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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 7 October 1992, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mrs. ESCALER
(Vice-President)

(Philippines)

General debate [9] (continued)Statements made by

Mr. Moumin (Comoros)
Mr. Mba Ekua Miko (Equatorial Guinea)
Mr. Munlo (Malawi)
Mr. Musa (Belize)
Mr. Young (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
Mr. Moses (Federated States of Micronesia)

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In the absence of the President, Mrs. Escaler (Philippines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros) (interpretation from French): I have the particularly agreeable duty, on behalf of the people and Government of the Federal Islamic Republic of Comoros, of conveying to Mr. Ganev warm and sincere congratulations on his well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forth-seventh session. We have every confidence in his ability, as a distinguished diplomat, to ensure complete success for our work.

I should like to take this opportunity also to express to Mr. Samir Shihabi of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia our total satisfaction with, and our profound admiration of, the effective way in which he conducted the work of the General Assembly at its last session.

May I also take this agreeable opportunity to wish the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, every success in the discharge of the noble and lofty mission that we have entrusted to him. I assure my dear brother and friend that in his efforts to ensure that the United Nations plays the part it is intended to play he will have the unflagging support of my country, the Federal Islamic Republic of Comoros. His election is a matter of pride for Africa and for the Arab world. Likewise, it reflects the standing and the dynamic role of his great country, Egypt, on the international scene. His determination to breathe new life into our Organization, to strengthen its role and its effectiveness, gives us grounds for great hope for its future.

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The Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" a document that was drawn up after the summit meeting of the Security Council last January contains concrete proposals that demand the attention of Member States. In this context, I should like to voice our complete satisfaction with the very pertinent ideas that the Secretary-General was able to set forth in such a short period. In our view, his proposals deserve the international community's very careful scrutiny to ensure that the greatest possible benefit is derived from them.

The delegation of Comoros joins those Members that have already extended a warm welcome to the States that have recently been admitted to membership of the Organization.

The forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is being held at a time when the world is beginning a new chapter in its history. The profound and far-reaching transformations that our planet has undergone during the past four years are very encouraging. General ideological confrontation is rapidly disappearing, and dictatorial and authoritarian Governments are falling one after another. We are witnessing a renewal of freedom, equality and respect for the dignity of man.

The cold war has ended, and the world has heaved a sigh of relief. Our Organization has an unprecedented opportunity to discharge the mandate entrusted to it by the Charter. Unfortunately, just as we were rejoicing at the end of the cold war, with its inherent threat of nuclear destruction - at a time when we were entitled to hope for a more peaceful world, in which

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priority would be given to the eradication of starvation and sickness other scourges arose, and they have made the current trends in international affairs more fragile.

A plethora of conflicts, of which no one could previously have conceived, have appeared on the scene; each of them has its special features and must be settled in a very precise manner.

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In the political area, old conflicts such as those of the Middle East, of Palestine and of apartheid are still going on and to these have been added new crises such as those of Somalia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and if these are not resolved in time, they may well prove to be a threat to international peace and security.

As regards the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, my country believes that this is by no means a civil war but rather an act of aggression perpetrated against a young State by the forces of Serbia and Montenegro. We therefore join the international community in condemning unreservedly this ignoble act, which constitutes a violation of the fundamental rights of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a violation of the principles underlying our Charter.

For that reason we support all the United Nations resolutions and the decisions of the recent London Conference on this matter. We also subscribe to the decision of the General Assembly to deny the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia automatic succession to the seat of the former Yugoslavia, and we support the initiative to have the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina declared a no-fly zone.

It is our hope that further steps will be taken to restore peace and stability to that part of the Balkans. We urge the Security Council, which is the main body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, to reconsider this matter in full detail with a view to putting an end to this aggression, as spelt out in Article 42 of the United Nations Charter.

However, we are aware of the diffidence of the Security Council to use the means spelt out in Article 42 of the Charter to put a stop to this

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aggression. We therefore encourage the Council to lift the arms embargo imposed on Bosnia and Herzegovina so that the people, with the help of friendly countries, can exercise their legitimate right to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter.

We are equally concerned at the armed conflict among the various Somali factions, which has led to flight and to famine. The persistence of this armed conflict, in addition to the natural disasters that have struck the country, has only increased the suffering of the Somali people, with extremely unfortunate consequences, particularly the loss of thousands of human lives.

The proposal made at Jakarta by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries last September, namely that a conference for national reconciliation be convened to forge the unity of Somalia, seems to us to be the only way to achieve a final resolution of this regrettable conflict. My Government makes an earnest appeal to the entire international community to channel more assistance to this people, which is facing such tremendous difficulties.

In southern Africa there have been encouraging signs. Thus, the Government of the Comoros welcomes the free and democratic elections that have taken place in Angola. It is our hope that that country will finally achieve lasting peace after so many years of civil war.

Furthermore, it is our hope that after the peace negotiations in Rome and the recent agreement concluded in Botswana between RENAMO and the Maputo government, common ground can promptly be found so that our friends and neighbours from Mozambique may also be able to regain their peace and stability.

In South Africa the changes that have occurred since the release of Nelson Mandela had given us every reason to believe that the country was

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irrevocably committed to a democratization of its political, social and economic life. Unfortunately, the events of Boipatong and the recent Ciskei massacres have dashed our hopes that there would shortly come into being a truly united, democratic and non-racial society in South Africa.

On the subject of this same country, I should like to voice the great hope that we place in the recent Mandela-De Klerk meeting. Our most earnest hope is that the negotiations for the establishment of a representative government can be resumed as soon as possible and that democracy and law will finally win the day.

The developments in Western Sahara give us reason to believe that a solution to this problem can be found in the near future. We welcome the climate that prevails at present and which proves the readiness of the parties to the conflict to contribute to finding a solution by peaceful means. We also commend the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in this matter and encourage him in his efforts to bring about a rapid solution to the problem.

One of the greatest threats to international peace and security has been the Middle East crisis, at the heart of which is the problem of Palestine. This problem is indeed a major challenge and one which our Organization must meet in order to strengthen its credibility and enhance its standing on the international scene.

In the light of the principles set forth in the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it is indeed intolerable that the Palestinian people, in their legitimate struggle to claim their inalienable right to a homeland, should continue to be subjected to brutalities inflicted by the Israeli authorities.

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With the hope that there will be a settlement of the Palestinian crisis, the international community places great hope in the international Conference for peace in that region. That is, quite clearly, the only means that can produce a viable solution to the problem by peaceful means.

Thus the new spirit characterizing international relations and the readiness that has been evinced at present by the parties concerned permit us to hope that the peace process begun last October in Madrid will continue and will lead to a happy outcome of this situation. The Government of the Comoros, whose support for the struggle of the Palestinian people has been unflagging, continues to believe that the solution of the Palestinian problem necessarily implies taking into account the just claim of that people, that is, their right to have a homeland.

The Gulf region will not be able to heal the wounds opened up by the aggression against, and occupation of, Kuwait by Iraq as long as Iraq fails to relinquish its unjustified claims against the State of Kuwait and as long as Kuwaiti prisoners in Iraq are not returned to their country in safety and honour. For the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros the necessary conditions for the restoration of peace in this region are entirely the responsibility of Iraq.

Turning to a different area, we note with pleasure the improvement in the situation prevailing on the Korean peninsula as a result of the joint efforts being made by the north and south of that country to find a swift solution to the problem. The Korean people have long suffered from the division of their country and it is high time for the international community to render its support with a view to bringing about its reunification.

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In this connection, my Government welcomes the coming into force of the Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between the two parties as well as the Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

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Similarly, the situation in Cambodia today is looking more promising as regards a final solution to the problem. The United Nations and the entire international community are aware that restoring peace in this country necessarily implies a comprehensive political solution resulting from genuine negotiations and has always emphasized this way of proceeding. We welcome the efforts which have been made by our Organization and by the world community which resulted in the agreements signed between the Cambodian parties concerned. The Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros finally hopes that following free and democratic elections Cambodia will regain its peace and stability.

In view of the rate at which authoritarian regimes are disappearing, I think we have every reason to believe that shortly there will no longer be any question of dictatorship in the world; freedom, dialogue and multiparty systems will have finally won the day, where force and violence triumphed in the past.

How then can we not be optimistic in view of the fact that, similarly, the thousands of voices raised in favour of recognizing the most essential human rights will finally be heeded as a result of the World Conference on Human Rights which is scheduled for 1993?

Turning to the area of economic and social development, it is regrettable to note that the very positive changes which are occurring internationally in the political field have not been accompanied by any economic progress. Thus, the problems of external indebtedness, in addition to the deterioration of the terms of trade and the decrease in development aid, continue to widen the gap that exists between the developed and the developing countries. The case of

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Africa, which comprises more than 20 of the least-developed countries, deserves careful attention.

The adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development has aroused great hope in us. We therefore appeal to the international community to live up to the commitments it made when this Programme was adopted and to lend its assistance to African development efforts. Similarly, since we are desirous of a flourishing economy for our countries, Comoros supports the decision of the Government of Japan to convene an international conference on the development of Africa in 1993.

Further, the current trend in world economics is directed more and more towards the creation of more open and more sound economic and trade blocs. It is for that reason that the process of regional integration has now been recognized as being an indispensable factor in promoting economic development, particularly the development of the developing countries.

