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President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral Portugal

In the absence of the President, Mr. Camacho Omiste (Bolivia), Vice President, took the Chair.

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

Typhoon in the Philippines

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I, on behalf of all of the members of the Assembly, extend our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of the Philippines on the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage which have resulted from the recent typhoon. May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity and respond promptly and generously to any requests for help.

I now call on the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Allarey (Philippines): In the name of the Government and people of the Republic of the Philippines, I would like to acknowledge with a profound sense of appreciation and thanks, Sir, your expression of commiseration and sympathy for the unfortunate victims of the super typhoon "Angela" which struck my country last week.

The death-and-missing toll now stands at over 600, and damages to infrastructure, crops and property have been extensive. President Fidel V. Ramos has declared a state of disaster in the islands of Luzon and the Visayas and has taken personal charge of relief and rehabilitation efforts in the affected areas.

As we pick up the pieces and start rebuilding our lives, we take comfort in the knowledge that our friends and neighbours, the members of the international community, are with us during this time of adversity.

I shall certainly convey the sentiments that have been so kindly expressed in this Assembly on behalf of the Members of the United Nations to my Government and to my countrymen.

Agenda item 40 (*continued*)

Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal

Draft resolution (A/50/L.15)

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to inform the Assembly that the representative of Nigeria has requested to participate in the debate on this item.

Inasmuch as the list of speakers was closed this morning, may I ask the Assembly whether there is any objection to the inclusion of this delegation in the list of speakers?

Since there appears to be no objection, Nigeria is included in the list of speakers.

I now call on the representative of Romania, Mrs. Lia Manoliu, President of the Romanian Olympic Committee.

Mrs. Manoliu (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): It might be presumptuous to imagine that we who belong to the world of sport have the power to silence the guns. War has often demonstrated that it is stronger; hence the Olympic hiatus between the years 1936 and 1948, which resulted from the Second World War.

But the recognition of a relative weakness in the face of the forces of evil does not necessarily mean the recognition of impotence. I personally have had the privilege of participating as an athlete in 6 Olympic Games, and as a member of the Romanian Olympic Committee, in 7 others: 13 Games that did not all take place in optimal internal and international political conditions. Nevertheless, I am gratified to note that my country has respected the genuine Olympic spirit throughout these Games and throughout this half century. Romania has never boycotted an Olympiad. There has never been a Romanian athlete who refused to take on an opponent for political, ideological, religious or racial reasons. The Romanian public, in turn, has avidly followed the conduct of the Olympic Games, and the very natural desire to see the representatives of its country achieve victory has never prevented this wonderful public from unreservedly admiring the performance of other competitors.

It was a real process of education in the pure Olympic spirit of peace, with mutual understanding and awareness between peoples — a process which involved not only several hundred athletes, but also millions and millions of Romanians. Guided by this spirit of total dedication to Olympic values, Romania is among the traditional sponsors of the draft resolution on the Olympic Ideal, whose most eloquent expression — the Olympic Games — constitutes one of the most important social and cultural phenomena of our modern era, within which a collective heart beats: the heartbeat of the Olympic athletes.

What other idea could be equally shared by the highly developed and the developing States? What other institution would be able to bring together young people from all over the world — young people who have reached the classic age at which they become cannon fodder — despite the current tensions, the hostilities and the upheavals? What other movement would be able to bring together young people who come from countries which have been adversaries for centuries or for decades, or even from countries openly at war at a given time in history?

Regarding the organization and the direction of the Olympic Movement, a pivotal role is being played by His Excellency Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, who, through his

policy of engaging in personal contacts and through the prestige which he enjoys throughout the world, within the most varied of political and diplomatic circles, has succeeded in making the Olympic Movement an interlocutor of the most representative and the largest world forum, the United Nations. The result has been first and foremost the proclamation by the United Nations of the year 1994 as the International Year of Sport and of the Olympic Ideal.

The Romanian Olympic Committee, which in 1994 celebrated its eightieth anniversary, reacted enthusiastically to the International Olympic Committee's appeal concerning that commemoration by organizing sports programmes as well as cultural programmes, which were favourably received by the public in its country. The respect and credibility which the Olympic Movement enjoys in the eyes and the hearts of billions of people throughout the world made it possible for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to put forward the proposal to respect an Olympic Truce inspired by the ancient Greek tradition of *ekecheria*.

The Romanian people, which was passionately following the Olympic Games in Sarajevo, was a stunned witness to the massacre committed on the outskirts of and within this Olympic city, barely a thousand kilometres from Romania. And, unfortunately, such conflict situations continue in various parts of the world. It is entirely logical and very human to ask that the guns should fall silent, at least for the brief moment — the 16 days — of Olympic competition in 1996. I paraphrase Neil Armstrong: this would be a small step on the long road to peace throughout the world.

In July 1996 we shall celebrate, in Atlanta, the centenary of the Olympic Games. More than 100 nations will be there — literally, through the presence of their athletes — and billions of people will be there in spirit, side by side with the athletes. We call on those involved in struggles — not in the arena but on the various fronts — to stop the massacres and, instead, to follow the games and note that it is possible to solve rivalries other than through war.

Let us hope that 1996 — the year of the Olympic centennial — will mark not only the organization of the most prestigious Olympic Games ever but also the fulfilment of that golden dream of the initiator of the modern Games, Baron Pierre de Coubertain: "May sport lead to peace."

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Swaziland, His Royal Highness Prince Sobandla, Minister for Home Affairs of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Prince Sobandla (Swaziland): The Kingdom of Swaziland is not being deliberately redundant in repeating the words of other representatives in congratulating Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral of Portugal on his deserved election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its historic fiftieth session. The members of Mr. do Amaral's team too are worthy of our congratulations.

The theme of this meeting is clearly spelt out in the title of the agenda item. But before voicing the sentiments of my country I should like, through you, Mr. President, to express our sympathy and sorrow over the sad events that have occurred in the State of Israel. The manner in which Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin lost his life reminded me of our father, King Sobhuza II, who said that out of violence comes no peace.

We, the small and developing nations, have been accused of employing the principles of peace and dialogue as a shield to protect ourselves from those whose powers, both in aggression and in defence, are mightier than ours. This may be true, but we still hold to the traditional practice of solving problems by peaceful means. This applies to personal misunderstandings, party political squabbles and international disputes.

It is not only Israel that is in pain today. A number of peoples in different countries are suffering from various ills, some of them the results of natural causes. We hope that the Almighty will heal the wounds of the people of the Philippines following the typhoon about which we have all heard so much.

