Africa's Priority Programme in reordering our economic priorities. We have introduced painful economic reforms and adjustments, and stabilization measures, often at tremendous economic and

(President Kaunda)

social cost and in the face of serious political risks, which in many a country have threatened the very foundations of social cohesion and political stability.

All this has been taking place at a time when a number of countries are experiencing continued or re-emerging drought problems and emergency situations, threatening once again to drain and divest scarce national resources that are badly needed for recovery and development.

(President Kaunda)

The recovery and development efforts in the southern African region have been, and continue to be frustrated by the racist régime of South Africa and its continued policies of aggression and political and economic destabilization. These policies have exacted tremendous financial and human costs and totally undermined peace, stability and security, which are the very prerequisites for economic recovery and development.

But, in spite of all the formidable difficulties and costs, Africa has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate its unswerving commitment to the United Nations economic recovery Programme. To us Africans the implementation of that Programme has been simply a matter of survival and a challenge to recover and develop; and we are determined to survive and grow.

Regrettably, one cannot but conclude that almost one and a half years after the adoption of the Programme, and despite some limited initiatives here and there, the international community's overall response has fallen far short of the requirements of the Programme. The international community has not lived up to its side of the recovery pact.

Our assessment of the situation is amply supported by the findings in the comprehensive and excellent progress report of the Secretary-General which is before us. This is also the assessment of a large body of distinguished African and non-African policy-makers, experts and representatives of international, United Nations and non-governmental organizations, who met recently in Nigeria at an international conference sponsored by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Development Bank. That group of policy-makers, experts and others set out to assess African's chances of recovery and development as embodied in the Abuja Statement, which is also before this session. Indeed, it is also the assessment of other major international organizations and a number of Western Governments.

(President Kaunda)

In addition to the failure of the international community, particularly the States members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to respond adequately, the external economic environment has become further aggravated. In one year alone, 1985 to 1986, Africa lost as much as \$US 19 billion in export earnings as a result of the collapse of commodity prices. In 1986 terms of trade deteriorated by 28 per cent and the purchasing power of its exports fell by 30 per cent.

The debt and debt-servicing problems have also assumed alarming dimensions. By the end of 1986 Africa's debt had reached \$US 200 billion, amounting to 54 per cent of the gross domestic product and almost 440 per cent of export earnings. Debt-service ratios to exports now exceed 50 per cent and are much higher for many countries. The scheduled debt-service payments exceed \$US 15 billion. The situation is so critical that many countries have had to stop payment altogether, and a special summit meeting of the Heads of State of OAU, to be held on 30 November and 1 December 1987, will specifically discuss this problem.

The dramatic fall in export earnings and the huge debt-service payments represent transfers from Africa of precious financial resources which could have been used to engineer economic recovery. The African countries pledged finance of about 63 per cent of the African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 from domestic sources on the assumption of stable commodity prices, so that the revenue and household income derived therefrom could in turn be stable and assured. That assumption went with the wind during the very first year after the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action. Very little, if any, action has been taken by the international community to ameliorate the debilitating effects of the adverse external environment.

(President Kaunda)

No measures are in sight to stabilize export earnings from commodities, which are of major interest to Africa; nor have effective mechanisms been put in place to deal with the unmanageable debt and debt-servicing burdens in any meaningful way. Worse still, the anticipated increase in the resource flows to Africa has not materialized. Not only have they not matched the resource outflows from Africa; they have actually stagnated. Standing at \$US 10 billion in 1986, total resource flows to Africa in real terms were below the 1985 level. Thus, while Africa lost about \$US 34 billion in outward transfers in 1986 alone as a result of the fall in export earnings and of debt-service payments, the net income resource flows could compensate for only a little more than half of that loss.

(President Kaunda)

It is thus clear that Africa has been losing on all counts, to the extent that one wonders whatever happened to the commitment the international community entered into in the United Nations economic recovery Programme for Africa and to the spirit of co-responsibility and mutuality of interest and why it has not translated itself into concrete actions.

This session should, inter alia, take stock of the extent to which our mutual undertakings have been honoured and spell out what needs to be done during the remaining life span of that Programme, if it is to be successfully implemented.

Although the word "compact" has not been used in the Programme of Action, the new partnership based, as it were, on a mutual commitment and shared responsibility between Africa and the international community is nothing short of a compact for development and progress in Africa. It also symbolizes the restoration of faith in the efficacy of international economic co-operation in support of Africa.

Of course we Africans know only too well that we have to be the masters of our own destiny and that we have to sustain domestic policy reforms, continue the efforts to improve economic management as long as it takes, and also concentrate all the adopted priorities to bring about the necessary change in the structure of our economies, to pursue self-reliant and self-sustaining development and to strengthen economic co-operation and integration in Africa.

Having said that, it is also true - and this needs to be stressed in very clear terms - that these efforts, no matter how relentlessly they are pursued, would be futile without genuine improvement in the external economic environment and without the adequate support of the international community. Unless effective solutions are found for the debt and commodity problems and unless resource flows at levels adequate to compensate for the outward transfer of resources away from Africa and also to allow for a meaningful positive per capita growth rate are ensured, prospects for bringing about recovery and development in Africa will



(President Kaunda)

become for ever elusive and the continent will for ever be a victim of the vagaries and misery of perpetual crisis.

The case for external support to Africa does not primarily rest on moral grounds, as some of us would like to portray it. It does not. The hard evidence clearly shows that a perverse massive transfer of resources out of Africa is currently taking place. These outflows must be stopped and reversed through resource inflows that would also take into account the requirements of growth.

However, one is aware of and grateful for some initiatives by some donor and creditor Governments to provide a variety of debt-relief measures and special assistance programmes. These measures include the rescheduling of official debt through the Paris Club on more generous terms and of private commercial debt through the London Club. Some donor countries have also cancelled other debts in favour of some least developed African countries.

We also welcome the recent decision at the Venice Summit that consideration should be given to the possibility of applying lower interest rates to the existing debts of those African countries that are undertaking adjustment efforts and that agreement should be reached, especially in the Paris Club, on longer repayment and grace periods.

Some initiatives have also been taken by multilateral institutions to increase the volume of their assistance to Africa. Worthy of mention here are the replenishment of resources from the International Development Agency (IDA) amounting to US\$ 12.4 billion and the decision to allocate 45 per cent thereof to sub-Saharan Africa.

Also notable is the recent proposal by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that the resources available for the restructural adjustment facility be tripled to \$9 billion in special drawing rights from 1 January 1988 in order to provide special support to poor countries facing extraordinary balance-of-payments problems.