Thus, the Comoros have become a member of the Indian Ocean Commission and have pledged to ratify the Treaty creating the African Economic Community as soon as the country has a national assembly.

In order to revamp its own economy and to initiate the process of harmonious development, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros has just signed, with the international financial institutions of Bretton Woods, a programme of structural adjustment. But as the Assembly is aware, the implementation of the measures set forth in such a programme necessarily and always entail consequences which are very difficult for the most disadvantaged strata of the population to bear.

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What can we say at this stage about the Rio de Janeiro summit? Despite the unhappy realities of the depletion of the ozone layer and the continued degradation of the ecological environment, let us recognize one thing at least: the meeting in Rio de Janeiro had the merit of taking account of our concerns and projections with respect to environmental problems. Now that the relationship between the environment and development is unquestionable, we are resolved no longer to divorce one from the other. In order to ensure the viability of the strategy and programmes adopted by our various development meetings, it is essential to pay particular attention to the environment. Thus, the cooperation of the countries of the North in financing Agenda 21 is absolutely necessary.

Democratic transition is a phenomenon which differs according to the specific features of each country. The Comoros itself is of course no exception to this rule. This is regarded as a period of transition which is needed to harmonize the democratic process in all its aspects.

Consequently, the Comorian Government, despite a very disturbing financial and economic situation which has produced considerable social tension, has during this transitional stage adopted a posture favourable to dialogue, convinced that confrontation should in all circumstances give way to dialogue. Because of this attitude we are completely in control of the situation. Thus, stability has at no time been jeopardized, as is proved by the fact that we foiled the attempted coup d'état of 26 September last.

This attempt failed because the Comorian people, aware of its Government's efforts to set up the necessary democratic institutions and to create the circumstances which would promote its social development, did not respond to an appeal, the purpose of which was to compromise the chances of

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creating a real State of law. In order to realize these noble ambitions, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros is once more turning to the international community, to the United Nations, and to its great family in particular, to remind them that now, more than ever, it has need of their unflagging support to save this embryonic democracy and to place it on a solid basis.

I cannot conclude my remarks before the Assembly without referring to the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte, which has appeared on successive agendas of sessions of the General Assembly since we acceded to international sovereignty. This unfortunate problem has been going on for 17 years now and to our great regret pits us against France, a country with which we have very close ties of friendship and cooperation. We will not go into the facts which underlie this problem here since the question is to be the subject of a special debate in a few days. I should simply like to recall that the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros has always favoured dialogue and has always abided by the rule of law in its attempts to find a peaceful solution to the question.

Nevertheless, the Comorian Government notes with some bitterness that no decision has as yet been taken on the French side which would show evidence on the part of the French authorities of a desire to find a solution to the problem.

Since his accession to the High Court, President Said Mohamed Djohar, with the support of his government, has reaffirmed his desire and resolve to persevere in seeking a solution to the problem of Mayotte, while respecting the law.

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As they are convinced of the correctness of their claims, the people and the Government of Comoros continue to believe that Mayotte is part of Comorian territory and nothing can undermine their will to work for the reintegration of this land into the Comoros. Hence the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros hopes that it will always be able to rely on the valuable support of the international community to find a prompt solution to this dispute.

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This assistance is essential if the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros is to regain its territorial integrity and its unity, which are based on ethnogeographical, linguistic, religious, cultural and economic givens, even though ours is an island country.

Over and above the policy of economic and financial recovery that has been implemented in the Comoros, my country has resolutely embarked on a process of democratization that has culminated in the adoption of a new Constitution on 7 June this year. In a month's time, the Comorian people is to elect the representatives to the national assembly and to the regional councils and the governors of the islands. Need I recall that the twofold effort of Said Mohamed Djohar and his Government to ensure, firstly, economic and financial recovery and, secondly, to establish democracy, is a major undertaking that requires the necessary conditions to be met for it to succeed. I therefore appeal to the international community to lend its most valuable support to our young democracy.

When the San Francisco Charter was adopted, the principal goal of the prime movers of our Organization was to seek ways and means to build, for all nations, a future of peace, progress and justice. Today, this vision of the founding fathers, given the new international relations scene, has the ideal framework for it to be made reality.

We therefore must give the United Nations our support, and give it the necessary means, to enable it properly to carry out the mission that has been assigned to it,

In conclusion, I reiterate that the Comoros is confident that our Organization can resolve all the problems, of whatever kind, that afflict our world. What is needed here is that States should have the will to contribute to achieving this noble goal.

Mr. MBA EKUA MIKO (Equatorial Guinea) (interpretation from Spanish): We are pleased to express our warmest and most sincere congratulations to Mr. Ganev on his well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this session and on the competent and dynamic manner in which he has been conducting the Assembly's proceedings. We are convinced that achievements and successes will be the common denominator of his term of office.

To his predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, we express our profound appreciation for the exemplary way in which he conducted the proceedings of the previous session.

We wish to convey to you, Mr. Secretary-General, the fraternal greetings of the people and the Government of Equatorial Guinea, and also the special greetings addressed to you by the President of the Republic, His Excellency Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who congratulates you both on your election as Secretary-General of our world Organization and on the efforts you are making, in all parts of the world and day after day, with the sole aim of achieving justice for a better world. Given the complexity of this task, we extend our best wishes to you for your own personal well-being and that of your family.

Our greetings and warm welcomes go to the new States that have joined the United Nations family. As in a traditional family, the birth of a new member is a symbol of joy and hope: joy, because of the new-found vitality of our Organization; and hope, because of the new experiences, opinions and alternatives that there will be to enable us to resolve the problems and situations confronting the international community.

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Our Government, in the conviction that there can be no better unity than that which flows from and is based on diversity, has formally recognized all those States that are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and has initiated and established diplomatic relations with each of them; our Government hopes to be able to proceed in the same manner with each of the new Members of the United Nations family.

On the political scene, the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is taking place at a historic time characterized by new crises, new obscurantism and new methods of exerting pressure and oppression that stand in real contrast to the hope and the optimism that filled the international community with the end of the cold war.

The reason for this is very clear and appropriately reflected in the report of the Secretary-General, in which he so rightly states that:

"The cold war confronted the international community with a singular threat to security; now, a widely varying array of resentments, ambitions, rivalries and hatreds masked for decades have come to the fore to threaten international harmony and shared purpose." (A/47/1, para. 111)

Figure 6 of that report, on peace-keeping forces and observer missions, testifies most tellingly to this sad reality: before 1988, the United Nations had conducted 13 missions, while between then and now there have been 14 of them in only four of the Organization's 47 years of existence.

True, there are glimpses of optimistic, hopeful signs on the horizon; however, it is also true that all generations have the right to live in peace, justice and security and to enjoy life so as to leave a better legacy to future generations.

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We note that high-level international conferences are being held these days in order to find solutions to the problems facing peoples and nations: New York saw the World Summit for Children in September 1990; Geneva hosted the summit on the advancement of the rights of rural women this year; Rio de Janeiro hosted the Earth Summit in June 1992; the international community's agenda includes the holding of the second World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, the conference on population and development in 1994 and on the advancement of women and on social development in 1995.

Equatorial Guinea welcomes these and other similar events, and once again reaffirms that, for these events to succeed and their results to be implemented in practice, the principle of the self-determination of peoples and the promotion of responsible relations between States are necessary conditions if justice, peace and international security are to prevail.

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In South Africa, apartheid and racial discrimination continue to claim innocent victims. In Somalia, selfish political interests and the desire for power have combined with natural disasters to accelerate the disappearance of an entire nation. The civil war in Liberia, which continues to claim victims and cause the permanent exodus of its citizens, has spilled over its borders, destabilizing the countries of the subregion and blocking the way towards a peaceful solution to the conflict: the holding of free elections in an atmosphere of peace and security.

In the former Yugoslavia, war is resorted to in order to slow down the effects of the end of the cold war, setting an extremely dangerous precedent, bearing in mind that the geopolitical and demographic spectrum of the former Yugoslavia is not unique in the community of nations. Our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, pointed out that sad reality when he rightly wrote:

"This is, then, a conflict with an international dimension. The future shape and security of one or more Member States indeed their very existence has come under threat." (A/47/L para. 141)

On the Korean Peninsula, as in Cyprus, intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States, including foreign occupation and domination, continue to play the same role as they did in the days of the cold war. The legitimate desire of the Korean people, both North and South, to see their country reunited, and the legitimate aspiration of Cypriots to attain their national identity, free from ethnic disputes and narrow-minded nationalism, are receding farther and farther from the process of peaceful solution and are disappearing in the sea of hegemonic interests. We believe that the best contribution that the international community, the United Nations and peoples

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who love peace and justice can make to the peaceful and lasting solution of these and other conflicts is, above and beyond all interests, to ensure respect for the self-determination of the peoples affected.

In Equatorial Guinea we welcome and applaud the efforts to restore peace and justice to all the affected areas and the multifaceted humanitarian assistance provided by the international community in the collective framework of the United Nations system in general and in particular the European Economic Community, the Organization of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Economic Community of West African States, the United States of America, Japan and other States and governmental and non-governmental charitable bodies.