Coming to the agenda item with which the Assembly is dealing today, one cannot disregard historical records, which reveal that the Olympic Truce was established, in ancient Greece, in the ninth century before Christ. This was marked by the signing of a Treaty between Kings — Iphitos of Elis, Cleosthones of Pisa and Lycurgus of Sparta — which was subsequently ratified by all the other Greek city-States. In part, the Truce provided that athletes, artists and their families and ordinary pilgrims could travel safely to participate in or attend the Olympic Games and to return to their respective homes.

Talking of contemporary experiences, I should say that I was privileged to lead my country's athletes to the Olympics in Barcelona, where we were joined by the King of Spain and other dignitaries from all over the world. The same happened when we went to Victoria, Canada, for the Commonwealth Games, where the Queen of the United Kingdom tirelessly worked to promote sports. Just two months ago Africans gathered in Harare, where President Mugabe hosted the biggest and most successful games ever held on African soil.

None of our athletes came home from any of these encounters with regrets. We could not have experienced the same warmth, tolerance, love and appreciation for others within the boundaries of our individual countries. No community, no society, no country has a monopoly on giving young people throughout the world these treasured experiences. That is why I believe that we need one another for the promotion of knowledge and peace.

Speaking in my capacity as Chairman of the Supreme Council of Sports in Africa, Zone VI, I can confidently say that the 10 countries in the region appreciate the manner in which the Charter of the United Nations takes cognizance of the need to develop friendly relations between nations, on the basis of respect for the principle of equal rights, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace.

It is heartening also to note that, in its resolution 49/29 of 7 December 1994, the General Assembly called upon my colleagues — Ministers for sports and culture — and to other officials to participate in the debate that is taking place today. The Olympic Ideal has been aptly described by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in the following terms:

“The Olympic Ideal is a hymn to tolerance and understanding between people and cultures. It is an invitation to competition, but competition with respect for others. In its way, Olympism is a school for democracy. In other words, there is a natural link between the ethic of the Olympic Games and the fundamental principles of the United Nations.”

The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland strongly advocates such a spirit, and I am here to support that spirit. The Olympic Truce must be given its rightful place in promoting dialogue, reconciliation and the search

for long-lasting solutions in order to allow peace to reign throughout the world.

Over the years it has often been stated that one should not mix sport with politics. Recent events, however, have indicated the contrary. Sport, if properly used, arguably provides the best therapy for creating peace, and bringing balance and sobering effects in times of strife.

We therefore call upon our colleagues all over the world to review their attitudes towards sport and to exploit fully the avenues they provide in the quest for a peaceful world. Our indifferent approach to youth and sport needs thorough scrutiny. One may argue that because of our strained fiscal resources, especially in the developing world, it is impossible to elevate sport to its rightful pedestal. A full reappraisal of the role of sport may convince us that sport is a worthwhile investment if we are to bequeath succeeding generations a world in which peace and the dignity of mankind are secured.

The Government of Swaziland is appreciative of the role played by sport in the international arena. In this connection, our sports policy recognizes that sport helps foster friendship. I am the first to admit that we have not done enough to transform the Olympic Ideal into the Olympic reality. Introspection is inevitable, therefore, if we are to be able to face the future without trepidation. We have to invest our money in youth and sports for a better world. Let this also be put on record: we owe the world and the future to our youth. That is why every Government should offer youth the best, which can be done precisely through sports.

I wish to address the Assembly on the question of drugs and the intensity with which this problem has engulfed the whole world. I would be remiss if I omitted to mention a sad phenomenon which has infiltrated the sporting fraternity: drug abuse by youth and the sports fraternity, which is undoubtedly inimical to the interests of these groups and the international community at large. If this issue is not addressed it will sound a death knell to the Olympic Ideal and will never allow the Ideal to mature into a reality.

As some of my brothers and sisters have done, I call upon Governments, the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee to rise up and deal swiftly, decisively and collectively with this scourge. Let us make concerted efforts to combat this menace; otherwise, the future of our youth may end up in untold peril.

Let us interpret to the fullest the old adage that says prevention is better than cure.

May I conclude by stating that the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland associates itself with the Ideal, as it coincides with its age-old principle of mutual coexistence. I hereby affirm my Government's willingness to cooperate in the fullest realization of this Ideal, as endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity pursuant to resolution CM/Res.28(LXII), which was adopted in Addis Ababa by the Organization of African Unity Council of Ministers on 23 June 1995.

Mr. Bhandari (Nepal): We are deeply shocked by the news of the brutal and barbarous assassination of the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin. I wish to express heartfelt condolences, on behalf of my delegation and the people and the Government of Nepal, to the bereaved family and to the people and the Government of Israel. Mr. Rabin lived and died for peace.

In pursuance of the relevant resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, we are committed to emphasizing and re-emphasizing the role of sports and the Olympic Ideal in building a peaceful and better world. This is not only a question of commitment; it is also the truth of our conviction.

In the last few decades, Nepal has been steadily improving in its scope and quality of sport. Like most countries, Nepal believes that the development of sports activities will in effect help the development of a vibrant and energetic society. Sport is fun and excitement, joy and recreation. Above all, it is creative, in the sense that authentic sportsmen and sportswomen create an enduring atmosphere of peace and well-being.

My delegation would like to suggest that *ekecheria*, or Olympic Truce, should not be limited to the cessation of all hostilities during the Olympic Games. The young men and young women who make an impressive gathering during the Olympic Games should pledge to work for peace and harmony in the world throughout the rest of their lives. For they know that the psychology of victory and defeat is more illusory than real. They know that depression, bitterness or elation is but a transient phase.

Coming as we do from the country of Lord Buddha, the foremost apostle of peace the world has ever known, our mind-set is consciously and subconsciously influenced

by his message of universal love and friendship. We cannot but be excited by the General Assembly's reaffirmation that the Olympic Ideal is to promote international understanding among the youth of the world, through sport and culture, in order to advance the harmonious development of humankind, and by the recognition that the Olympic Ideal is relevant to the United Nations Year for Tolerance, which is being commemorated in 1995. Nepal cannot be apathetic or indifferent to the measures for peace and prosperity that the United Nations has taken in its resolutions.

One of the purposes of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Charter, is the achievement of international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. In this context, my delegation is pleased to note that 1995 has been declared the United Nations Year for Tolerance, which has been celebrated throughout the world with programmes jointly organized by the International Olympic Committee, various relevant agencies of the United Nations, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), international sports federations and national Olympic committees.

My delegation also appreciates the efforts of the International Olympic Committee to mobilize athletes and youth in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and the United Nations Year for Tolerance. We express our gratitude to the International Olympic Committee for its humanitarian activities, such as food-relief assistance to children in conflict situations, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In keeping with the tradition of the Olympic Ideal, Nepalese youth will participate, with other fellow sportsmen and women from all over the world, in the observance of the Olympic Truce in the forthcoming Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta next year in order to promote international understanding and the maintenance of peace in the world.