(President Kaunda)

However, appreciable as these efforts are, they only represent partial approaches to the problem in hand and do by far fall short of the requirements of Africa.

What is required is a package that includes solutions to the debt and commodity problems and a substantial increase in official development assistance (ODA). Such a package should include the conversion of all ODA debts into grants, a substantial reduction and cutting of interest rates on commercial debts and the consolidation of these debts and the debt-service payments due thereon into long-term loans repayable over 30 to 40 years on concessional terms, allowing for a 10-year period of grace.

(President Kaunda)

The resultant debt-servicing requirements must be fully compatible with the capacity to pay of African countries, after fully taking into account the requirements of sustained growth and development.

A solution should be found to the mounting debt of African countries to the IMF and the World Bank. There is now a substantial net outflow of resources from Africa to the IMF. It is estimated that in 1986 the net outflow of resources from Africa to the IMF amounted to over \$US 960 million. Such a situation is unsustainable, unjustifiable and illogical. We should ensure that the IMF and the World Bank can reschedule, on a long-term basis, the repayment of the debt owed to it by Africa and the debt-servicing obligations.

The urgent need to deal with the problems of African commodities can hardly be overstressed. The dramatic fall in export earnings and the continuous deterioration of Africa's terms of trade have not only made a mockery of any attempts to increase the volume of exports but also they starved the African economies of a major source of investment funds.

We should translate into specific action the call on the international community in the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990

"To deal urgently with commodity issues, taking into account the special interests of the African countries ... and also to increase the capacity of African countries to process, market, distribute and transport their exports".  
(resolution S-13/2, annex, para. 17(b)(ii))

Support for and the stabilization at reasonably remunerative prices of the earnings from commodities of primary interest to Africa are an important area for specific action. In this regard, the recent proposal by the Economic Commission

(President Kaunda)

for Africa (ECA), which was also taken up by the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to expand donor participation in these matters and systems to include the other Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) donor countries deserves special attention. In addition to providing solutions to these problems, the package must ensure the flow of concessional resources to Africa at levels adequate to compensate for any outward transfer of resources as well as to meet the requirements of sustained growth at meaningful levels.

Over and above this, \$US 9.1 billion per annum are still needed from external sources to finance Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990. The requirements of the African development programmes, which go beyond the requirements of the Priority Programme, are much larger.

The international community should shoulder its responsibility to face the problems of Africa squarely and provide the kind of lasting solutions that I have just mentioned. The efforts to initiate concrete action have failed to take off, because of the opposition of a few major countries. I appeal to them, in the name of humanity and in the name of international solidarity, to join hands with other countries in the full implementation by the international community of our joint economic recovery Programme for Africa.

The problem of the environment is a matter of grave concern to mankind as a whole. We in Africa attach great importance to the urgency of this global issue. It is in that context that we welcome the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, which was presented to the twenty-third ordinary summit meeting of the OAU. It is worth noting in particular that, while the Commission recognized that pollution largely constitutes a northern or urban problem,

(President Kaunda)

"poverty is the main cause of environmental degradation in many developing countries".

I commend that report to the Assembly, and at the same time I wish to thank the Chairman of the Commission, the Prime Minister of Norway for it, and also for coming to address our summit meeting in Addis Ababa, the twenty-third session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of Africa.

The political situation on the African continent is no better than the economic scene. Western Sahara continues to be an area of conflict. The Organization of African Unity supports the efforts now being made by the United Nations Secretary-General to bring about a cease-fire and a referendum. We call earnestly on both the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Morocco to support the Secretary-General in his efforts. As in the past, the OAU will do all in its power to assist.

The dispute between Libya and Chad has not yet been settled, but we are consulting among ourselves within the framework of the Organization of African Unity in an effort to find a lasting solution to the problem.

(President Kaunda)

The Ad Hoc Committee, which held its first meeting in Lusaka last month, is continuing its efforts to find a solution to the problem. In this regard, we strongly appeal to the wider international community to refrain from such action as will further complicate the situation.

The volatile and worsening situation in southern Africa, at the root of which is the evil system of apartheid in South Africa, continues to be a matter of grave concern to us. This world body has condemned apartheid and has rightly declared it a crime against humanity. Numerous appeals have been made to the régime in Pretoria to abolish this most cruel system of racial discrimination - but to no avail. Instead, the racist régime has responded by strengthening its repressive machinery and enforcing apartheid with even greater brutality. The racist Pretoria régime has, among other things, refused to lift the state of emergency and has continued to muzzle the press through censorship.

South Africa's aggression against neighboring independent countries has increased. Furthermore, its destabilization of the front-line States through its sponsorship and control of anti-Government bandits, mercenary-led groups such as the MNR (Mozambique National Resistance) in Mozambique and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) in Angola, has been considerably stepped up. These bandit groups cannot lay any claim to credibility as the representative of the people in these countries - much less to any worthwhile cause. Their hallmarks are murder, plunder and wanton destruction and violence.

Only recently, the South African-sponsored armed bandits added to their macabre record the cold-blooded massacre of hundreds of innocent women, children and old people at Homoine and elsewhere in Mozambique. The banditry of these groups has caused much loss of life and property and unimaginable suffering and has left permanent physical and psychological scars on the people of these countries. In Mozambique alone, an alarming number of children die as a result of this

(President Kaunda)

banditry. Hundreds of thousands of persons have had to flee from Mozambique and Angola, thus presenting a refugee problem of a magnitude that the region is finding difficult to cope with.

Yes, even as I address the General Assembly, the racist régime's armed forces, supported by the bandits of UNITA, have invaded Angola. Only a few minutes before I came here, I received reliable information that the racist troops in Angola have now actually taken over from their bandits of UNITA, because the so-called headquarters of those bandits was about to fall to the Angolan patriotic forces. The South African racist régime's evil forces have now taken over complete control of the war situation in southern Angola. In short, they have actually now invaded Angola themselves. There is no longer any pretense about this. All this is a deliberate campaign to establish bantustan-type governments in front-line States.

Of course, in the end the racists cannot succeed. But how much bitterness are they building up against themselves in the hearts of all those young people, part of the future of mankind, who are now growing up witnessing this barbaric campaign by a primitive régime in the twentieth century.

South Africa's destabilization of neighbouring countries is meant not only to turn them into bantustans but also to force them to abandon their support for the struggle against apartheid. What the racist régime in Pretoria simply does not understand is that that struggle is not being waged from outside but is being fought and will be won by the oppressed peoples themselves right inside South Africa.

