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at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. Paul J. F. LUSAKA
(Zambia).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT: I wish to remind representatives of the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 3rd meeting, on Friday, 21 September 1984, that the practice of expressing congratulations in the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered is prohibited. It is my firm intention to see to it that that decision is applied strictly and consistently, out of fairness to all delegations. I appeal to all members for their co-operation in implementing this explicit decision of the Assembly.

2. Mr. HARDING (Jamaica): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to see you presiding over this, the thirty-ninth, session of the General Assembly with the skill, competence and assiduity we have come to associate with you. The deep pleasure it affords my delegation to see you seated there reminds me that the middle passage did not break the ties that join the peoples of the Caribbean to the peoples of Africa. Time has served to affirm and strengthen the links of ancestry and historical experience between the Caribbean and Africa. The Jamaican delegation is certain that your rich experience will serve us well as you carry out your important task.

3. I take this opportunity to convey our appreciation to Mr. Jorge Illueca, of Panama, who deserves our praise for the competent manner in which he carried out his duties as President during the past year.

4. It is also a pleasure to welcome Brunei Darussalam as the 159th Member of the United Nations.

5. The Caribbean, like Africa itself, has been much analysed but not well understood. If some of the contributing reasons in the case of Africa have been the sheer vastness of the continent, its long and rich history and the complexity of its indigenous social and cultural traditions, with us in the Caribbean the reasons are very different. We are mostly small islands, and in the main a transplanted people. Despite our size, we have often found ourselves at centre stage in the turbulent unfolding of events, not just during the past few years, but indeed over the past few centuries.

6. We were at one time both the pawns and the prize in the struggle amongst the European Powers for economic and political hegemony in the New World. And still, today, we are close to centre stage. For while islands do not change hands any more, the

struggle continues, this time for the political allegiance of the Caribbean. The axis and basis of competition have shifted. The protagonists are no longer to be found in rising European Powers, but in the super-Powers to the East and the West, locked in ideological struggle.

7. Our historical role and importance in the turbulent events of several centuries, events which now continue in different forms, have been out of all proportion to our size. Small and at history's centre stage, we have been continually buffeted by crosswinds and swirling currents. But we have refused to be overwhelmed. The response of our people to the events which have shaped our subregion has been evolving slowly but with certainty, especially over the past two decades or so of our independence.

8. During this period, we, in the English-speaking Caribbean, have seen the ingenuity and vitality of our people at work, weaving a democratic, political culture out of the varied skeins of our past; carrying out with confidence the important process of institution-building in our young societies; moulding economies which, despite their size, limited resource base and manifold problems, are among the more successful in the developing world; and, perhaps above all, cultivating in our subregion a deep appreciation of the civil and political liberties and a just respect for the human rights of all, which include the unfettered right of all citizens to change their Governments by ballot.

9. In summary, during the two decades of our independence we have been defining for ourselves for the first time, as Caribbean people, the Caribbean reality, and determining for ourselves the ethos that infuses that reality. This is a difficult process. There have been and will necessarily be many impediments and disagreements—sometimes serious ones. But Jamaica believes that the record of the Caribbean countries which came to independence during the past two decades or so, countries which emerged from the longest period of modern, colonial history in either the New World or the Old, is commendable.

10. For small countries such as Jamaica, economic interdependence can be no mere slogan; it is the key to our survival. Let me illustrate. In the three years between 1980 and 1983, bauxite exports, upon which Jamaica depends for 70 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings, fell from 12 million to 7.3 million tons—a decline of approximately 40 per cent. This dramatic reduction was directly attributable to the international recession, and the contraction of markets in the industrialized world. Debates will continue among academics and politicians as to whether the recession could have been avoided. There will be arguments about whether its depth and severity were caused by the particular mix of policies adopted by industrialized countries, and even whether the recov-

ery which we now discern will be self-sustaining. But one question Jamaica need not debate is the severity of the impact of the recession on our economy, particularly on our major exports, and the consequent adverse impact on indices and targets which relate directly to my Government's determined effort to improve the social and economic welfare of our people.

11. Against a background such as this, developing countries such as my own have no choice but to take seriously the mandate of the Charter of the United Nations regarding international co-operation as a means of solving international problems. There is no escape from multilateralism. We are thus disturbed not only by the impasse that has been reached, but by the confusion and obfuscation, some deliberate, that now seem to bedevil discussions of international economic co-operation.

12. It would be quite obvious to any onlooker who descended to this planet that different development strategies in the developing world have met with varying degrees of success. This is hardly an earth-shaking conclusion. It is true of strategies adopted by any group of countries. It is also clear that some countries in the developing world have chosen the strategies which they regard as optimal and the domestic conditions which they regard as most conducive to growth and development. This is their right and, indeed, it is as much the right of the smallest developing country as it is that of the major Powers in the international economy. Against considerable odds, Jamaica has chosen to pursue an outward-looking export-oriented strategy and to do so in consonance with domestic policies sensitive and responsive to the social and economic interests of the Jamaican people. But the choice of development strategy is not and should not be the main issue in matters of international economic co-operation or a weapon used to blunt efforts at institutional and structural reform of the international monetary, trade and payments system.

13. Despite varying growth records amongst developing countries, the evidence over the years indicates clearly that the development process will be greatly assisted by increased flows of aid, capital and technical assistance to the developing countries; by appropriate reforms of the monetary, trade and financial systems; and by buoyancy in the economies of the industrialized world. If we cannot agree on these concerns, which, in the light of the historical evidence, are almost axiomatic, then we fear that it is not only the international economy which is in crisis; equally disturbing, our thinking about the international economy is itself in crisis.

14. This latter concern is not inconsequential. How else can we explain some of the paradoxes which bedevil our approaches to international co-operation and to the functioning of the international economy? To cite just a few: countries which show no growth are blamed for bad policies, and countries which do show growth are met with bad policies in the nature of protectionist barriers of various sorts. This catch-22 belongs in the sphere of fiction from which it emerged, not in international economic relations. Increased South-South trade is regarded as a key element to offset secular trends in trade between North and South. Yet policies which entail simultaneous constriction of the imports of a large number of developing countries can have no other consequence but the throttling of trade amongst them.

Indeed, when in the 1960s the rallying cry of trade, not aid, was heard, very few of us could have envisaged that by the 1980s the implied choice might not exist. High real interest rates and significant differences in these rates amongst the industrialized countries induce trans-Atlantic capital flows among capital-rich industrialized countries, while the same phenomena serve only to add to the flow of resources out of the capital-poor and debt-ridden South.

15. World inflation seems to be a problem when it comes to a new issue of special drawing rights; but the problem all but disappears when the question is budget deficits in the industrialized world or, indeed, massive armaments spending.

16. This catalogue of paradoxes, only a few of which have been cited, does not augur well for the future. Much depends at this juncture on both sides—North and South—coming once again to see the problem of development in essentially the same perspective, and agreeing generally on the consequences of failing to address together some of the most pressing problems of international economic co-operation that confront us.

17. In this context, we should be able to agree that there is ample evidence that the situation of the developing countries in general is worsening. The statistical data charting the decline are there to be seen. But, as is often the case, the figures do not fully reveal the facts. The situation which confronts developing countries is even more ominous than the statistical evidence might indicate. The sobering truth is that the industrialized countries have already begun to employ the technologies of the future in areas such as micro-processing and bio-technology while much of Asia, Africa and, indeed, Latin America and the Caribbean is still dependent on the technologies of the past.

18. Differences in technological and scientific sophistication, productive capacity and levels of development are certain to grow, not diminish, in such circumstances.

19. Were this bleak prognosis the inevitable outcome of existing differences among countries, Jamaica might accept them passively, but we are convinced that there are other more desirable and, indeed, attainable solutions. There are at least three key elements of an approach that will lead to mutually beneficial growth based on the synergistic potential of economic activity rather than the exacerbation of existing differences which, in the long run, will only seriously limit the overall potential for growth in the international economy. These elements are: first, a renewed will to co-operate on the part of the developed countries; secondly, a readiness on the part of the developing countries, many of which are already making extraordinary sacrifices, to intensify their efforts to achieve, with external assistance, the levels of living to which they aspire; and, finally, an understanding on the part of all members of the international community that existing economic structures and institutions are neither ends in themselves nor sacrosanct and therefore shielded from even beneficial change. These structures and institutions must be moulded to meet better the goals and objectives which the international community might set from time to time.

20. There is a clear obligation on the part of the international community to ensure that vital institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank function

as effectively as possible and that their modalities of operation are always in the interest of those members of the international community that need them most—the developing countries. The international recession will indeed be an ill wind that blows nobody good if it does not act as a catalyst for certain measures of reform. One clearly demonstrated shortcoming is the continuing inadequacy of the resources of both institutions, even taking into account the recent increases under the IMF Eighth General Review of Quotas and the selective capital increase in the case of the World Bank. Twenty years or so ago, quotas in the IMF represented about 12 per cent of world trade. At the end of 1983, the figure had declined to about 5 per cent of world trade. At the same time, we find that drawings by IMF members have attained record levels for the second straight year, indeed, with drawings in 1983 being over 69 per cent higher than in 1982. The inadequacy of the resources of the IMF is of concern to my delegation not only because of the upward trend in the demand made on those resources, caused by the recession and the debt and payments difficulties of developing countries, but, equally important, because the rigidity of IMF conditionality and the harshness and sharpness of the adjustment process which countries such as my own have had to endure require for amelioration the lengthening of the time available for adjustment, more flexibility with regard to special circumstances and increased resources to the IMF. One immediate measure which should be taken to ease the liquidity problem of developing countries and to promote the revitalization of our trade is a new issue of special drawing rights by the IMF.

21. In addition to providing for adjustment on a longer-term basis, the role of the IMF itself should be adjusted, so as to place more emphasis on investment and growth. The need for this emphasis is almost self-evident when we consider that, at the end of 1983, 43 developing countries had either stand-by or extended arrangements in effect with the IMF, making excessive emphasis on demand management intrinsically self-defeating.

22. Jamaica wishes to emphasize that the international community must ensure that the key role of the World Bank is not eroded now, at a time when private lending has fallen off dramatically and when many developing countries are pursuing painful adjustment. We are disturbed that current projections are for a decline in the net disbursements of the multilateral lending institutions over the next few years. Now may be an opportune time for a general increase in the capital resources of the World Bank so as to enhance its borrowing and lending capacity and, further, to re-examine its gearing ratio with the aim of augmenting the level of resources that will be available to developing countries in the next few critical years.

23. Jamaica fully understands that there are no ready-made solutions to the economic problems that confront the international community, the developing countries in particular. Neither North nor South, no country—no matter how large or how powerful—is in possession of a set of prescriptions that can guarantee international prosperity. We fully recognize that entrenched attitudes, varying perceptions, goals and objectives, misplaced trade-offs between short- and long-term benefits and between short- and long-term solutions, can not only hinder the development process in the case of the developing countries

but, in the case of the developed ones, create paralysis or lead to action inimical to the interest of the international community as a whole. Nevertheless, a renewed commitment to international economic co-operation is not misplaced idealism, for these are not arguments against, but arguments for international co-operation. It is also a recognition that buoyancy in the international economy, with the promotion of development, is a two-tiered process involving interdependent members of the international community in vigorous and appropriate action at both the national and international levels.

24. Jamaica fully accepts the view that a substantial part of the solution must, indeed, be generated within our own economies in the South. And for our part, we intend to press ahead vigorously with our efforts to restructure the Jamaican economy so as to make it more broad-based, more productive, less protective and more competitive—elements we view as essential for the achievement of self-sustaining growth.