The Olympic Ideal originated during democratic rule in Athens, and we are certain that it will be sustained fully and entirely in a dispensation that is essentially democratic. My delegation believes that the proper use of the Olympic Ideal is necessary for the building of a more peaceful and better world. This ideal, established more than 2,000 years ago and dedicated to building a world in which people are whole and healthy in body and in mind, can be an effective force in the creation of a harmonious new world order.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Portugal, His Excellency Mr. Júlio Miranda Calha, Secretary of State for Sports.

Mr. Miranda Calha (Portugal): I wish at the outset to express the condolences and sympathy of my country to the Israeli people and to the family of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. He will remain in our memory as a great statesman who dedicated his life to the cause of peace, and we sincerely hope that this terrible loss will not affect the ongoing peace process in the Middle East.

It is a great honour for me to address this Assembly, as I believe that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, together with the celebration of the International Year for Tolerance, constitute an excellent opportunity for us to underline the continued importance of contributing to a more peaceful and better world through sports and the Olympic Ideal. Activities carried out in the name of this ideal have played a decisive role in the promotion of understanding among nations, especially since the end of the Second World War.

The General Assembly, by declaring 1994 the Year of Sport and the Olympic Ideal, paid tribute to the centennial of the foundation of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). This decision represented a just recognition of the activities undertaken by the Committee and of those who have anonymously and selflessly contributed to developing the modern sports world.

The Olympic Movement not only was the springboard for the organization of modern sports but is the glue that keeps them together. Its activities, as the President of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, has defined them, are both permanent and universal. It was thanks to this movement, supported by many countries, that an international network of activities and relationships was created and consolidated, based on ideals that promote human ennoblement and on rules deeply rooted in tolerance and loyalty. Only in this way has it been possible to attain the current spectacular levels of excellence and high standards that are normally associated with today's international competitions.

Alongside these notable achievements, the activities undertaken by countries through sports associations and the Olympic Movement have contributed decisively to the creation of a sports culture among millions of people, who are searching, through sports, for physical well-being, social contacts, contact with nature or merely an escape from the stress of daily life. These

characteristics allow athletes to be particularly conscious of the need to defend the principle of respect for human dignity. Consequently, sports and the Olympic Ideal have now been linked to the major concerns of humanity, such as the protection of the environment, the pursuit of peace, the prevention of disease and the alleviation of human suffering.

It is with great pride and satisfaction that my country has joined in sponsoring the draft resolution before us today, introduced by the representative of the United States of America, which appeals to Member States to support the activities of the International Olympic Committee, especially those that seek to strengthen ethics and fair play. The draft resolution also calls for the reaffirmation of the observance of an Olympic Truce during the Games of the XXVI Olympiad. Indeed, thanks to the appeal already made by this Assembly and to the efforts of the International Olympic Committee, the Marquis de Samaranch was able to visit Sarajevo at the time of the Lillehammer Winter Games of 1994.

In this context, the newly elected Portuguese Government welcomes all initiatives developed by the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee, and is willing to participate fully in them. Portugal has been actively involved in peace-keeping activities of the United Nations in Angola, in Mozambique and in the former Yugoslavia, either through diplomatic initiatives or by sending peace-keepers to the field.

Portugal intends to pursue its efforts towards the achievement of world peace and international development, and considers that a decision to put these matters before this Assembly on a biennial basis constitutes a very positive step. The Atlanta Olympic Games are approaching. The observance of the Olympic Truce during the 16 days of the competition is a major challenge faced by international sports leaders and those responsible for world diplomacy. It can constitute an important move towards conflict resolution and provide an opportunity for the parties to conflicts to work out their differences.

It is up to us to ensure that sports and the Olympic Ideal continue to contribute towards a better world.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Senegal, Mr. Papa Baboucar Mbaye, Vice-President in charge of International Relations, National Council of Youth of Senegal.

Mr. Mbaye (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): The theme of our meeting today, "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal" pricks the universal conscience about the need for men and women of goodwill to promote a framework of peace and solidarity at every level. Sport and the Olympic Ideal are the essential ingredient in this undertaking, as history and modern practice prove every day.

At a time when the world seems to be heading straight for an era of radical upheaval, when peace is being assailed on all sides, respect for the Olympic Truce is more urgently needed than ever before.

On the eve of the Games of the XXVI Olympiad, which will be held in Atlanta next year, Senegal solemnly reaffirms its support for the United Nations initiative and urges Member States to adopt the draft resolution now before the Assembly.

The youth of my country also calls on the glorious International Olympic Committee and States to place particular emphasis on education programmes for peace based on the recognized virtues of sport and the Olympic Ideal, which have become the most reliable bastions of social interaction, tolerance and understanding among peoples.

On the threshold of the third millennium, we venture to hope that the ideals of de Coubertin and the Olympic spirit will continue to inspire humankind's onward march towards universal harmony.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Canada, Mr. Adam Ostry, Director-General of Sport Canada.

Mr. Ostry (Canada): First, I wish to transmit to the Assembly, on behalf of the Canadian delegation, our most profound and sincere condolences on the death of Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. The world has lost a great statesman dedicated to peace and reconciliation. The prayers of the Canadian people are with the family of Prime Minister Rabin and with the people of Israel.

It is a distinct pleasure and a great honour for me to speak on behalf of Canada on the occasion of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Canada is committed to supporting the principles embodied in the draft resolution on the Olympic Ideal.

Canada has a long and distinguished history of support for Olympism and the Olympic Movement. Great national pride was expressed from coast to coast in Canada when we hosted first the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics and then the 1988 Winter Games in Calgary. Canada's commitment has not ceased renewing itself. Our bids to host the 1996 Summer Olympics in Toronto and the 2002 Winter Olympics in Québec City attest to our sustained loyalty to the Olympic Ideal. Indeed, this loyalty was also underscored by the strong commitment from all levels of government in Canada to providing direct financial assistance to both Toronto and Québec City had they been successful bidders.

Canada's ongoing commitment to Olympism expresses itself in other ways as well. In Québec City, in the spring of 1995, Canada hosted the International Congress of the International Sporting Press Association (AIPS) and the World Forum on Physical Activity. Canada has demonstrated a strong commitment to the principles of fair play and ethics in sport, notably through policies and programmes to increase access by women to sport and through our efforts in relation to anti-doping. In July 1994, Canada endorsed the Brighton Declaration on Women in Sport on the occasion of the *Jeux de la Francophonie* in Paris.