There appears to be no indication at all of a willingness on the part of the racist régime to dismantle apartheid peacefully. But, as surely as night follows

(President Kaunda)

day, apartheid will be destroyed. It is not a question of if but of when and how apartheid will be ended. I want to emphasize that point: it is not a question of if but of when and how apartheid will be ended.

We wish, therefore, to reiterate what has been stated before: In the context of the southern African situation, comprehensive and mandatory sanctions remain the only peaceful way - I might add, comparatively speaking - to end apartheid. Lest it be forgotten, I point out that the world has been warned by the Organization of African Unity and other bodies that failure by the international community to resolve this issue peacefully will result in unimaginable bloodshed and destruction.

South Africa's bogus attempt at reform cannot be tolerated, because, as the farce of a tricameral parliament has shown, apartheid cannot be reformed.



(President Kaunda)

Furthermore, as the impudence of the May 1986 whites-only elections loudly proclaimed, the racist régime is neither serious nor willing to negotiate the dismantling of apartheid. It is against that background that we should like to repeat our endless appeals to the major Western countries which have sufficient leverage over the racist régime to join the campaign for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the apartheid régime.

In the absence of such sanctions, only revolutionary violence by the oppressed majority of South Africa will dismantle apartheid. The racist régime must be pressured to renounce the abominable system of apartheid and the ban on the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other political parties and organizations, lift the state of emergency, release Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners and proceed to negotiate with the genuine representatives of the oppressed people for a non-racial and democratic government.

Namibia constitutes another tragedy for this Organization and for the international community as a whole. A global consensus exists that South Africa is illegally occupying the Territory of Namibia. The International Court of Justice, the Security Council and, indeed, this Assembly have reaffirmed that global view. A great deal of energy, diplomatic effort and even money have been spent to remove the innumerable obstacles impeding the implementation of the United Nations plan approved in Security Council resolution 435 (1978). The world has anxiously been awaiting the implementation of that resolution. The momentum that existed in 1978 has completely waned in the wake of the impasse created by the linkage of the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola with Namibia's independence.

The OAU, the Non-Aligned Movement, the United Nations General Assembly itself and the Security Council have always maintained that the issue of linkage is extraneous to the Namibian question. We therefore request the Security Council

(President Kaunda)

immediately to face its responsibilities and enable the Secretary-General of the United Nations to proceed with the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

The international community has a duty to assist the front-line States and other independent States of the region in order to enable them to withstand South Africa's acts of aggression and destabilization. I also appeal for increased humanitarian assistance to the victims of apartheid, especially those who have been displaced from their homes.

I note with profound dismay that although the principle of peaceful co-existence has been accepted as the foundation of the United Nations, the intense rivalry between the two super-Powers and their respective blocs, which is the major driving force behind the arms race, is a real threat to international peace and security. In a world where millions of people die of hunger and malnutrition every year, how can our conscience allow us to spend over US\$ 1000 billion per annum on armaments? What sense is there in our continuing to acquire and perfect more and more nuclear weapons when existing arsenals can destroy the world many times over? How can we live in peace with nuclear weapons, which we cannot manage to keep safe even when we are not using them?

Surely we owe it to ourselves and to posterity - and, indeed, to the millions who have died and continue to die of starvation, malnutrition and disease - to stop the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, so that we can channel the resources released in that process to more worthwhile and life-supporting purposes. In this regard, we should like to appeal to the two super-Powers, which have a special responsibility seriously and urgently to negotiate with each other an arrangement that will lead to general and complete disarmament.

In that vein, Zambia, and indeed the whole of Africa, welcomes with great relief and joy the recent announcement that the two super-Powers have reached

(President Kaunda)

agreement in principle to abolish all medium- and short-range missiles with a view to concluding an intermediate-range nuclear missile treaty. There is no doubt that the whole of mankind feels justly proud of that achievement at this historic moment. That agreement in principle reflects the patience, responsibility and great foresight that the two super-Powers have shown after long and difficult negotiations. Accordingly, we present our hearty congratulations to President Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.

We know, however, that much more needs to be done. Much larger nuclear, chemical and conventional stockpiles remain. We therefore call on the United States and the Soviet Union to persist in their efforts to rid this earth of all nuclear and chemical weapons and significantly to reduce conventional armaments, in order to guarantee security for both sides and for the world at large.

The Middle East continues to be an area of conflict. The Palestinian problem remains unresolved and now seriously affects Lebanon and its people. There is, however, a ray of hope - an international conference for peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. The OAU supports such a conference and calls on Israel to take full advantage of this historic opportunity to re-establish peace and secure borders for all in the Middle East.

(President Kaunda)

But for such a conference adequately to address all the issues of the area, it is imperative that the Palestine Liberation Organization attend as a full participating member. In this way, all the countries and peoples of the Middle East will commit themselves to the outcome of the conference.

The war between Iran and Iraq has entered its eighth year. The cost in human lives and property has been very heavy for both countries. The concentration in the Gulf of forces alien to the region increases the probability that the war may expand beyond the present conflict. That conflict could expand and engulf the neighbouring States, and threaten the flow of oil from that region. The OAU is concerned about the war and about its menacing consequences. We believe that the road forward lies in ending the war. For that reason we welcome the adoption by the United Nations Security Council of its resolution 598 (1987). That resolution may not have fully satisfied the demands of all concerned, but it provides a basis for a meaningful settlement of the problem. It is our understanding that Iraq has already accepted the resolution. We therefore join the international community in calling on Iran to do the same.

The situation in Central America is also a source of worry to us. The peace and stability of that region can be assured only if the countries there are allowed to settle their own problems without external interference. We therefore support - and support fully - the Guatemala agreement recently signed by the five Presidents of the area. It is our hope that this will provide a basis for the settlement of all the outstanding issues.

There are other areas of tension. I am referring here to Afghanistan, Cyprus, Kampuchea and the Korean peninsula. In all these areas the introduction of foreign troops has made it difficult for the people of those lands to establish peace for themselves without outside interference. We join with the rest of humanity in

(President Kaunda)

demanding that those countries be given the opportunity to determine their own future.

The United Nations remains the most important multilateral institution for resolving international conflicts. It affords debate across ideologies and other human prejudices. It is a uniting factor. It must be preserved.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Zambia and Chairman of the Organization of African Unity for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Kenneth Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu): Sir, I have the honour of extending to you the congratulations and best wishes of the Government and people of Vanuatu on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at this forty-second session. Your unanimous election is both a personal tribute and a token of esteem for the country you represent. I take pleasure also in thanking your predecessor, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, for the manner in which he guided us during the forty-first session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

In addition we join in thanking the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts. His work and that of his staff and the entire Secretariat are sources of pride to us all. In this regard we commend the addition to his team of Ambassador Joseph V. Reed as Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs. He has a rather large pair of shoes to fill, but all who know him have no doubt that he is equal to the task.