The increasingly acute economic and financial crisis afflicting all countries, and the developing ones in particular, with special emphasis on the least developed countries, still rests on the well-known pillars built by the current economic order, which has been so often denounced in almost all international forums. With the passing of time, the external debt becomes ever more unpayable, in spite of the constant efforts and sacrifices the debtors make to increase the output of raw materials and export commodities while accepting the discipline imposed by structural adjustment programmes. In the international markets, to which access is difficult because of the protectionist policies of the fortunate countries of the North, the prices of raw materials remain low, while the prices of manufactured goods remain high, much to the despair of the less fortunate countries of the South.

We are sure that everything needed to solve these and other problems in the context of international cooperation for development is within our grasp:

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a reduction in military budgets and progress in disarmament and the curbing of the arms race, which, together with democracy, free markets and respect for fundamental freedoms, would carry us swiftly to the goal that we all share: well-being.

We take the opportunity given us by this world forum to express in this context our profound and sincere gratitude to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and other international financial organizations and individual countries for their ongoing contribution to the task of rehabilitating and rebuilding the economic and financial structure of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. From this rostrum we invite them all to continue along that path and to support Equatorial Guinea on the occasion of the Third Round Table, to be held soon in Geneva, Switzerland.

Equatorial Guinea cannot presume to be immune to and free of the ills, often a legacy of the past, that afflict national communities and the world community in the vital social domain and in the equally vital area of human rights.

The economic and financial restrictions caused by the unbalanced international economic order prevent our having enough schools and training centres and make us unable to guarantee the provision of health services meeting the needs of all our inhabitants. Nevertheless, the effort of our Government, within the limitations of its modest means, combined with the assistance received from friendly countries and international organizations, is becoming increasingly evident in improvements in those sectors.

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We in Equatorial Guinea believe that as long as a people lacks a basic infrastructure to resolve problems of education, medical and pharmaceutical care, a clean environment, drinking water, housing and so on there should be serious, profound reflection on the concept of human rights.

In the face of all the factors affecting the human being, including the challenges of his natural enemies, our Government has started out on the road to the fullest enjoyment of fundamental freedoms and the guarantee of respect for human rights. In this context, we express our deepest appreciation to the following for their support of the work being carried out by our national constitutional bodies and special commissions, such as the National Commission on Human Rights, the National Commission of Support for the Children of Equatorial Guinea and the National Commission for the Protection of the Environment, to name but a few: the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and all those others that directly or indirectly provide effective and disinterested assistance to our country.

On mentioning, however briefly, the question of human rights, I cannot fail to refer to the erroneous image of our country held by the Commission on Human Rights and certain journalistic circles. We believe and maintain that the Commission is an organ at the service of the United Nations and therefore of the Member States. Its components, including experts and rapporteurs, cannot become prosecutors acting against sovereign States Members of the

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United Nations, nor can they assume the role that a country's legal system and international law grant to State authorities.

We have seen, to our regret, that in exchange for the firm political will and readiness of our Government to promote respect for human rights in Equatorial Guinea by providing, inter alia, all sorts of logistical assistance local transportation, public and private contacts, access to public and private locations and places that were off limits for security reasons, and so on - the report of the Rapporteur assigned to Equatorial Guinea only denigrates the image of our country and its Government, incites violence and undermines the peace and order that prevail in our country.

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Equatorial Guinea)

While flatly rejecting the report presented to the Commission on Human Rights at its session in Geneva in March 1992 for its lack of realism and objectivity, the Government of Equatorial Guinea pledges to the international community that it will, within its means, continue its programme in defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms, launched on 3 August 1979, in a climate of peace, justice, harmony and understanding, and that it will not allow itself to be swayed by attempts at intimidation and/or provocation.

Equatorial Guinea wishes to express its satisfaction at the bilateral and multilateral efforts made by the international community to promote global, regional and subregional disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons. In this regard, we welcome the decision taken by the General Assembly, at the initiative of the Economic Community of Central African States, to support the formulation of confidence-building, disarmament and development measures, as well as the establishment of a Standing Consultative Committee to deal with questions of security in Central Africa. We hope that its programme and timetable of activities, drawn up during the organizational meeting held in Yaoundé in July 1992, will be given the complete support of the Assembly at this session.

We could not conclude this statement without availing ourselves of the opportunity to inform the Assembly of the current state of the democratization process being carried out in our country.

We overwhelmingly approved our new Fundamental Law at the end of last year. It is based, inter alia,

"on the principles of social justice, reaffirmed solemnly in instruments on the rights and freedoms of the human being, as defined and enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

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At the same time, it recognizes political pluralism in Equatorial Guinea. A set of laws regulating these rights and freedoms was promulgated early this year, and a transition Government was established with the sole and exclusive task of preparing the people and adapting the Republic's institutions to current realities, characterized by the multiparty democracy that has been in effect over the 12-month period that will end on December 1992.

At present, five political parties the Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial, the Unión Popular, the Convención Liberal Democrática, the Partido Social Demócrata and the Unión para la Democracia Social - have been registered and given official status under the provisions of the Law on Political Parties of 6 January 1992. These parties are already conducting their political activities throughout the country in a climate of dialogue, order, peace and tranquillity.

In the same direction, and with the two-fold objective of involving all the country's forces in the construction of a new era of democratic coexistence, on the one hand, and of alleviating the sad and heavy burden that the phenomenon of exile and displaced persons places on the international community, on the other, the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, approved and promulgated for the second time since 1979 the Law on Amnesty, under which

"All acts of commission or omission of a political nature committed by Equatorial Guineans and characterized as political offences and crimes in the Criminal Code or in special criminal laws passed prior to 2 December 1991 shall be forgiven and forgotten."

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Therefore

"All citizens of Equatorial Guinea granted this amnesty who are outside the country will be able freely to enter the national territory and reside therein. They shall be entitled to all rights and freedoms under the conditions set forth in the Fundamental Law and other legal provisions of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea."

In this context, we hope that, on the same humanitarian grounds that inspired the Governments of the host countries and the international governmental and non-governmental organizations, they will continue to give all assistance necessary to facilitate the voluntary return of our brothers and sisters, just as our Government has already taken, and will continue to take, steps to do so and to ensure their integration into the society of Equatorial Guinea.

In the coming months, the People's House of Representatives - the parliament of Equatorial Guinea - will be taking a decision on the draft Electoral Law, which is to be formulated with the help and participation of all duly constituted political parties. This will conclude the planned medium-term actions and will lead to the final stage in the process of democratization through the organization and holding of municipal, legislative and presidential elections in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

May I conclude my statement by emphasizing the relevance and timeliness of the report of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, entitled "An Agenda for Peace". We believe that the content of this important document is a challenge to our generation and to the United Nations, since, if by

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national and international "preventive diplomacy" we succeed in attaining the following objective:

"To seek to identify at the earliest possible stage situations that could produce conflict, and to try through diplomacy to remove the sources of danger before violence results" (A/47/277, para. 15), we shall have marked the real beginning of the new era, and future generations will indeed be grateful.

Mr. MUNLO (Malawi): On behalf of the Malawi delegation, I wish to congratulate Mr. Ganev on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. We have no doubt that under his leadership and guidance, the session will be a success. We also congratulate his predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, for a job well done. Mr. Shihabi presided over the forty-sixth session of the Assembly effectively, and we wish him well in the future.

On behalf of the Malawi delegation, let me also take this opportunity to applaud our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his steady stewardship of the Organization as it continues its work of maintaining international peace and security, as well as the promotion of social and economic development around the world. Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali has been in office for less than a year. Yet his laudable achievements in charting the Organization towards the United Nations perceived by its founders, a United Nations that plays a leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping, are very clear to us all.

(Mr. Munlo, Malawi)

His determined efforts in focusing attention on poverty reduction and economic development in the third world have also been notable. We assure him of Malawi's complete support and wish him success. We also pay a tribute to all his staff for their dedication to duty, at times in circumstances of extreme personal danger.

(Mr. Munlo, Malawi)

It is with great pleasure that we join all those who have spoken before us in welcoming to the United Nations the 13 new Members. We wish them well. The near universality that this new membership has brought us will definitely contribute to making the United Nations stronger.

My delegation is pleased to note from the Secretary-General's report to the Assembly that the past 12 months have been characterized by general international peace and security. Certain areas and regions, however, remain zones of strife and conflict, posing a grave danger to the efforts of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this regard, my delegation is equally concerned at what is happening in the Balkans, in particular the suffering and death of innocent civilians, especially young children, women and old people. The fighting and shedding of innocent blood must stop. Malawi supports the efforts of the United Nations and the European Community to provide humanitarian relief supplies to Sarajevo and other beleaguered parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also support the determined efforts now in progress to establish a cease-fire and to arrive at a peaceful solution to the problems confronting all the parties to the conflict. Dialogue between the various parties is the answer and an essential condition to the achievement of peace and stability in that region.

Regarding the Middle East, Malawi welcomes the landmark developments on the protracted and problematic issues relating to the Palestinian question. Malawi welcomes the United States/Russian-brokered peace initiatives. The Malawi delegation joins all those who have spoken before us on this issue in wishing the peace process success.

(Mr. Munlo, Malawi)

The situation in Somalia is a source of concern to all peace-loving countries. My delegation is pleased to note, however, that through the determined efforts of the United Nations and in particular of the Secretary-General, the mayhem taking place in Somalia before our very eyes is at last being addressed by the international community. The deployment and the increase in the number of United Nations security guards from 500 to 3,500 will help curb the serious security problems and make possible the airlift and distribution of desperately and urgently needed humanitarian supplies such as food, medicine and clothing. My delegation commends the United Nations and its lead agencies, the donor community at large and non-governmental organizations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières, Oxfam and others for their dedication and for their tremendous achievements in very difficult conditions.