25. Two world wars in this century forced the international community towards consensus on the need to try to manage rationally political relations among States. We should not await a second collapse of the international economy, as was the case in the 1930s, to recommit ourselves without further ado to a similar consensus in respect of international economic solutions.

26. The United Nations is the foremost expression of our commitment to an enlightened approach to relations among States. For this reason, the stake that countries such as my own have in this institution and our commitment to its principles and ideals cannot be overstated. We view the retreat from those principles and ideals as clear signs of a regression towards more irrationality in international affairs and an increased search for spheres of influence and pursuit of militaristic policies and solutions. Jamaica is profoundly disturbed that these dangerous trends are once again gaining strength and momentum in the international community. They are reflected in the deadlock over arms control and disarmament, in regional conflicts and tensions and in the attacks on the Organization. We know from historical experience that the level of tension in the Caribbean subregion, while not explainable solely in those terms, is directly related to the state of relations between the major power blocs, and particularly between the super-Powers.

27. Our view is that, if we wish to avoid the costly errors of the past, it is incumbent upon Member States to use fully and in good faith the multilateral institutions and arrangements at our disposal.

28. Year after year, from rostrums such as this, appeals have been made on behalf of arms control and disarmament. Year after year they go unheeded. The frantic pursuit of “parity” or “superiority” or “balance” in the name of security goes on. Perhaps at no time in the past were the prospects for some movement in this area more gloomy.

29. The past year has seen the suspension of bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, with very little indication of early resumption; and negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament continue to yield meagre results. There is no question that the arms race and the proliferation of weapons require our urgent attention, first, because of our concern for peace and survival in this nuclear age and, secondly, because of

our conviction that the massive expenditures now being devoted to the procurement of arms should be diverted towards the economic and social benefit of mankind. It is essential that a start be made, particularly with regard to the control of nuclear weapons. To begin with, we need a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty as an essential first step in the process of nuclear disarmament. Since it now appears that the technical problems of verification can be resolved, there is no reason why any nuclear Power should fail to co-operate in achieving this objective.

30. There is, as well, a clear need to advance the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention which would ban the manufacture, acquisition and use of such weapons. In addition, we cannot ignore the persistent increase in conventional weapons and particularly the expansion of the arms trade to developing countries. There has to be some restraint. It is Jamaica's view that regional initiatives could be usefully pursued to make progress in the restriction of conventional weapons. We recognize that such initiatives would themselves require political accommodation and a framework of regional co-operation would have to be worked out to facilitate the process.

31. On 30 April 1982, when the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea¹ was adopted, a new chapter was opened in multilateral co-operation for the management and exploitation of resources which are the common heritage of mankind. The implementation of the arrangements provided for in the Convention, which is now the task of the Preparatory Commission for the International Sea-Bed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, is one of the most important tasks before the international community. The Preparatory Commission held a formal session and an informal session in the past year and we are satisfied that it has made good progress and should continue to be fully supported by Member States. We urge all States which have not yet done so to sign the Convention before the closing date for signature on 9 December this year, thereby becoming full participants in the work of the Preparatory Commission. We also urge signatories which have not yet done so to ratify the Convention as soon as possible. It is our belief that the most effective response to those who would wish to undermine the Convention is early ratification, thus allowing its provisions to come into effective force.

32. It should be clear that there can be no viable or legal arrangements for sea-bed mining outside the Convention. We therefore warn against any attempt to conclude a mini-treaty or other arrangements which purport to confer legal rights for sea-bed mining. The position of the Government of Jamaica is that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is the only legally acceptable international régime applicable to the sea-bed and its resources. We reiterate our opposition to documents based on national legislation and reciprocal agreements that purport to regulate activities in the deep sea-bed. Such agreements are contrary to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and have no legal validity. In this regard, the Jamaican delegation must express its concern at the conclusion of a so-called provisional understanding between eight Member States on 3 August this year. In our view, this goes beyond its avowed purpose of conflict resolution and contains terms which are incompatible with the provisions of the Convention.

We urge all States to join together to resist any selective application of the Convention and any attempt to undermine the arrangements being made for the establishment of the International Sea-Bed Authority.

33. Conflicts and turmoil in various regions of the world continue to hamper prospects for peace and should be a matter of great concern for all of us. In Central America, there has not yet been an end to the fighting. We are alarmed at what seem to be insidious attempts to whittle away the hopes of the Contadora process and to undermine the process itself. Jamaica continues to give its fullest support to the ongoing efforts of the countries of the Contadora Group to conclude a regional agreement for peace among the States in the region. They deserve the fullest support of the international community. It is therefore our hope that the revised Act will be signed by all concerned.

34. In the Middle East, Jamaica continues to urge the parties to co-operate in reaching a comprehensive solution involving the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, the withdrawal of Israel from Arab territories occupied since the war of 1967 and the adoption of arrangements whereby all States in the region can live in peace and security within recognized boundaries.

35. In other parts of Asia, there are continued problems caused by intervention and foreign occupation. In Afghanistan and Kampuchea, intensified diplomatic initiatives are needed to restore normalcy and peace. In the Korean peninsula, there is growing recognition that dialogue and accommodation involving the two sides is the only realistic means of achieving peace and the possibility of reunification.

36. The current wave of unrest in South Africa confirms the warnings that have been so often repeated to the South African régime. The system of *apartheid* is doomed because its fundamental precepts are evil and offensive to human decency. Its practitioners are perpetrating a crime against humanity. It cannot be maintained indefinitely by resorting to violent tactics of repression and intimidation. It cannot be saved by futile and superficial changes in a system that is fundamentally immoral. The Government and the people of Jamaica are unalterably opposed to that wicked system. The so-called new constitutional arrangement introduced by the racist régime is another pernicious attempt at strengthening and reinforcing *apartheid*. They have fooled no one. The response of the people of South Africa is a clear and unequivocal rejection, as shown by the recent disturbances. The reaction of the South African régime has been the familiar one of indiscriminate shooting, detention and banning orders intended to terrorize the people into submission. It is important for the international community to apply the greatest pressure on South Africa and not collaborate in any way in the current wave of brutality on which the régime has embarked. South Africa should be left in no doubt about international condemnation of its abhorrent policies. We can find no distinction between accommodation and constructive engagement. It should be clear to all that the record of the South African régime is one of deception, hypocrisy and treachery.

37. Look at Namibia. There, we continue to be faced with South Africa's defiance which has for so long prevented progress towards self-determination

and independence for the Territory. The international community has a plan which enjoys the support of all countries except one. We say to the Members of the United Nations—let us implement that plan, or take the necessary action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and end the long nightmare of oppression.

38. There is no obligation so exalted, yet so humbling, and none to be taken more seriously than an obligation to posterity. We can choose the path of irresponsibility or we can work diligently through the Organization to bequeath to succeeding generations a world consonant with our vision of a community of nations free from strife, free from repression and free from want. Let us therefore use wisely the power we have now to shape the future so that the hopes of this generation will be realized in the next.

39. Mr. GUTIÉRREZ (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the high post of President of the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session. Your well-known integrity and efficiency, your vast experience and tireless dedication to the United Nations and your excellent work as President of the United Nations Council for Namibia ensure the success of this session of the General Assembly, presided over by a distinguished son of the great African continent.

40. Thirty-nine years of commitment and tireless work by the United Nations to wipe out colonialism and promote the self-determination of peoples is reflected at this session by the presence here of Brunei Darussalam, the newest Member State of the Organization. We greet that country and warmly welcome it to the family of sovereign nations.

41. The Secretary-General's work, his concern over the problems of international peace and security and his dedication to the complex duties of his post, as evidenced by his report on the work of the Organization [A/39/I], are internationally recognized and a source of justified pride on the part of the Latin American countries.

42. I have read the Secretary-General's report with real interest. As the representative of a country located in a region threatened by instability and war, I value the ideas and suggestions it contains with regard to matters affecting international peace and security. It is a source of satisfaction and encouragement to Costa Rica to find the Secretary-General, with his high authority, mentioning the original tenets of the Charter of the United Nations in order to confirm the commitment to settle disputes among States by peaceful means and to renounce the use or the threat of the use of force in international relations.

43. The Charter that was signed at San Francisco established, without any doubt, a new international order based on the obligation of all States to stand in solidarity for the maintenance of peace and security. The obvious conclusion is that peace-keeping—as the Secretary-General points out—is an expression of international political consensus and will, without which peace-keeping operations are weak and uncertain.

44. Both out of devotion to the principles of the Charter and because they protect the fundamental aspiration of nations to continue to exist, a small and unarmed nation such as the one I represent has the

duty to support the Charter in order that its own security may be safeguarded.

45. When international conflicts are not dealt with in the framework of the solutions envisaged in the Charter, but are the subject of bilateral or unilateral action in which force prevails, there is a serious erosion of the international system, which does great harm to all countries and, above all, to countries such as Costa Rica, which have entrusted their security to internationalism.

46. Hence, I fully share the Secretary-General's concern about the consequences of the failure to observe the principles of the Charter, when the framework they provide are replaced by methods that give priority to the threat or the use of force, so detrimental to the countries that are the victims of it as well as to the international system based on the Charter. The result is that the Charter is irreparably violated.

47. On the basis of those ideas taken from the Secretary-General's report, and because I cannot now refer specifically to each of the serious problems facing the General Assembly at this session, I shall confine myself to stating my country's position on some of those problems, which illustrate the tensions making it impossible to view the international situation with serenity.

48. First, I shall refer to the problem of the Malvinas Islands. The echoes of a war that would never have taken place if international negotiating machinery had been used effectively have died down. Nevertheless, the inter-American system, relations between the Americas and Europe and relations in the Organization require that the parties continue their efforts to deal in a rational and friendly way with the problem dividing them. It should not be difficult for two civilized nations and two democratic Governments to find a solution to their differences that does not prejudice their dignity, their legal position or their history.

49. Costa Rica is particularly concerned at the struggle being waged by the people of Namibia for its independence, which must be granted to it under Security Council resolution 435 (1978). We regard as completely unacceptable and anachronistic the doctrine of *apartheid*, which the South African Government persists in applying.

50. We regret also that the Korean nation, with an age-old culture and rich traditions and with such a promising future, has not yet been able to overcome the obstacles to its reunification. We believe that it is time for that country—preferably reunified, but even divided—to take its rightful place in the Organization.

51. Of course, our main concern must be for the fate of our own region, Central America. In this respect, we Costa Ricans must bear witness to our commitment to peace and our desire that democracy, well-being and freedom should be promoted in our region.

52. We feel sorrow and pessimism, on the one hand, and hope and optimism, on the other. Since the thirty-eighth session, Central America has experienced more crises, more hatred, more death than in previous years. But, at the same time, the democratic frontier has advanced in Latin America and has reached Central America. The commitment to democracy is deeply rooted in our continent, and Central America is no exception. We rejoice in the

fact that today, for the first time in the history of our subregion, there are three civilian Governments that have been elected by the people, and there is talk of holding elections in the other countries.

53. José Napoleón Duarte became President of El Salvador as a result of two free processes of consultation with the people. Those processes, held under the critical eye of a large number of observers, represent an advance towards democracy and an unquestionable reaffirmation of Central America's will for democracy, bearing in mind the very difficult circumstances in which they took place. On Monday [24th meeting], the Assembly heard President Duarte put forward the most positive proposals so far for the national reconciliation of a Central American country. That initiative should be welcomed by all Governments and peoples concerned about peace in Central America and the future of that region.