Canada hosted the First World Conference on Anti-Doping in Sport in 1988, from which the International Olympic Anti-Doping Charter was created. As a founding signatory of the International Anti-Doping Memorandum, we are proud of our collaboration with France, Norway, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Australia. Our domestic doping-control programme conducts over 2,500 tests annually; 75 per cent of these are random and unannounced.

(Spoke in French)

Canada takes this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Guy Drut, France's Minister for Youth and Sport, on his statement today, particularly with regard to anti-doping. As a past Olympic champion, Mr. Drut is clearly in a most distinguished position to argue both in France and at this forum in favour of fair, equitable and ethical sport. Canada supports the French message concerning international standardization and harmonization in regard to anti-doping. We must all, in particular the large countries that have sufficient resources to do so, support the efforts of our National Olympic Committees to introduce strict anti-doping measures, including unannounced testing, within their respective domestic sporting federations. Canada also

hopes that other United Nations Member States will reinforce their mutual cooperation in combating doping at the international level.

(Spoke in English):

By including in the General Assembly's agenda discussion by the Assembly on "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal", we confirm that all countries have a great capacity for mobilizing collective efforts in sport to advance the harmonious development of humankind.

The international Olympic Movement has an enormous capacity to contribute to the quality of human life throughout the world. Canada is committed to working with the International Olympic Committee and its programmes to advance the values inherent in Olympism.

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):*
I now call on the representative of Greece, Mr. Vassilis Kaskarelis.

Mr. Kaskarelis (Greece): Allow me first on behalf of my Government to express our deepest condolences and profound sympathy to the family, and to the Government and the people of Israel on the tragic loss of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, an eminent statesman and leader dedicated to peace and reconciliation.

I welcome with great pleasure the Assembly's discussion of the draft resolution before us at a time when the United Nations is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, and honour once more the Olympic Ideals of peace, brotherhood and unity among peoples. In a troubled era in which disputes, conflicts, inequalities, tensions and environmental crises wreak havoc on the quality of life, we meet today to discuss athletics and the Olympic Ideal. By so doing, and by adopting the draft resolution before us, we shall send the message that there is still an eagerness for communication and dialogue.

The Olympic Ideal has been living in the hearts of the Greek people for more than 30 centuries. That is not to say that through our long history we have not been subjected to the vicissitudes of mankind: we have experienced untold discord, conflict and disunity. Nevertheless, however remote the goal of building a world based on the rule of law, justice and peace may be, the continuity of the Olympic Ideal has always provided

us with a source of inspiration and hope, for the present as well as for the future.

Since its birth in 776 B.C., the Olympic Ideal has been a token of man's noble struggle to exceed his limits. In its framework, competition stands for virtuous antagonism. It expresses the desire to compete by peaceful means, to aim at peaceful targets, and to attain victory through individual effort and the exercise of the body and the mind. It is never a means to exterminate an enemy. It contributes to the enhancement of our overall potentialities.

The draft resolution's call for world peace during the Winter and the Summer Olympic Games has its roots in the concept of *ekecheria* — the Olympic Truce established by our ancestors. Even though it constitutes only a small step towards world peace, we should not forget that a long path is indeed made of small steps.

The Olympic Games in ancient Greece were convened for the day of the first full moon after the summer solstice, which today coincides with mid-July. This period of time was called *ierominia* — holy month. On the eve of the *ierominia*, special envoys travelled throughout Greece carrying the message of peace and the Olympic Truce. Peace was recognized as a fundamental prerequisite for the Games. For 40 days before and after the Games, all hostilities ceased and all persecution of individuals was prohibited.

Alexander the Great often stressed that the city of Olympia should be regarded as the capital of all Greeks. He spread not only the Greek spirit, but also the athletic ideal. He built athletic stadiums and organized athletic games. He encouraged everyone to share the virtues of the perfection of the body, the nobility of the spirit and the kindness of the soul, as well as the values of noble emulation, freedom and individual distinction emanating from honest victory.

In the year 393, Byzantine Emperor Theodosius I put an end to the Olympic Games because he regarded them as an expression of paganism. Many efforts were subsequently made for the revival of the Olympic Games, which finally led to the first modern Games held in the Kalimarmaro Stadium of Athens in 1896. These Games were the result of the joint efforts of the Frenchman, Baron Pierre de Coubertin and the Greek, Demetrios Vikelas, who became the first President of the International Olympic Committee.

It is a fact that the athletic movement has over the years gone through many phases and crises. It is also true that athletics is the expression of a powerful and universal reality which brings a major influence to bear on the wider social environment as a means of education in the framework of school athletics, as a means of health and recreation for all sexes and ages in the framework of mass participation in sports, and as a means of communication, brotherhood, solidarity and peace in the framework of competitive sports.

This three-dimensional social role of athletics has contributed to its development as a lasting cultural value. However, the world athletic movement is today suffering a dangerously deepening multifaceted crisis. It is an ideological crisis, because the philosophical nucleus of the ancient Greek spirit is being superseded by extreme commercialization, which contributes to turning fans into hooligans, athletes into ruthless professionals and sporting clubs into trading companies. It is an operational crisis, since athletic records do not reflect the noble endeavour to extend the boundaries of the body and the mind, but political, business and, occasionally, racial objectives. Finally, it is an organizational crisis, since we seem unable to confront the plagues of violence and the abuse of prohibited substances.

On the other hand, the urge for physical exercise plays an ever-increasing role in our everyday life. The transformation of our lifestyle and the urbanization of our societies, in conjunction with the anguish and stress of our technological age, highlight the need to develop a powerful athletics movement, in which the largest possible number of people will be able to actively participate. We have the binding obligation to reconsider the way in which the heritage of the Olympic Movement and of ancient Olympia is being put to use around the world, for we seem to have forgotten the sacred ideals, limiting ourselves to judging everything and everyone according to cheap materialistic criteria.

The Greek people wholeheartedly wish the city of Atlanta success in hosting the Olympic Games next summer. But we also hope that the world in general, and the International Olympic Committee in particular will acknowledge the moral debt they owe to Greece and to the Olympic Ideal, and give my country the honour of hosting the Games. It is indeed inconceivable that no

Olympic Games should have been held, during the twentieth century, in the country where they were born and which has served as a major source of inspiration to the history of the modern Olympics.

Greece stands ready to host the Olympic Games at the turn of the century, and to invite world youth to take part in Games of friendship, civilization and peace, so as to inaugurate a new phase of the revitalization of the Olympic Ideal.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call next on His Excellency Mr. Hans Peter Manz, Deputy Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations.

Mr. Manz (Austria): Before addressing the item we are debating today, I should like to convey, on behalf of my delegation, our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Israel. The loss of Prime Minister Rabin to a senseless act of murder has shocked and saddened the people of Austria. We share the grief of his family and all of Israel.

