



General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/43/PV.10  
30 September 1988

ENGLISH

Forty-third session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Thursday, 29 September 1988, at 10 a.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. CAPUTO	(Argentina)
later:	Mr. ESSY (Vice-President)	(Côte d'Ivoire)
later:	Mr. CAPUTO (President)	(Argentina)

- Announcement of the Nobel Peace Prize
- Address by Mr. Francois Mitterrand, President of the French Republic
- Address by Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by:

Mr. Nwachukwu (Nigeria)  
Mr. Mocumbi (Mozambique)  
Mr. Andreotti (Italy)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call on the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to convey to the General Assembly some news which I am sure will be a source of satisfaction and of pride to the Organization.

Today the Nobel Prize Committee has informed me of its decision to award the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces. In awarding the Prize to our peace-keeping forces, the Committee has recognized that the quest for peace is a universal undertaking of mankind, involving all the nations and peoples of the world.

The recent achievements of the United Nations have been neither sudden nor fortuitous; rather, they are the result of the persistent and dedicated work done throughout the many years of the Organization's peace-keeping activities. The Prize is a tribute to the idealism of all those who have served the Organization, and in particular to the courage and sacrifices of all those who have contributed, and continue to contribute, to the peace-keeping operations.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to associate myself with what I am sure is the feeling of satisfaction of all representatives in the Organization at the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces.

Ever since our Organization was founded, the peace-keeping operations have made a major, effective contribution to the keeping of the peace in various confrontations. They have also helped to prevent conflicts and, in general, have promoted the purposes and principles of the Charter.

(The President)

The new international atmosphere provides a concrete opportunity for the United Nations to play an even broader role in the system of collective security, of which the peace-keeping operations are a fundamental instrument.

Therefore we welcome with joy this important distinction that has been conferred on the Organization, and - rightly, I think - we interpret the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize as a tribute to the United Nations, to its ideals, to its purposes and principles and - I would add - to its Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, whose intelligent and dedicated efforts have without any doubt been a vital, indeed crucial, element in the creation of this new international context which is clear to all of us.

ADDRESS BY MR. FRANCOIS MITTERRAND, PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the French Republic.

Mr. François Mitterrand, President of the French Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the French Republic, His Excellency Mr. François Mitterrand, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President MITTERRAND (interpretation from French): I begin by paying tribute to the wisdom of the members of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, who, in electing you President, Sir, have made clear both the deservedly high esteem in which they hold you and the prominent place held by Argentina and, beyond Argentina, by Latin America in today's world.

I wish to add that I deeply appreciate the great honour of having this opportunity to address the Assembly again.

Having just learned, as the Assembly has, the news about the Nobel Peace Prize, I wish immediately to convey my congratulations to the United Nations on the award of the Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces.

When I came to this rostrum five years ago the world was dominated by the East-West confrontation, the proliferation of regional conflicts, the deepening of the gulf between North and South and repeated violations of human rights and the rights of peoples. Have those realities now disappeared? Is our planet decisively turning towards unity and peace? I shall not claim that that is so. In spite of the passing years, I seem to hear too often the same words, the same vain incantations, and to see too often the same hopes being aroused only to end in the

(President Mitterrand)

same disillusionment. The expectations of too many peoples remain unfulfilled. Two centuries after the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen there are still many Bastilles to be taken, many liberties to be won, many rights to be safeguarded. But here and there some progress is being seen. What had seemed for ever immovable has begun to move. Will hope come into its own again in the society of men?

We know how much we owe to Mr. Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev, who have had the intelligence and the courage to have done with the arms race and the escalations of confrontation.

Similarly, the adversaries engaged in some regional conflicts - whether they have taken stock of the limits of their action and the attrition of their strength, have changed their appraisal of their people's interests, or have wanted to contribute to the general movement towards the easing of tensions - are trying to disengage themselves from the tragedy they have been living through.

I wish to express my gratitude to peace-loving men and women everywhere who have worked ceaselessly to bring about such a result. Among them I should mention the name of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Perez de Cuellar. Without his skill, his persistence, his constant readiness to serve and his cultural resources, we should not have come this far.

For the first time since the last World War the two greatest Powers have begun to explore the path of disarmament. It must be stated that their agreement on the elimination of United States and Soviet intermediate forces in Europe is a good agreement. On behalf of France, I unhesitatingly approved it from the very first day. It is now my expectation that the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will make progress in the reduction of their strategic nuclear armaments, as they have planned to do. If the negotiations they are conducting

(President Mitterrand)

lead to agreements consistent with the imperative rules of balance and verification this will do much to strengthen the security of all.

These questions are, of course, of tremendous importance. But it will be readily understood that, as the head of a European State, I attach priority to the reduction of the conventional armaments which are stockpiled in Europe, and stockpiled unequally, to the disadvantage of Western Europe. It is my earnest hope that the 35 participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe will take up the substance of these negotiations as soon as possible.

We have been offered an opportunity, unprecedented in the past half century, to ensure the establishment of a stable balance at a lower, sufficient and reasonable level of armaments. Will this balance be achieved? That will depend on the political will of the States involved. But who could assume the responsibility of rejecting this chance out of hand?

The objective is easy to formulate: that everyone should be able to defend himself, as is his right, without threatening anyone else. But how shall we go about this? I venture to suggest some elements of an answer.

First, by ensuring that no army and no coalition of armies in the area where East and West are facing each other has the means for the sudden launching of a surprise attack, nor for waging a prolonged war. To that end, it would be desirable to arrange measures in that area for the reduction, withdrawal and deconcentration of troops and equipment - tanks, armoured vehicles, artillery, portable bridges and all other techniques for crossing water barriers - and measures for the limitation of reserves and stockpiles.

Secondly, by preparing procedures for verification and inspection to prevent any violation of treaties.

(President Mitterrand)

These new measures of transparency and confidence would usefully supplement the arrangements arrived at in Helsinki.

My country has taken a number of initiatives concerning the definition of the area in which these constraints would be applied, the ratio between new military equipment and foreign equipment, and the ceiling to be set on the forces of an individual country in relation to the whole. It would also be my wish that at the end of the next two years the status of negotiations should be examined. If nothing had been achieved, there would be nothing to prevent people from exercising their freedom. However, a favourable outcome would open vast new prospects for the future of Europe. All of us, Europeans both in the East and in the West, belong to the same continent and derive our heritage from the same culture. History and geography invite us patiently to overcome, by every possible means, for the security of all, the confrontation of hostile blocs.

As for chemical weapons, whose ravages we have unfortunately observed in the recent past, we must eliminate them as quickly as possible. What President Reagan said last Monday about this subject was quite right. He expressed himself in lofty and urgent terms, which echoed our own concerns, and in a manner that is all the more timely because his country possesses such weapons. I noted with equal interest that the Soviet Union, which also possesses chemical weapons, had supported this proposal.

The proposals put forward by France, which has no chemical weapons, are of three kinds. First of all, my country, the depositary of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, naturally favours a meeting of the 110 signatories to that agreement. The purpose of such a meeting, in our view, would be to solemnly reaffirm the

(President Mitterrand)

commitment not to use chemical weapons, to prevent their proliferation, to encourage new accessions to the Protocol, to improve investigative procedures - in short, to indicate a common desire for the success of the work currently being carried out at Geneva within the context of the Conference on Disarmament.

Secondly, my country wants to increase the role of the United Nations in the struggle against the proliferation and the use of chemical weapons. In 1982 France was the originator of the resolution enabling the Secretary-General to arrange investigations in those parts of the world where chemical weapons had reportedly been used. This procedure has already confirmed that such weapons have in fact been used. Let us go further: let us create a situation that would make it impossible for any State to use chemical weapons with impunity to settle its external or internal problems. If any State should use them, I think it would become necessary, among other measures, to impose an embargo on all deliveries of products, technologies and, more generally, weapons to that State. For its part, France is ready, after consultation with its partners, to submit a draft resolution to this effect. This would be without prejudice to any sanctions decided upon by the Security Council.

The third and last point is the one I particularly wish to stress: we must prohibit not only the use of chemical weapons but also their manufacture. The risks of the normalization and the proliferation of chemical weapons compel us to accelerate our efforts to bring about the destruction of stockpiles, as well as to maintain close supervision of the means that would make it possible to rebuild them.

In signing the convention, each State possessing stockpiles of chemical weapons would undertake to destroy them. In the view of experts, this will take several years, and in the meantime the chemical threat will continue to exist.



(President Mitterrand)

This is why I believe that chemical-weapons factories should be closed as soon as the convention enters into force and, like stockpiles, should be subjected to international surveillance before they are dismantled. France declares its readiness, as of this moment, to renounce under the same conditions - that is to say, as soon as the future convention enters into force - any possibility of producing chemical weapons.

Of course, the banning of chemical weapons could not be imposed on some if others, including the nuclear Powers, retained a clear field for themselves and did not persevere in their desire for nuclear disarmament.