54. The newspapers today carry the news that representatives of the guerrillas have accepted President Duarte's invitation, effectively opening up the possibility of domestic peace for El Salvador.

55. The Government of Costa Rica supports the proposal made from this rostrum yesterday [26th meeting] by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Honduras that the Central American countries should meet at Tegucigalpa before next week's Contadora meeting. To the extent that, within the spirit of Contadora, we Central Americans regain the initiative in settling our problems among ourselves, we shall have taken steps towards peace and made it possible to take action ourselves, without the need for mediators.

56. The hopes of Central Americans have been raised by the progress of the Contadora effort. Since January 1983, with the co-operation of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, we, the five Central American countries, have been trying to find a remedy to the problems besetting the region. No one could be better fitted to endorse our efforts than our immediate neighbours, who are familiar with the nature and scope of the crisis, are far removed from all claims to hegemony and share the same historical and cultural roots.

57. We have made great progress, culminating in the revised version of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/562, annex]. The Act was a comprehensive effort, and never before had a regional crisis been examined in its political, military, economic and social aspects. The Act is also a bold effort, because it aims not only at reducing the sources of conflict in our region but at promoting the political, economic and social development of our peoples. It is innovative, because it proposes verification of compliance with the commitments entered into when it is signed and because it places the fate of our peoples above the old, narrow concepts of the internal sovereignty of States. In sum, the Contadora process, carried out with full awareness of our history, has looked towards a peaceful, richer and freer future for the peoples of Central America.

58. We said last year that Costa Rica was not a part of the problems of Central America, but that Central America was a part of the problems of Costa Rica. We are continuing to build our nation in peace and democracy. But the peoples of Central America are prey to political instability, war and economic crisis and the painful consequences are felt by us Costa

Ricans. This gives us another reason to participate actively in the Contadora process and to fight there, as we have fought throughout our independent life, for institutionality, democratization, respect for human rights and the economic and social development of the whole region.

59. I reiterate from this rostrum our readiness to comply with the obligations imposed upon us by the Contadora Act. Furthermore, I can state that Costa Rica already complies with those obligations, because they are a part of the pacifist and democratic tradition of the Costa Rican people.

60. We believe, however, that the verification and control mechanisms provided for in the Act should be improved and strengthened. We hope that the foresight of the Central American Governments in voluntarily submitting to international verification will have as its reward verification that in all the countries of Central America there is strict observance of the spirit and letter of the Act. We understand clearly, as we are sure the other Central American States do, that the commitments we shall make upon subscribing to the Act are binding and enforceable. The very nature of those commitments explains the need for effective and reliable verification and control.

61. We Costa Ricans are aware that a comprehensive agreement on peace and co-operation in Central America is a fundamental step. But we are also aware that the great harm caused to our region by the international economic crisis, political upheavals, underdevelopment and war can only be remedied with the continued support of the international community. That is why when the President of Costa Rica, Mr. Luis Alberto Monge, travelled to Europe last June he extended invitations—as the spokesman for Central America—to the Conference which was held at San José, Costa Rica, on 28 and 29 September 1984. We received in our capital the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the European Economic Community, of Spain and Portugal, of the countries of the Contadora Group and of the Central American States. As the host country, we felt that our ideals and realities were being recognized. We are grateful for the friendship and acknowledgement of the Governments represented at San José. At that ministerial meeting, we received European support for the process of democratization in Central America, the restructuring of our common market and our development through increased co-operation programmes.

62. Europe's concern about the fate of Central America is now added to Latin America's, expressed in the Contadora process, and that of the United States, shown by the Caribbean Basin initiative. That European concern was demonstrated by the presence in San José of 12 Ministers for Foreign Affairs from Western European democracies. This opens up for Central America the prospect of beginning a new period in its history, characterized by well-being and the full enjoyment of freedoms.

63. The presence of members of the European Economic Community in Central America strengthens the ideal of integration, efforts to achieve which we embarked upon 25 years ago. Besides the triumph over nationalism represented by the establishment of the European Economic Community, the readiness of its members to help Central America shows that the old and obsolete concepts of colonialism have

been replaced by a modern concept of co-operation. We are sure that this attitude will find expression in the prompt and successful negotiation of an agreement between Europe and Central America.

64. Although the desirability of creating a more harmonious and just international economic order is recognized, there is a remarkable lack of political consensus which is preventing the dialogue that is needed to make the necessary structural changes to bring about that greater harmony and justice.

65. In approaching the end of this century, we realize that many countries are not in a position to meet the most basic needs of their peoples; others hope barely to halt the deterioration experienced in the living conditions of their peoples. Indeed, the situation in Africa, especially with regard to food, is becoming alarming; and Latin America is entering its fourth consecutive year of economic recession, as part of a crisis the most salient manifestation of which is the external debt. That debt exceeds the \$300 billion mark; it represents 36 per cent of the gross domestic product of the region and servicing the debt absorbs 65 per cent of its export receipts. To indicate the degree to which the situation has deteriorated, suffice it to mention that in 1975 the debt represented merely 20 per cent of the gross domestic product and used up only 26 per cent of export earnings.

66. The reasons for the problem have been broadly discussed in various forums and I need not dwell upon them here. I wish to emphasize the fact that attempts to solve the problems that countries are facing in isolation and individually are clearly not sufficient. Furthermore, that has led to a very unjust situation in which the cost of the necessary adjustments is borne exclusively by the debtor countries.

67. In the search for solutions, we should bear in mind not only the cost for the world economy of the fact that developing countries are less able to participate in international trade but also the very high social and political cost that will no doubt be incurred if our countries must continue in a process of internal deflationary adjustments.

68. There is no doubt that Latin American countries are facing up to this crisis with proved responsibility. It is now time for the other actors in this drama to make a comparable contribution to resolve a situation which in fact is a shared responsibility and the solution of which ultimately benefits all. The industrialized countries must adopt forceful measures to reduce interest rates and combat protectionism. Multilateral agencies must contribute more medium-term and long-term resources, and on more favourable terms, to support the programmes of external adjustment and structural change, and the international banking system must continue to provide commercial credit because, if it were not to do so, that would jeopardize those resources already committed.

69. Costa Rica speaks on these issues with a certain degree of authority. In mid-1982, the Government undertook a series of adjustment measures aimed at stabilizing the economy. Those efforts meant that the deficit in the public sector in one year went down from 9.3 per cent of the national product to less than 3 per cent, inflation was reduced from 90 per cent to 19 per cent, and the exchange rate which was 64 colones per dollar was stabilized at about 45 colones per dollar.

70. The crisis has taught the Government of Costa Rica a number of lessons: first, to ascertain the degree of maturity of the Costa Rican people in accepting the impact of the adjustment and the strength of its commitment to the country's democratic institutions; secondly, to understand that recovery and long-term stability are beyond our reach when the meagre possibilities of a small country to handle the situation are reduced even more by an adverse international environment.

71. All Latin American nations have learnt an equally important lesson from this crisis: that it is pointless to try to face up to this situation in isolation. We recognize the urgency of concerted political action at the regional level. In this context, the Quito Declaration and Plan of Action² and the more recent Cartagena Consensus³ represent an effort to give a serious and responsible answer by Latin America to the crisis.

72. I wish to take this opportunity to mention in particular the impact of the crisis on what is dearest to our societies—children. Tragically, one of the results of the adverse economic climate in which we live has been a fall in the indicators which measure the well-being of the young population of the developing world. We must commit ourselves to an effort that would enable us to isolate the impact of the economic cycle on our children. I therefore appeal to the Member States and the Secretariat of the United Nations to mobilize the creativity and necessary resources to find ways in which to protect children and other especially vulnerable groups from the harshness and irrationality of the fluctuations of the international economy.

73. I cannot conclude this statement without making a specific reference to the ideal of the protection of human rights, which has been a constant concern of Costa Rica and its Governments. It seems to me necessary since the United Nations, from the moment of its birth, embarked upon an important task in this field. The Charter was dedicated to that major objective and became a point of departure for the task of making fundamental rights become an international commitment. Then came the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and increasingly concrete and specific international covenants. The Legislative Assembly of my country, which was the first one to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [*resolution 2200 A(XXI), annex*], has just approved the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women [*resolution 34/180, annex*].

74. Nevertheless, we still note a major omission in that field. The United Nations does not yet have a truly effective mechanism for the defence of human rights. The extraordinary number of documents, declarations and treaties on the subject have not yet given the Organization the power to restore the enjoyment of rights to victims of violation. This does not detract from the merits of the work done by the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Committee; rather, it is a recognition of the limitations placed upon their work. For our part, Costa Ricans have insisted on imbuing the defence of human rights with an effective structure, despite the fact that we must recognize that many Governments lack the political will to do so.

75. Our sincere concern relates to the fate of peace and security in the world. Recently, the President of Costa Rica mentioned before the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Europe, Central America and the countries of the Contadora Group that when violence comes from above it inevitably leads to violence in the opposite direction, thus altering and destabilizing countries and regions. We can infer from that idea that peace cannot be possible so long as the stifling of the fundamental rights of the human being persists. We Costa Ricans have tried in our own land to avoid phenomena of that type. We are a peaceful and stable society, within the convulsed Central American region, because we have been able to build a society based on respect for human rights. We should like that kind of society to be extended now so that we may have a Central America that is an example and not a cause for concern, that contributes to peace instead of giving rise to problems, that provides first the hope and then the reality of human beings working and striving peacefully for development, free from fear.

76. Because this is linked with the subject of human rights, I cannot fail to appeal for international solidarity with respect to the problem of the more than 600,000 refugees who have been displaced because of the turmoil in Central America. They have been treated generously by the receiving States, but not enough is being done, for this is a problem which exceeds their capacity. The dedication and timely aid of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration and other international agencies represent a form of assistance which we Central Americans appreciate for its full worth. However, we require the help of the international community while, within the framework of Contadora, we promote in the nations to which the displaced persons belong the internal conditions conducive to their return to their lands and their work.

77. Costa Rica proposed that the year 1986 be proclaimed the International Year of Peace. It should be a constant task of the United Nations to call for peace, because this has been the great objective of the Organization since its foundation. The International Year of Peace will be devoted to emphasizing this commitment, at a time when, because of world tensions, it is necessary to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter, in which special prominence is given to the maintenance of peace.

78. In a tribute to that concept the President of Costa Rica, in November of last year, recalling our traditional position on the problems of the region in which we live, proclaimed the neutrality of our country in the face of the military conflicts in the region but pointed out that, because of our democratic commitment, we could not in any way be ideologically neutral.

79. I shall conclude by quoting what the President of Costa Rica said in the formal proclamation of our neutrality:

“Costa Rica is not an economic Power; nor can it be. Costa Rica is not a political Power; nor can it be. Costa Rica is not a military Power; nor does it wish to be. Costa Rica is a spiritual Power, because the people practise a true faith in the power of common sense, the power of the will and the power of morality.”

80. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Right Honourable Mr. Mahathir bin Mohamad. I have great pleasure in welcoming him and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

81. Mr. MAHATHIR (Malaysia): Sir, it is with special pleasure that I greet you, a distinguished son of Zambia and of Africa, as President of the General Assembly and offer you my warmest felicitations on your unanimous election. Yours is a heavy responsibility as you guide our work during a very difficult period for the United Nations, and I want to begin by assuring you of the fullest co-operation of the Malaysian delegation in all your efforts, because Malaysia's support for the United Nations is unstinting and unabashed.