Taking the floor immediately after Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, President of Zambia and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, is a great honour and at the same time a great responsibility. It is not easy to follow to the rostrum of this body one so eloquent and so universally admired as is President Kaunda. He looms large in history as a spokesman for those who cherish mankind's highest ideals. Today he has spoken not only for the people of Zambia and the continent of Africa but also for all who believe in the United Nations.

It is always a great honour and rare privilege to speak before the United Nations General Assembly. Today the honour is greater and the privilege rarer because of the presence of President Kaunda and his penetrating words. We, like others, applaud his wisdom, his dedication and his sensitivity. We also concur with his vision of a world in which humanity is permitted to blossom to its fullest potential.

The ability to communicate through the medium of the spoken or written word, so movingly demonstrated by President Kaunda today, is one of mankind's greatest achievements. Occasionally that ability is taken for granted and neither appreciated nor properly utilized.

Those few who - because of their economic or military strength - hold in their hands the power of life or death over so many other human beings, often do not feel the need to listen to the words of those of us who do not command vast fortunes,

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

powerful armies or large armadas. When they do listen they tend to listen mechanically, with their ears rather than with their hearts. They then frequently fail to heed the poignant messages addressed to them.

Thus, year after year, speaker after speaker walks to this rostrum, stands before the nations of the world and states the case for independence for Namibia, an end to apartheid in South Africa and common decency and justice for the Palestinians. Speaker after speaker pleads for justice and peace for the people of Central America and South-East Asia. Speaker after speaker calls for an end to the arms race and the recurring nuclear nightmares of small children everywhere. Were these words to be listened to, and heeded, they would be almost magical in what they could achieve.

Words are like magic. They can transport one to another time, another place, or another dimension. They can express the full range of human experiences and emotions, from charity to greed, from forgiveness to indignation, from humility to arrogance, from hope to despair, from love to hatred. Words can be instruments of enlightenment or revelations of ignorance. Words can stir, inspire and move listeners to action or lull them into indifference, boredom and inactivity.

Words are capable of opening minds or closing them. They are capable of expanding horizons or restricting them. They can bring us together or drive us further apart. Words are potentially more powerful than any military weapon known to mankind. They have been known to make tyrants tremble and dictatorships decay.

That is why some fear the written or spoken word as much as they fear anything. That is why eighteenth and nineteenth century slave holders in the western hemisphere made it "illegal" for the human beings they held in bondage to learn to read and write and forbade them to communicate in their own languages. That is why well past the mid-point of the twentieth century, in even the most developed of countries, some parents have had to struggle to see their children get any

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

semblance of a decent education. That is why the apartheid régime of South Africa has spared no effort to stifle the voices of that country's bravest sons and daughters.

That is why in so many lands, large and small, developed and developing, north and south, east and west, so many generations of courageous human beings have pleaded, petitioned, marched and agitated for the right to be educated and the right to be heard. That is why today we search for words which will, as a renowned Mozambican poet wrote, "... enter every house like the wind and fall like red hot embers on our people's souls ...".

With all that words can do, none can do more than words of candour and sincerity. The late Amilcar Cabral once encouraged his colleagues, in the African Party for the Independence of Guinea (Bissau) and Cape Verde, to hide nothing from the masses of the people and to tell no lies, claim no easy victories. That admonition is as appropriate to us here, at the United Nations today, as it was 22 years ago to those struggling to bring freedom to two small West African countries.

Truth is a mighty weapon. It is in fact the greatest weapon possessed by those who would feed the hungry, house the homeless, heal the sick, educate the illiterate, end senseless violence and generally help create a more equitable world.

In none of those areas will the international community be able to claim an easy victory; not one of these things will be easy to achieve. Then, again, that which is worth working for, that which is worth struggling for, seldom is easy. We would be guilty of the worst form of naivety were we to suggest otherwise.

Words alone, no matter how beautiful, are not sufficient to resolve the many issues on the agenda of the United Nations. If they were, Namibia would be a full Member of the United Nations, Palestine would be a Member of the United Nations and



(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

South Africa would be represented by a legitimate Government and would be seated in this Hall today.

If words alone were sufficient, the questions of Cyprus, Kampuchea and Afghanistan would no longer appear on our agenda. If words alone were sufficient, the peoples of Western Sahara, East Timor and New Caledonia would already have been permitted to assume their rightful places within the community of nations.

Words, however, no matter how articulate, how truthful, how forceful, how insightful or how well-intended, are never enough. They probably will never be enough. Frederick Douglas, a leader of the anti-slavery movement during the nineteenth century and a great orator, expressed that best when he said:

"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both."

Every year the General Assembly passes a stream of resolutions. The words of those resolutions, taken together, comprise some of the most noble thoughts and theories known to mankind. What is far less noble is the lack of resolve by some Members of the United Nations when we leave this Hall and it is time to implement our collective decisions.

It is not enough merely to denounce apartheid. It will not disappear without a struggle. How long and how violent a struggle is up to those who imposed apartheid on South Africa's people and then on Namibia. We, the rest of the world, must in a real sense support those who struggle against apartheid and adopt for ourselves values which differ from the values of those who practise this onerous creed, as well as the values of those who profit from it.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

The values we embrace should be the values of those who respect the genuine universality of every human being. Those values must be embraced at all times, in all places, and not merely when and where the world happens to be looking or listening.

Silence, or inaction, in the face of a known evil in one corner of the globe can be taken as acceptance of other evils in other corners of the globe. We, the international community, must be consistent and unremitting foes - no matter the price - of anyone who would assign a second- or third-class status to any person because of his or her race, religion, sex, language or economic status.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

The essential need to secure and hold the higher ground during any engagement of hostile forces is a well-known axiom of military science. In mankind's moral engagement to determine the future destiny of our planet, we should apply the same axiom and secure and maintain the higher ground.

No person held in slavery should aspire to be a slave-holder. No person who has known the bitter taste of discrimination should himself, or herself, discriminate against another. No person who has been victimized should look for others to become his, or her, victim.

It pains us deeply to see some former colonies fail to understand the legitimate strivings of others for their own independence. Interruptions in the process of decolonization are even more tragic when the intruding State is itself a former colony which might have helped a neighbour's first tentative steps on the path to reclaiming its own identity. Vanuatu's position on this question is based on what it perceives as what is right and what is wrong, rather than on what others might perceive as either convenient, expedient, safe or a fait accompli.