Somalia needs peace and reconciliation. In this respect, Malawi applauds and supports the combined efforts of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in working tirelessly towards the achievement of peace and stability in that country.

On behalf of the Malawi delegation, I take this opportunity to welcome the peace accord that was signed in Rome on 4 October 1992 between President Chissano and Mr. Afonso Dhlakama, the leader of RENAMO. It is common knowledge that Malawi has a direct interest in the establishment of peace and stability in Mozambique. Indeed, over the years Malawi has been involved in the search for peace in that country. The end of the 16-year civil war means the end of untold suffering for the people of Mozambique and a wonderful opportunity to focus their energies and resources on the reconstruction and development of their beautiful country. For Malawi, this

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also means that the Nacala and Beira corridors, our most cost-effective routes to the sea, will begin to function at full capacity. We therefore have every reason to rejoice at this welcome development.

The international community is also aware that Malawi has through the years been host to more than 1 million refugees from Mozambique. It is our sincere hope and prayer that the cease-fire holds and peaceful conditions are established that will allow the refugees to return to their homes in honour and in dignity. Malawi considers the role of the international donor community and the United Nations, especially that of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to be extremely important in facilitating the return and resettlement of the refugees as well as the internally displaced people. Massive assistance will be required to enable Mozambique to forge ahead in its enormous task of reconstruction and development.

My delegation wishes to reiterate the Malawi Government's readiness and commitment to assist, within its means and capabilities, in these arduous tasks.

The situation in South Africa continues to be a source of concern to my Government. Malawi holds the view that there is no better alternative to dialogue for resolving the political problems in that country. That is why we welcomed the negotiations under the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) process, and were therefore disappointed by the wanton cycle of violence that led to the suspension of CODESA.

We believe that peace must be re-established for negotiations to take place. It is in this context that the Malawi Government welcomed the appointment of a Special United Nations Envoy on South Africa and fully supports Security Council resolution 772 (1992), which provides for the

(Mr. Munlo, Malawi)

increase - from 30 to 50 in the number of observers to monitor and help curb the violence taking place in that country. Malawi also welcomes the initiative taken by the OAU, the European Community and the Commonwealth to cooperate with the United Nations in contributing additional observers.

The Malawi Government has been encouraged to note that the people of South Africa themselves continue to believe in the effectiveness of negotiation as the path towards peace and security. We therefore welcome the agreement reached recently between the President of the African National Congress, Mr. Nelson Mandela, and the leader of the South African Government, President F.W. de Klerk, to resume constitutional negotiations.

In welcoming the agreement between Mr. Mandela and President de Klerk, my President, Ngwazi Mr. H. Kamuzu Banda, expressed his hopes for a future South Africa as follows:

"I do hope that [Mr. Mandela], together with President De Klerk and others, can bring real peace to the South African townships, and put an end to the human suffering there. We look forward to the time when a non-racial democratic South Africa will take its place among the nations of our region in particular and the world in general."

Malawi joins all those who have spoken on the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, this past June. By all accounts, the Conference was a historic milestone. Malawi took part in the Conference and was one of the many countries that signed the Convention on biological diversity and the Convention on climate change. Although the two Conventions did not meet all the demands and expectations of the developing countries, it is Malawi's view that they generally present a major framework for progress towards the goal of protecting and preserving the environment.

(Mr. Munlo, Malawi)

Malawi, as a developing country, looks forward with hope to the post-UNCED period. The implementation of the programmes which make up Agenda 21 is the key to the success of UNCED. We therefore welcome the impending establishment, during the course of this session of the General Assembly, of the commission on sustainable development to oversee the implementation of Agenda 21. We hope that within the framework of this institutional machinery, supported by the United Nations system as a whole, the new global partnership between North and South will make possible the transfer of technology and, even more critically, the financing of Agenda 21.

Malawi appeals to the developed industrialized countries to honour their commitment to meet the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance and to honour their pledges to increase their assistance in order to ensure the full implementation of Agenda 21. We also welcome the efforts by the World Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme to restructure the Global Environmental Facility to make it transparent and flexible in order to achieve a wider coverage and scope in its operations, especially with regard to the financing of Agenda 21 programmes.

The Malawi delegation would like to add its voice to the debate on the restructuring and reform of the United Nations system. The aims of the reform include eliminating the duplication of functions and rationalizing and revitalizing the Organization's operations. Malawi supports the initiatives which the Secretary-General is taking. Change is an on-going process and is necessary if the United Nations is to be able to respond effectively to the new challenges and opportunities that are so evident in this post-cold-war era.

(Mr. Munlo, Malawi)

However, Malawi is of the view that these on-going changes should not lead to a deviation from the purposes and principles of the Charter.

It is in this vein that the Malawi delegation welcomes the measures taken to restructure and revitalize the Economic and Social Council as well as the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, which is already playing a major role in dealing with the drought emergency situation in Africa.

Malawi, like the other countries in southern Africa, is experiencing the most serious drought in living memory. The drought situation has had a major debilitating effect on the country's development efforts. National food production has been severely affected. The country, which is normally self-sufficient in food, is now facing a shortfall in maize, the national staple, of more than 690,000 tonnes. There are also shortfalls in pulses, edible oils and salt. This serious situation has been compounded by the cross-border movements of persons looking for food or running away from civil strife. Even cash crops, which earn Malawi scarce foreign exchange and afford the local Malawians a source of income to live decently, have also been adversely affected by this drought. Disease and malnutrition are on the increase. All this is having severe adverse effects on the socio-economic development of our country.

We have been encouraged by the many nations and international organizations that have come forward to assist Malawi, as they have done in respect of the other countries in our region. However, in spite of this generosity, the situation in Malawi remains critical. Major shortfalls in food, medicines and water supplies still exist. For example, over 50 per cent of our food aid needs have not yet been met. We are also experiencing serious problems in meeting costs for internal transportation, storage, fumigation,

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water supply, health and nutrition. We therefore renew our appeal for more urgent assistance to avert any further worsening of the situation.

In recent months serious questions have been raised about Malawi's human rights record. As a result, a number of our partners in development have withheld or reduced support for the country's development programmes. In its independence Constitution of 1964 Malawi recognized the sanctity of the personal liberties enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Malawi continues to respect these personal liberties.

Malawi has gone even further. It is party to a number of human-rights instruments, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Malawi became a party to these important instruments aware of its commitments as a member of the community of nations.

In a key address to the nation on the eve of the celebration of Malawi's 28 years of independence on 5 July 1992, our Life President, Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda, reaffirmed the emphasis placed by the donor community on human rights and good governance for development assistance. In keeping with this commitment, Malawi has recently embarked on a vigorous programme of action aimed at a transparent demonstration of its continued respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, at the policy level and in practice.

It is not possible, in the time available to me, to give a comprehensive review of the Malawi Government's programme of action. I can only give a few examples of the developments that have taken place so far.

As I speak, all political detainees in Malawi have been unconditionally released. In addition, the Government of the Republic of Malawi has amended

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the Preservation of Public Security Act with a view to giving all those detained under the Act the opportunity to have recourse to the legal process through an open court or a tribunal.

Secondly, the Malawi Government has invited the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit prisons and places of detention and to interview inmates about their conditions and treatment. The Government of the Republic of Malawi has agreed that it will be happy to work with the ICRC on its recommendations. In a separate but related exercise, the Government of Malawi has set aside funds to improve prisons as well as to speed up the handling of any backlog of untried cases. To improve prison conditions further, the Government is putting together a project proposal. We hope that this project will receive donor support.

The Malawi Government has also recently amended the Forfeiture Act, which was enacted to curb the plunder of the economy by unscrupulous businessmen. However, in order to ensure that the practical application of the law is consistent with the spirit in which it was enacted, Parliament has recently passed an amendment with a view to allowing persons to be heard in their own defence in the High Court before they are declared to be subject to forfeiture.

The Government of the Republic of Malawi has also initiated a dialogue with the press to promote the exercise of freedom of expression and freedom of the press. To improve the atmosphere further, last week our President appealed to all Malawians to engage in constructive discussion amongst themselves on issues of national importance.

My delegation wishes to reaffirm Malawi's continuing commitment to the promotion of human rights and individual liberties and to assure our partners

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in development and all others that the Malawi Government remains ready to maintain a constructive dialogue with them on these questions.

Finally, I should like to thank the United Nations system and all the friendly Governments and non-governmental organizations for assisting Malawi in all its endeavours towards raising the standard of living of its people.

Mr. MUSA (Belize): On behalf of the Government and people of Belize I extend congratulations to Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria on his election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We are confident that he will steer the Assembly with wisdom and energy.

My delegation also pays special tribute to the Secretary-General for his untiring efforts in bringing us closer to peace.

Five hundred years ago the Colombus enterprise set off a chain of events that created the world we know today. Some may find in this anniversary cause for celebration, but the peoples of the Americas, of Africa and of Asia mourn the ruthless exploitation of nature and humanity that was unleashed by those events.

The enterprise brought Christianity to the Western Hemisphere. It led to the creation of one world. It took humanity inexorably along the path to economic globalization and interdependence in all spheres. It also led to the creation of many dual worlds: in our Hemisphere, the European world and the indigenous world, the white world and the black world; the rich and the poor; the dominators and the dominated. And on our planet this tragic dichotomy is writ large in the great divide between North and South.