82. It is this support which has brought me here twice to address the Assembly although I have been Prime Minister of my country for only three years. For far too long, the United Nations has been abused, denigrated and ignored. For far too long now, we have been hearing about the so-called tyranny and irresponsibility of the majority, about waste and “paper” resolutions and double standards. We all know that the United Nations is not without fault, but in the face of ignorance and bigotry, of myths and falsehoods, we must continue to proclaim our faith in what the United Nations at its best stands for—a world which is secure for all, just for all, prosperous for all and humane for all.

83. These were the ideals of international co-operation and justice proclaimed by the founding fathers of this institution: not a world in which only the rich and the powerful make the important decisions; not a world in which small nations fight proxy wars on behalf of big nations; not a world in which might is right; not a world half-rich and half-poor, half-well-endowed and half-deprived. What has happened now to those ideals? We who believe in them want also to believe that the founder-Members of the Organization meant what they said when they proclaimed the Charter of the United Nations. It is understandable that the excitements and the expectations of the dawn of 1945 should inevitably be tarnished in the cold light of experience over the last 39 years. But the sad truth is more than that.

84. For the first 15 or 20 years of the Organization's existence, we did not hear anything about the disproportionate voting strength of small States—and there were small States—or about the tyranny of the automatic majority—and there was often an automatic majority. Instead, we heard about the virtues of a more democratic international life as exemplified in the United Nations. What has happened to those sentiments? Were we naive to believe that those countries which loudly proclaimed such ideals in the early decades of the Organization did, indeed, believe in them? What, then, are we to make of the constant barrage of perverse criticism, the threats and the denigration which have now become the fashion in certain quarters? Is it because the United Nations can no longer be manipulated and manoeuvred?

85. Malaysia, for one, would like to believe otherwise. Yet we see the big Powers continuing more and more to ignore and to belittle the United Nations. They have established a network of relationships outside the United Nations system to resolve world problems. They have formed their own economic

clubs, to which from time to time the developing countries are permitted to make their supplications. But the clubs, like all exclusive clubs, essentially look after the interests of their members. In the mean time, in the economic as in the political field, the United Nations continues to be ignored. Indeed, we witness something even more negative, namely, the threat to withdraw from certain United Nations agencies. Unhappy about the direction and leadership of these agencies, they sometimes make these threats under the guise of management or budgetary concerns.

86. To that I wish to respond: we, the small and the poor, also pay. What we contribute may not be much, but in terms of our own budgets it is substantial indeed, sometimes even more substantial than the contributions of big nations. We do not like to see anyone squandering our money any more than the rich. But what we would like to see is not savings through the destruction of the agencies but a thorough overhaul of the system to ensure that it is cost-effective and serves the agreed objectives. Undermining the agencies is definitely not the way to tackle the problem, and so let us say: enough of this shortsightedness; enough of cynicism; enough of distortions and falsehoods. As we stand on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, let us first of all pledge ourselves once more to the United Nations and, in that spirit, to a practical and realistic appraisal of where we can go from here.

87. Looking back at the past four decades, I believe that from time to time we have succeeded in acting in the true spirit of the Charter. No one can deny that the United Nations has had its successes and it still does much valuable work, often in unspectacular ways. All this has been due to the consciousness that there exists an international community and that our national interest can in fact be safeguarded in the larger context of the international interest. It is this consciousness that we must constantly cultivate.

88. The fact is that the further development of the United Nations depends first and foremost on the attitude of the major Powers. It is they, more than anyone else, that are in a position to decide the future of the Organization. This is because the major Powers cannot be ignored. The resolutions of the United Nations can be ignored, as they have been. The weak developing countries can be ignored, as they have constantly been. The question then is: do the major Powers want the United Nations to become what it can become—a centre for resolving conflicting interests and a catalyst for peaceful change—or will they abandon it because they can no longer manipulate it?

89. But, of course, the responsibility is not theirs alone. The smaller nations are disillusioned at the ineffectiveness of the United Nations, which has been paralysed on so many occasions because the major Powers have prevented effective action. But Malaysia has always believed that just as the major Powers must avoid alienating the smaller countries by their obstructive policies, so also must the small countries prevent the alienation of the major Powers from the Organization through the wholesale imposition of decisions by majority vote. Speaking as a representative of a small developing country, I am very conscious of the fact that a United Nations resolution that is obtained by majority voting along group, political or ideological lines will not in itself solve any problem. There is often a need for greater

realism and restraint. More efforts can be made through the process of negotiation and consultation to arrive at solutions of principle that are both realistic and practical.

90. But the principles must remain at the core of any solution. The United Nations, if it is to mean anything at all, must stand firm on principles, and there will be a need for adjustments and compromise on the means, the processes and the modalities. We, the smaller nations, cannot be blamed if we insist on that. It is hypocrisy to accuse us of being emotional or unrealistic, irresponsible or irrelevant only because those principles are now inconvenient to the major Powers.

91. I turn now to another subject of equal importance to contemporary international and human relations. I refer to the misunderstanding that is so prevalent in the Western world, fed by deliberate distortions by interested parties about what is happening in the Islamic world.

92. The fact is that there is a resurgence of faith in the Islamic world as well as among other religions. Do not allow yourselves to be manipulated so as to fear this resurgence or even the word "fundamentalist", which has triggered so many ancient suspicions and prejudices. Yes, we are the Islamic "fundamentalists", because we believe in the fundamentals of Islam—in peace, tolerance and justice—and, yes, there are extremists just as there are extremists everywhere in every religion and in every phase of history. Surely no one can deny that, historically, there have been aberrations in all religions and it is plain prejudice or deliberate distortion to allow these aberrations to determine our perception and our judgement. Let us ask ourselves: would it be fair to judge Christianity by the excesses of the Spanish Inquisition, or by the obscenity of *apartheid*, or of nazism? Would it be fair to judge Judaism by the perversities that political zionism represents?

93. The answer is obvious. The current revolution in Islam deserves to be judged fairly and objectively. I do not deny that violence, injustice and much that is against universal good values have been perpetrated in the name of Islam. But the concentration on these aspects—which, I repeat, are aberrations typical in any historical movement—to the exclusion of all others that are true and good does harm to the world. It leads to misunderstanding, fuels suspicions and reinforces prejudices to the detriment of us all.

94. And yet there are some who, for their own racist reasons, are only too prone to highlight and gloat over every excess, real or imagined, which they can focus upon. If all the money, time and energy spent on distorting what is going on in the Islamic world were spent instead on a careful and objective understanding of one of the most important developments in the contemporary world, how much better off we would all be. The great liberation movements after the Second World War could be understood only when people knew that Gandhi was not "a half-naked fakir", nor Kenyatta a representative of the forces of evil and darkness, nor Nasser an upstart and an irresponsible trouble-maker. Similarly, what is happening in the Islamic world today must be understood as a movement that seeks to consolidate political freedom, economic justice and cultural identity; a catalogue of values which everyone, if he is to be true to any notion of decency and civility, must surely support.

95. It is not my purpose in these remarks to place the current Islamic resurgence in its historical context. There is a long and turbulent history of relations between Islam and the West during which many prejudices became ingrained. What is more tragic is that these are now being revived, fanned and exploited by the Zionists to serve political ends. The great peoples of the Book—the Jews, Christians and Muslims—have much in common with each other, have contributed much to human civilization and surely have much more to contribute.

96. Why is it then that we allow one of the most significant movements of our times—the resurgence of Islam—to be wilfully misrepresented and misunderstood? Who stands to gain from such misunderstanding? Why cannot we instead turn to one another and learn from one another, from our respective historical experiences, from our dreams and hopes and fears? Let us find charity in our hearts; let Christians, Jews and agnostics alike find the charity in their hearts to recognize what is going on in the Islamic world for what it really is: a search for spiritual succour in a world that is confused and troubled. Let us be rid of hatred, of the anti-Islam propaganda of bitterness and prejudice that the Zionists continue to spew.

97. I appeal therefore for understanding between Jews, Christians and Muslims. Many Muslims today are disillusioned and shocked at what they regard as contemporary aberrations in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and this has resulted in a resurgence of Islamic orthodoxy and extremism. The Zionist-inspired Western reaction to this Islamic resurgence, as well as its aberrations of intolerance and self-righteousness, has further increased the separation and antagonism between the West and the Islamic world.

98. It is time that we—all of us—put a stop to this. The contemporary aberrations in the Judaeo-Christian traditions and, similarly, the contemporary aberrations, in a few instances, within the Islamic tradition must not be allowed to obscure their fundamental virtues. Let us study each other's teachings. Let us be true to those teachings. God willing, the great understanding that this will generate will help Jews and Christians and Muslims alike to contribute first of all to peace in the Middle East and then to greater understanding in the world. It will at the very least stop the machinations of those with selfish and narrow, racist ends who are seeking to exploit ignorance and suspicion and prejudice. It will be a development of historic significance.

99. I would like to turn now to economic issues, and here my theme is consistency and fairness.

100. For a long time, the banner of free trade was held high, and the colonies of the metropolitan Powers were vigorously taught the virtues of free trade. At that time, and for years after independence, we could not export anything except primary commodities, and, true to the lessons we had been taught, our markets were open to imports of manufactured goods from the industrialized countries. However, now that we ourselves have learned the trick of manufacturing and exporting goods, although the amount is insignificant, what has happened to that proud banner of free trade? It flies limply or at half-mast in the industrialized countries. We see quotas and other restrictions, so-called voluntary restraints and other threats and pressures. We even see our industrialization policies, which seek to attract for-

eign investment through such devices as export incentives, preferential financing and so on, being challenged. We also see to our surprise labour unions in industrialized countries which in the days of empire had not been in the least concerned about the lot of our workers—who were then certainly exploited—suddenly become champions of our workers, urging them to demand higher wages and improved working conditions, even though our workers have already gained better treatment since independence. Why this unusual concern, we wonder? Is it coincidental that the result of this concern is that our products are less competitive?

101. We will be forgiven, therefore, if in the face of all this we are a little cynical about the principles of free trade which they have been preaching and about the interest of their labour unions in the welfare of our workers. Therefore I say this. Do not merely preach free trade, practise it. Do not be so presumptuous as to think that you know better than our labour leaders how to look after the interests of our workers. We can compete with you freely and fairly in certain areas. These are usually those of low-technology goods which, in any event, you, who are much higher up on the industrial scale, can best leave to us so that in turn we can import the higher-technology goods that you produce. In this way, we can all mutually fuel international trade, which is an essential engine of growth and the only real solution to our poverty problem.

102. I want to turn to another area in which the comfortable and the rich in the industrialized countries still have the colonial mentality and want to lead us by the hand. During colonial times, many of our forests were cleared for timber and for planting rubber, oil palms, tea, sugar, coffee, and so on. Little concern was then expressed about the environment. Now, as we seek to open up our lands for modern farming, for the generation of power and for industrialization, a whole host of environmentalists from the industrialized countries have descended upon us to educate our people about preserving the natural beauty of our tropical forests, and so on. Certainly, we want to preserve our forests. Certainly, we want to maintain our clean environment, our clean atmosphere. But, make no mistake, it will not be at the expense of the living conditions of our people. We will not accept a situation in which our rural people live in poverty and misery so that the rich, when they come by, can say "What unspoilt beauty!", tip the "happy" native children 10 cents to pose in front of a thatched hut, and then go their comfortable way. The preservation of the environment requires money, which we will not have unless we develop. We fully intend to develop, and it is we, and we alone, who will make the judgement about environmental standards and about the preservation of our natural beauty, which we, surely, more than anyone else have an interest in preserving. Help the poor countries to develop economically and the environment will be taken care of. Being poor in a beautiful environment does not mitigate poverty.