In this connection, I recall that in September 1983, speaking from this rostrum, I stated the conditions under which my country would agree to participate, at the proper time, in a nuclear-disarmament conference among the Powers that possess nuclear weapons: a decisive narrowing of the gap between the arsenals of the great Powers and our own; a halt in the anti-missile, anti-satellite and anti-submarine weapons race; and correction of the imbalances in conventional armaments. Today I maintain what I said at that time.

I would add that limiting the disarmament effort must be extended to space, the common heritage of mankind. That is why France is opposed to an arms race in space but supports the use of space-borne means of control.

Before the INF treaty, the importance of which is becoming more apparent every day, and the on-site verification for which it provides - a clause the importance of which can never be over-emphasized - disarmament negotiations had stalled over this problem. At the special session of the United Nations last June - the third special session devoted to disarmament - my country advocated control by satellite and by automatic surveillance, as well as the so-called routine or challenge on-site inspections. We can now define, on a case-by-case basis, a combination of

(President Mitterrand)

means of control adapted to each disarmament agreement. But nothing can be done without the political will of States.

Coming now to regional conflicts, I can only welcome the developments in the Gulf, what has been initiated in Afghanistan, and what is expected in the Western Sahara, Cambodia and, perhaps, Cyprus. This is the easier for me because France has always refused to recognize the fait accompli, has ceaselessly condemned terrorist or military intimidation, and has tirelessly pleaded for settlement of conflicts by peaceful means.

(President Mitterrand)

Far be it from me to underestimate the scope of the progress made in the past few months. I have noted, however, that while the rapprochement between the United States and the Soviet Union has contributed to the cessation of fighting, it remains insufficient to restore lasting peace, for the underlying causes persist. In this connection, I have noted that this period of diplomatic calm has not reached several parts of the globe: the Middle East; Central America, despite the Arias Plan and the action of the Contadora and Lima Groups, which France supports; and, while there may be some respite now and again, southern Africa, a direct consequence of the intolerable policy of apartheid.

It is the responsibility of the international community to consolidate what has been achieved and help extinguish the last remaining pockets of violence. When weapons have fallen silent, so much will remain to be done: agreements to guarantee, wounds to staunch, adversaries to reconcile, economies to be rebuilt.

It will do no good to shower the work and the person of the Secretary-General with praise, if we are going to withhold our support from him tomorrow. For peace has its price: sending armed troops there, organizing a referendum here, and elsewhere setting up aid for reconstruction. All this has to be financed. I would hate to think that after being so lavish in their war efforts, States, particularly the most powerful, would be tight-fisted when it comes to peace efforts.

In Afghanistan no one can ever be satisfied with replacing an international conflict by a civil war. The withdrawal of foreign troops should normally open up the way for the restoration of the sovereignty of that country, the return of refugees and economic reconstruction. But this can only come about with extreme vigilance.

It is my wish that the cease-fire between Iraq and Iran will lead, as quickly as possible, to a genuine peace, a settlement of conflicts, the reconstruction of

(President Mitterrand)

disaster-stricken areas and the restored freedom of navigation in the Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

Peace is contagious and everyone, the States and the peoples of the region, will reap the benefits. At this time, how can we be unmindful of the fate of a minority which has suffered in a two-fold way, such as the Kurdish people? I hope that renewed conciliation in Western Sahara will prevail. We could believe it today. This will remove an obstacle to the construction of the Greater Maghreb, bringing with it peace and prosperity, a plan of which France approves. Here we count upon the wisdom of leaders.

In the Middle East, the uprising of Palestinian youth and the decision of King Hussein of Jordan have shown once again that the status quo no longer protects those who are subject to it, those who seek to benefit from it, and that it is increasingly deadly for those who are subjected to it.

Let us go back to the basic principles of a lasting settlement, as defined by the United Nations. All members are familiar with them. For my part, I outlined them both in the Knesset in Jerusalem and in the Arab capitals. Israel has the right to exist within safe and recognized borders; the Palestinian people are entitled to aspire to a homeland and to take charge of their own destinies.

In order to arrive at a peace settlement, which would enshrine these rights, there must be dialogue between the parties. Each side, Israelis and Palestinians, must do its share. Each must be willing to accept for the other what it demands for itself, and each must be able to say this in no uncertain terms. I do understand how difficult it is to take the first step.

In order to facilitate dialogue and break down the walls of distrust, the international community must clearly act as an intermediary. A procedure exists: the international conference. It is the only framework within which real partners can meet and establish bilateral contacts between them.

(President Mitterrand)

The international conference has become a reference point. Let us make it a reality. I proposed some time ago that a preparatory committee earnestly go about laying the groundwork. Mr. Gorbachev was in agreement with me on this idea. Now the time has come to revive this. I suggest that a diplomatic arrangement be made among the five permanent Members of the Security Council in conjunction with the Secretary-General. This preparatory work should result in recommendations on the organization and calendar of the future conference and recommendations about who its participants will be.

France, of whose ties to Lebanon I need not remind the Assembly, will not resign itself to watching that country's independence and unity disintegrate. We call upon the United Nations as a witness to the obstacles which have been placed in the way of the free exercise of the sovereignty of the people. We appeal to the sense of reason of the neighbours of that country. A peaceful, reconciled Lebanon is no threat to anyone. A Lebanon dismembered and the object of conflict and dispute will remain an area of insecurity for us all. Let us urge the Lebanese to draw upon their national pride and patriotism to summon the strength and courage to have faith in their country. I can assure the General Assembly, in any case, that France will remain at the side of those who, in mutual respect, are fighting for a democratic future for Lebanon, as well as its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Farther away, towards the Far East, an end to the sufferings of Cambodia is in sight. The decision announced by the Government of Viet Nam to end its intervention, the initiatives of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the actions of such leaders as Prince Norodom Sihanouk may bring us closer to the hour of a political settlement.

(President Mitterrand)

My country, which facilitated the initial meeting between the Cambodian partners, will continue to work even harder at this, and soon, I hope. We stand ready, if they so wish, to invite the parties involved to meet in Paris in due course.

At this point in my address, I wish to tell the General Assembly that nothing seems more important to me, whatever the importance of the subjects I have touched upon this morning - disarmament and the settlement of regional conflicts - nothing, I stress, is more important to me than closing the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries. The causes of this disparity, as the General Assembly knows, are many: political, social, economic, demographic, financial, and so on. They have become so serious that many are tempted to dismiss all remedies as futile.

(President Mitterrand)

That is not the case with France. For seven years now - and I am certainly not the only one - I have been repeating that it is in the interests of the North to help the South; that there is no such thing as fate; that man can always master the course of events and that it is urgently necessary to do so. I see in the persistence of the current imbalances the most damaging cause of tremendous unhappiness, a misfortune which, more assuredly than any other danger, will drive the world towards the endless chaos of war, or something even worse.

Nevertheless, international multilateral or bilateral aid is stagnating or receding. France - which, of all the industrially advanced countries, allocates the highest percentage of its gross national product to development aid - believes that it has not yet done its duty. The target of 0.7 per cent remains its ambition. In particular, the debt burden calls for immediate action. A number of very interesting initiatives have been launched by one country or another. For my part, I suggested to the major industrialized countries at their Toronto meeting this year that they make the terms of repayment considerably easier for the poorest countries. As for France, it has chosen to cancel one third of the debt owed to it by these countries. This significant step is but a beginning.

For other heavily indebted countries, particularly in Latin America and Africa, debt also represents an intolerable burden, and in certain cases a threat to democracy. In the face of this situation the international community must show that it can be more realistic and more imaginative. All debts incurred must be repaid, but the cost of this can be reduced without passing on the burden to the taxpayers of creditor countries.

Thus, last year the United States, in a bold move, guaranteed a proportion of the principal of Mexico's commercial loans. Several countries and many experts have thought of creating a multilateral fund which would lower the cost by

(President Mitterrand)

guaranteeing interest payments. Various methods of financing this fund have been put forward.

In the view of France, the best technique would be to create a fund in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to guarantee the payment of interest charged on certain commercial loans converted into bonds. This fund would lower significantly the finance charges payable by debtor countries and would involve them more actively in world trade.

In order to finance this, the developed countries would set aside their share of a new issue of special drawing rights for use by the developing countries. I realize that the implementation of this project would represent a significant legal and financial innovation. It would require lengthy preparatory work and many consultations among creditors and with their debtors. However, this alone would seem to be equal to the challenge.

But development requires many other things. I would mention the following: stabilizing the export earnings of countries in the southern hemisphere and diversifying and increasing the value of their production - and the Uruguay Round must take these into account; environmental protection, which only a short time ago was endangered by industrial wastes from the North being disposed of in the South - and the international community will have to agree to regulations and the necessary precautions; a massive transfer of technology and know-how from the North to the South - and I would like in this regard to suggest a new approach, modelled on what is known as Europe's EUREKA project, in which Government stimulus, together with initiatives freely undertaken by companies and universities, leads to co-operation on an equal footing. I continue my brief list: launching major programmes of universal interest which can mobilize our energies to bring help to regions facing catastrophes due to natural causes or the folly of men. I cite as an example the



(President Mitterrand)

stabilization of the rivers that have been flooding Bangladesh, the cause of a terrible catastrophe, as an appropriate beginning for a project of this kind. France, for its part, is ready to contribute.