The sermon of the Catholic Friar Antonio de Montesinos delivered in 1511 was and remains a telling message to the world. "Tell me," he said, "what right have you to enslave them? What authority did you use to make war against them who lived at peace on their territories, killing them cruelly with methods never heard of? How can you oppress them and not care to feed or cure them, and work them to death to satisfy your greed?"

We are not here to lament tragic occurrences of a distant past, but to record the facts of an unacceptable present reality, for the world order whose foundations were laid then continues to this day.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

At this historic juncture of world history, we are called upon to create a new world order, an order based on justice and respect, an order that can produce peace. We should be in a better position than ever before to launch a united struggle to achieve this goal. We have seen the consequences of injustice and intolerance, and we are waking up to the obvious that we live on one planet, and that the welfare of one is inextricably linked to the welfare of all.

Just a few days ago the people of Belize celebrated the eleventh anniversary of independence. On that occasion the Financial Times of London wrote about Belize as an oasis of calm with a promising future:

"Its judicial, political and educational systems work reasonably well ...

It is possible to be optimistic about tomorrow."

Our goal is to become more productive, more competitive and more adaptable to the changes that lie before us at the dawn of the unfolding century. But even as we celebrated, we reminded ourselves of the need for fundamental changes in the present world order if people around the world are to achieve their expectations for a better quality of life. And so we feel compelled to add our modest voice to the rest of humanity's and propose the outlines of policies that will give us all a chance to pursue and maintain sustainable development and social equity.

With the Assembly's indulgence, I will say a few words about three critical and interrelated blocks we believe must be used to build a new world order: justice, respect and peace.

Justice for all. Five hundred years after, it cannot be right that 200 million people in our Hemisphere are living in critical poverty. This cannot be right because, among other things, our region, Latin America and the Caribbean, is rich. With 8 per cent of the world's population, that region

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possesses 23 per cent of the world's potentially arable land, 46 per cent of the tropical forest, and 31 per cent of the available surface water.

Nor is it that we have not been producing wealth. Since 1982 Latin America and the Caribbean have been transferring a net US\$20 billion to US\$30 billion every year to the industrial world. The poor are subsidizing the rich.

The external debt of our region has not been reduced but has escalated alarmingly, from US\$285 billion in 1981 to US\$500 billion today. At the same time, the application of structural adjustment policies has enormously increased the social debt in so many countries of the region since the burdens of payment have fallen disproportionately on the poor, their plight worsened by sharp cuts in social programmes and public services.

Cancellation or reduction of the debt of underdeveloped countries would be an act of justice. It would be a first step in the process of constructing a new world order that will enable sustainable development to take place based on a new socio-economic strategy that puts people first.

We wish to emphasize that to achieve sustainable development we must build a new international order based on principles different from those that now govern international relations. We must reach agreement on a common strategy that respects the principles of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and the right of each country to select its own path to development. In this day and age there is no place for the unilateral use of force and for claims made by States to exercise extra-territorial rights. The new international order must ensure for countries of the South adequate access to compatible technology, respect for the principle of gradualism for free and fair trade, just and stable prices for our products, food security, an end to the North's practices of protectionism and non-tariff barriers, adequate

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financial flows and the provision of investment funds that produce mutually beneficial results.

There is now a growing international recognition of the universal validity of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We welcome this growing trend towards democratization in our region and in the world. We deem it necessary to echo the words of the Jakarta Message of the Tenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement: no country should use its power to dictate its concept of democracy and human rights or to impose conditionalities on others. Human rights must be addressed on the basis of universality, individuality, impartiality and non-selectivity.

The situation in South Africa today, while mitigated by glimmers of hope, still presents a picture of daily massive abuse of human rights of black people. Apartheid, by whatever name, is still firmly in place. We cannot be complacent about the one-step-forwards, two-steps-backwards syndrome that has apparently settled on the politics of that suffering country. The international community must help the South African people to defend the advances made so far and to advance the negotiations rapidly so that the people of South Africa may soon be able to start building a truly democratic State, free of the blights of racism, repression and exploitation.

The people of Palestine, those in the territory and those scattered in the cruel diaspora, cry out for immediate and effective action to allow them to exercise their rights to their territory, to self-determination and peace. The institutionalized denial of the rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories continues unabated - starting with the right to life and passing through all categories of rights.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

How can we allow such denial and abuse to continue on the threshold of the twenty-first century? My delegation earnestly calls on all parties involved rapidly to conclude negotiations for a just solution to the Palestinian question and on this body to do everything possible to facilitate the process, beginning with the effective enforcement of all relevant United Nations resolutions.

In the Arabian Gulf region, as in other regions, we must be alert to any violations of the principle of territorial integrity. We cannot condone the acquisition by force of an island, no matter how small, or of any territory.

In our hemisphere the people of Haiti continue to suffer gross violations of human rights under a military dictatorship that deprives them of the first fruit of their decades-long struggle for democracy. We in the Caribbean feel a special concern for - indeed a special debt towards the people of Haiti. As our Caribbean novelist George Lamming said recently:

"The first and most decisive blow struck at the Plantation, destroying its hegemony, was the triumph of the Haitian war of independence." Yet today the democratic triumph of the Haitian people is frustrated as President Aristide remains in exile.

As a Caribbean country we cannot remain silent in the face of this injustice. Neither can we condone the systematic strangulation of another Caribbean nation in violation of all norms of international law. Justice must be for all. It cannot be selectively dispensed.

Perhaps the greatest contribution to world peace and development made by modern environmentalists has been to remind us of what our ancestors instinctively knew: that we cannot use the Earth's resources for our own benefit, but that if we wish to survive we have to respect the Earth in all its diversity.

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Since that fateful landing 500 years ago, the assault on nature in our hemisphere has resulted in an ecological destruction unprecedented in world history. Countless numbers of plant and animal species have been permanently lost to humanity. The real tragedy, however, is that in this supposedly enlightened age the destruction continues.

We are destroying the planet by conscious acts of devastation, and the double tragedy for us in the South is that even when these acts take place within our jurisdictions we are rarely the authors and hardly ever the beneficiaries of their short-term gains. While we accept the responsibility for conserving our common environment, we cannot unilaterally close off options for development to our people when their need is so great. What is needed is effective international cooperation that, recognizing our interdependence, compensates us for our efforts.

We in Belize are taking this responsibility seriously. We have set aside more than a quarter of the country's land mass as environmentally protected areas; we have resisted the seductions of mass tourism and opted for sustainable eco-tourism. We are about to pass a comprehensive environment protection law.

We are also struggling to come to terms with the demands of maintaining biodiversity. The regional report, "Our Own Agenda", reminds us that "diversity of life forms is indispensable for the survival of the biosphere and the human species. Biodiversity is acknowledged today as a common value, and its conservation is of a high priority for all".

We also believe, however, that we the world community will never succeed in respecting and preserving biodiversity if we do not respect and preserve homodiversity. Our biggest incentive to preserve the environment is

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to preserve the human species and enhance its prospects for sustainable development. While it is true that we are all Earth's children, we are also enriched by differences. We are one people with many cultures, many languages, many distinct ways of life, many different creeds. We are one tapestry, but with many different threads. We must respect these differences, or there will never be peace.

The phenomenal growth in migration all over the world should convince even the most sceptical that it is in everyone's interest to learn to respect the diversity of peoples. This phenomenon, while creating tensions in the short term, will, we believe, enhance the probability of all of us learning to live with people whose cultures are in many ways different from our own. Either that, or we condemn ourselves and our children to perpetual strife.

When we struggle together for justice for all and we learn to respect nature and humanity, we give ourselves the opportunity of creating a world in peace. But we cannot talk about creating a peaceful world unless we first acknowledge that the world is not in peace and identify the major causes of this situation.

We consider it more important to prevent conflicts than to separate combatants after conflict has broken out. One cannot speak about keeping the peace when there is no peace to be kept. We believe, therefore, that the United Nations should concentrate much more on a new, expanded role of peace-building.

However, we can work effectively together only if the structures we use to define and implement our common strategy are based on the very principles we proclaim. We cannot espouse democracy in our various countries while our own collective Organization is not only profoundly undemocratic but based on a world power relationship that is no longer valid.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

There is an urgent need to reform the United Nations system. In particular, the Security Council must be democratized. As His Excellency Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, states in his report, "An Agenda for Peace",

"regional action as a matter of decentralization, delegation and cooperation with the United Nations efforts could not only lighten the burden of the Council but also contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in international affairs".

(A/47/277, para. 64)

In our hemisphere we support moves to strengthen the Organization of American States and its related institutions and join the efforts to make them more effective mechanisms for addressing our common concerns.

Closer to home, we are committed to an expanded Caribbean Community (CARICOM), as recommended by the West Indian Commission in its report entitled "Time for Action". The Commission recommended that CARICOM initiate proposals for the establishment of an Association of Caribbean States directed to both economic integration and functional cooperation, with membership open to all CARICOM member States, the other island States of the Caribbean and the Latin American countries of the Caribbean littoral.