103. While on the subject of environment, I want to draw attention to yet another imposition on certain poor countries. I refer to the pollution of the sea, specifically to pollution in the straits regarded as international shipping routes. More specifically still, I want to refer to Malaysia's experience in the Straits of Malacca. In the days when ships were not so numerous or so huge, their passage through the

narrow Straits posed little problem for the littoral States. But now hundreds of these behemoths, filled with all kinds of goods, including dangerous chemicals and petroleum, clog the Straits. Every now and then they collide with each other, spilling their contents into the sea. While tankers no longer clean their holds in the narrow waters, other ships still do. There is still a considerable amount of rubbish being discarded into the sea. The net result is filthy Straits with patches of oil, pieces of paper, plastic and other rubbish. Eventually all this lands on our shores, making them equally filthy.

104. In the face of those developments, the equipment and boats which Malaysia maintains to clean oil spillage at considerable cost to ourselves are no longer enough. Now we have actively to consider sweeping the sea of the wastes and rubbish thrown or flushed out of ships. I believe that in the circumstances we are right to ask that the maritime nations and the shipping firms, which obviously benefit from using the Straits, should help to maintain the facilities for keeping the waters clean. I have no specific formula in mind but I am convinced that the international agencies concerned must examine this question and make necessary provisions for keeping the waters clean. The developing countries which face these Straits should not be further burdened with having to equip and maintain costly facilities for dealing with oil spills and extensive damage to fishing, sometimes for years. Nor should their polluted beach resorts, from which they earn a few tourist dollars, be cleaned entirely at their own expense. The ships generally belong to the rich and they must defray the cost, at least partially.

105. I have in these remarks focused on a number of broad issues affecting the United Nations, the Islamic world and the developing countries. However, I shall be failing in my duty in this general statement if I do not also touch upon certain other issues which are pertinent as Malaysia looks at current developments in the world.

106. Before doing so, however, may I take this opportunity, first of all, to express the appreciation of my delegation to the outgoing President, who carried out his tasks so admirably during the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

107. I would also wish to express from this rostrum, on behalf of the Government and the people of Malaysia, our warmest welcome and felicitations to the delegation of Brunei Darussalam as it takes its seat in the United Nations—an event which has given us very special pleasure. Brunei Darussalam is a neighbour of Malaysia and a fellow member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations [ASEAN]. Since 7 January this year, when Brunei Darussalam formally joined ASEAN as a full member, we have worked closely and amicably with it and we know that it will make many important and serious contributions to the work of the Organization. Malaysia looks forward to a future of close and fruitful collaboration with Brunei Darussalam.

108. As we survey developments around the globe, we cannot but be filled with a sense of foreboding at the downward spiral of international understanding, of outrage at so much blatant injustice and even, alas, of cynicism at the wide gap between professions of principles and their practice.

109. Take the case of Palestine, which has been referred to for too long as an Arab-Israeli conflict.

That is a deliberate misnomer, because the conflict is in essence and in reality an Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the root of which is the adamant denial by Israel of Palestinian nationhood. Of all those who insist on direct talks between the parties concerned, I ask: who are the parties but the Israelis and the Palestinians? Of all those who talk of democracy, freedom, self-determination and all the other lofty principles of justice and human rights, I ask: in the name of what can the people of Palestine be denied their right to their own independent homeland? Is it in the name of Israel's security, which can be ensured, in any event, in many other ways? Can this be seriously argued by countries which, at the same time, are vociferous in condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea? No. The fact is that the Palestinians are being denied their freedom because Israel wants it so and it has the support of a powerful ally to enforce its will. Let us avoid debating points. Let us avoid dredging up minutiae of history. This is the basic issue. Despite the clear will of the international community and the undeniable rights of the Palestinians, Israel adamantly and violently opposes Palestinian freedom. If another State were to do this, it would be rightly condemned, as Israel is by some, and rightly repudiated, as Israel is not, because of its powerful ally. And yet Israel and its friend attempt to portray it as the victim, the injured innocent.

110. Sometimes it is also said that the Palestinians, or more specifically the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], must first of all recognize Israel—and let us bear this in mind—not before Palestinian independence can be accepted, but before the PLO can be allowed to take part in any discussion on Palestine's future: an explicit recognition of Israel by the PLO, in return for which the PLO will be allowed an undefined seat in undefined negotiations about an undefined future for Palestine. This is insisted upon—never mind about the Fez resolution of the Arab Heads of State, never mind about the resolution of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, whose provisions about the security of all States in the Middle East are clear for all who wish to see. And yet, by the same token, have those supporters of Israel asked Israel for an explicit recognition of the PLO and for Palestinian freedom? The answer is no. Or even for an implicit recognition? Again, no. And, what is more, not only has Israel neither explicitly nor even implicitly recognized the PLO and Palestinian independence, it has quite explicitly and categorically rejected any possibility of dealing with the PLO or any prospect of Palestinian independence. In those circumstances, those who still point the finger of responsibility at the PLO cannot expect us to take them seriously. No doubt they have their own reasons for what they do, but they cannot expect us to believe that those reasons are remotely connected with any principle of democracy, justice or human rights.

111. As to southern Africa, how can we adequately express our outrage at the manner in which the rights—and even the lives—of black Africans are being treated? At the risk of being misunderstood, I venture to suggest that if white people were treated by a black Government, or any Government for that matter, in the way that the black people of South Africa are being treated, the entire world would rise up and take decisive action. And yet what do we see? Certain countries press into service all manner of

arguments under sophisticated labels, such as constructive engagement. They appeal for patience, they draw attention to practical realities and, in the case of Namibia, they even advance the almost incredible and totally irrelevant concept of “linkage”—arguments which they themselves would not tolerate for one moment if the victims of this monstrosity that *apartheid* and the racist régime represent were whites. I urge those Governments to leap beyond oblique intellectualizing, beyond calculations of economics or power politics to understand that what is at stake is a moral issue. How can you support a Government whose philosophy is immoral and whose methods are brutal and cruel? How can you justify denying to the black people of South Africa a life of freedom and decency in their own land? History will judge you, and do not be outraged that, in the mean time, we are judging you too.

112. Looking elsewhere in the world, it is ironic to see in Afghanistan the contrast between professions of lofty principles and actual practice. In the name of good neighbourliness and fraternal relations, a vicious and bloody war is being inflicted on the people of Afghanistan. This violation, like any other violation of the independence and territorial integrity of a sovereign nation, must be resisted. Malaysia has therefore supported and will continue to support, in whatever practical way it can, the struggle of the valiant Afghan people for their freedom and honour. That is why we have given facilities for the *mujahidin* freedom fighters to have an office in Kuala Lumpur. That is why we continue to support the diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General to seek a political solution to this problem. Faced with the might of stronger neighbours, small weak States need to know that the United Nations will not allow them to be trampled on by the boots of invading armies. Everything else must depend on this fundamental right to freedom and sovereignty.

113. Nearer to us in Malaysia, we see the same cynical manipulation of words such as self-determination and fraternal assistance and human rights in order to justify what cannot be justified, namely, the Vietnamese invasion and continuing occupation of Kampuchea. The ASEAN countries, which had offered a hand of friendship and co-operation to Viet Nam at the end of the Viet Nam war in 1975, have opposed and will continue to oppose this blatant violation of Kampuchea's independence and territorial integrity. The situation is ironic because Viet Nam, which once earned the high admiration of many for standing up in defiance and, finally, in triumph against overwhelming odds to uphold the right of the Vietnamese people to freedom in their own homeland, is committing now exactly what it had accused its adversaries of attempting to do: namely, the imposition of its will by armed might on a smaller and weaker country. This tragic irony is compounded by the fact that those of Viet Nam's neighbours which are members of ASEAN have categorically shown that they are fully ready to meet Viet Nam's legitimate security interest. A further irony is that the ASEAN countries had agreed in 1971 to the concept of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia and it is Viet Nam's continued occupation of Kampuchea which is the obstacle to the realization of a conflict-free neutral area untroubled by the rivalries of the major Powers, which Viet Nam also claims to be its objective.

114. The choice between conflict and co-operation is Viet Nam's. From the contacts and meetings, both public and private, that it has had with individual ASEAN countries, Viet Nam knows that ASEAN is flexible and sincere in its wish to bring the present conflict to an end, but ASEAN cannot and will not compromise with regard to the right of the Kampuchean people to choose their own form of Government free from any external coercion. We will stay the course. The position we have taken is not only in conformity with United Nations principles and relevant resolutions but offers a fair and honourable exit for Viet Nam. It is now up to Viet Nam to decide.

115. I would like to turn now to the subject of Antarctica, to which I feel compelled to refer as Malaysia was one of the sponsors requesting the inclusion of this item at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.⁴ As we await the Secretary-General's study and the subsequent debate on this subject later during this session, I want to emphasize most of all that Malaysia approaches the forthcoming discussions with an open mind and with the hope that, by listening carefully to each other's concerns and views, we shall all be able to move forward together on this issue. I also want to stress that Malaysia raised this subject in a constructive spirit—to build, not to destroy. We do not dispute the good that the present Antarctic Treaty⁵ system has done. But what we are seeking to build is a broader basis and a firmer foundation for international co-operation in Antarctica which would be acceptable to, and in the interest of, the international community as a whole and thus ensure the long-term stability and effectiveness of the system. We have an open mind as to how that can best be brought about. Of course we have some ideas of our own: in the particular circumstances of Antarctica—a large land mass occupying some one tenth of the globe's land surface, situated in a strategic part of the world, with a fragile ecosystem and possessing rich marine and, possibly, mineral resources, a part of the world, moreover, with no settled inhabitants and where, indisputably, there is no recognition of the claims to sovereignty except between the seven claimants—we believe that there is at least a strong case for Antarctica to be in one way or another the common heritage of mankind.

116. But we are aware that there are practical and legal realities as well as a great deal in the way of national sensitivities which cannot simply be swept aside. The United Nations has only begun to consider this question of Antarctica and all of us will therefore need to proceed cautiously and carefully. Hence, whatever Malaysia's views may be, we will approach the forthcoming discussions with an open mind and sensitivity to the concerns, views and interests of other Member States. We earnestly urge a similar approach by all concerned. It is in that spirit that we have proposed the establishment of a special committee on the question of Antarctica. It can be expected that the discussions which will take place later during this session will not be conclusive. Such a committee should build upon the discussion in the General Assembly and examine the subject in greater depth so as to arrive at a consensus on the objectives of a régime in Antarctica and the machinery to achieve such an objective.

117. One matter that needs constant serious attention is the drug problem. As we are aware, the drug problem is international or global in character and

knows no national boundaries. Thus, no country can handle this problem single-handed. It requires a serious and concerted effort at the international level by all countries and international agencies concerned.

118. The present co-operation at the international level has not resulted in much. There are many reasons for this, of which the lack of commitment and co-ordination among the various countries is a major factor. This lack of co-operation is due in part to the conflict of interest which may be commercial and economic in nature. It is also observed that some countries are reluctant to implement United Nations decisions relating to the prevention and control of narcotic drugs owing to various factors, including the lack of political will. This could also be because many countries do not consider their drug problems to be serious, partly because of their outlook and partly because their problems are small.