Two centuries ago France began a revolution that changed the course of history throughout the universe. In doing so, France took a position in the battle which has yet to be won, and is still necessary, for a greater measure of freedom, equality and brotherhood. As we prepare to celebrate this bicentenary, let us defend human rights more fiercely than ever before, from the earliest recognized to the latest: human rights, the rights of peoples, the rights of mankind. Today, in certain emergency situations, in situations of distress or extreme injustice, we should affirm the right of humanitarian assistance.

Economic and social progress is the only solid foundation on which to build democracy; the moral weight of public opinion and unflinching vigilance will be its best guarantee.

So many people are still being denied their most elementary rights and for so many men, women and children poverty is the only world they know, and the absence of rights is their only horizon.

Surely the time has come to acknowledge that rights of mankind exist and should be defined. I am thinking of the protection of our natural environment in the face of the sometimes irresponsible requirements of our economy. I was happy to hear the representative of the Soviet Union asking for a plan to be worked out before 1992 on this subject. I am also thinking of the protection of the human species, the ravages of drugs, and the extraordinary possibilities of science, in particular genetics.

The conference of Nobel Prize-winners which I convened in 1988 in Paris alerted us to the dangers of this. It is not knowledge in itself that is

(President Mitterrand)

dangerous; it is rather the applications of science that must be controlled, that we must master. Since we are accountable in proportion to the power we now possess in transmitting a natural and genetically intact heritage to our descendants, we must lay the foundations for the ethics of the third millennium.

I must stop here. Since, with you, I have been looking at the future, I dream of the day when Europe, as it is trying to take shape, will be able to speak here with a single voice, using, as I have just done, the language of peace among nations and confidence in the destiny of humanity.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the French Republic for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. François Mitterrand, President of the French Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. PAUL BIYA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Cameroon.

Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations General Assembly the President of the Republic of Cameroon, His Excellency, Mr. Paul Biya, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President BIYA (interpretation from French): I thank you for the kind words you have just said as you bade me welcome to the Assembly.

Allow me to congratulate you on your well-deserved election to the presidency of this session and to express the hope that, under your guidance, its work will be successful.

It gives me great pleasure also to extend my warm greetings to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, whom we had the pleasure of welcoming to Cameroon at the beginning of this year. As you are well aware, Cameroon owes its existence to the United Nations. It is therefore deeply attached to this Organization, which played a decisive role in its accession to independence.

I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for his devotion to the service of our Organization. I take this opportunity also to reiterate our support for the considerable efforts he is making to promote peace and co-operation in the world in spite of the prevailing economic difficulties.

I also wish to extend my congratulations to the United Nations peace-keeping forces, which have just been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

(President Biya)

We are on the eve of the year 2000, a turning point in the history of mankind. We will also be responsible for the smooth or faulty take-off of this new millennium.

The duty of each and everyone of us is to ensure the future of generations to come in the best possible circumstances.

(President Biya)

If we take a quick look at the world today the words that keep coming up are: crisis; conflicts; poverty; ignorance; disease; disasters; and injustice. Yet never before have science and technology offered the opportunities they offer today for us to overcome poverty and disease and never before have the various means of communication offered such tremendous possibilities for abolishing distances; but never before has a political and economic crisis reached the extent of today's crisis.

The United Nations, it must be recognized, is doing what it can to improve international relations from both the political and the economic points of view. All these efforts notwithstanding, much still remains to be done. Every conflict stands in the way of progress. Progress depends inevitably on entente, consultation and mutual respect.

Because of their unavoidable interdependence, States should regard the United Nations as a neutral forum wherein they harmonize their positions and settle their disputes in a peaceful and mutually beneficial manner - and this is possible. Politically, the new climate between the Soviet Union and the United States is an example. The commitment of those two great nations to report to the international community, in particular to the Conference on Disarmament, on the progress and results of their negotiations is a decisive step towards peace.

The determination of the major Powers to work more closely together leads us to expect other encouraging results. In Afghanistan, the partial withdrawal of Soviet troops holds out hope for new developments. In the Western Sahara, the peace plan proposed by Mr. Perez de Cuellar has been accepted. The Chad-Libya border conflict appears to be moving towards a negotiated settlement. Many leading African Presidents have made ceaseless efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement. Such a settlement would certainly constitute a great victory for them and for the

(President Biya)

whole of Africa. The situation in the Horn of Africa also allows us to be hopeful. Efforts to normalize relations between Ethiopia and Somalia should be encouraged and supported. In Angola the peace talks between the parties concerned are continuing in Brazzaville. Following the cease-fire agreement in August, the talks between Iran and Iraq begun in Geneva are to be resumed.

However, the odious system of apartheid is still thriving in South Africa and, to date, in spite of United Nations Security Council resolutions 435 (1978) and 601 (1987) Namibia continues to be deprived of its independence. A solution to this conflict would also enable the independent States of the subregion to continue, in an atmosphere of peace and security, the work of nation-building which has been undermined by the attacks and acts of economic sabotage perpetrated by the rebels armed by racist South Africa. We will continue to support a people fighting for a just cause, namely human dignity.

Our present economic difficulties should not prevent us from honouring our commitments to the Special Fund of the Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa and to the Action for Resisting Invasion, Colonialism and Apartheid (AFRICA) Fund. We should also continue to help the freedom-fighters of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), as well as the front-line States.

Once more I call on all forces of peace, on all nations, to exert pressure and to adopt comprehensive and mandatory economic sanctions against the racist régime of Pretoria.

The situation in the Middle East remains disturbing. Cameroon, which maintains relations of friendship and co-operation with all States of the region, condemns the escalation of violence. I sincerely hope that dialogue will replace

(President Biya)

such violence and enable all parties concerned to seek a just and lasting peace. It is high time for the international community to find an appropriate solution.

Numerous hotbeds of tension still persist also in Latin America and Asia, and we must commit ourselves to restoring calm.

The encouraging results achieved in the Sahara, in Afghanistan, in Angola and in Chad are proof that it is always possible to find an appropriate solution: what is needed is to demonstrate seriousness and good faith.

Unwavering determination must be applied to resolving the severe economic crisis afflicting the third world. Consultation designed to find solutions to the poverty in which three fourths of mankind is living is as necessary and as important as the quest for solutions to conflicts. The economic picture of the past few years has been appalling. Imbalances are worsening. Rich countries are enjoying growing prosperity, whereas the natural resources of developing countries no longer suffice even to meet the basic needs of their peoples. The African countries have now come to realize that they must first count on themselves and on their own efforts.

Confronted with this very serious situation we have taken measures aimed at stabilizing our economy and, in the long term, bringing about its recovery. We no longer want to be dependants. We have either abandoned or reconsidered certain development projects and we have cut down on State expenditure.

(President Biya)

Certain companies have been obliged either to close down or to lay off staff. We are all aware of the gravity of the situation.

The special session of the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. However, within the context of the world crisis it is not enough to constitute subregional bodies or to define short-term priorities to stimulate our growth and reduce the vulnerability of our economies.

The prices of our basic products have reached the lowest level in the past 50 years. Our export earnings have dropped alarmingly, while the prices of the capital goods and finished products we import are continuously rising. As if that were not enough, our manufactured goods meet with the protectionist policies of the industrialized North.

The result is that our balance of payments is registering a serious deficit. That deficit is further aggravated by the burden of our external debt and by monetary disorders. It is true that we want to settle our debt, but we do not have the means to do so. It is therefore logical and imperative that we examine with our creditors those solutions that will allow us to replay our debts and still save our economies from total collapse.

Everything that has been done to contain this situation has come up against a hostile international environment. We are working more, we are managing better, we are producing more, yet the sharp drop in the prices of raw materials, the reduction of financial aid for development, the enormous debt burden, inflation and fluctuating exchange rates, the lack of dialogue, which is crucial to bringing about a more just economic order - all those elements constitute impediments to the progress of the African continent and threaten the future of the world.

As we are well aware, world stability concerns both developed and developing countries. We are waiting for the international community to make greater efforts



(President Biya)

and to adopt concrete measures. Decisions taken by a certain number of developed countries, such as Canada and France, and those taken at the summit meeting of the Seven in Toronto, constitute the beginning of positive action.

We are not asking for charity. We are seeking help in order to resolve the serious problems that concern us all. Every one of us has a stake in this - it is not a one-way street. Assisting developing countries out of the crisis means opening up new markets to industrialized countries, new markets for their products. The solutions exist, and all we need is to seek them whole-heartedly.