The Commission's recommendations are being carefully studied, but we can say that the concept of an expanded Caribbean Community has always been on Belize's agenda, not least because we are both a Caribbean and a Central American country, and we feel called upon to provide one of the vital links between the two subregions. The task of bringing them closer together is made easier by Guatemala's recognition of Belize as an independent sovereign State, and we are confident that with goodwill on both sides there will be a

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satisfactory resolution of Guatemala's territorial claim, which is still outstanding.

Another important principle that our Organization is pledged to respect is that of universality. This session is enriched by the presence of 20 new Members, and we must support the call for a return of the Republic of China to the international community. We cannot continue to ignore the reality of 20 million people organized in a State, and we are confident that those people are capable of making a useful contribution to our work at the United Nations.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

We all rejoice at the end of the cold war. We can all breathe easier now that the threat of a nuclear holocaust has been reduced. But while none of us died as a result of the cold war, during all those years millions died from poverty, and hundreds of millions suffered hunger, malnutrition, lack of education, poor housing and the indignity of unemployment. The tragedy is that the system continues to take its toll.

Now that the cold war is ended, are we not entitled to expect something more than triumphalist declarations of this fact? It is unforgivable that, while military budgets remain so largely disproportionate to any rational security need, children are dying from hunger or preventable disease. If, over the next five years, Governments in our hemisphere alone were to reduce their military budgets to a level 20 per cent below 1990 figures, a minimum of \$50 billion would be available at the end of that period for the war on poverty.

Let us not forget that poverty and misery have principally affected women and young people; they have borne the brunt of the hardships produced by structural adjustment policies. We must make a firm commitment to implement a gender perspective aimed at the integration and mobilization of women as full participants in, and beneficiaries of, the development process.

At the same time, we must take special measures to provide young people with the education and employment that will allow them to lead healthy and productive lives. In this context, we cannot but agonize at the terrible toll that drug abuse and drug trafficking are taking on our young people. We must redouble our efforts in the fight against these evils. Adequate resources must be mobilized internationally and made available for the interdiction and eradication of drugs, as well as for treatment and rehabilitation.

(Mr. Musa, Belize)

We harbour no illusions about the enormity of our task or about the chances of our succeeding in creating a just and peaceful world. But, no matter what the odds, we must make a solemn commitment to give it our best shot. We owe it to the millions who have gone before us and who have struggled against injustice and poverty. We owe it to the suffering peoples of our time. Above all, we owe it to the children who will inherit the world we make for them. We must all reaffirm our commitment to full and effective implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children. It is for the children that we must construct a world system that will guarantee the quality of life necessary to ensure their well-being.

The challenge is there for us. All we can do is begin the task; the children must pursue it. We must begin now if the children are to have any chance at all. We must do so with a sense of urgency. Time is running out. This is the moment to act with God's help and the support of peoples represented here at the United Nations.

Mr. YOUNG (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): I should like to begin by offering to Mr. Ganev my heartfelt congratulations on his assumption of the high office of President of the General Assembly. He takes up the presidency at a time when the world is looking with renewed confidence towards the United Nations. As a politician from an area with a proud tradition of representative democracy, he has played a commendable role in the vanguard of the democratization process in his own country and in Eastern Europe. His unanimous election as President of the General Assembly for the current session highlights the continuing efforts of his region in its transformation to market-driven, democratic societies and the global prerogatives of the post-cold-war era. I am sure that his experience, training and diplomatic

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skill will do much to ensure that the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is fruitful and constructive.

Let me also take this opportunity to extend to his predecessor, Mr. Samir S. Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, our best wishes and our appreciation of the highly competent manner in which he presided at the last session of the General Assembly.

I take this opportunity also to express to our esteemed Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our profound understanding and appreciation of the efforts he has so far made to achieve for the world body greater flexibility and enhanced ability to meet the new challenges posed by the dramatic developments taking place in international relations and, at the same, to fulfil long-standing mandates.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, I pay tribute to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, whose term of office expired at the end of 1991. Under his guidance over a 10-year period, the United Nations shrugged off the negative image of a useless talking-shop and emerged as an institution whose growing reputation as an effective peace-keeper has resulted in calls upon it to take on numerous new responsibilities. Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar did indeed ease the transition of the United Nations through the changing climate and brought it to the centre of new-world-order politics. He brought the Organization, with its new peace-keeping and peacemaking roles, back to its founding mission. We join the international community in saluting him for his service to the United Nations and to world peace.

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This year the General Assembly has so far admitted 13 States to membership of the United Nations by acclamation. My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The admission of this significant number of new Members in the Organization is another major step towards the goal of universality.

My delegation wishes to express its deepest sympathy to the Governments and the peoples of the United States of America, the Bahamas, the Philippines, Nicaragua, India and Pakistan, which suffered tragic loss of life and extensive material damage as a result of the recent spate of natural disasters. We pray that our own Caribbean region will be spared any more destruction during this hurricane season. It is our hope that the rehabilitation process in the affected communities will be swift and will receive the generous support of the international community.

In the last few years we have witnessed momentous changes in the international arena. The end of the cold war has raised hopes for a better and more secure future. The world now faces novel challenges in the quest for justice, equity and prosperity. In many regions of the world significant progress has been made towards democracy, as well as towards achieving the purposes set out in the United Nations Charter. Completion of the process of dismantling apartheid would make a major contribution to these trends. However, while there has been positive movement towards the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa, we are perturbed by some serious differences that have emerged in recent negotiations.

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My delegation wishes to express its full support for the call by the African National Congress for an international investigation of the Boipatong massacre. We urge all concerned to make every effort to maintain the momentum of the negotiating process of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa in order to finalize agreement on the outstanding issues. If negative trends in South Africa are not reversed my Government stands ready to join in remobilizing the international community, through all appropriate means, in the struggle against apartheid. We wish to encourage President De Klerk to continue the courageous leadership that he has so far given his Government and urge him not to undermine the historic image that both he and Nelson Mandela have established.

My delegation has been following the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has shocked the conscience of every human being, irrespective of national origin, ethnic background, religion or political persuasion. We condemn the existence of detention centres, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where civilians are being detained against their will and subjected to ill-treatment. The odious practice of "ethnic cleansing" must be firmly rejected and a strong signal sent that the international community will not passively witness the attempt at the total annihilation of a Member State by a powerful neighbour.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolutions 770 (1992) and 771 (1992), which are designed to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that international organizations, in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross, have unimpeded access to concentration camps and detention centres.

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My delegation has been following with keen interest the negotiations on the issue conducted under the auspices of the European Community. We believe that this process must be accompanied by international efforts to put an immediate end to the violence and that increased pressure should be brought to bear on all parties concerned to work wholeheartedly for a political settlement. The cease-fire agreement which European and United Nations negotiators reached with warring factions in Bosnia is a step in the right direction.

We are heartened by increased efforts to aid the long-suffering people of Somalia in the Horn of Africa. We continue to be concerned about the famine and the condition of human life in sub-Saharan Africa. My delegation implores the international community to pay the necessary attention to the plight of these people. We wish to draw attention to, and emphasize, the urgent need for policy reform that would make it possible to reduce drought through reafforestation, and avoid famine created by wasteful military expenditure.

My delegation welcomes the current peace efforts and prays for a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis, the core of which, in our opinion, is the question of Palestine. My delegation reiterates the importance of this issue and calls for the same consistency on the part of the United Nations that was so evident when the resolutions dealing with the invasion of Kuwait were before us. It is our hope that the ongoing peace process will result in a resolution of the conflict based on United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). My country firmly believes that the only durable solution to the historical conflict lies in the full recognition and establishment of the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and the corresponding right of the State of Israel to exist

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within secure and guaranteed borders. The definition and maintenance of secure borders at this time in world history has the benefit of modern technology, as the Gulf war has decisively shown.

After a decade of mediation by the United Nations in the war over Cambodia, the historic signing of the Paris Peace Agreements by the warring factions on 23 October 1991 offers real hope for ending hostilities in that troubled country. We are, however, deeply concerned about the difficulties which are being encountered by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in the implementation of the Agreements. My delegation joins the call for all concerned parties to permit the deployment of all components of UNTAC in the areas under its control so that it can carry out its full function in implementing the provisions of the Paris Agreements.

The situation in Haiti remains one of extreme concern to my country. We have already condemned, in no uncertain terms, the attempted illegal replacement of the constitutional President, the widespread use of violence, the coercion by the military, and the violation of human rights in that country. We feel that because of its critical involvement in the Haitian elections and its generic role as guarantor of international human rights, the United Nations has a special responsibility to the people of Haiti, who have never had the good fortune to enjoy the basic human rights and freedoms that the international community has agreed are fundamental to human dignity. The present situation calls for serious attention by the world body, working in tandem with the Organization of American States. Expressions of concern should be matched by concrete action. We share the anguish of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the forces of democracy, and join him in his impassioned call for action now.

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With regard to the political situation in Central America, my delegation welcomes the Peace Agreement on El Salvador, signed in January 1992 at Chapultepec. We wish to congratulate Colombia, Spain, Mexico and Venezuela on the very important role they played in the negotiating process. A profound debt of gratitude is also owed to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar for his efforts in the service of peace in Central America, which are being continued by the new Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

My delegation is particularly pleased by recent developments in relations between the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the countries of Central America. The momentum generated by the convening and successful conclusion in January 1992 of the First Ministerial Conference between CARICOM and the countries of the Central American isthmus at San Pedro Sula in Honduras must be maintained.