119. It should be noted that the drug problem not only brings with it criminal implications, but, if left unchecked, can weaken and eventually destroy the social and cultural fabrics of our societies. It also has security ramifications that can threaten the very survival of a nation. It is for this reason that Malaysia has adopted harsh laws to curb the drug menace. Other countries may take exception to these laws, but the best way they can help stop the harsh sentences on drug traffickers is by co-operating in the prevention of drug production and trafficking. We appeal to the world community truly to internationalize the prevention of drug trafficking.

120. I have, in these remarks, expressed my views openly and frankly. I do so because I take the United Nations seriously and I do not believe that the general debate at each session of the Assembly should be an exercise in platitudes or politeness. We must mean what we say, and say what we mean. I have tried to do that, although in doing so I may have caused some uncomfortable feelings. Only frankness, an open mind, a willingness to work hard on the details of issues and to accommodate other views and, above all, a firm commitment to the vision of the Charter—a world of peace, freedom, justice and human dignity—will see us through the critical days that are upon us now. It is in that spirit that the Malaysian Government approaches its duties at, and to, the United Nations.

121. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Malaysia for the important statement he has just made.

122. Mr. ADDERLEY (Bahamas): Mr. President, I extend my congratulations to you, on behalf of the Bahamian delegation, on your election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I am confident that the proceedings of this session will be executed skilfully under your able leadership, which you have already demonstrated for many years as President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, and I can assure you of my delegation's support throughout our deliberations.

123. I should like to commend Mr. Jorge Illueca for the excellent manner in which he carried out the functions of the office of President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. His qualities as a leader and his knowledge of the issues were evident throughout his term of office.

124. I must also pay tribute to the efforts of the Secretary-General in seeking to identify and establish those means whereby international peace and brotherhood, economic security, respect for human dignity and sovereignty of States can become realities.

125. It also gives me great satisfaction to welcome to the United Nations the delegation of Brunei Darussalam, a sister Commonwealth State.

126. I believe that all nations can see the wisdom of the observation that, if the United Nations did not exist, it would have to be invented. This being the case, then all States large and small, whether powerful or weak, industrialized or developing, must uphold the ideal of interdependence. This body has not been immune to negative comments. Nevertheless, I believe the world holds the Organization in high esteem. If all Governments demonstrated a willingness to implement its decisions, there can be no doubt that the image of this body would be enhanced and its credibility strengthened. Towards this end, among the many activities envisaged for the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, all States should renew, through concrete goals as well as declarations, their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

127. My Government is deeply troubled by the problems of our region. Political ideology and the tendency of some to view the uncertainties of the area from a geopolitical point of view, thus placing all of the area's problems under the umbrella of East-West confrontation, is in our view a mistake. My delegation, however, shares the opinion that, notwithstanding ideological factors, the fundamental crisis faced by the people of the region is rooted in deep-seated social and economic ills. In this context, we welcome the continuing efforts of the international community to provide assistance to the people of Central America. The efforts of the Contadora Group in trying to devise a peaceful settlement of the problems of Central America, which would take into consideration all political views, are commendable and deserving of the support of the international community. The history of our region has taught us that an imposed settlement which does not accommodate the views of all parties will never stand the test of time.

128. The national security and defence of small States is a matter of grave concern to countries such as the Bahamas, and it ought equally to be of concern to the international community. Given their limited resources, it is impossible for small States to incur the expenditure necessary to create and maintain military capacity for self-defence against powerful forces of aggression.

129. In the case of the Bahamas, the problem is further compounded by its geographical make-up. The Commonwealth of the Bahamas, with a population of less than a quarter of a million, is an archipelago comprising some 700 islands, fewer than 30 of which sustain a permanent population. Given the priorities incumbent upon any Government for the provision of adequate services, inclusive of national health, social security, education and the other prerequisites of welfare, the creation and maintenance of a military cannot, especially for a country of extensive archipelagic expanse such as the Bahamas, be an objective of high priority.

130. The United Nations is charged with the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Strict adherence by Member States to these obligations will eliminate the necessity for small States to be concerned with these matters. But we today live in a world characterized by super-Power rivalry and competing self-interest where States guard jealously their national sovereignty, thus making it more difficult for the Organization to discharge its functions.

131. We are aware that efforts have been made by organs of this body responsible for international peace and security to make arrangements under which the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States can be preserved. We are also aware of the obligations imposed upon all States not to interfere in the domestic affairs of another State. As the matter relates to economic aggression or coercion, there exist, in particular, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations [*resolution 2625 (XXV), annex*] and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [*resolution 3281 (XXIX)*] of 1970 and 1974, respectively.

132. At the fifth meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, held at Nassau from 4 to 7 July 1984, the problem of the security of small States was considered. The communiqué issued at the end of that meeting states the following:

“The Heads of Government expressed their concern that the security of small States continues to be seriously threatened. They observed that small States were increasingly vulnerable to external aggression, manifested in traditional as well as new forms, and were being subjected to various forms of economic aggression, including the attempt of some States to impose extraterritorial jurisdiction.”

133. The Heads of Government also renewed their commitment to the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Caribbean Community and of its member States. They emphasized the need for continuing efforts within the Caribbean Community to identify and document the various forms of threat to the security of States in the region. They took note of the proposed study by the Commonwealth Secretariat on the security of small States and agreed on a procedure which would ensure that the particular needs of the States of the Caribbean Community would be adequately reflected in the study. The Heads of Government further called for the early convening of the previously established working group to consider a unified approach to the question of economic aggression and the establishment of a scheme of mutual assistance. We are not convinced, however, that sufficient viable machinery exists today to tackle successfully the problem of threats posed to small States. We therefore pose the question: does not the necessity now arise for the codification and conclusion of a multilateral treaty concerning this issue?

134. Someone once referred to disarmament as any plan or system for the limitation, reduction or abolition of armed forces, including their arms and budgets. It is clear that this approach is not now being followed for, despite the fact that Governments are aware that the arms race has resulted in the

wastage of valuable resources that could have been put to more productive use, there is a great unwillingness by many to desist from acquiring and—even more disconcerting—developing newer and more sophisticated weapons of destruction.

135. While we can take comfort in the fact that a global war is not going on now, we are disheartened by the war between Iran and Iraq, by the situation in the Middle East, in Afghanistan and in Kampuchea and by the conflicts in the Latin American region. A paradoxical concept exists that security can be had only through an accumulation of weapons of mass destruction, which both sides claim they will never use. It seems incongruous that, at a time when nations decry the use of chemical weapons and assert that nuclear weapons would annihilate our planet, they seem to be rushing into a race to build, acquire and use these deadly weapons. If the words of the Charter of the United Nations, “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”, are to have any meaning, then there must be more concerted efforts on the part of all nations to desist from the senseless act of escalating the arms race. While it is recognized that the United States and the Soviet Union, as super-Powers in the military field, have a moral and social obligation to the peoples of the world to curb the arms race, no State, big or small, militarily significant or militarily insignificant, can continue to shirk the responsibility that comes from the fact that globally every State is involved directly or indirectly in the web of military arsenals with which we could be destroyed.

136. Mahatma Gandhi, in his timelessly inimitable fashion, directed our attention to our responsibilities when he said:

“If we are to reach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on real war against war, we shall have to begin with children; and if they grow up in their natural innocence, we won't have to struggle, we won't have to pass fruitless idle resolutions, but we shall go from love to love and peace to peace, until at last all the corners of the world are covered with the peace and love for which consciously or unconsciously the whole world is hungry.”

137. Another matter of urgent global concern is that of stagnated economic development. Given the economic state of affairs of the world, it is amazing that a total collapse of the monetary system has not yet occurred. High interest rates, inflation and defaults on loans are all contributors to the mounting crisis. Protectionism is on the rise and exploitation of natural resources in developing countries by transnational corporations aggravates the problem. The new international economic order and global negotiations lie dormant because of the lack of commitment to and acceptance of the concept of interdependence. John Donne's “no man is an island” theory is not being practised and consequently nations have become more selfish and introspective.

138. Granted there are no easy answers to the sensitive matters of finance and economic development. My Government is convinced, however, that too much of the world's wealth is concentrated in too few hands. There has to be a much greater broadening of this base if the concept of equity is to be effectively applied and the downward spiralling international economy is to be revived.

139. There is an obvious relationship between political independence and economic independence

and there is an equally obvious relationship between political independence and the global ideological conflict in which, willingly or not, we are all caught. So it must follow that failure to reach agreement on the means by which economic independence will be achieved is bound to influence political and ideological considerations. Hence it is necessary that those of us who wish to preserve our freedom and the political independence we have must seek to promote the reconciliation of legitimately conflicting points of view among developed and developing countries.

140. Freedom and political independence are rich harvests to reap, but they become an empty feast at the table of economic dependence. The economic philosophy of development which dictates that the rich should get richer and let riches trickle down to the poor is an affront to national dignity and sovereign independence. It is a philosophy of dependence worse than colonialism. The evolution of a more equitable system of economic relations among nations must not be deferred by those who fail to realize that the total interdependence of the world requires, paradoxically, that the road to self-sufficiency and economic independence is called co-operation.

141. We are rightly proud of the level of liberty and freedom enjoyed by the people of the Bahamas, but we are not unmindful of the fact that that level of sovereignty is still denied large numbers of persons in the world. Consequently, there is today some movement, sometimes overt and sometimes less open, of people attempting to secure a larger measure of political freedom and more real control over their own affairs. No super-Power's armed might or economic authority can deter indefinitely the peoples' movements—which we support everywhere—in which man claims freedom from minority rule and economic oppression. Those movements may take the form of peaceful revolution, such as we were able to achieve in the Bahamas; others may be less fortunate and choose a separate route. But so long as the ultimate objective is greater freedom through giving the people the unfettered right to choose their own form of government, who would find fault with that?

142. It is not trite to inquire here today who speaks with a powerful, clear and credible voice for the rights of man. The old world order of the ideological right and left has failed to provide either leadership or hope for mankind. Super-Powers feed us unrelentingly with a morality of physical confrontation and our hope of peace and tranquillity is balanced on the scales of something called nuclear parity and deterrence. I do not believe that mankind is ennobled or that people of the world are impressed or their lives enriched by the magnificent means of world destruction which are being accumulated, but I do believe that all people are dismayed, frustrated and frightened by them. Those who value power over principle, and political ideology over ideas and reason, occupy the seats of the controllers of our destiny. Freedom and democracy are on the defensive. Those who have the voice, the power and the riches to mobilize those forces which do exist and which are in pursuit of democracy, political freedom, territorial integrity and economic and racial justice are silenced completely or muted beyond recognition. The recognizable power centres of the world are locked in the bondage of power politics, as they are held hostage by their histories and cultures, which, unfortunately,

time is quickly passing by. Is it too much to hope that during the thirty-ninth session of this Assembly of the nations of the world some tangible signs will be evinced that will touch the conscience of mankind and kindle in the mighty some vision, reason and courage to promote, encourage and indeed lead those who cry out for more freedom, more democracy, more regard for human rights and more economic and racial justice?

143. It is incumbent upon me to state unequivocally that it is time *apartheid* and racial discrimination came to an end. We believe that it is the duty of each and every Member State to do its utmost to see that *apartheid* and racial discrimination are thoroughly eliminated, indeed eradicated. Our commitment to the promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms is clearly evident in our Constitution and in our determination to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

144. The Bahamas condemns, without reservation, the racist minority régime of South Africa, which continues to oppress the black majority and, through its institution of *apartheid*, seeks to destroy and deny this majority their inherent dignity and the exercise of their inalienable rights as free human beings. The Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the various human rights instruments adopted by the Organization theoretically form the core of the international community's defences against racism and racial discrimination. Not only are ideas based on racial superiority and hatred renounced and rejected in those instruments, but the equality of man and the entitlement of all to basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, regardless of race, colour, place of origin or any other consideration, are reaffirmed. By blatantly and unashamedly declaring the superiority of one race over another, the policy of *apartheid* challenges, directly, the very foundations and principles on which the Organization was based. This really ought not to be condoned by any member of the international community. Nor should any member of the international community condone the fraudulent so-called new constitution designed to foster the entrenchment of the abhorrent system of *apartheid*.