Politically, the major Powers have demonstrated that when they want something it can be achieved. That applies to the economic crisis as well. We need only have the will.

For us, the United Nations represents a forum for consultation and for seeking solutions. The United Nations reflects the common determination of nations to work together. The United Nations is an assembly. It is a force to reckon with, a powerful tool for development. Let us learn to use it together.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Cameroon for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

## GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. NWACHUKWU (Nigeria): On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, Sir, I wish to congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly at this session. I am particularly pleased to see you occupying this high office because of the very friendly relations between our two countries. I am sure that this session of the Assembly will benefit from the sterling qualities that you will undoubtedly bring to bear on your duties as President. May I assure you of my co-operation and support and that of Nigeria during your tenure of office.

This session is taking place at a time of considerable improvement in the international political climate. The United Nations has proved its value as an effective and indispensable instrument in the painstaking process of negotiating the terms of settlement of most regional problems. This augurs well for the future of the United Nations and of mankind. At this point, may I congratulate the Secretary-General on the leadership role he has played in the cause of world peace and the strengthening of the United Nations.

The award a few hours ago of the Nobel Peace Prize for 1988 to the United Nations peace-keeping forces is the greatest tribute that could be paid at this time to our Organization, but it is also a challenge to the United Nations to strive even harder to progress from peace-keeping to peace-making. As Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, Nigeria is proud to be associated with the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations.

The international economic environment remains extremely unfavourable for the developing countries. The indices of this situation include the continuing decline in the prices of primary commodities, the general worsening of the terms of trade, the problem of rising protectionism, the increasing debt burden and net capital outflow from these countries. The political will needed to address these issues,

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

in particular the debt problem, has not been sufficiently demonstrated by the developed countries. Indeed, the debt burden has become a major impediment to our economic growth and social development. The North-South dialogue has lost momentum, and with it the desire to look critically at the operations of the international economic system.

Nowhere has this worsening economic situation facing the developing countries been exemplified more vividly than in Africa. The economic situation of the continent remains critical. In our determination to improve our economic situation, we have embarked on major reforms of our national economies. Many of us have courageously undertaken fundamental structural adjustments aimed at reviving our economies, stimulating growth and promoting development.

The reform measures have included drastic devaluation of our currencies, reduction or elimination of subsidies, privatization of publicly owned enterprises and the streamlining of our bureaucracies. These measures entail considerable political risks, and social costs arising from the sacrifices which our peoples have been called upon to make. They certainly demonstrate our willingness to do everything possible towards the development of self-reliant economies.\*

The mid-term review and appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development 1986-1990 has demonstrated that the serious economic difficulties faced by African countries remain largely unsolved and in most cases have worsened. The contributions of the international community to the implementation of the Programme have fallen short of the expectations of African countries. Yet, when the Programme was adopted at the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, two years ago, it was widely acclaimed as a positive

---

\*Mr. Essy (Côte d'Ivoire), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

response by the international community to the serious economic problems of the African continent.

Nigeria perceives the Programme as a compact between African countries and the international community. We in Africa are fulfilling our own side of the pact; we expect the international community to fulfil its commitment. Jointly, we must find solutions to the most serious economic problems facing African countries through debt relief, an increase in official development assistance and support for agreements to stabilize the prices of primary commodities, on which the economies of most African countries depend.

The Nigerian Government is facing the challenges of the overall development of our national economy with a courage and dedication unequalled in our history. The focus of the strategy is the modernization and transformation of our national economy. To this end we have adopted a structural adjustment programme designed to improve the performance of our economy. The implementation of this programme has opened up opportunities for our citizens and improved the climate for foreign investment in our country.

Two years of its implementation have brought into bold relief the obstacles that hamper our development. These include, principally, the lack of an adequate supply of external financing and the high cost of imported manufactured products and machinery. These problems have been made more acute by our crushing debt burden and debt-service obligations, as well as by huge losses in export earnings as a result of the sharp and continuing decline in the prices of our primary commodities, including oil. Thus the economic development of Nigeria, like that of most other developing countries, continues to be constrained by an adverse international economic environment.

We believe that the economic problems of African and other developing countries are issues that can no longer be swept under the carpet. The phenomenon

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

of a world in which one fifth of the population lives in luxury and affluence and four fifths live in abject poverty and squalor cannot guarantee peace and security for mankind. Such a world would have little chance of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, nor would it promote fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person.

We believe that, unless the international community takes more seriously its obligations and commitment to establish conditions in which justice and respect for human dignity prevail, the primary purpose of our Organization, which is the maintenance of international peace and security, will continue to be in jeopardy.

In a few weeks we shall be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since its adoption the world has witnessed tremendous progress in the field of human rights, globally, regionally and nationally. The one exception to the universal advancement of the rights of the individual is South Africa, where a white minority continues to trample upon the rights of the black majority.

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

When we in Africa discuss the issue of human dignity, we do so with the conviction that our African culture recognizes the sanctity of life and liberty as universal. We believe that when any man's dignity is trampled upon anywhere in the world, all mankind suffers a little. That is why we denounce apartheid as morally outrageous and indefensible and politically unacceptable to the civilized world. The pernicious apartheid system continues to be an affront to the international community. Worse still, the racist régime continues to destabilize the front-line States of southern Africa.

It is not only unfortunate but outrightly unacceptable that this evil régime in Pretoria should continue to pursue its obnoxious policies with the active support of important Members of this world Organization. Though we are told with sanctimonious piety that sanctions do not work, the same countries that make the claim are quick to impose sanctions on other States with which they disagree. We call on all Member States to rise above pecuniary considerations and impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions on that evil régime.

The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on southern Africa, of which Nigeria is a member, has produced incontrovertible evidence to attest that sanctions indeed do work. I know that South Africa has been feeling the effect of the limited sanctions imposed on it by some Members of the United Nations. We are most disheartened to know not only that a number of countries are continuing unashamedly to trade with South Africa while proclaiming their abhorrence of the evil system of apartheid, but that some of them are benefiting from the limited sanctions imposed on that State. This must stop.

We call on all those who give the racists succour and support to join the civilized world in ostracizing that pariah State until a non-racial régime comes to power in South Africa. Nigeria will continue to support progressive forces within

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

and outside South Africa that are committed to the dismantling of apartheid. This is a commitment that is shared by our people and our Government. Nigerians see the denial of basic human rights to black people in South Africa as a slur on mankind. That is why as far back as 1976, for example, individual Nigerians voluntarily contributed \$15 million to support the peoples of southern Africa in their just struggle to be free.

Africans are a generous and forgiving people. When right triumphs over wrong in South Africa, when freedom overcomes tyranny, when harmony replaces discord and dissension, the Boers will not be victims of reverse racism, as many of them fear; rather they, along with all God's children on the African continent, will march forward in freedom and harmony for the good of the human race. This is the thrust of the Lusaka Manifesto adopted by the Organization of African Unity in 1969.

We call on this Assembly to convene a special session in 1989 devoted to apartheid in South Africa and the destructive consequences of South African aggression against the front-line and neighbouring countries. We hope that the special session will formulate new strategies for the early liquidation of the apartheid system.

We welcome the ongoing negotiations on Angola and Namibia. We believe Angola should be left to develop along its chosen line. It is also the sovereign prerogative of Angola to secure its independence. The recent withdrawal of South African forces from Angola is only a return to sanity, legality and international decorum. Ten years ago the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 435 (1978). The continued illegal occupation of Namibia constitutes not only an affront to the United Nations but a deliberate challenge to the Security Council. South Africa must withdraw forthwith from Namibia.

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

It is to us an irony of our times that any group of countries, fully aware of the grave dangers posed to lives and the environment, would either condone the dumping of toxic and radioactive waste or actively encourage their export to other countries. The international community must accept, as my Government has actively canvassed, that dumping of toxic and radioactive waste is a moral equivalent of war.

The Nigerian Government has made its position clear on this matter, and followed this up with a call on the international community, at the subregional and regional levels, to enact laws to discourage this callous and unacceptable assault on lives and the environment.

At the levels of the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Community of West African States, firm resolutions have been adopted to discourage the importation of these hazardous wastes into our continent and to penalize any persons or private organizations which collaborate with outside interests to turn Africa into the garbage dump for toxic and radioactive waste. At the meeting in July, in Rio de Janeiro, of the countries of the South Atlantic, bold new steps were taken to strike back at this menace before it becomes truly unmanageable.

Recently also, the Nicosia meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement adopted a Declaration which strongly condemned the dumping of hazardous waste. With the establishment of a "Dump Watch", my country is currently collaborating with many Members of this Organization in the dissemination of precise information on the extent and location of toxic waste vessels now roaming the high seas. We have co-operated with and will continue to count on the excellent support of non-governmental organizations which have devoted their time and other resources to the protection of the environment.