Thus, it is Vanuatu's hope that the people of Western Sahara, the people of East Timor and others similarly situated will be allowed to realize their dreams also. Their rights are as sacred as those of anyone else represented here today. If there is no room at the inn for them, then very few of us should feel secure about our own places.

We are similarly saddened by the tragic spectacle of intercommunal strife which plagues every corner of the earth. There is no need to recite the names, the dates or the places. Everyone is already painfully familiar with them. Much of this intercommunal strife has its roots in a shared colonial history. Some pre-dates colonialism and is the result of antagonisms that go back many centuries. Understanding the roots of a problem should help us to combat it. Unfortunately, demagogues are always willing to exploit and manipulate existing

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

social contradictions for their own selfish ends and carry others down a destructive path. We, the international community, must maintain the higher moral ground. We should address these social contradictions and try to resolve them. How we go about it is the important question. We should let our actions signal to others the type of world we would like to see.

The dignity and majesty of the victims of the apartheid régime of South Africa are, we believe, an example for the rest of the world. The African National Council (ANC) and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) have consistently maintained the higher ground by steadfastly refusing to adopt the values of the Pretoria régime. We have great faith in their vision of the future. They struggle for their people and against a system, rather than against fellow human beings. To secure the future of this planet, it rests with all of us to learn from them and stop waging war against each other and against each other's children. It rests with us not to adopt the discredited values of immoral régimes. It rests with us not to act as proxies for others who are only too willing to divide us by seductively whispering in an ear how bad one ethnic group or another is.

The tragic war between Iran and Iraq is an example of a conflict which involves a complex web of historical contradictions. Like most other countries, Vanuatu was appalled by the outbreak of this war and is appalled by its continuation. Vanuatu has never taken sides on the antagonisms that exist between these two States and will not do so now; we consider both friends. However, one must ask this: does there come a point beyond which one wages war against a neighbour and begins to wage war against one's own professed values, and one's own people, and the rest of civilization?

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

We do not have answers to the questions posed by this tragedy. Like so many others, we merely address an appeal to the decency and common sense of both parties to the conflict. We ask them please to try to reason together and arrive at some mutually agreeable formula. Let there be neither victors nor vanquished; let there simply be peace.

The war between Iran and Iraq, the loss of life it entails and its economic consequences bring to mind the relevancy of the recently concluded International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. Although the result of the Conference was not completely satisfactory, the consensus that was arrived at was an important step on the path we must all walk together. None of us can walk that or any other road alone.

The economic situation faced by developing countries has been discussed at length. We will not at this time expand further on what has already been so adequately said by others similarly situated. However, we cannot help but observe that when developing countries wish to build a railroad, a port facility, an airport, a communications network, schools, health clinics or other parts of a national infrastructure all sorts of financial obstacles are encountered. But, when a developing country wishes to buy weapons, credit can always be arranged. This is true no matter how poor or how small the country, regardless of its other needs, and no matter how ill prepared its military might be to absorb certain equipment. Some seem to confuse the business of selling weapons with the art of diplomacy. For them, the way to win friends and influence people is to market the means of mass destruction. In most instances, the friends that are gained are many times fewer than those that are lost.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

The recent agreement in principle between the United States and the Soviet Union to dismantle intermediate-range nuclear forces is a positive, although tentative, step. There are, of course, a great many more complex issues to be addressed. Therefore, the proposed upcoming meeting between the leaders of those two countries is another welcome sign. President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev will carry with them the prayers and hopes of the entire world when they meet. The prospect of a productive dialogue between them is a harbinger of a better international climate.

The world cannot help but be encouraged by the example of these two great nations learning to live with each other. Certainly Iran and Iraq should be able to find as much common ground as have the United States and the Soviet Union.

After years of harsh and bitter fighting, it appears that common ground may now exist in another part of the world. The recently concluded agreement between five Central American Presidents is a positive step worthy of international support. Peace, and the opportunity to pursue justice without fear, may finally be at hand for the people of that troubled region.

In this connection, Vanuatu also joins in supporting appeals for the normalization of relations between Belize and Guatemala. Recognition of the national identity, dignity and territorial integrity of all six nations of Central America is an essential element in the promotion of peaceful coexistence and economic development for the people of that region.

Few areas of the world cry out as much for adherence to the basic values of human decency as does the Middle East. When all is said and done, the fact remains that in that part of the world the fundamental contradiction, the fundamental problem, the fundamental wrong, is the systematic effort to deny the humanity of the Palestinian people. Their homes, their hopes and their futures were sacrificed to establish the State of Israel.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Now, neighbouring Lebanon faces a doubtful future. Its children's dreams have also been sacrificed. Is there no limit to what the world expects the people of that region to endure? This is a matter that has vexed and plagued the international community for longer than anyone cares to remember. Over the years, there have been a great many heroes and villains on both sides. Certainly, neither side is pure but, here again, each must reach out to the other. It makes as much sense today to ignore the Palestine Liberation Organization as it did earlier to attempt to deny the existence of the people it represents.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

This is a problem that the international community helped to create. Thus, it is a matter that we must help to resolve. We can begin by convening the much discussed international conference on the Middle East.

William Shakespeare once aptly stated that the past is the prologue. We believe that solutions to many of the items on the agenda of the United Nations require that we look to the future rather than be prisoners of the past. Today the United Nations affords mankind an opportunity to avoid many of yesterday's mistakes.

However, like Shakespeare, we believe that truly to comprehend the nature of some of the current problems and the motivation of some of the principal actors on the world stage, we must also have knowledge of the past. In this regard we note regrettably that some, notably the apartheid régime of South Africa, live so far in the past that they are incapable of comprehending the lessons of history.

South Africa's slave-State conditions are not historically unique. In recent years those conditions have been modified in form but not in substance. Thus, South Africa remains fundamentally as uncompromisingly racist as other parts of the world were in the nineteenth century.

The changes that have occurred resulted in part from the impact of the rapidly changing world of the twentieth century. However, the most important catalyst has been, and continues to be, the efforts of the people of South Africa who have simply refused to be docile.

Apartheid ranks with slavery, the inhuman excesses of the colonial era, the holocaust of the Second World War era and other acts of genocide, among the most significant crimes ever committed against humanity. Apartheid is not always discussed in the same context as slavery. However, for many reasons we believe it should be.



(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

The commercial traffic in human beings known as the trans-Atlantic slave trade, like its lesser known counterpart in the South Pacific, earned universal condemnation for its evil nature and the horror it created. That sinful behaviour cost millions of lives and destroyed entire societies. It wrenched families apart and eventually became the genesis of colonialism. The depth and magnitude of the human suffering caused by the slave trade is incalculable. Similarly, the financial wealth accumulated by an assortment of kidnapers, hijackers, thugs and terrorists - yes, terrorists - as a result of the traffic in human beings can never be calculated. Some may have forgotten. Others, no doubt, would prefer to forget this important page of history.