Guatemala's recognition of the independence of Belize and the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries are positive and welcomed developments, facilitating the deepening of relations between member States of the Caribbean Community and the countries of Central America.

The Caribbean region, and especially the countries of the Windward Islands, of which Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a part, have firmly committed themselves to structural adjustment and other economic reforms designed to increase their export earnings and competitiveness in the global economy. In the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, we established free trade in 1988. In the wider CARICOM grouping, the 1984 Nassau Agreement on Structural Adjustment and the 1989 Grand Anse Declaration expressed the urgency which the regional leadership attaches to the transformation process.

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Even as we welcome recent hemispheric trade and investment initiatives aimed at enhancing the mobility of goods and services and creating greater opportunity for people, my country, as well as others in the Windward Islands grouping, is concerned that the vital economic interests of small States like ours are very marginal as the powerful developed countries of the world move to consolidate their markets in extensive trading blocs.

In this regard the Governments and people of the four Windward Islands will redouble their efforts to ensure that powerful forces working in their own interest do not destroy our economies by prematurely reversing the marketing regime under which we sell our bananas to the countries of the European Economic Community. We expect the international community to understand that, with the best will and intention in the world, small, resource-impooverished islands like ours constitute a special case in economic development. Nothing has changed these circumstances.

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As the international order moves in the direction of free trade, my delegation expresses the strong conviction that special attention should be paid to traditional trading arrangements which have sustained economic growth and democracy in many parts of the world. In this regard we shall continue to work towards the maintenance of our traditional relationship with the European Community even as we make the transition towards eventual free trade.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which brought together the largest gathering of world leaders ever in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 3 to 14 June is now history. We must now translate 12 days of debates into positive action, or posterity will remember us for wasting a great opportunity to set the agenda for the preservation of our environment. As Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries during the month of July 1992, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines initiated action within the Group to coordinate the activities of member countries in follow-up action at the multilateral organizations as well as in the wider international community.

My Government regards the agreement reached at the Rio Summit as an important start of a process that could eventually change the way the world approaches the challenge of fostering economic growth. We are particularly pleased that issues such as the sustainability of islands, the alleviation of poverty, the sustainable development of all types of forests, and the environmentally sound management of solid waste were addressed.

My delegation urges the early ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity, which, it is felt, if honestly implemented could mitigate some

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of the hazards which small, island States like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and other low-lying coastal developing States face.

My delegation takes note of the renewed commitment made by developed countries to achieve the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for development assistance to developing countries and, where this target has not yet been achieved, to augment their aid programmes in order to reach that target as soon as possible or by the year 2000.

It is our hope that the recommended high-level commission on sustainable development will be established soon so that it can be convened as early as possible to ensure that follow-up action on the Rio Summit meets the hopes and aspirations of us all.

Continuing progress towards democracy in many regions of the world, the obsolescence of the bipolar politics of the cold war, the overall reduction in military expenditure and the emergence of new States have elicited a positive response from the world community. The United Nations peacemaking and peace-keeping roles have increased and broadened considerably in the post-cold-war era. The world body is providing leadership in these and other vital areas. Unfortunately, demands for the same leadership in the field of social development have not been given the same degree of political importance. The Organization must address this issue as a matter of priority. It is true that significant efforts are being made at the national and international levels to improve the standards of living of the world's peoples but, globally, statistics show that there are today more poor people, more unemployed and greater social insecurity, especially among the populations of developing countries.

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Social development problems are global in scope and require global responses. To this end my Government supports the convening of a world summit for social development at the level of Heads of State or Government in early 1995 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

As man's inhumanity to man continues to manifest itself daily throughout the world, my Government remains mindful of its pledge to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. In furtherance of these goals, my Government will support the establishment of an effective international system for the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of all peoples, irrespective of race, sex, language or religion. We hope that this can be achieved at the World Conference on Human Rights scheduled for Vienna in June 1993.

My delegation is deeply concerned that our region has become a transshipment point for illicit drugs targeted at the North American and European markets. We recognize that drug trafficking is an international problem which affects the institutions and populations of different countries. My delegation wishes to reaffirm its commitment to increasing cooperation in fighting the global problem of drugs in all its aspects, be it illegal production, trafficking or consumption. This epidemic cannot be allowed to undermine our precious human resources. Accordingly, my Government will sign the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

The world is poised on the threshold of a bold new experience in human history. The possibilities are tremendous but the challenges great. We in

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the English-speaking Caribbean, where democracy and constitutional order have long been institutionalized, are anxious to play our legitimate part, with full recognition of our condition and the requirements for global integration. We have been reliable allies in times of struggle and turbulence. We now look forward to sharing fairly in the dividends of a durable peace to which we have contributed by our stability and resolute commitment to liberty and democracy.

Mr. MOSES (Federated States of Micronesia): It is a great honour for me to address the Assembly at the commencement of its forty-seventh session and in so doing to mark my country's first full year of membership of the United Nations. For a people that has been ruled by others, the privilege of at last having an equal voice in the community of nations is uniquely fulfilling. With that voice I now express our gratitude for the openness and generosity that we encountered among the members and within the Secretariat as we undertook our initial participation in the work of this great body.

We join other members in extending heartiest congratulations to Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. We wish also to thank his predecessor, Mr. Shihabi, for his truly outstanding service as President of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. It is indeed fortunate for us and for future generations that in the most challenging of times this body has available the leadership of individuals possessing the highest skills, energy, dedication and integrity.

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In speaking of leadership, I must also, of course, mention with respect and appreciation our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He has already shown himself to be more than equal to the tremendous tasks associated with his high office. He is assured of our prayers and our continuing support.

Last year, the Federated States of Micronesia was privileged to be one of the seven nations admitted to membership in the early days of the forty-sixth General Assembly. Subsequently, within the forty-sixth General Assembly, history of a special kind was written when 13 other nations were admitted to membership, and so I gladly extend the warm congratulations of my Government and people to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on their admission to the United Nations. We are confident that in sharing with them this unique moment in history we will maintain a common bond that transcends geographic differences and gives added meaning to the concept of the brotherhood of man and nations.

The extensive and comprehensive agenda to be addressed by this session of the Assembly is testimony to the ever-increasing interconnectedness of the world's nations and their peoples. While we were a non-self-governing people, we of the Federated States of Micronesia strived long and hard to achieve independence, only to find that once we had it, full self-sufficiency is neither possible nor desirable in today's world.

I had the honour, recently, to accompany my President, His Excellency Mr. Bailey Olter, to the Earth Summit in Rio. That historic meeting served, among other things, to deepen our understanding of the possibilities for global international cooperation on a basis of common, but differentiated responsibilities.

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Among the many statements made at Rio by Heads of State, I was struck by a most appropriate quotation from Sir Francis Bacon offered by the President of Iceland Her Excellency Madame Finnbogadottir. He said,

"No one makes a greater mistake than he who decides to do nothing because he can do so little."

The President's suggestion of that thought in the context of the Earth Summit was truly inspired, but if I may be permitted, it also gives guidance to my country over the entire spectrum of international cooperation.

We now realize that the Charter was meant to challenge every Member, large and small, developed and developing, to play its part in the implementation of collective decisions to approach the question, "What can I do?" not as a basis for inaction, but rather as a springboard for action within our means, however modest. Only by doing our rightful part do we earn the right to hope that the world community will deal effectively with such universal problems as the environment, poverty and war. Only by doing our rightful part do we earn the right to expect the direct assistance of the world community in dealing with those problems of social and economic development at home that are beyond our means to solve.

Thus, my Government wishes once again to thank all those in this body and throughout the United Nations community for our kind reception here, and to renew, now with broader understanding, our commitment to the Charter and our obligations thereunder.

To the modest extent that the Federated States of Micronesia has made its presence known within the past year, it has been mostly in the context of the environment, and particularly in the intergovernmental negotiating committee

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for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Since we are a country whose land is comprised of low-lying, small islands, our entire nation finds itself in the front line, along with others similarly situated, who will be the first to suffer the devastating consequences of unchecked global warming. Rising sea levels would ultimately cover our islands, but long before that our protective coral reefs would bleach and fall victim to increasing storm surges, our agricultural crops would be ruined and our freshwater sources rendered unfit for human consumption. We are facing nothing less than the end of island civilizations that have endured for thousands of years.

We participated actively throughout all the sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, and we had no hesitation in signing the Framework Convention in Rio because the final text of the Convention goes far to recognize the particular vulnerability of the low-lying island States to the consequences of human-induced climate change. The real effectiveness of the Convention, however, will be measured by its protocols yet to be negotiated and in the operation of its conference of the parties and other mechanisms.

That statement is particularly applicable in the case of the Framework Convention because, as we stressed to the intergovernmental negotiating committee, the scientific evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows a need for significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Even the modest emissions cuts to which the industrialized countries found themselves unwilling to commit themselves at Rio must immediately be replaced by more stringent goals set by the dictates of science rather than of politics.

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It is ironic that the peoples of small island countries, in seemingly idyllic settings, distanced from the stresses of industrial societies, should be the peoples with the greatest sense of urgency to get on with the business of protecting the planet. It is, nevertheless, island people who are beginning to suffer the effects of global warming; island people who are witnessing the swift and disastrous alteration of ancient weather patterns; it is island people whose homelands will be the first victims of rising sea levels.