As we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we should also reflect on how closely related the underlying ideas of its foundation are to a much older concept: that of the Olympic Games. As naive as it may appear at times, the notion of competing peacefully in sports rather than challenging each other's strength by engaging in warfare has certainly lost none of its relevance and appeal. Its link to the United Nations is obvious, and to underline its importance in this forum seems only appropriate.

Today, as in ancient Greece, the Olympic Games contribute to international understanding and mutual respect. Rivalry and aggression appear to be inherent human features with a potential for devastating effect. Engaging in sports allows us to channel those forces in a constructive way and is therefore a powerful manifestation of competitive yet harmonious human interaction. Austria is proud to have hosted the Olympic Winter Games in Innsbruck in 1964 and 1976.

However, sports are not only a peaceful way to enter into competition with other individuals. There is another aspect to any sports activity: the effect of sports on the individual itself. It is a way to develop physical and mental skills, which in turn foster people's health and self-esteem. Both factors are crucial to an individual's well-being and therefore to society's as well.

In this context, I should like to stress particularly the Special Olympics and their invaluable function for the disabled. Individuals who often find themselves marginalized and even humiliated by society are given the chance by way of sports to be at the centre of attention, to feel large-scale support and to become heroes. The self-esteem acquired by those preparing for and participating in the Special Olympics is a rare but lasting experience for all directly or indirectly involved. Austria, as a former host country of the Special Olympics, will continue to promote this specific concept as a particularly important strategy for the full integration of the disabled into society.

The contribution of sports to people's health and self-esteem is also of eminent importance in the context of the international fight against drug abuse. The involvement of young people in sports becomes most relevant in this context. We therefore welcome the mutually beneficial cooperation agreements between the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme as well as other relevant bodies. The Vienna-based Drug Control Programme is very active in providing training courses, creating manuals and offering technical assistance in this field, all of which, we believe, are viable factors in helping youth to withstand the deceptive attraction of drugs and which we therefore strongly support.

Austria also welcomes the many activities of non-governmental organizations in sports all over the world that aim at enhancing a society free of drug abuse. We thus encourage the IOC, in collaboration with local and national committees, to help promote the importance of a drug-free society at the forthcoming Games in Atlanta.

The eve of the centenary of the revival of the Olympic Games in 1896 in Athens presents an excellent opportunity to remember the ancient Greek tradition of the Olympic Truce. May this spirit be reflected in the forthcoming Olympic Games. May the Olympic Games of the future be an example of harmonious competition between individuals and nations and a rallying point for the promotion of peace in the world.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call next on the representative of Colombia, Mr. Luis Alfonso Muñoz Aguirre, Director-General of ColDeportes.

Mr. Muñoz Aguirre (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Peace and development are permanent themes in the daily life of the United Nations. As the

world Organization celebrates its fiftieth anniversary, there can be no better time to reaffirm the notion that the Olympic Ideal consists of promoting international understanding through sport and culture, in particular among young people everywhere, in order to promote the harmonious development of mankind.

The joint endeavours of the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), such as recent meetings on "Sport against drugs", "Sport and the environment" and "Sport for all and health for all", are among the reasons we support and invite other States to support draft resolution A/50/L.15 on building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal.

Sport, recreation and the proper and beneficial use of leisure time are a right which my Government is committed to guaranteeing to all Colombians. The entry into force of the national sports law, recently endorsed by President Samper, will allow us firmly and decisively to take the great plunge into sports to which our Government is committed. The current sport and recreation policy is aimed at fostering the integration of the population, promoting the participation of the student population at all levels, firmly supporting physical education and encouraging formal sports and the follow-up to sports-training schools.

This law will help us to modernize and update sports structures and to create processes for extending sports, recreation and physical education to all municipalities of the country. It will also strengthen sports participation in the educational sector as part of the comprehensive development of young people. It stresses sports and recreational programmes for ethnic groups, in particular indigenous groups, and for the disabled population. This will allow for citizen participation and linkages in the socialization process. Monitoring and supervisory mechanisms to be established to avoid violence and drug use in sports are pillars of our national policy; that is why we are working intensively on this subject.

We believe that it is essential to control doping. Colombia will therefore soon establish a monitoring laboratory which will allow us to take concrete measures against activities that are antithetical to sports. That is why we recently sponsored an international meeting on this subject. We recently asked the European Union to allow us to sign on to the anti-doping agreement that the European countries have already adopted. We are a State member of the Ibero-American Sports Council, an organization of 25 States created to establish mechanisms of cooperation,

strengthen relationships and exchange ideas on improving development.

Colombia recently became Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement. Activities taken in the context of our national policy should therefore have the coherence and dynamism to allow us to share our experience with the developing world. Now is the time to ask the developed countries to encourage specific programmes that will allow the developing world to integrate itself and to contribute through sports to the peace and development of the international community.

I should also like to emphasize the effort now being made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in favour of sport as part of the total education of the person. I also congratulate the International Olympic Committee and its President, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, on the important task it is carrying out, a task that we shall continue to support.

Colombia is enthusiastic and resolute in its support for the draft resolution and undertakes to apply it because we are aware that sport and culture are excellent tools for bringing about peace and coexistence between peoples and for improving conditions for continuing on the path of development in equality and justice.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, Miss Patricia Durrant.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Allow me, Sir, on behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica, to express our deepest condolences to the bereaved family and to the Government and people of Israel on the tragic loss of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to an assassin's bullet. Prime Minister Rabin's courage, his commitment to peace in the Middle East and his indefatigable and fearless pursuit of normal relations between the peoples of the region have been an inspiration to us all.

I wish also to express our sincere sympathy with the Government and people of the Philippines at the tragic loss of life and destruction occasioned by Typhoon Angela. As someone from a part of the world that only a few weeks ago experienced the fury of several hurricanes, we feel with those who have lost loved ones, their homes and their livelihoods in this disaster.

On the eve of the centenary of the Olympic Games, which were revived in 1896, it is fitting that the United Nations should devote special attention to the goal of the item before us, "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal". In keeping with this goal, the United Nations, through General Assembly resolution 48/11, revived the ancient Greek tradition of the Olympic Truce, which calls for all hostilities to cease during the Games. The very ancient nature of this tradition is a significant reminder that wars and hostilities are not new to this century; that from time immemorial countries have seen the value of sport as a catalyst for peace.

In the past few years, we have seen an increase in conflicts motivated by racism, xenophobia and general intolerance. This reality was brought home clearly to athletes participating in the last Winter Olympics, in Lillehammer, Norway, who recalled in sad irony and disbelief that in just a few years the beautiful city of Sarajevo, gracious host to the 1984 Winter Olympics, had been torn apart by conflict and hatred of a shocking intensity. The conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia has become a symbol of similar ethnic conflicts in other parts of the world, and has focused attention on the need for greater efforts to be made in favour of peace.