We make this reference today not out of bitterness. There is no rancour in our hearts and no recrimination is intended. We merely wish every nation represented here today to remember and comprehend the past so that we will understand the true context of South Africa, the nature of humanity's foe in Pretoria and what the international community must do to overcome that foe.

South Africa has not yet learned the lessons of history. Therefore the rest of the world must strive harder to bring the message of those lessons home to South Africa. We must become better interpreters and instructors of history than we have been to date.

Despite circumstances and conditions which would test the patience of a saint, Nelson Mandela has maintained the moral higher ground we spoke of earlier. He and his colleagues have taught their gaolers a most important lesson. Indeed, in a sense, he and many of his people are freer than those who placed him in prison and who fearfully stand guard over an entire aroused nation. It is our hope that by the end of this session of the General Assembly all of us will be standing with Mr. Mandela and no one will either apologize for, or protect, his gaolers.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Those who traffic in narcotic drugs have much in common with those who now govern South Africa. Both value material wealth over human life and moral decency. Both sell the false dream of a mindless form of existence. Both offer nothing more than modern-day slavery in different forms. Both deserve nothing but the sternest concerted international action to eradicate them from the human experience.

The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in Vienna this past June under the able presidency of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, was an important milestone. Vanuatu is pleased to note the increasing international realization that not a single region, not a single nation, not a single community, not a single individual is untouched, or immune, from the scourge of drug abuse or the curse of drug traffickers and what they bring with them. However, no nation, not even the richest and most powerful among us, can feel that it is doing enough to address this major challenge to civilization. The evidence of this fact surrounds us, unfortunately, and threatens to drown us all.

Terrorism also threatens to drown civilization. This is as true of the type of terrorism practised by those who appear at a door in the middle of the night wearing official uniforms, armed with the blessings of a State apparatus and who have perfected techniques of torture, as it is of those individuals who take it upon themselves to kidnap and cruelly traffic in human beings much as slave traders and pirates did in an earlier era. It is also as true of the type of terrorism that holds all of humanity captive to the very real danger posed by nuclear arsenals, as it is of those who commit random acts of violence using more conventional instruments of death. Terrorism is wrong. It is wrong morally. It is wrong tactically. It is wrong politically. There are not exceptions and no qualifying conditions. One cannot use criminal tactics without becoming a criminal.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

The values of an organization or a movement are, like the values of an individual, determined by how that organization or movement lives and how it values life - all life. That is true whether the life being valued is that of one who is black, white, brown or yellow; whether it is the life of one who is Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, atheist or agnostic; whether it is the life of one who is gifted or disabled; or whether it is the life of one who is wealthy or one who lives in poverty.

We now turn to a subject we wish we did not have to turn to. In the forty-second year of the existence of the United Nations, 27 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, this body should not still have before it the question of Namibia or the question of New Caledonia.

Despite the obvious obstacles to its independence, there is no longer any question as to whether Namibia's people have the right to their own identity and their own country. Even if South Africa were tomorrow somehow to transfer large numbers of whites into Namibia - many of them military personnel and civil servants - and enough people from neighbouring countries to make the Namibians a minority in their own country, no one would be deceived and question Namibia's right to become an independent nation. South Africa, by its intransigence, has managed to delay the inevitable, but it cannot at this stage rewrite history.

In New Caledonia, the administering Power is attempting to defraud the colonized people and deceive the international community through a policy of demographic engineering. Through its deliberate actions in encouraging migration to New Caledonia, it has now succeeded in turning that Territory's people into a minority - although still the largest community numerically - in their own land.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

The question before us now is, should such actions by a colonial Power be allowed to frustrate the legitimate aspirations of a colonized people and a decision of the United Nations? Common sense and morality, as well as the Charter and many pronouncements of the United Nations, clearly indicate that the answer is no.

The Government of Vanuatu wishes to make it clear once again that it has no quarrel with the Government or people of France. It wishes France, and the people of that great nation, nothing but continued prosperity and success. These wishes are sincere and earnest. They are not, however, given at the expense of the people of New Caledonia or those of any other territory whose lands and resources may be coveted by a segment of the French population.

Vanuatu is New Caledonia's closest neighbour. It is also a country that has a shared colonial history with that of New Caledonia and an affinity for its people that can perhaps only be understood by other peoples who also have so much in common.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Last year we, and other countries of the South Pacific were gratified by the support we received on the question of New Caledonia at the Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Harare, Zimbabwe. We are further pleased that today, New Caledonia's colonized people continue to enjoy the support of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in their campaign to regain that which they never surrendered.

We were also gratified by the decision taken by the General Assembly last December to place New Caledonia on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Delegations may recall the atmosphere in the General Assembly in the days leading up to that decision and on the particular day the vote was taken. Delegations may also recall the things that were said and the way in which they were said.

Some were told that New Caledonia was a part of France and that this matter had no business being discussed at the United Nations. Some were told that what became resolution 41/41 A was unnecessary because the Committee of 24 was going to consider the question anyway. Some were told that the countries of the South Pacific harboured irrational ill feelings towards France and did not know what they were doing. That last statement was the most incredulous of the many incredulous things that were said.

Looking back one must wonder, if France was so convinced that New Caledonia was a part of France, why it conducted what it termed a referendum on the Territory's future only a few weeks ago. We will not even pose the question how and when New Caledonia became a "part" of France. We will save that question for another day.

One must also wonder why if resolution 41/41 A was so unnecessary, France still has not transmitted the information required of it under Article 73e of the

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Charter. On the basis of the arguments it put forward last year, one might have surmised that France intended to co-operate with the Committee of 24. Instead, the only information that has been forthcoming is the rather inaccurate statement made by the Foreign Minister of France in his address to the Assembly on 23 September 1987. With all due respect to the Foreign Minister, we do not consider a plebiscite organized without due regard for the accepted principles and practices of the United Nations to be a valid act of self-determination. This is particularly true when the colonized people boycott the entire process.

The result was predictable, and was predicted. Those who are French chose to remain French. We would have expected nothing else. For the most part, those who are not French did not vote.

Is France now proposing that similar votes be organized in other areas under occupation? Could such a plebiscite turn the Golan Heights, for example, into part of Israel? By extension of this logic, might we permit South Africa to further its claim to an important part of Namibia through a little demographic engineering? In a somewhat similar vein, are we now prepared to accept France's claim to Mayotte? In the future, will we accept any large country's claim to a smaller, less populous land, simply because its people are overwhelmed numerically and, most important, militarily?