But this sad reality does not mean that the rest of the world can afford to wait, for by the time the world witnesses the effects of global warming on the islands it will be too late for the rest of the world then to take the necessary steps to save itself.

Thus, we are encouraged by the adoption of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, but we look anxiously towards its prompt implementation and pray that its operation will quickly lead to actions and restraints by the industrial countries on the scale necessary in order to reach the Convention's objective. That objective is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at levels which do not adversely affect the climate.

Stabilization at such levels cannot be achieved by half-hearted efforts. As United States Senator Gore recently wrote in his book "Earth in the Balance",

"The tide of this battle will turn only when the majority of people in the world become sufficiently aroused by a shared sense of urgent danger to join an all-out effort."

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Let us earnestly hope that the signing of the Framework Convention by 155 countries at the Earth Summit was evidence of such a shared sense, and signalled the beginning of an all-out effort.

The President of the Federated States of Micronesia also joined most of the other Heads of State at Rio in signing the Convention on Biological Diversity. We accept our State responsibility for conserving the biodiversity of our islands and waters, and for using those resources in a sustainable manner.

We welcome the reference in the Convention to the precautionary principle with regard to applying measures to avoid or minimize threats to biodiversity. We are reassured by the specific recognition in the Convention that small island States will need new and additional financial resources and appropriate access to relevant technologies in meeting their obligations. We look forward to an early convening of the conference of the parties.

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Agenda 21, in both letter and spirit, at last brings into focus the concerns of the developed and the developing world for securing an environmentally sustainable future. I believe that in a world no longer preoccupied with the super-Power conflict, Agenda 21 will come to be seen as the single most important social instrument ever negotiated. Of course, in legal effect it is only a guide, and despite its length it is only a framework. But its future impact on the domestic and foreign policies of every nation is certain to be pervasive.

The establishment of the commission on sustainable development is a landmark achievement of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and with it we see realistic hopes for turning Agenda 21 into actions. We strongly urge that the commission be situated in New York. Developing countries must participate significantly in the work of the commission, and in our case, being a small Government with limited financial resources, we are far better able to attend activities at United Nations Headquarters than anywhere else.

As a Pacific island country, we ascribe particular importance to chapter 17 of Agenda 21, which addresses the protection of the oceans. This is a subject many would have put aside, feeling that the oceans are so vast and our knowledge of them so limited that we are better off concentrating on perfecting land sciences. But it appears mankind is slowly realizing that human activities on the planet can significantly affect our oceans and bring about disastrous consequences for our food supplies and even our weather.

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Thus, we strongly support the call in Agenda 21 for conferences to exchange experience on coastal-zone management and on the sustainable development of small island States, and we hope that they will take place on schedule.

Chapter 17 also addresses constructively the need for intergovernmental cooperation to control indiscriminate and harmful practices in harvesting sea resources. While we welcome the approaching total ban on drift nets, which have been accurately called "curtains of death", much needs to be done with reference to the high seas, and straddling fish stocks and highly migratory species of fish, in order to reverse already notable trends towards the disappearance of species that were once thought inexhaustible. We support the call for a conference on those topics.

Chapter 18 of Agenda 21 recognizes the pressing need for improved climate forecasting, in the context of freshwater resources for human survival. The Federated States of Micronesia, along with many other island States in the middle of great oceans, has suffered repeatedly in recent years from droughts brought on by little-understood climate mechanisms. In addition, Pacific island States are already suffering widespread damage caused by tropical storms of increasing frequency, range and intensity, which we have little or no capacity to predict. This fact was stressed by the South Pacific Forum countries at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, which responded by adopting resolution 46/234, calling for relief measures that include improved forecasting capabilities. We should like to reiterate our deep gratitude to the many sponsors of the resolution and to the Assembly as a whole for adopting it.

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Our deep concern for the oceans and their resources also causes us to focus very closely on the provisions of chapters 19 through 22 of Agenda 21, which deal with the management of toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes, solid wastes and sewage and radioactive wastes. In his address to the Rio Conference, President Olter of the Federated States of Micronesia expressed the hope of overcoming the attitude of developed countries "that the Pacific Island region is a great, unpopulated void" offering opportunities

"for convenient disposal of toxic, radioactive or otherwise harmful wastes, and for the conduct of any dangerous or obnoxious activity that cannot for reasons of public safety be carried out on home territory". We maintain high expectations that what President Olter called the "world's emerging sense of environmental ethics" will prevail over past attitudes.

There are already some good signs, notable among which is the decision by France to suspend nuclear-weapon testing in the South Pacific. We applaud France for taking that initiative and pray that the ugly history of nuclear experimentation in the Pacific region has reached a permanent end. But realistically, that cannot be assured so long as nations continue to manufacture, stockpile and threaten to use weapons of mass destruction. Thus, even our small islands have a large stake in the continued progress of nuclear, chemical and biological disarmament, and we look forward to supporting the implementation and extension of comprehensive treaties on these subjects.

The Federated States of Micronesia especially welcomes the recent conclusion of negotiations on a chemical-weapon convention and is pleased to

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be one of the original sponsors of the draft resolution to be considered at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly endorsing the convention. My Government wants to express its gratitude and congratulations to those esteemed nations that have successfully negotiated that long-awaited convention and calls on the Assembly to adopt the draft resolution. I wish to recognize with appreciation the active role that Australia, from our region, took in negotiating the chemical-weapon convention and for its outstanding contribution to the global movement towards arms control and disarmament.

Unfortunately, the forsaking of nuclear, chemical and biological weaponry serves to intensify the already serious problems associated with the movement and disposal of wastes. Large stocks of chemical weapons must be eliminated, but uncertainties surrounding the technology for their disposal result in pressures on less powerful and more remote peoples, such as Pacific islanders, to bear the associated risks. Frightening quantities of weapon-grade plutonium must either be safely stored or utilized in questionable enterprises that involve hazardous and secretive shipments through the waters of maritime nations.

Up to this point the efforts of the world's nations to deal with these problems have produced a patchwork of conventions some implemented, some not most of which are of limited effectiveness because of technicalities and political self-interest. Worthwhile instruments such as the London Dumping Convention need to be strengthened on an accelerated basis. Vital arrangements such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal need to be implemented. The role of the International Atomic Energy Agency with regard to safeguards must be brought up to the pace of current events.

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But even if all these things are done, dangers and risks will continue to be imposed upon the poorer, less powerful and more remote peoples of the world unless the following principle is universally respected: the nation from which the material originates bears the complete responsibility for the cost and safety of its storage, shipment and disposal; that nation should adequately inform other nations potentially affected and should not utilize the global commons in any action related thereto over their objection.

I am aware of the implications of that statement, both politically and in terms of international law, but unless the spirit it expresses can enter our international conscience and influence the behavior of nations, I fear that the passing threat of wartime holocaust will be replaced by an even less restrained and in some ways equally horrifying danger.

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The roads towards so many of the worthy goals to be sought by the Assembly, whether related to economics, the environment, development, human rights or international security, are haunted by the spectre of poverty. Poverty causes much environmental degradation. Poverty makes human rights irrelevant to many people of our planet, and tempts others to exploitation. Poverty contributes to destabilization of political institutions and endangers the world.

No matter how dedicated are the efforts made by governments towards sustainable development and lasting international peace, and no matter how massively those efforts might be funded, I fear that a single factor fuelling the engine of poverty could render all the expenditures of resources ineffective. I am referring to exploding and uncontrolled population growth. Members are familiar with the statistics, past, present and projected. They are particularly disturbing in that the greatest rate of growth occurs in the most poverty-stricken segments of the population. Clearly, this is one of the most sensitive and difficult problems to deal with in a multilateral setting, and I respect the diversity of views on the subject. For that reason, I respect its treatment in Agenda 21, knowing that many preferred stronger and direct statements. Nevertheless, we hope that the mechanisms of Agenda 21 will help to influence the developed countries to increase funding for population-related activities. We also look forward to the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo in 1994.

With regard to the protection of human rights, the Federated States of Micronesia is pleased to associate itself with the exemplary efforts made by the United States of America and other like-minded nations for the

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implementation of the standards for the protection of human rights as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In so doing, the Federated States of Micronesia joins in the condemnation of abuses of human rights by members of the international community. They insult our sense of common decency and the values we attach to human life - the very values governments are established to protect.

Hardly a speaker in this debate has failed to voice support for the historic efforts being made by the United Nations to reorganize and reorient itself so as to cope with its emerging roles in advancing the cause of mankind. We are no exception, and in our judgement the Secretary-General has so far provided wise leadership along a most difficult path.

One of the most challenging current problems is to determine the fairest and most effective means of meeting the costs associated with the Organization's expanded role in the maintenance of international peace and security. We are all aware that these costs have virtually skyrocketed over the past years, and the question of their proper allocation, we would suggest, is more complex than the simple formulas that served the purpose in former times. It is a question, naturally, involving the limits of the resources of small islands, but in our case it also involves predictability. We are determined to meet all our obligations under the Charter, financial and otherwise, but the need for us to budget strictly for developmental and other immediate requirements leaves us little flexibility to meet unforeseen demands of substantial proportions.

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We look forward, during this session, to participating in the exploration of ways and means to devise the fairest and most effective system for financing the role of this body in the new world order. We also look forward with confidence to the enhancement of this role as the age of multilateral cooperation truly dawns and the interdependence of all peoples of the world is seen to be the overshadowing practical reality of the future.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.