The Olympic Games, the Olympic Movement, the whole spirit of the Olympic Ideal are meant to promote friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation between the peoples of the world and, by extension, between the nations. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali summed up this theme quite eloquently when he stated that

"The Olympic Ideal is a hymn to tolerance and understanding between people and cultures. It is an invitation to competition, but competition with respect for others. In its way, Olympism is a school for democracy. ... there is a natural link between the ethic of the Olympic Games and the fundamental principles of the United Nations".

For all these reasons, the Government of Jamaica supports the call for the reaffirmation of the Olympic Truce during the Centennial Games in Atlanta in July 1996. We also support the reaffirmation of the Truce prior to each Summer and each Winter Olympic Games.

The Olympic Ideal places particular emphasis on mobilizing the world's youth in the promotion of sport as a vehicle for peace and understanding. This emphasis on youth fits very well with the United Nations observance this year of the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year,

which the General Assembly commemorated just two weeks ago. At that time, my delegation stressed the importance of youth to the development of our country and of the world, and outlined some of the measures being put in place to ensure the improved development of Jamaica's young people.

Jamaica has had a rich tradition of excellence in the field of international sports since the 1940s, when our great track and field athletes captured the imagination of the world at the Olympic Games even at that difficult time, just after the Second World War. This tradition continues today.

Many of our athletes come from very humble backgrounds. It is in this humble environment that they first learn the lessons of discipline, fair play and teamwork, by participating in sports and other cultural activities. It is one of the greatest miracles — even to Jamaicans — that, even without financial resources, proper equipment and formal training, many of our young people have risen to become world-class athletes. Some have used their talents to assist with their educations, and all have recognized the value of sports — particularly community sports — to their stability and to the stability of their communities and of the world.

In many communities in Jamaica, people set about creating their own facilities and sports teams, and organizing tournaments, fully understanding the power of sports to calm tempers and counter juvenile delinquency. In its national youth policy, the Government of Jamaica has taken decisive steps to recognize the link between sports and cultural activities and the growth and development of our young people.

Youth organizations are encouraged to play a key role in designing programmes to facilitate the integration of youth into the community and to develop healthy lifestyles, which are the best protection against drug abuse. These programmes include participation in team sports. In addition, through its national sports policy, the Government of Jamaica emphasizes the provision of competition-level and community playing fields and facilities; assistance to increase significantly the level of participation in selected sports in schools and at the community level; and the encouragement of greater private-sector sponsorship of competition-level sports and in assisting national representation at international events.

These steps are in line with the continued work of the International Olympic Committee in collaboration

with organizations of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme

The International Conference on Sport against Drugs, held in Rome earlier this year and organized by the International Olympic Committee and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, and the use of famous personalities as goodwill ambassadors are an excellent example of the use of sports to drive home the anti-drug message to young people.

We should also like to commend the work of the International Olympic Committee in its increased surveillance of doping in sport. Jamaican sporting authorities are adamantly against the use of medicaments to enhance athletic performance. Not only is this a dangerous and unhealthy practice for our athletes; it is also grossly unfair to other competitors.

We urge all athletes, as well as their coaches and doctors, not to succumb to the temptation of taking performance-enhancing drugs. It is not worth the risk, and robs the person of his or her dignity as a fair competitor in the spirit of the Olympics. More important, such habits developed in play are carried over into work, as young athletes continue to cheat in their academic and business activities.

Sport prepares young people for life. This, after all, is the whole point of the Olympic Ideal and of the exercises we are now conducting in our observance of that Ideal. Those in charge of young athletes need to remember that the method by which those athletes are trained reveals the character of the trainer and how the trainer conducts his or her affairs in all aspects of life. There are those who would scorn the attempts of the international community to spread the spirit of Olympism in trying to achieve peace in the world. My delegation is fully aware that the reasons for war are complex and that peace does not therefore come easily. But there are many avenues for approaching peace. The Olympic Games provide a medium for international communication like few other events. Indeed, there are expected to be some 190 countries present at the Summer Olympics in Atlanta.

We would urge any sceptics to bear these considerations in mind and to join in the promotion of the

Olympic spirit, to the best of their ability. We urge the international community not to give up hope that lasting peace can be achieved in the world. We have in our lifetime witnessed the dismantling of the system of apartheid, against which so many of us sportsmen and sportswomen fought valiantly. At the last Winter Olympics, in Lillehammer, a team from a tiny tropical island which has experienced neither snow nor ice entered the bobsled competition and finished ahead of many veterans of that sport. They were an inspiration to many people worldwide.

We are very pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution before us and call upon all members to support it.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Iraq, Mr. Maki Khamas, Member of the National Olympic Committee of Iraq.

Mr. Khamas (Iraq) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I have the honour to represent the Iraqi National Olympic Committee in this international forum dedicated to the exchange of views and the search for the means whereby a peaceful world may be established through sport.

I should like first to extend sincere thanks to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which took the initiative of requesting the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the General Assembly in 1993, and has thus afforded us the opportunity to search for means to promote the Olympic Movement and thus to make it possible for the United Nations to explore new concepts and additional approaches in the service of peace and stability in the world.

The Olympic Movement, through its activities and programmes, has played an important role in the search for world peace. It is appropriate to consolidate the relationship between the Olympic Movement and the United Nations in the service of the common, fundamental objectives of the Charters of the United Nations and the Olympic Movement. This could be achieved through teaching the world's youth the virtues of peace, and the elaboration of a cooperative plan to promote sports relations amongst nations on the basis of fair competition and mutual respect, instead of confrontation and domination.

The United Nations has set for itself a number of ambitious objectives for the establishment of peace and ensuring equality for all nations in the enjoyment of the

fundamental human rights, which include the rights to education for all, to health for all and to housing for all. The promotion and development of physical education and sports for all are vital prerequisites for the attainment of these objectives. Therefore, it is necessary for the United Nations to promote international cooperation in the field of sports and physical education, and to immunize it against the negative political effects generated through the pursuance of self-interest by certain international quarters.

In this regard, mention should be made of the coercive measures imposed by the Security Council against Iraq, which have run counter to and worked against the attainment of these objectives. For five years now, my country has been subjected to a comprehensive embargo which has impacted negatively on all aspects of life, including sports. It has become extremely difficult for Iraqi athletes to obtain sports equipment, uniforms, balls, nets, training equipment, or equipment for sports medicine. The embargo has also prevented many Iraqi teams from participation in various sports activities abroad, such as games, conferences, and training camps, due to the scarcity of resources.