(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

Nigeria was a victim of this despicable practice. Between August 1987 and May 1988, toxic wastes were secretly dumped in the Koko Port area of my country. By this act, the people and the environment of Koko were put at very grave risk. In addition, the economic life of the area was dislocated. The Nigerian Government moved with despatch to have the waste removed. It also enacted appropriate national legislation against the dumping of toxic and radioactive waste.

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

My delegation is gratified to note that several delegations have in the course of this debate and in other forums condemned this act and expressed their willingness to crusade effectively against it. As a starting point, we have called on all Member States to curb the activities of those involved in the transboundary movement of waste. We call also on all Member States and non-governmental organizations to adopt the "Dump Watch".

Just as we are worried about the dangerous effects of toxic and radioactive wastes on the environment, we are also concerned about the possible hostile use of these wastes. We are equally happy that the International Atomic Energy Agency at its thirty-second session, last month, condemned all practices of nuclear-waste dumping and requested the Director General to establish a working group of experts to draw up a code for international transactions involving nuclear waste. We call upon the present session of the General Assembly to give the Conference on Disarmament the mandate of commencing negotiations on a draft convention on the prohibition of the dumping of radioactive and toxic waste for hostile purposes.

In the Middle East, after four decades of endemic cycles of violence and needless loss of life, the United Nations has finally outlined a peace process which, if faithfully implemented, has a credible chance of bringing durable peace to that area. Nigeria supports a United Nations-sponsored international conference on the Middle East.

Another area where a solution compatible with the Charter of the Organization is urgent is Kampuchea. Nigeria will continue to work within the United Nations, particularly through the Committee on Kampuchea, in pursuit of an acceptable solution to this problem.

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

The ongoing withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan has demonstrated what is possible when there is political will. It is our hope that the Geneva accords on Afghanistan will be adhered to by all the parties concerned.

Similarly, we commend the peace initiatives of the Latin American and Central American countries. We call on the entire international community to support the ongoing process for a lasting peace in Central America.

I had the opportunity at the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, to congratulate the two super-Powers on the conclusion and ratification of the Treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces. That agreement is historic as the first true nuclear disarmament measure eliminating an entire category of nuclear weapons. The joint declaration by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought has given great relief to a world dangerously threatened by the possibility of self-destruction.

My delegation, like others that worked hard for the successful outcome of the special session devoted to disarmament, is naturally disappointed at the failure to agree on a concluding document. However, we believe that the international community cannot afford to be totally discouraged by such periodic reverses. We appeal to the super-Powers to see multilateral involvement by the United Nations in disarmament as a useful and necessary complement to bilateral and regional efforts. An urgent area for multilateral action is the negotiation of a convention on chemical weapons.

The achievements of the Organization in the four decades of its existence have been quite impressive. The United Nations has contributed substantially to the decolonization process. But for this Organization we would have been without instruments and frameworks of accountability such as the codes, conventions, norms and principles that at present regulate international relations.

(Mr. Nwachukwu, Nigeria)

We are encouraged by the resurgence of hope and faith in our Organization. We are further encouraged by the increasing desire to use it for the primary purpose of advancing international peace and security.

The United Nations is indispensable to all the countries of the world. The presence of all of us here is a reaffirmation of that fact. My country, Nigeria, remains firmly committed to the United Nations Charter.

Mr. MOCUMBI (Mozambique): It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I have the honour of congratulating Mr. Dante Caputo on his election to the presidency of this session. His vast experience in international relations and diplomacy gives legitimacy to our expectations that our deliberations will be successful. I should like to assure him of my delegation's determination to work closely with him as he discharges the responsibilities unanimously entrusted to him. I take this opportunity to recall the recent visit President Chissano made to his beautiful country, Argentina, during which we had an opportunity to explore ways for strengthening further the friendly bilateral relations of our countries.

Similarly, I should like to salute the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr. Peter Florin, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, for the efficient and commendable way in which he presided over the deliberations of the forty-second session and the special session devoted to disarmament.

I take this opportunity also to congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, on his commitment and devotion to the search for solutions to international problems as well as the promotion of better understanding and co-operation among nations.

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

We have learned with great satisfaction this morning of the decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces. That fact represents a singular recognition of the outstanding, indeed unique, role played by the United Nations in promoting peace.

The situation in Mozambique continues to be characterized, on the one hand, by war imposed on us from outside and, on the other, by our firm determination to defend our independence and promote peace and progress.

When addressing the last session of the General Assembly, in this Hall, His Excellency President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of the People's Republic of Mozambique referred to the massacres, the widespread destruction of social and economic infrastructures and the extremely large number of displaced Mozambicans, both inside and outside the country. In general terms, that situation still prevails today. The criminal acts of the armed terrorists continue to spread sorrow, pain, famine, insecurity and homelessness to many Mozambicans.

But that is just one side of the coin. The other gives rise to increased optimism in our people as a result of the victories we have scored on the military, economic and diplomatic fronts.

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

On the military front, our armed forces have been able to restore peace and tranquillity to various parts of our country previously affected by the criminal acts of the armed terrorists. In this endeavour, the support and participation of the front-line States, notably Zimbabwe and Tanzania, continue to be important and greatly appreciated. Equally worth mentioning is the contribution of the Malawian forces in the protection of the Nacala railway.

The Mozambican Government is aware that these efforts intended to eliminate terrorism must be complemented by the adoption of other measures designed to integrate into Mozambican society the terrorists who have repented. As a result, our People's Assembly approved in December 1987 an important law - the law of amnesty. This law forgives those who have committed crimes, massacres and other abominable acts perpetrated against our people and the State. As a result of the application of this law, many terrorists have been granted amnesty and have returned to normal life.

The birth of the law of amnesty translates the deep-rooted nature of the humanitarian policy of clemency adopted by FRELIMO since the times of the armed liberation struggle for our motherland.

At the proclamation of our independence in 1975 a situation arose in which some Mozambicans were found to have committed, at the incitation of colonialism, heinous crimes against their own people or to have been collaborators with the colonial repression system. All these individuals were integrated into our society, and today they are working as valid citizens with other Mozambicans in national reconstruction.

The law of amnesty constitutes an integral part of our efforts to bring about reconciliation, unity and the rehabilitation of those Mozambicans who were brutalized through crime and terrorism and were turned into tools of our enemy. We are ready to welcome them in to our midst and to help them regain their dignity,

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

rights and duties as citizens of a free, independent, sovereign, non-aligned and democratic State.

This process is taking place at a time when the Mozambican people are engaged in the preparations for the Fifth Congress of the FRELIMO Party and are involved in the revision of the Constitution. These two processes constitute an example of the exercise of democracy in our country. They will strengthen democracy there and reinforce the fundamental freedoms of our citizens.

We are aware that our project and our dream of building a peaceful and happy society are shared by all peoples of the world and that they enjoy the sympathy of the international community at large.

One manifestation of such feeling is the visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to Mozambique. He was welcomed enthusiastically by the whole people, regardless of their religious belief, in a massive demonstration of national unity. We hope that his message of solidarity with, and wishes of peace to, the Mozambican people will find an echo in every corner of our globe.

Those efforts go hand in hand with the economic and social recovery measures we have embarked upon. As we have repeatedly stated in the past, the war of aggression against Mozambique by armed terrorists is responsible for the overall retrogression of our development, not only because it entails the diversion of efforts and means away from other endeavours to the defence of our motherland, but also because economic sabotage and the destruction of socio-economic infrastructures were the most favoured policy of our enemy in such a war.

Those who conceived the strategy of destroying our country first set out to destroy our economic base. During the last few years they have embarked upon wanton massacres, which have received widespread international condemnation. As a result of such a strategy, education and health care, which experienced considerable advances during the first seven years of our independence, are now

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

confronted with serious and numerous difficulties, as can be seen from the following figures: 2,269 primary schools destroyed, affecting half a million pupils and 700 teachers; 400 teachers murdered, kidnapped or mutilated; 22 secondary schools destroyed, affecting 80,000 students; and 36 boarding schools and 4 teacher training centres destroyed.

As I pointed out earlier, terrorism does not affect only the economy, education and health. It also affects the Mozambican man and woman, the Mozambican child, the Mozambican youth and the Mozambican family, as the following figures illustrate: 1.1 million people have been displaced from their usual places of work and residences, and 800,000 of them are in neighbouring countries; 3.3 million citizens are seriously affected; 5.9 million citizens are in a difficult situation, affected by severe shortages, in both rural and urban areas; and 200,000 children are in a difficult situation - fundamentally they are orphans, abandoned children and children who had been utilized by the terrorists to carry out their criminal acts. In addition, there are a large number of mutilated citizens and citizens with physical disabilities.

It was in this dismal scenario of socio-economic conditions that we introduced the economic recovery programme and the emergency programme. As a result of the implementation of the former, it was possible to reverse the downward trend of the economy which had been taking place in the last few years.