145. It is discouraging and even deplorable that year after year we continue to be plagued by some of the same issues. The racist régime of South Africa poses a threat to international security and peace, not only through its policies within its borders but also through its actions beyond its borders, in Namibia, by constantly setting up obstacles to the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which provides the basis for the independence of Namibia and the establishment of democratic rule in that country.

146. South Africa's occupation of Namibia is illegal. The current ploy by South Africa, to link Namibia's independence to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, is totally unacceptable to the Bahamas Government. We support whole-heartedly Security Council resolution 539 (1983).

147. We reiterate the concern expressed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government at their meeting held at New Delhi from 23 to 29 November 1983⁶ in regard to the delaying of Namibia's independence. They urged the contact group as well as other negotiating bodies to make more serious efforts to

ensure the speedy and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

148. A solution to the Cyprus problem has eluded us for far too long, and now, once again, recent developments in that country pose a serious threat to international peace and security in that region. While the Bahamas firmly believes that the principle of the right of peoples and countries to self-determination is a paramount aspect of international relations, national unity, which is a precondition for the development of nationals in any society, is not fostered by unilateral declarations of independence. In the Cyprus situation, such a unilateral declaration has created more problems than it has resolved. We are therefore convinced that effective social and economic development in Cyprus, or in any other nation or region, will evolve only in a situation where there is peace and respect for human dignity and freedom.

149. The Bahamas commends the Secretary-General of the United Nations and endorses the utilization of his good offices in seeking to formulate a framework for an overall solution to the Cyprus problem. To this end, we urge the speedy implementation of Security Council resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984) as means whereby the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and non-alignment of that country will be ensured and any disruptive interference by others will be precluded.

150. The problem of drug control and, in the case of the Bahamas, trafficking in drugs represents the primary social and moral problem facing the Bahamas. Two factors—the geography of the Bahamas itself and the geographical location of the Bahamas—are contributory factors in the incidence of the traffic in drugs through our archipelago. The Bahamas covers an area of almost 100,000 nautical square miles of water with many isolated islands where ships and aircraft engaged in drug trafficking may seek haven to elude detection. The geographical location of the Bahamas also makes it a convenient transit country for illegal drugs destined for the big and profitable markets in North America.

151. The Bahamas is not now and has never been a producer of drugs and is not, in the international context, a major consumer, but consumption in the Bahamas has increased in direct relation to the volume of traffic passing through. Producer countries are generally south of the Bahamas; the major consumer country is to the north. This puts us in an unenviable position. As a result, drug trafficking through the Bahamas is straining the economic, moral and social fabric of the islands of our Commonwealth. What is important to the Bahamas is the effect the traffic in drugs is having, and has had persistently for years, on small Bahamian communities where a high percentage of the adult male population may find it economically to its advantage to become involved in this illegal business. This is a moral and cultural threat the long-term ramifications of which could be devastating to the social fabric of the country.

152. The major participants in this trade are not Bahamian nationals. They are almost all nationals of the producer and consumer States. It ought therefore to be readily understood why the primary concern of the Bahamas in this matter is for greater involvement of the United Nations system to internationalize the approaches to these problems of trafficking so that those who contribute the most to the traffic, that is,

the producer and consumer countries, would be required to bear a greater share of the burden of law enforcement and eradication.

153. The resources of the Bahamas, as a developing country, are not unlimited. Narcotics control should not have to be in competition with social services for funding from the national budget. What is urgently needed is adequate international co-operation among all States: the producer States, the consumer States and the transit States such as the Bahamas.

154. The Bahamas wishes to see the problem of international drug control in all its aspects given priority in the United Nations system. As a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, my Government pledges itself to do its utmost to work for the speedy implementation of the suggested international measures which have been discussed and recommended in this and other bodies. It hopes that, with the support of this body, the participation of the Bahamas can continue to make a contribution to international drug control.

155. Undoubtedly, one of the most valuable resources of any country is its youth. Particularly in the developing world, youth comprises a significant proportion, or, in some cases, the majority, of national populations. The United Nations is therefore to be commended for fulfilling an important part of its mandate in proclaiming 1985 International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace.

156. It is not sufficient, however, simply to identify or codify issues and problems which concern youth. National Governments, in particular, must seize this opportunity to increase their knowledge of this valuable resource and to adopt and implement policies and programmes directed towards the specific human needs and conditions of young people.

157. To be successful in our endeavours, two important considerations must be borne in mind. First, efforts for youth must be undertaken in consultation and co-operation with youth. Secondly, the momentum of International Youth Year must be sustained to ensure that youth is utilized as a force for economic progress, nation-building, and peace. In pursuit of these goals, the Bahamas has undertaken efforts to implement many of the United Nations recommendations in this field, and will co-operate fully with regional and international programmes in support of International Youth Year.

158. Even the detractors and the harshest critics of the United Nations, and therefore, much more, declared supporters, would agree that the world would be a worse place without it. Yet one must ask: is everything being done which can be done to use and improve this most invaluable global institution? I believe the answer, unfortunately, is no.

159. Member States' actions in many instances reveal contradictions between legal, theoretical and practical political support for the purposes and principles of the Organization. If the opportunities afforded by the United Nations are to continue to improve the security and well-being of mankind, there must be a closing of the gap between declared expectations and commitment.

160. At the level of international action there must be, generally speaking, more frankness in the evaluation of the total magnitude of resources present among Member States and the part that is diverted to United Nations endeavours to turn a recession- and conflict-ridden international society into a mutually

co-operating healthy community of States. There must also be courage and enlightened self-interest in the establishment of priorities to solve long-standing problems. Such courage and enlightened self-interest should have its practical expression in a more critical review and consequent revision of the Assembly's agenda.

161. In closing, I reiterate my Government's uncatagorical support for the work of the United Nations, based on the principles and objectives delineated in its Charter. It is our view that the United Nations is indeed a unique and indispensable Organization, which, among other things, serves to cushion those harsh realities with which we are faced as members of the international community. While we recognize its shortcomings, we are convinced that, with the appropriate degree of commitment by its Member States, the United Nations could become the greatest institution for progress through co-operation and interdependence that mankind has ever known. We believe that this was the implicit intent of its founding fathers and, with this vision as a guiding beacon, the Bahamas will continue to promote the principles and objectives of the Charter and to enhance the functioning of the Organization, in a spirit of hope and brotherhood with other Member States, in pursuit of our ultimate goal of world peace.

162. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by Mr. John G. M. Compton, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Lucia. I have great pleasure in welcoming him and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

163. Mr. COMPTON (Saint Lucia): Mr. President, many a distinguished statesman has occupied the presidency of this parliament of the world—the General Assembly—and I have no doubt that, with your fine record of public service, you will follow the precedents of fairness and impartiality which have been the hallmark of your distinguished predecessors and that, as you pass the mantle of the presidency of this body to your successor, you, too, will be remembered as having served with honour.

164. During your presidency, Sir, you have seen a new Member, the State of Brunei Darussalam, admitted to the Organization. That this new nation has added the name "Darussalam" to its pre-independence designation is a happy indication of the policy it intends to pursue. As we welcome this proclamation, we also welcome this new Member to our Organization.

165. The fact that countries such as Saint Lucia and Brunei Darussalam can gain independence, and retain it against the blandishments of international predators, is a tribute to the work of the United Nations, the fortieth year of existence of which we commemorate next year.

166. The Charter of the United Nations is not only based on mutual respect for sovereignty and the peaceful settlement of disputes between States; even more important are the moral underpinnings of the principles of human rights and human dignity—principles which are often buried in the torrents of words and the snowstorms of conflicting resolutions that daily pour forth from this body or its various agencies. It is therefore necessary sometimes to remind ourselves of the Biblical injunction concerning the sabbath, and remember that as "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath"

[Mark 2:27], so, too, the State was made for man and not man for the State.

167. The lot of ensuring that this injunction is not lost sight of has fallen upon the shoulders of the Secretary-General. On behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia, I thank him for his untiring efforts, not only in the cause of world peace but also in other, less dramatic but equally important, areas of human concern. His efforts in mobilizing resources to relieve famine in the sub-Saharan areas of Africa, whose millions live constantly in the shadow of death, will always be remembered as one of the high points of his tenure of office.

168. But there are times when, despite the efforts of the Secretary-General and his staff, the conduct of some Member States, even in the precincts of this very Hall, drive us, in small countries, to despair and to cry out with Mark Anthony, of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*:

"O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason."

169. Time and again, resolutions passed and ratified by the United Nations have been defied or ignored by Member States. There have been attempts to condemn, without the observance of one of the most basic principles of natural justice—hearing the other party. The "gag rule" has been invoked, as in the notorious case of the Grenada resolution, and the veto has been used on occasions which can only lend aid and comfort to the racist régime of South Africa. All this can lead us to conclude that the United Nations has lost its moral underpinnings and is in danger of losing that reverence and awe in which it was once held, particularly by small nations such as our own.

170. But, in the encircling gloom of the clash of angry speeches and angry denunciations by Member States of each other, even within these revered halls, of the seemingly endless arms race, and the threat of nuclear holocaust, we yet see that tiny light of hope held aloft by such agencies as UNESCO, UNDP, the Pan American Health Organization, UNICEF and a host of others, whose untiring efforts, away from the glare of news headlines, bring hope and relief to untold millions in the developing world. It is for these reasons, if for no others, that we are strong and steadfast supporters of the United Nations.

171. It is therefore in sadness, rather than in anger, that we speak when we discern attempts to dislodge the Organization from its moral foundations and weaken the voice of the collective conscience of mankind. It is in sorrow that we see the furnace of the arms race being fed with such a large proportion of the world's resources, the product of the finest brains and the labours of millions, while nightly into our very living rooms is brought the sorry image of starving children. It is in sorrow that we call attention to the fact that while some developing countries can hardly provide the basic necessities for their people, their Governments parade the latest military hardware supplied by some of the developed countries, some of which contribute not a single rouble to United Nations famine relief funds.

172. But it is in anger that we protest at the conduct of certain States which should provide moral leadership to the Organization but which encourage, wittingly or unwittingly, that repulsive régime of South Africa in its errant ways and its defiance, which reduces this world body to impotence. South Africa is

the pariah of all nations and should be made an outcast of the world, and any conduct which in any way lends aid and comfort to that repulsive régime in the perpetuation of its racist policies must be deplored and unequivocally condemned.

173. The issue of Namibian independence continues to defy solution, as South Africa, in contemptuous defiance of world opinion, continues its illegal occupation of that Territory, enforcing its doctrine of racism upon that unhappy land. The work of the contact group of Western nations, upon which so much reliance was placed, has ended in frustration, and United Nations efforts to find a peaceful and speedy solution have been repeatedly thwarted. South Africa must be continuously pressured to comply with the edict of the United Nations, and a Namibia whose independence and neutrality is guaranteed by the United Nations must be brought into the community of nations without further delay.