This is the way the world operated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in the early part of this century before there was a United Nations. Is this what we wish to return to? What France is now telling the world flies in the face of logic and United Nations precedent. It is also a radical departure from the currently accepted norm of international behaviour, and a very dangerous departure from the accepted practice of decolonization.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Furthermore, we do not agree with the Foreign Minister's statement that conditions in New Caledonia during the plebiscite, "... were calm and beyond dispute" (A/42/PV.8, p 36). Through the eyes of television cameras, the world saw how "calm" things were in New Caledonia in the weeks leading up to the vote. We are as pleased as anyone that there was not more violence. However, we attribute this to the patience of the Kanak people and the intimidating presence of French military forces, which controlled the colonized population very effectively. The French military did its job very well.

Now we, the international community, have our own mission to perform. We must continue to follow the principles and practices we established. We must continue to be faithful to our Charter and to our own histories.

The Committee of 24 has recommended a draft resolution which does exactly that. It is balanced and moderate in tone. We hope members will lend their support to this draft and thereby remain faithful to the United Nations' own stated values. We merely ask that the United Nations be allowed to play its customary role. What could be more reasonable?

France is an important member of this body. It occupies a permanent seat on the Security Council and in other ways exercises considerable influence within and without the Organization. It should, therefore, be among the first to respect the letter and the spirit of the decisions of the world body. Being fair to those who have been colonized in New Caledonia can only enhance, rather than diminish, the prestige and glory of France.

We will continue to make this appeal until it is heard by France with its heart, as well as with its ears. If it is ignored, we will continue until it is heeded. Nothing will dissuade Vanuatu from this cause, other than the Kanak people themselves saying that this is no longer their cause.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Vanuatu has no ulterior motive in pressing this case. We have nothing to hide, and nothing to gain, save security in the knowledge that the United Nations is still the Organization that the words of its Charter recite.

Mr. FARAH (Djibouti) (interpretation from French): Sir, it gives me great pleasure to convey to you our heartfelt congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-second session. Your election to that high office is the best testimony to your qualities as an experienced diplomat. I am convinced that your vast knowledge and experience will ensure the success of our deliberations. My delegation will spare no effort in making its modest contribution to the performance of your task.

I am also happy to convey the appreciation and gratitude of my delegation to your predecessor Mr. Choudhury, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, who demonstrated ability and devotion in the performance of his duties as president of the General Assembly at its last session.

It also gives me pleasure to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the tireless efforts he has made in promoting co-operation and understanding among nations.

The economic situation of Africa has become very alarming. It has been marked, inter alia, by a reduction in the gross domestic product, a drop in export earnings, a drop in income, and a high rate of population growth. At a time when the African countries most need it for implementing their recovery programme, we are witnessing a net drain of capital from the developing countries to the developed countries.



(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

Many African countries, especially those of sub-Saharan Africa, are facing debts that considerably hamper their development. Inadequate social services in such areas as health, sanitation, education and housing have become sources of constant concern in these countries. The tragic consequences of drought have been exacerbated also by the large number of refugees and displaced persons.

All these factors jeopardize economic, social and political stability and undermine the economic reforms that Africa has undertaken since the adoption in 1985 of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 and the adoption by the General Assembly in 1986 of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. The outlook for increased investment in development projects has become far worse.

African countries have undertaken a long-term programme of economic and social development to deal with that economic situation. We are convinced that the international community will support the programmes for the recovery and economic development of Africa, since African economies must achieve a higher growth-rate so that Africa can reverse the current trend and overcome its underdevelopment.

It goes without saying that African countries must promote inter-regional co-operation in all the spheres deemed necessary for improving their economic and social situation in conformity with the Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act.

In this connection, it should be noted that the countries of east Africa - Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Djibouti - have combined their efforts to confront the adverse effects of drought and other related natural disasters, and have established the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development. Those countries have adopted a plan of action for financing specific sectoral programmes and well-defined projects necessary to strengthen their national and regional

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

capability to combat the effects of drought and promote economic and social development. We believe that these programmes can be successful only with the total support of the international community.

I wish to inform the General Assembly that the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development held its first conference of donors in Djibouti in March 1987. At that conference the donor countries, United Nations specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations recognized the serious work done by the Authority in submitting to them coherent programmes and projects in keeping with Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990. The international community showed interest in these projects, which related to food security, water resources, combating desertification, agronomic research and infrastructures.

I take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all Member States, agencies and organizations that have contributed and given their assistance at this difficult time, when the countries members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development are trying to mobilize the necessary financial, material and technical resources.

The nations of the Horn of Africa have always worked to promote regional co-operation. We believe that the establishment of regional intergovernmental organizations will help to create conditions conducive to tolerance and good-neighbourliness, thus making possible the development of real co-operation in commercial and cultural exchanges. Such co-operation can help to establish a climate of mutual trust that will enhance the well-being of the peoples of the region.

The Republic of Djibouti is situated in one of the most arid regions of the world. The scarcity of rainfall and other adverse climatic conditions continue to

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

be the main obstacles to development and self-sufficiency in food. Poor agriculture and livestock production have made Djibouti a net importer, at extremely high prices, of nearly all the food needed for local consumption.

Industry is practically non-existent, owing mainly to the high cost of the electricity available. The Government of Djibouti has given high priority to the development of new and renewable sources of energy that could form the basis for viable industrial development, and in particular to exploration for and exploitation of the geothermal energy that we believe exists in sufficient quantity to meet a substantial part of the country's energy needs in the near future. But exploitation of geothermal energy requires technology, capital investment and qualified professionals, which at present we lack.

Nevertheless, the development and expansion of the service sector, which is now the basis of our national economy, must be maintained. However, the maintenance of this sector at a viable level requires structural adjustment, the training of a work-force and major financial resources.

In addition to these difficulties, the Republic of Djibouti must deal with the precarious economic and financial situation resulting from several adverse factors caused by the foreign debt, inflation and unemployment. The repercussions of the last drought and the presence of a large number of refugees are a heavy burden on the State budget.