To illustrate this, the data available for the first six months of 1988 suggest overall economic growth of 5 per cent. This percentage is higher than that registered in 1987, when the gross domestic product experienced a 4 per cent growth. This growth is primarily due to the positive evolution in the agricultural sector.

Despite this positive trend, our country's economic and financial situation remains difficult. Foreign debt still constitutes an enormous burden to our



(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

economy, negatively conditioning its growth. Although there has been some significant progress in the debt-rescheduling process, there has been no generalized application of the more favourable conditions we have been seeking.

This situation leads to a net outflow of resources and thus prevents the allocation of finances required for the development of the productive sectors of the economy. Therefore, we hope that the consensus reached at the Toronto summit meeting regarding the provision of debt relief measures for low-income African countries will be vigorously and expeditiously implemented by all creditors. We call upon our development partners for renewed efforts aimed at an effective reduction of the stock of debt and debt-servicing obligations. In turn, in spite of its difficulties, our country will continue to do its utmost to honour its foreign debt obligations.

It is with high expectations that we look forward to the forthcoming second meeting of donor countries in support of our economic recovery programme, to be held in Paris next November. It is our hope that this meeting will mobilize adequate resources that will enable us to move to the second phase of our programme for economic recovery, which contemplates the rehabilitation of infrastructures.

In order to cope with the emergency situation, our Government has had to mobilize both internal and external resources. In April this year the Second International Conference on Humanitarian Assistance to Mozambique was held in Maputo, with satisfactory results.

We were particularly encouraged by the fact that the international community has recognized that it is imperative to supply the affected people with the means of production and building materials and other means required for the recovery of the infrastructures destroyed or damaged by the criminal acts of the armed terrorists, so as to enable the affected people to resume their normal way of life and production and become self-sustaining.

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

I would like to seize the opportunity to express our gratitude once again to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, to donor Governments, to organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, to governmental and non-governmental organizations, and to humanitarian and religious institutions, for the support they have been rendering to our people.

Let me turn my attention to the situation in southern Africa. Only a few weeks ago the President of the People's Republic of Mozambique, His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Chissano, described the situation in the region as follows:

"Southern Africa is experiencing contradictory processes. One such process is the conflict which is rooted in the colonial past, in the persistence of the ambitions of domination, in the survival of apartheid, a political system based on inequalities of man and on racial discrimination. The other is that of solidarity amongst the peoples and States that pool their efforts together and combine their resources to promote social and economic development."

The state of affairs in southern Africa could not be better characterized. Indeed, the front-line States realized at a very early stage that their fate is intertwined by roots which can be traced back to a common history of domination, colonialism and exploitation. Thus, they have found that pooling together their resources and potentials is a definite way out of servitude to alien interests.

The moral, political, diplomatic, material and military support that the front-line States are rendering to the People's Republic of Mozambique is a manifestation of this solidarity. When the blood of soldiers from the brotherly countries of Zimbabwe and Tanzania mixes with that of our soldiers to safeguard sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, this solidarity acquires an historic dimension.

Mozambique, in its turn, made its modest contribution to the liberation

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

struggle of other countries and peoples. Although Angola is experiencing difficult conditions, it has offered its territory as a rear base in the struggle for Namibia's independence, as did Tanzania, Zambia and others.

The Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) constitutes one manifestation of this common objective, as well as the affirmation of the unanimous will of the countries in our region to free themselves from oppression and economic domination through the integration of their economic potential on the basis of solidarity and co-operation. This solidarity is an important factor in the establishment and preservation of peace, stability and security in the region. The People's Republic of Mozambique is proud to be part of such solidarity. Southern Africa will owe its future of peace and prosperity to this unity, cohesion and solidarity.

In such an endeavour, however, we come across negative and destructive factors, which must be urgently eliminated. More specifically, we are referring to the persistence of values that are both as anachronic and as abominable as only apartheid can be. In South Africa these factors manifest themselves through the institutionalization of inequality, racial discrimination, injustice, division, depersonalization, repression, oppression and refusal to recognize the fundamental rights of the majority of the people.

In Namibia, colonialism still persists and represents a source of violence and conflict. In other words, colonialism constitutes a serious obstacle to peace and development.

Peace initiatives aimed at bringing about a negotiated solution to these problems are now taking place. The quadripartite negotiations involving Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the United States of America are developments in line with the wishes of the region and of the world. It is our duty to encourage the parties

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

concerned to proceed, with seriousness and responsibility, in the negotiation process so as to ensure success and implementation. We also commend the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General in order to implement Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

In the framework of the peace initiatives in the region, a summit meeting between the People's Republic of Mozambique and South Africa was held in Songo. Its objective is to ensure the implementation, in letter and in spirit, of commitments entered into at Nkomati. These developments cannot, and must not, in any way be used as a pretext for certain members of the international community not to fulfil their duties and responsibilities to contribute to the eradication of the apartheid system.

We are aware that these efforts can bring about peace and stability only if South Africa honours its obligations. For this reason, the international community is called upon to intensify its pressure on South Africa to abolish its policy of apartheid and engage in the process of negotiations leading to the establishment of a democratic society in South Africa.

A just and lasting peace in South Africa demands that an end be put to the state of emergency, repression and violence, as well as to other measures adopted by the South African régime with a view to silencing the voice of justice and reason. It also demands the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, with whom the régime must entertain a dialogue in order to find a just and equitable solution to South Africa's problems. Refusal to have dialogue with the legitimate and genuine representatives of South Africa's majority people can only delay further the solution of the problem and will certainly result in a greater heightening of tension in South Africa and in the region as a whole.

The People's Republic of Mozambique reiterates its support for the African

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

National Congress (ANC) and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) - the authentic representatives of the peoples of South Africa and of Namibia respectively.

The People's Republic of Mozambique further reiterates its readiness to contribute to the process of negotiations currently under way in southern Africa.

As we review the international situation we cannot help but express our satisfaction at the positive trend we have witnessed in the last few years. The climate of dialogue between the two major nuclear Powers undoubtedly brings renewed hope for the future of international relations. We are increasingly witnessing recourse to the provisions envisaged in our Charter in the search for solutions to conflicts. They are peaceful alternatives based on the most elementary norms governing relations between nations.

In this context, we can cite such delicate conflicts as the Iran-Iraq war and those in Western Sahara and in south-west Asia as examples of the important role that the United Nations, given the opportunity, can play in the maintenance and the preservation of peace. We hope that the commitment undertaken by the parties concerned will be honoured and that peace, stability and security will prevail in those regions.

In South-East Asia, there is a willingness to embark on dialogue. We hope that such willingness will materialize so that, sooner rather than later, it can bear fruits that will contribute to the reduction of tensions in the region. Chad and Libya have given an example of political maturity as they choose to try peaceful means to solve the conflict between them.

Central America also aspires to peace and stability - objectives that can be realized only when there is respect for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the countries in the region. The dialogue now taking place

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

must be encouraged. We would like to reiterate our appreciation of the efforts being undertaken by the Nicaraguan Government in order to find a peaceful solution to the problems of the region.

As I salute this positive trend in international relations, I cannot help but point out that other challenges still await us.

The Palestinian question, which is the core of the Middle East problem, must find a rapid and immediate solution so that the Palestinian nation can be established in peace, freedom and independence in its own territory. We consider that an international conference on peace in the Middle East would contribute to the solution of those problems. Therefore, we want to stress that such a conference should be convened with urgency.\*

---

\*The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

Similarly, an urgent solution must be found to the conflict in East Timor, where foreign forces have invaded and occupied that territory. We sincerely hope that the Secretary-General will be able to reactivate the process leading to self-determination and independence for the people of East Timor in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

The reunification of the Korean nation has not yet taken place despite various initiatives and repeated efforts in that direction, which we support. We hope that the day will come when a unified Korea will be admitted to our family of nations.

We expect that the consensus reached at the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean establishing 1990 as the date for the convening of the Colombo Conference will be respected. We must therefore start acting now with vigour so as to ensure its success.

The sacrifices our people have made in order to defend our freedom and independence are truly enormous. Despite the generalized campaigns of terror and the crimes committed against our people, despite the destruction of social and economic infrastructures, the Mozambican people remain undeterred in the defence of their motherland and in the building of a future of peace, progress and happiness. It is in the search for attaining such goals, which are much cherished not only by our people but also by the whole world, that we have been treading on such a hard and difficult path for about a quarter of a century.

We want peace. It is only with peace that we can rebuild our fatherland, use all available resources in our country, extend education and health care to everyone, eradicate famine, remedy the lack of clothing and overcome misery and underdevelopment.

We should like to reiterate our appeal to the international community to continue providing its multifarious assistance and support to our people so that they can as soon as possible ease their suffering and attain a lasting peace.

The struggle continues.