The embargo and the lack of adequate nutrition have deprived athletes of the necessary means to realize their full athletic potentials. As a result, the number of sports teams have declined, many sports clubs have been closed and many sports tournaments, individual and collective, have been cancelled. That has led to an extremely serious deterioration in sports activities in schools and universities. Furthermore, the Olympic Council for Asia, for narrow political reasons, suspended the membership of the Iraqi National Olympic Committee in 1990. Iraq's membership in that Council remains suspended without any justification, in contradiction to the fundamental values and principles of the Olympic Movement.

These negative consequences of the embargo on sports and on every other aspect of life in Iraq place a legal responsibility on the United Nations as well as a moral responsibility on the International Olympic Committee and make it incumbent on both the Organization and the Committee to work for putting an end to this unjustified tragedy.

The manifestations we have just mentioned, as well as many others, require us all to work closely together for the attainment of the common objectives of the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee which aim at creating a world of peace and prosperity, free of the narrow political interests of this or that party, a world in which

sport is not used as a political tool of policies dictated by the narrow interests of certain international quarters.

We should like to take this opportunity to commend the Marquis Juan Antonio Samaranch for his tireless efforts to keep sports independent of the policies of vested interests. From this rostrum we call upon all nations — large and small, strong and weak, rich and poor — to promote dialogue and to build bridges of hope and understanding between them all through sports and through observance of the humanitarian Olympic values of mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity, justice and equality, which eschew all forms of discrimination, domination and coercion.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Japan, Mr. Shunji Maruyama.

Mr. Maruyama (Japan): The Government and people of Japan are profoundly saddened by the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. It is Japan's earnest hope that the people of Israel will not allow this tragedy to discourage them and that they will remain committed to the peace process and ensure that Prime Minister Rabin's desire for peace in the Middle East will be realized.

As the host country for the next Winter Olympic Games, which will take place in Nagano in 1998, Japan would like to express its great pleasure that the agenda item entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal" is being considered at plenary meetings of the General Assembly in this the year of the Beijing Conference on Women and the Copenhagen Summit, which focused on people-centred development, and the year in which we observed the United Nations Year for Tolerance and the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year. In addition, next year, in Atlanta, we shall celebrate the centenary of the revival of the Olympic Games in 1896. Clearly, it is a most opportune moment to acknowledge the importance of sport in general and of the Olympics in particular.

All round the world, sport plays a prominent role in the promotion of mutual understanding, friendship and good will, and it is conducted under universal rules. It has enormous importance for this reason, and we are pleased that the world's most important sports authority — the International Olympic Committee (IOC) — and the United Nations system are engaging in joint endeavours in areas such as the prevention of drug abuse.

We also welcome the efforts of national Ministries of Youth and Sport to strengthen educational programmes for youth and to enhance the participation of women in all aspects of the sports movement. It is essential, in particular, that young people, who hold our future in their hands, join in efforts to build a more peaceful world. This, we believe, they can do by participating in sports and, more importantly, by living their lives in accordance with the principles that are at the heart of all sporting competition.

The world continues today to be racked by regional conflict, and ways must be found to address this challenge. The Olympic Truce is a very useful, if temporary, means of effecting peace, and we are pleased that it has been agreed that a Truce will be observed once again during the Nagano Olympic Games. Since the time of the ancient Greeks, the goal of the Olympic Games has been to build a peaceful and better world and to enhance respect for human dignity. That goal continues to deserve our full support.

By hosting the eighteenth Olympic Games, in Tokyo in 1964, and the eleventh Winter Games, in Sapporo in 1972, Japan has demonstrated how deeply it believes in the Olympic Ideal. As I mentioned at the outset, Japan is privileged to serve once again as host country — this time for the eighteenth Winter Games. The venue, Nagano, is situated at the foot of the Japanese Alps, in the heart of Japan — a place famous for its magnificent views and great natural beauty. Preparations are already under way, with extensive support from the Government of Japan, and every effort is being made to ensure that these Games will be the most smoothly run ever. We are convinced that the Nagano Games will inspire participants and observers alike to strive to realize the goals of the Olympics in their own lives and in the relations of their countries.

We have established three guidelines for the organization of the Games in Nagano. First, as these will be the last Olympic Games to be held this century, they should be not only a series of world-championship events but also an opportunity for youth and children — the men and women of the early part of the next century — to appear on the world stage. Secondly, as the Winter Games are ice-and-snow events, we should try to feature the abundant natural resources that Nagano has to offer. Thirdly, we are determined to organize this historic event in such a way as to ensure that it is a means of enabling everyone, individually and collectively, to make a contribution to peace, harmony and friendship. Japan will be honoured to welcome athletes and visitors alike to the Nagano Games.

Japan wishes to express its deep respect for the work of the International Olympic Committee, and we welcome Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of the IOC, to the General Assembly's deliberations. Throughout its 100-year history, the IOC has contributed to the promotion of friendship and peace through sports, and the international community owes it a debt of gratitude.

I should like to conclude my statement by quoting the remarks of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, that were incorporated in the report of the International Olympic Committee on the International Year of Sport and the Olympic Ideal last year:

“The Olympic Ideal is a hymn to tolerance and understanding between people and cultures. It is an invitation to competition, but competition with respect for others. In its way, Olympism is a school for democracy. In other words, there is a natural link between the ethic of the Olympic Games and the fundamental principles of the United Nations.”

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Guyana, Mrs. Paulette Cornette.

Mrs. Cornette (Guyana): I should like, first, to take this opportunity to extend the condolences of the Government and people of Guyana to the Government and people of Israel and to the bereaved widow and other relatives of the late Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated last Saturday. It is our hope that Mr. Rabin will not have died in vain and that the peace process, which he had brought so far, will continue to progress, leading to lasting peace in that region.

In less than one year from now, in July 1996 in Atlanta, we will celebrate the centennial Olympic Games of the modern era. During that period over 200 nations of the world will field athletes who will be participating in every conceivable area of sporting activity. The important contribution which sports and culture offer to the participants, the majority of whom are youths, by way of healthy competition of body and mind can never be overemphasized.

We are equally well aware of the apparent ease with which athletes at national and international levels are able to interact, in defiance of all other obstacles, such as language, race and religion. We are reminded that in keeping with Olympic tradition, we will be making a great effort to observe during the Games an Olympic

Truce in the cause of peace. This initiative, which revives an ancient Greek tradition, is all the more valuable because it is completely in keeping with the principles of the United Nations Charter and promotes a spirit of fraternity and understanding between peoples.