In the light of these social and economic difficulties, my Government hopes that Member States and international agencies and organizations will provide Djibouti with the assistance needed to support its efforts and enable it successfully to carry out its development programme.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

The situation in the Middle East continues to be the most worrying threat to international peace and security. Israel, which is pursuing an expansionist policy, has constantly defied international public opinion and spurned the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the provisions of the Charter and the principles of international law, which state that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible. According to Israel, the solution of the Middle East problem is not a just and lasting peace, but rather expansion and the acquisition of territory to the detriment of its neighbours, and the denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

Ever since its creation Israel has shown by its actions that it will not give up the expansionist goals set by the Zionists. Since the creation of the State of Israel by the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II), of 29 November 1947, the Zionist régime has waged a campaign of terror, involving massacres of the civilian population, including women and children, and resulting in a massive exodus of Palestinians. Thus, terrorism has been introduced in our time into the Middle East as a means of achieving political goals. Since 1948 Israeli acts of aggression have caused several armed conflicts that have endangered international peace and security.

The Palestinian question is at the core of the Middle East conflict. There can be no solution without taking account of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. That crucial fact was stressed in the Arab peace plan adopted at the Fez summit conference. The international community has stated on many occasions that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the total, unconditional withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, are the essential elements of a just and lasting

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

peace in the Middle East. The international conference on peace in the Middle East, which should be convened in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, under United Nations auspices and with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, would be the most appropriate forum for establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

We commend the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts to speed up the preparations for the conference and hope he will overcome all the obstacles in the way of his initiatives.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

Israeli intervention in Lebanon, the unjustified massacre of civilians and the destruction of property continue to worsen Lebanon's economic and social structure which has already been seriously affected by internal conflict. Under the pretext of the so-called buffer zone, Israel continues to occupy southern Lebanon to impede the process of national unity and the country's reconstruction. We call upon the United Nations to ensure implementation of Security Council resolution 509 (1982) and to assist Lebanon to regain sovereignty over its entire territory in order to undertake the difficult task of reconstruction and recovery.

Notwithstanding resolutions of the United Nations, the OAU and the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as world public opinion, the South African régime continues to intensify its oppressive practices through acts of violence, intimidation and massacres perpetrated against the black majority. However, South Africa's campaign of terror, police brutality and violence will only strengthen further the resolve of those fighting for their freedom and national independence.

We express profound concern at the lack of progress in negotiations to find a solution to the problem of the political, economic and social emancipation of the African black majority at a time when atrocities perpetrated against the South African people by the apartheid régime still continue.

We believe that in the circumstances the only way to force the apartheid régime to negotiate is through concerted specific international pressure and the immediate imposition of comprehensive sanctions. There will be no peace and tranquillity in that region so long as the apartheid system has not been totally dismantled and destroyed, and all international efforts likely to disable that régime's repressive machinery must be supported by all peace-loving countries. International action must also support the efforts of the South African majority to end racism and racial discrimination and eliminate the repressive policy of the Pretoria régime.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

The illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa and the latter's refusal to recognize the rights of the Namibian people to self-determination and independence, despite United Nations resolutions, are a serious source of concern. As long as the Pretoria régime continues to occupy Namibia, as long as military and police repression are used to subjugate the Namibian people, and as long as the apartheid system plunders the enormous natural and mineral resources of the Territory in the interest of the minority and foreign allies, peace in that region will be jeopardized.

The acts of violence committed by the forces of apartheid have gone beyond the borders of Namibia and South Africa. Indeed, a few moments ago the Head of State of Zambia and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) referred to the latest events that have occurred in that region. The Pretoria régime has many times perpetrated acts of aggression against the independent front-line States to destabilize and disorganize them. In view of that situation, the front-line States need proper political, material and financial support to enable them to defend themselves against South Africa's repeated attacks.

Any negotiations seeking to find a political solution to the problem of Namibia should lead to a complete cease-fire followed by the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the South African occupation forces from that Territory, so that the Namibian people can exercise their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence, in keeping with the United Nations plan approved in Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which is the genuine basis for finding solutions leading to peaceful independence for Namibia.

The international community must give the Namibian people every necessary assistance to deal with South African aggression to enable it to win its legitimate struggle for freedom and independence, under the wise guidance of the South West Africa People's Organization.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

For seven years and a few days now a destructive conflict has been going on between Iran and Iraq, two Muslim neighbouring countries - a conflict which, according to some estimates, has resulted in a million dead and wounded and incalculable material damage. The conflict is now taking on dangerous dimensions, including the risk of its becoming internationalized. Aware of those developments, the international community adopted practical measures contained in Security Council resolution 598 (1987) of 20 July 1987 in an attempt to end the conflict.

Unfortunately, the carnage and destruction continue to be intensified either through bombing civilian centres or endangering international shipping. We urge the international community to increase its efforts and take the necessary steps to end that conflict. All initiatives undertaken bilaterally and multilaterally must be pursued to bring about genuine peace between the two countries. The recent efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General must be supported so that the two countries can agree to negotiate on the basis of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) of 20 July 1987. We greatly appreciate Iraq's positive response to find a negotiated solution to the conflict.

The mediation process undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State of the OAU to find a solution to the Chadian problem deserves support. We must support all efforts likely to lead to peace and security in that region. The international community must give every assistance to the people and the Government of Chad in their reconstruction effort.

For almost eight years now the Afghan people has been suffering from occupation by foreign armed forces and several millions of them have been forced into exile to escape massacre. That situation requires an urgent political solution on the basis of the principles of the Charter and the obligation of States to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against



(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any State. The international community's repeated appeals for the withdrawal of foreign troops have still not been heeded. The international community must redouble its efforts to relieve the suffering of the Afghan people by guaranteeing the withdrawal of foreign forces to enable that people freely to choose its political, economic and social systems, without any foreign interference.

South-East Asia is another region of tension since the foreign armed intervention against and occupation of Democratic Kampuchea. We hope that peace will be restored to that region by finding a just political solution to the Kampuchean problem and guaranteeing the withdrawal of all foreign forces, thus enabling that country to enjoy its sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status.

In the Korean Peninsula, since the start of the conflict in the early 1950s, the situation has been a permanent source of tension. The only way to lessen tension is to create the necessary conditions to enable the peoples of South and North Korea to establish a dialogue making possible the establishment of a climate of mutual trust so as to resolve differences without any foreign interference.

We are living in a world where interdependence has increasingly become an absolute necessity. We note with satisfaction the efforts undertaken by the United Nations to encourage the developed and the developing nations to co-operate to establish a new just equitable international order.

(Mr. Farah, Djibouti)

The United Nations promotes understanding and co-operation in the broadest meaning of those words. The United Nations must redouble its efforts to find solutions to eliminate abject poverty, hunger, malnutrition and disease.

In conclusion we firmly believe in the United Nations for the safeguard of international peace and security. We reiterate our support for the noble ideals embodied by the United Nations, for it offers the best forum for finding solutions likely to lead to understanding, tolerance and co-operation in international relations.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.