Mr. ANDREOTTI (Italy) (interpretation from French): Mr. President, on behalf of the Italian Government I should like to congratulate you most warmly on your election. We are pleased that this honour should have been conferred on the representative of a country to which we are bound by long-standing ties of friendship, personified by the presence of a large Italian community in Argentina. Your abilities and your experience will guarantee the successful fulfilment of this mandate, a mandate that has been rendered particularly delicate by developments in international affairs which offer hopes that cannot be allowed to die.

May I also be allowed to express my appreciation to the outgoing President who, in performing the task entrusted to him by the General Assembly last year, met the challenges posed to our Organization during that period with dedication and skill.

Lastly, the Secretary-General has the gratitude of the Italian Government and my personal appreciation. As a worthy heir to the Latin American juridical tradition, he has succeeded in handling with extraordinary political vision, commitment and negotiating skills situations from which others would have emerged the loser. In the efforts he has generously devoted to the pursuit of peace and security, in his quest for negotiated solutions, and in his firm defence of the principles of the Charter, the Secretary-General has had, and continues to have, the unconditional support of the Italian Government.

The winds of history seem, today, to be blowing in the right direction. This is confirmed by the trust and sincerity of the ongoing dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the incisive role assumed by the United Nations in regional crises and conflicts. Italy is contributing to these developments the whole-hearted co-operation of a country fully aware of its international responsibilities.



(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

In view of the advances made by the two major Powers in the field of disarmament, we must recognize that many things have changed over the past 12 months. Positive changes have opened up new prospects for stability, particularly in Europe. The Italian Government, acting individually and in the framework of the Atlantic Alliance and the European Community, has made its own contribution to promoting these prospects.

The conclusion of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles has particular significance. Above all, it suggests a new way of dealing with disarmament problems because, for the first time in the history of mankind, massive quantities of weapons are being destroyed, not through wartime military operations but, on the contrary, as a consequence of negotiations. And here I should like to emphasize that this Treaty, together with the detailed verification procedures it provides for, should serve as a model to be followed and, accordingly, extended to other agreements as soon as possible.

We all cherish the well-founded hope that the agreement on a 50-per-cent cut in the strategic arsenals of the two major Powers will also be formally concluded at an early date. We would call attention both to President Reagan's consistent commitment to promoting the dialogue at the highest level with the Soviet Union and to the dynamic and courageous approach taken by General Secretary Gorbachev, also in his international policies.

It is chiefly in the area of disarmament that the community of nations must play a role if bilateral agreements are to be gradually extended to cover all types of weapons existing on Earth.

Today, in the light of the results achieved, our objective must be to eliminate the risks of a sudden change of course. This is an endeavour incumbent on all nations, and should be self-evident in the case of an Organization that

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

believes in the strength of its universality and the need to take the utmost advantage of all possibilities afforded by a more serene international climate.

Unfortunately, the agreements between the two major Powers have not yet been matched by any appreciable results in the various multilateral forums.

The proceedings of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament did not produce any specific conclusion. Of course, we do not underestimate the contribution that emerged from these joint deliberations towards more effective mechanisms for the transparency of military budgets, towards a deeper analysis of the principles governing verification of arms control agreements, and particularly towards increased effectiveness for United Nations initiatives in activities directly or indirectly linked to disarmament.

These deliberative contributions are by no means minor. But our task does not consist solely in stating and illustrating positions; it requires us to work coherently for the realization of the good intentions and the equally receptive attitudes that exist.

At the conference table in Geneva no progress has been recorded for some time in almost any of the areas under discussion, from the cessation of all nuclear-test explosions to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, or from the banning of radiological weapons to the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Only in the field of chemical weapons are negotiations moving ahead, but even these are moving too slowly.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

At one time we had hoped they might be completed this year. In fact that was the hope that, together with Foreign Minister Genscher, I personally expressed in Geneva last February. That has not happened, although the use of this terrible instrument of mass destruction is again of current concern to Governments and public opinion.

We do not, of course, underestimate the technical difficulties of applying adequate verification procedures in this field. For that very reason we sponsored an international symposium last May in Rome, attended by eminent scientists. Information and conclusions emerged regarding the possibility of conducting experiments to verify that there are no diversions for military purposes in industrial production processes. We shall bring the results of the proceedings to the attention of Governments.

Regionally, the imbalances in conventional weapons existing in Europe are another dangerous source of insecurity. We must therefore make every effort to secure prompt results that will permit the achievement of greater stability at lower levels of forces and armaments. Here, in the context of the informal Vienna talks on the elaboration of a mandate for future negotiations, there are signs of a significant convergence of views on questions of substance.

We intend to continue to work, in every possible way, towards the speediest possible completion of a satisfactory final document.

I should like at this point to reaffirm the validity of the Helsinki Final Act, an irreplaceable instrument in international relations which has indissolubly linked the United States and Canada to the future of the countries and peoples of the Old World.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

In this context let me express the hope that Albania will also play a part in the overall European framework. I would interpret as a positive step in this direction the very recent Albanian decision to resume active participation in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which will be celebrating its centenary next year.

In a final reference to the topic of disarmament in Europe, I would mention that Italy, as part of a drastic reduction in armaments, is giving priority to the elimination of asymmetries in the most destabilizing offensive-weapon categories. This elimination should be followed by a restructuring of military deployments in a defensive posture.

It will be recalled that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons itself provides that all the signatories, including the nuclear-weapon Powers, should pursue negotiations for the conclusion, as expressly stipulated in article VI, of "a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control". (resolution 2373 (XXII), annex)

The representative of the country currently holding the presidency of the Council of the European Communities has already stated the common position of the member States on the various more delicate aspects of international activities. The statement made by my colleague from Greece has testified to the work done by the Twelve towards harmonizing their respective foreign policies, a harmonization we Italians hope will become increasingly visible and extensive. We are indeed convinced that we must build a more united and mutually supportive Europe capable of progressively asserting, primarily on the basis of the Single European Act, an identity of its own and its own role in shaping a free world responsive to the demands of the various peoples. This identity and this role fully accord with the aims attributed by the Charter of the United Nations to regional arrangements.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

The United Nations has recently achieved encouraging results in endeavours to resolve some of the most acute and difficult international crises of the past decade. The advances made constitute real successes for the Organization and its Secretary-General, to whose perseverance and skill as a negotiator they are largely due.

I refer, first of all, to the good offices which led to the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan.

In the case of Iran and Iraq, a cease-fire was achieved and a direct negotiating process between the parties has finally been launched. We fully support the efforts of the Secretary-General to consolidate, through implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), the results obtained thus far.

In the Security Council and at the bilateral level, we shall continue to work for the restoration, between the two countries concerned and in the Gulf, of the conditions of security and stability which are the prerequisite for peace and are indispensable for the commencement of reconstruction.

On the question of Cyprus and in the dispute over Western Sahara, the patient quest for points of contact also seems to hold out prospects of change.

We are thus at a point in history when the United Nations is offered increasing opportunities, either directly - as in the cases I have just mentioned - or indirectly, to consolidate and bring to fruition the agreements reached at the regional level. This is happening in the case of southern Africa, where in Angola and in Namibia the United Nations may be called upon to facilitate and guarantee the withdrawal of foreign troops, the restoration of domestic peace and the completion of one of the last great decolonization processes in history.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

The role of our Organization is undoubtedly becoming more incisive. We have seen the increasingly favourable reception accorded to offers of mediation by United Nations bodies and the new opportunities for action that are constantly opening up.

The new possibilities and the prospects I have mentioned are, without doubt, due to the changed climate in relations between the two major Powers and the overall improvement in international relations wrought by that change.

For the first time since 1945 - that is, since the approval of the Charter at San Francisco - the United Nations now finds itself operating within an international context not unlike the one envisioned by the founding countries, a context in which international collaboration, a tendency to engage in dialogue, the negotiated solution of problems, in short multilateralism and the rule of law, should take precedence over arbitrary approaches and the use of force.

The present convergence of positive elements could enable the United Nations to make greater use of all the instruments available under its Charter. Here we have a great opportunity, but also a great question mark. Once the differences between East and West have been reduced and, we hope, eliminated, it remains to be seen whether those uninvolved in that tension, and those who were loud in their denunciation of the inherent threats to international progress and stability, will also shoulder their responsibilities. There must be a broadening of narrow regional outlooks, less rhetoric and a greater focus on action, a feeling of participation in a common design. There is a need for a spirit of dialogue, which we must all patiently seek to make more effective.

The successes I have mentioned would not have been possible without the mediation efforts, I say again, of the Secretary-General and his associates, with the contribution of the Security Council - an important context for its function

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

and the problems confronting it, but a limited one, and, I would say, certainly inadequate in the light of the great potential of our Organization.

The time has come to test the potential of all the organs of the United Nations, including the General Assembly. We must overcome the conflicts between groups, which have been a frequent feature of the past few years. This is a necessary development if the system is to pursue the role assigned to it by the Charter, keep pace with developments in international relations, and thus preserve its credibility.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

One thing is certain. If the dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union is pursued in depth and results in a strengthening of the cause of peace and the necessary conditions for security, there will no longer be any excuse for those countries or groups of countries that have thus far, more or less deliberately, tried to shirk their historical responsibilities.