As we in this Assembly are only too well aware, global peace and security continue to elude our grasp. The period of intense super-Power rivalry is thankfully now behind us, and the world has retreated from the threat of nuclear annihilation. We are now confronted, however, by numerous localized wars that resist all attempts at resolution. Witness the many factional conflicts that are currently in progress in Europe, Africa and other areas of the world.

Commendably, the United Nations and particularly the Security Council strive to bring peace and stability to these troubled places. We are forced to recognize, however, that the Organization's success to date has been severely circumscribed. While we are encouraged by new breakthroughs in the various diplomatic and negotiating processes, we cannot escape the conclusion that new concepts and fresh approaches are needed to deal with the persistence and proliferation of conflict.

By extending the principle of the *ekecheria*, or Olympic Truce, we can at least pray for some respite, however temporary, from the killings and destruction which accompany conflict. The Truce, as we know it, would normally last for the period of the sporting event. During that time national rivalries, jealousies and considerations of politics, race, religion, wealth and social status were cast aside. Kings competed with commoners for the honour of winning the simple branch of wild olive which was given to each victor and which over the years has come to symbolize peace.

With political commitment, however, the Olympic Truce, which was considered sacred by all participants, can be prolonged indefinitely. We therefore call upon people of goodwill everywhere to place at the forefront of their thoughts and action the principles that *ekecheria* and the Olympic Ideal seek to propagate.

Of those currently engaged in conflict we ask that, despite the urgencies and validity of the causes for which they struggle, they show some regard for these higher principles that have been endorsed by the United Nations.

The fundamental principles of the Olympic Movement embrace the values and ideals of this Organization. It is

therefore possible for it to collaborate with us in the campaign to achieve world peace. The movement has made a valuable contribution towards building a better world through sport. The United Nations, for its part, has taken a major step in furthering its own efforts to foster peace and development, by its full acceptance and endorsement of the concept of the Olympic Truce.

We are pleased to note the appreciable effort which the International Olympic Committee is making to provide humanitarian assistance to several war-torn areas. Such assistance enables the international community to make the best possible response to the growing number of situations which require its intervention. We wish to commend the Committee for its positive contribution and to invite its continued involvement in the work of our Organization. We have accordingly co-sponsored draft resolution A/50/L.15, which seeks to bring the International Olympic Committee into a closer relationship with the United Nations system.

The occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which the General Assembly is observing this year, should see a concerted international effort to fulfil the principal aim of its Charter, namely to rid this and succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

As the Olympic torch moves from Barcelona to Atlanta, we must work to ensure that by the summer of 1996, when the International Olympic Committee observes its centennial, a permanent truce will be called to conflicts among and within nations. It will certainly be a worthy achievement if at the dawn of the twenty-first century mankind can enter a new age of universal peace and harmony.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Cyprus, Mr. Demos Georgiades, President of the Cyprus Sport Organization.

Mr. Georgiades (Cyprus): In a world faced with unabated turmoil, the ancient Greek spirit that gave rise to the Olympian ideal of athletic achievement and excellence transcends the cultural and political boundaries that divide human communities.

The Olympic Ideal continues to inspire us to this day. It shines like a beacon of hope, a guiding force underpinning the fundamental values of society: peace, freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is a motivating element of human competitiveness without

recourse to violent confrontation, an essential ingredient for the preservation of universal values.

Consideration of the present draft resolution by the General Assembly during this year's historic session is of particular significance. It attests to the importance attached by the United Nations to the Olympian values for their contribution towards the promotion of peace and the betterment of the world through sports. It is by instilling the Olympic Ideals in our youth that cultural and political discord can be overcome.

The Olympic Ideal serves to promote international understanding among the youth of the world. In that way, the necessary conditions for building harmony among nations are created. It is thus that the prevailing culture of conflict and misunderstanding can be mitigated.

The practice of sports offers a unique way to cultivate the body, the mind and the soul. It is an activity that people can engage in regardless of racial, cultural, political and other differences. The Olympic Ideal dissipates prejudice.

Nearly a century ago, Pierre de Coubertin was inspired by the same principles when he revived the Olympic Games in their land of origin — Greece. This is why it is only appropriate that the International Olympic Committee give serious consideration to the proposal of Greece to organize an Olympiad in the country that hosted the first modern Olympic Games, the country that gave birth to the original Olympic spirit.

Sports have always played a central role in the education system of Cyprus. Statistical data indicate that Cyprus compares favourably with those nations that are most active in the realm of sports.

My country, a land divided by foreign aggression and occupation, continues its struggle for peace and freedom. This struggle is motivated by the same spirit that guided the founders of the Olympic Games. It is a spirit driven by the ideals of peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding and reconciliation.

We live in an era of uneasy transition, characterized by political and social upheaval. However, we must not allow our fears and concerns about the present to cloud our vision for the future. Our collective mission to promote the Olympic Ideal can only serve to fulfil the objectives of the draft resolution — that is, promoting and preserving international understanding and cooperation through the active participation of youth in sport.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*):

I now call on the representative of Viet Nam, Mr. Le Buu, Director-General of the General Department of Sport and Physical Education of Viet Nam.

Mr. Le Buu (Viet Nam) (*spoke in Vietnamese; English text furnished by the delegation*): I feel most honoured to attend, on behalf of the Sport and Physical Education and Olympic Movement of Viet Nam, at the invitation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and of the President of the International Olympic Committee, this debate on agenda item 40, entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal", at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

Our people, living in a country that has undergone wars, strongly cherish a life of peace, independence and freedom, and have an age-old tradition of sport. It is in peace that Vietnamese sport has been integrated into the modern Olympic stream since the end of the 1970s.

The objective of Vietnamese sport is to build a movement of popular sport, physical education and good health for everyone, and to expand relations of cooperation, friendship and development with friends all over the world.

Unfortunately, suffering is still being experienced by many peoples. I would earnestly recommend to the sports and physical-education leaders of every country that they strive, as one of the important responsibilities within their competencies, to implement resolution 49/29, adopted at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly on the Olympic Ideal. It aims to create a world of peace and stability in which all peoples may enjoy their fundamental rights — for example, the right to live in peace and equality, the right to development and the right to enjoy sporting exchanges and cooperation on sport between countries and peoples.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the President of the International Olympic Committee, the Association of National Olympic Committees, the international sports federations and the sports and physical education organizations of various countries for extending to Viet Nam their valuable assistance.

Vietnamese sport commits itself to do its best to make a worthy contribution to the lofty cause of the Olympic

Ideal; it commits itself to building a world of sport for peace and development.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*):
We have heard the last speaker for today.

In order to hear the other speakers on the list and to take a decision on draft resolution A/50/L.15, the Assembly will continue consideration of agenda item 40, entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal", tomorrow morning as the third item.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.