Special attention should be given to unresolved conflicts.

The Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, which began last December, clearly reflects the distress of a population compelled for decades, and without any political prospects, to live in a state of occupation. The disagreements between Arabs and Israelis and the Palestinian problem are back in the limelight, serving as a dramatic and, indeed, a daily reminder to the international community of the existence in a sensitive area of an open wound that requires healing.

We are all aware of the complexity of the problem confronting us. Everyone, including the parties involved, is looking for a way out of the situation, and it is also generally recognized that repressive measures against a movement that is widespread and spontaneous are of no avail. Israel is a member of this Assembly, as it is entitled to be. This must be fully recognized, and so must the corresponding right to security, without offensive charges of racism. Similarly, Palestinians and Israelis, particularly those of the younger generation, must be helped out of the vicious circle of hatred and confrontation and encouraged to enter into dialogue and co-operation that can open up new prospects for development throughout the Middle East.

There is a growing conviction, shared by a very broad section of the community of nations, that an international peace conference, subject to rules and procedures that are imaginative and innovative, could help overcome the problems and obstacles in the way of a global, just and lasting solution to the conflict.



(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

We welcomed the acceptance in principle by the United States of the idea of an international peace conference, and we appreciate the aims underlying the personal and generous commitment demonstrated by Secretary of State Shultz in presenting his peace plan.

I am convinced that solution of the problem confronting us - which, in essence, concerns the possibility for all the countries of the area, including Israel, to live within secure and recognized borders, and the right of the Palestinians to a homeland - is not always facilitated by those who take up purely declaratory positions which remain without effect. I believe that a serious, positive effort must be made by all of us to reduce existing differences.

In the Middle East context we also view developments in Lebanon with concern, for its institutional difficulties are all the more alarming in that they could jeopardize not only the coexistence of Christians and Muslims, but the very unity of the State.

In Central America, after encouraging progress in the dialogue following the Esquipulas agreements, we note with concern disturbing symptoms of intransigence that will make it harder to achieve the general reconciliation we hoped for and, hence, that "happy peace for all" to which the Presidents of the Central American countries referred last year when agreeing, inter alia, on the promising idea of a common Central American parliament.

Italy is an active participant in the political dialogue instituted between the States of the region and the countries of the European Community. The latter countries are continually and actively following the regional peace efforts and hope that all parties will show that genuine political will necessary to give those efforts a constructive thrust and renewed momentum.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

The Horn of Africa region also deserves the attention of the Assembly because of the tensions still existing there. These tensions, and some major natural disasters, have unfortunately made living conditions unacceptable for hundreds of thousands of human beings. Realism and a genuine spirit of conciliation are the components needed to consolidate promising agreements and translate into reality the political solutions that would restore peace to that area, as an essential prerequisite for its social and economic progress. For years Italy has been giving the highest priority to its co-operation in the development of this region. We are prepared to strengthen this co-operation further if conditions permit. In this context, Italy is devoting special attention to the situation in Eritrea, where its co-operation and humanitarian assistance efforts are encountering particular obstacles, which are having a negative impact on the normal development of those efforts.

Another crisis, that in Kampuchea, shows signs of positive developments, provided that the parties are able to maintain the commitments already undertaken and the conditions are achieved for the formation of the broadest possible domestic coalition.

The history of our planet is becoming increasingly a closely shared experience in which peoples, nations and different economic and social systems are participating. This is not, at this juncture, an empty statement. On the contrary, it has a particular meaning for a world that has become more aware of the dangers of collective destruction caused by misguided developments in science and technology and is consequently intent, above all, on rediscovering the values of solidarity and justice.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

The deliberations of the forty-third session of the General Assembly cannot fail to take account of the new climate of increasing openness to mutual understanding and of willingness to search more actively for common ground.

Italy has always been a supporter of the role of the United Nations in the pursuit of international peace and security. Our very presence in the Security Council reflects those concerns and proceeds from the assumption that the role of the Secretary-General should be enhanced and that parties to a dispute should be constantly persuaded to take a peaceful view of their own interests.

The successes the United Nations is scoring today confirm the validity of multilateralism and show that we must all have faith in a system of agreements that promotes the rule of law and increasingly restricts recourse to violent means.

In this connection we affirm our belief in the principle of universality as a fundamental principle that must be reinforced and extended, where the proper conditions exist, by consistent conduct on the part of United Nations bodies and Member States. We hope, in this context, that contacts between the two Koreas will be resumed and yield positive results, so that the principle of universality may also become a reality for them.

We must also ensure that the United Nations is in a position to overcome its present budgetary crisis and that there is a sound financial basis for its peace-keeping operations, which we all wish to see extended and consolidated, so as to infuse new life into the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Our Organization cannot confine itself to reacting to events. It must take preventive action and look ahead if it is to understand and satisfy the far-reaching demands of our peoples and redress the glaring imbalances which are still poisoning relations between nations. We must, in other words, take full

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

advantage of the opportunities available for bringing about a world order guaranteed by the rule of law and considerations of justice.

The path is now strewn with obstacles, difficulties and burdensome restrictions. The efforts of the entire international community are required to overcome them. Our peoples feel ever more acutely the need for an improved quality of life, a healthier and better protected environment and true freedom from the enemies of society and civilization, such as the heavy indebtedness of some countries, recurrent food crises, pollution of the atmosphere and the oceans, the effects of excessive urbanization and the production and use of drugs.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

In actual fact little has been done to combat these evils. I am thinking, in particular, of the terrible dimensions of the drug phenomenon, which is undermining the very foundations of our society and destroying our young people, who are our hope for the future.

We must attack drug production by carrying out adequate programmes to assist economic and social development and to substitute other crops for drugs in the producing countries. We must attack trafficking by means of increased co-operation between judicial and police authorities and by introducing, through international agreements, financial controls that will make it possible to freeze and confiscate the proceeds of drug traffickers. Lastly, and perhaps above all, we must strike a blow at illicit drug use by putting into effect all appropriate preventive measures, educating and sensitizing public opinion, harnessing for this purpose the power of the major communications media, using appropriate school and leisure facilities and instituting programmes for the treatment, recovery and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

International co-operation to combat drug use is particularly necessary now that it is affecting all States, albeit to a different extent, so that no country can really consider itself immune. It is a terrible evil which we all share, from East to West, North to South, and we all have a duty to take forceful determined action to combat it.

The economic, social, health and environmental effects of urbanization also need careful consideration. It has been estimated that, after the the year 2000, some 50 per cent of the world's population will be living in megalopolises, and that this phenomenon will affect the emerging countries particularly.

While it is easy to imagine the kind of effects produced by the concentration of populations in cities, it seems more difficult at the present level of our knowledge to identify suitable remedies to reduce - at least partially - the

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

resulting anomalies. Perhaps, in this particular area too, help will come from co-operation between scientists, in a setting in which science is growing more open, rising above ideological barriers to become a vehicle of universal progress and not an instrument of competition.

There are certainly many opportunities, even in this area of the quality of life, for encouraging and developing international co-operation. The United Nations, precisely because of its universal character, cannot evade these new challenges and, indeed, should be ready to provide convincing and eloquent responses to them.

I am not at present in a position to suggest the courses to be taken. Perhaps, and particularly with a view to preparing for, or, if possible, preventing major natural disasters - I have in mind disasters of the Sahel type - we might consider setting up a collective emergency force to be placed at the disposal of the Secretary-General. The establishment of such a force would complement certain activities which, to some extent, are already being carried out, and would confirm the universal role of the United Nations, viewed as a catalyst for human solidarity.

It would be over-ambitious of me to delineate the exact contours of our future, and predict the structure of our society at the planetary level.

However, there is one element in the thinking of the authors of the San Francisco Charter that remains particularly valid - the idea that the United Nations and its machinery should be a profoundly innovative factor in relations between States. Besides, the mere fact of achieving harmony between peoples with such diverse cultures and systems through a process that precludes suspicion and mistrust in the interests of promoting co-operation, must inevitably result in something original and unique.

(Mr. Andreotti, Italy)

Now is the time to embark on this venture, precisely because we must realize that the principles and purposes set forth in the Charter could not have been properly affirmed in an atmosphere, such as we have experienced in the past, characterized by serious tensions between the two major Powers. Is it possible, then, to attain these objectives in the framework of the process of revision taking place in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union? If we tried to give a definite affirmative answer to that question I think we would be venturing onto the unsafe ground of prophecy. We will merely note that there now exist favourable conditions for change and that the requirements linked to this change are coming to light, even if they are not always perceived fully and with total clarity.

More than any other design, that of a more balanced order, an order that is informed, above all, with the principles of justice, appears the most likely eventuality as we approach the year 2000, if only because, as Plato said, every individual or State that is unjust contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction. And this is still valid for all mankind.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.