174. How can some countries condemn the genocide of Hitler and Pol Pot and yet openly encourage South Africa with trade and investment? How can we live with our consciences when we stand impotent in the face of the blatant genocide of large sections of the black population, who are moved from their traditional homelands into barren lands to die of hunger and our only response is the passage of pious resolutions? How can the veto of a resolution exposing the sham of the so-called power-sharing in South Africa be justified when that sham has already been exposed by the very people it is supposed to benefit?

175. How can certain countries reconcile their superficial subscription to the Charter of the United Nations with their conduct outside the Organization? How can countries, some of our own friends, line up in mute obedience to condemn the initiative in Grenada which liberated the people of that country from the iron boot of military tyranny and removed the threat to the very existence of the small, democratic and defenceless nations of the eastern Caribbean—an initiative that was supported by the overwhelming majority of the peoples of the Eastern Caribbean and by almost the entire population of Grenada? Yet many of those nations remain silent on the continued bleeding of the people of Afghanistan.

176. Those are questions which small countries, defenceless but for the umbrella of the moral authority of the United Nations, continue to ask. The answers, when they come, bring us but cold comfort.

177. The technological revolution, which could have been employed to solve many of the social and economic problems that beset the world, instead has brought people in every part of the globe under the mushroom cloud of fear. We now have the spectacle of two super-Powers, with contending ideologies and sharply differing political systems, both armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons capable of reaching the furthest end of the earth, standing off like characters in the cinematographic film *High Noon* and glaring at each other across a gulf of hostility which even sportsmen and sportswomen are not permitted to cross. But it must be realized that there can be no winners in the arms race. As we raise the stakes so, too, do we raise the danger of mutually assured destruction. This madness must stop and the resources of the earth must be put to the service of mankind to fight the only wars that should be fought—wars against hunger, ignorance and disease.

178. Other wars are being fought, however, wars by proxy, and the chosen battlefields are countries of the developing world. Lebanon continues to bleed in agony, and we welcome the initiatives at present being undertaken to end that fratricidal strife. Nor can we fail to raise our voices in support of those who seek to end the seemingly interminable war between Iran and Iraq, a war in which so much blood and treasure is being senselessly expended.

179. It is now 40 years that there has been no peace in the Middle East. It has been said and frequently repeated that the Palestine question lies at the heart of the problem. Saint Lucia subscribes to that statement, but Saint Lucia also recognizes the fact that Israel exists and that, short of a nuclear holocaust, Israel will continue to exist. That certain countries in the area refuse to accept this fact is also at the heart of the problem. Therefore, while we support the Palestinians' right to a homeland, we also support Israel's right to exist within secure and defensible boundaries. Israel, too, if it is to retain international support, cannot fly in the face of world opinion and pursue an expansionist policy of settlements on land which, if it is to live in peace, it must eventually vacate.

180. The costs of these interminable wars in the Middle East are horrendous and, if the expenditures in military enterprises since 1948 had been used to develop a Palestinian homeland rather than to provide instruments of destruction, the Palestinians would have the highest *per capita* income of any nation on earth. But logic and sanity are at a high premium in that part of the world.

181. It does not appear that the poverty of a country and the destitution of its population preclude its being dragged into the arena of international conflict. Had that been the case, the people of the Republic of Chad would have enjoyed a life of peace and serenity. That is, unhappily, not the case. While the bulk of the population of that unhappy country languishes in poverty, hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent to frustrate the ambitions of one international adventurer. The initiative taken by France to protect the independence of Chad is to be commended, and it is hoped that foreign troops will soon be withdrawn and that unfortunate country left to pursue its destiny without further interference from outside.

182. Wars, in the sense of armed conflict between States, are not the only cause of concern. In recent years, a new and dangerous phenomenon has emerged—the phenomenon of State-supported terrorism. The tragedies of Rangoon and Beirut shocked the conscience of the civilized world and bear sad testimony to that fact. The perpetrators of those dastardly acts and those States which give them aid, comfort and sanctuary must be unequivocally condemned, and concerted international action must be taken to remove this scourge from our midst.

183. It would appear that the sponsors of that form of international mischief spare no country, however small or however far removed from their borders. Only one year ago, certain Governments of the eastern Caribbean, including Saint Lucia's, became aware of a conspiracy to train certain of their nationals in terrorism and sabotage—a conspiracy which was frustrated only by timely intelligence received from certain friendly countries. Such brazen

acts of aggression by proxy cannot be condoned by the international community.

184. Permit me to deal briefly with matters of current concern in the Caribbean and Central America. In this area, within the last decade, there have been stirrings of a people anxious to remove the weight of centuries from its back. These stirrings, in the main, have not evoked sympathetic response from the international community but, rather, have provided opportunities for international adventurers and attracted the attention of the sensation-seeking media. The problems of the region are social and economic in origin, with roots deep in the colonial past of which they are legacies. Such problems as the unequal distribution of land and wealth, the wide disparity between rich and poor, the denial of such basic human needs as education and health facilities, deep-seated though they may be, are not amenable to military solutions. If neglect in addressing them has driven some sections of the population, in despair, to take up arms against their sea of troubles, hoping that by opposing they will end them, that should not be seen as an opportunity for international adventurers to fish in the troubled waters of social discontent, in an area hitherto free of international entanglements, and to pour in military equipment and advisers in quantities and numbers which must cause alarm as to the ultimate intentions of the suppliers of such assistance.

185. For more than a century, the Caribbean and the Americas have endeavoured to sort out their problems without international entanglement. This approach should continue, and those problems that exist must be left to the wisdom of the statesmen of the region, who, with regard to the current problems in Central America, have already taken the initiative under the umbrella of the Contadora Group. All peace-loving nations should therefore support their endeavours. This support can be convincingly demonstrated by the cessation of supplies of military equipment and the withdrawal of all military advisers from the region. What the region needs is ploughshares, not the sword; tractors, not tanks; bread, not bazookas; teachers, technicians and doctors, not military advisers, and, most important, an environment of peace in which economic development and social transformation can take place.

186. Therefore, we welcome the recommendations of the Kissinger Commission on Central America, with its emphasis on economic and social assistance. We welcome, too, the opportunities available for expanded trade and development under the Caribbean Basin Initiative and the initiatives taken by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the European Economic Community in support of the Contadora Group.

187. After centuries of colonialism throughout this hemisphere, coupled with slavery in some parts, western hemisphere leaders are wary of becoming involved in ideological struggles for fear that by so doing they might exchange one colonial master for another. Recent events in the Caribbean have forcefully demonstrated to us the need for vigilance if we are to preserve our fragile independence—vigilance particularly in the removal of any areas of social conflict. If the Caribbean is to be made a “zone of peace” as some have proposed, this should mean not only “peace”, as opposed to military conflict, but “peace” in terms of the removal of social conflict

between various groups in our society, by removing the root causes of such conflict.

188. In this regard, we urge the appointment, specifically for the Caribbean region, of a Commission, akin to the Kissinger Commission on Central America, to address the needs of the Caribbean and to recommend a programme of economic assistance which would help in removing areas of social discontent and to provide the environment of social peace which is so crucial to economic and social development and the preservation of our democratic way of life.

189. In our part of the world—and I speak specifically of the Commonwealth Caribbean—we know of one way and one way only of choosing and of changing our Governments: that is, by the ballot box, in free and fair elections, held at regularly specified times. We do not subscribe to the doctrine that power comes from the barrel of a gun but, rather, we hold steadfastly to the imperative that power comes from the will of the people, who giveth and who taketh away. It is for this reason that we became so alarmed when in 1979 one member of our closely knit family of nations departed from this traditional path. This departure provided an opportunity for international adventurers to invade our region, introducing alien ways and strange concepts intended to keep the people of Grenada in subjection far worse than colonialism and, by subversion, to extend their influence throughout the region, with domination their ultimate goal.

190. What other explanation is there for the introduction of over 10 million rounds of ammunition in a small country with a population of fewer than 100,000? What other explanation can there be for the supply to a country, surrounded by unarmed and friendly neighbours, of arms far in excess of its needs for self-defence, or for the construction of the most powerful radio station in the region and of a satellite earth station, or for the vast array of instruments of propaganda and subversion? What other explanation is there when young people from neighbouring islands are recruited and trained in subversion and terrorism and sent back home to practise their newly acquired skills?

191. Our needs in the Caribbean are great, but guns and instruments of war are not among them. In most countries of the eastern Caribbean, our only defence is a police force seldom numbering as many as 300 men, including the band, armed only with batons or ceremonial rifles. Military assistance is, therefore, not welcome.

192. However, between 1979 and 1983, the militarization of the island of Grenada progressed at a rate that caused alarm. One distant country with which we have no traditional association provided in excess of \$15 million in military hardware, but not a single dollar for water supplies in a country where over 50 per cent of the population is without potable water. Others provided hundreds of military advisers, but not a single teacher in technical education. Armoured personnel carriers came, but not a single agricultural tractor. There were elaborate provisions for military training, but no provision for job training. Elaborate military installations were built, but not a single mile of farm road. And so the litany goes on. These were not the needs of the Grenadian people and were not the solutions to their needs.

193. We, in the eastern Caribbean, drew our own conclusion, and this gave us no comfort. In fact, we became alarmed and when the opportunity presented itself we took action under the Treaty establishing the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States⁷ for our own self-defence and self-preservation and removed this cancer of militarization from our midst—action which is permitted under the Charter of the United Nations. Today, Grenada is a free country, and the eastern Caribbean can breathe easily again; we can sing the popular song that has now become an anthem: “We hope the day will never come when we will awake to the sound of guns.”

194. We are peace-loving countries struggling to provide basic essentials for our people, whose history of colonization has been so long and is so recent. Those with military and imperialistic ambitions must therefore look elsewhere. The Caribbean will provide them no haven. Bayonets planted in Caribbean soil will not grow. In a few weeks' time, Grenada will have a Government elected by the democratic process, the fairness of which is open to observation by the international community. That is our way, the only way we will have it. How many countries can boast of such a record?

195. On another encouraging note, Saint Lucia applauds the recent proposals for a peaceful solution of the Beagle Channel dispute and the acceptance of these proposals by Argentina and Chile, and we congratulate these countries on so doing. I note, too, that Guatemala is prepared to negotiate a peaceful settlement of its dispute with Belize, and it is our hope that the dispute between Guyana and Venezuela, which has been submitted to the Secretary-General so that means of mediation may be found, will be speedily and satisfactorily disposed of so that these two countries—one a brother and the other a close friend—can then devote all their energies to the solution of their social and economic problems.

196. We, in this hemisphere, have in this manner demonstrated to the international community our approach to the solution of disputes between ourselves. It is my hope that such an approach will be used as an example in providing a solution for the Falkland-Malvinas dispute—a continuing irritant between traditional friends. One approach which I commend to the parties is that Argentina should forswear the use of force as a solution to the dispute, while the United Kingdom, for its part, should suspend the fortification of the islands pending mediation under United Nations auspices.

197. While the high drama of political issues held the spotlight, equally important, though less dramatic, were the battles of reviving the world economy from the longest and deepest recession since the 1930s, and the organs of the United Nations have played a leading role in this field. Though there are positive signs of recovery in the more developed countries, even in those the recovery is patchy and uneven, and most developing countries are still firmly held in the grip of the recession.

198. Protectionist policies adopted to shield domestic industries from competition are still obstructing the free flow of trade; prices of the primary commodities on which most developing countries depend for their very survival are still depressed and in many cases below 1975 levels; and interest rates are so high that to borrow at all is to court financial disaster.

199. The low level of earnings from exports from the third world, the decreased capital inflows and the high level of resources deflected to finance the arms race of the developed countries or to provide arms in some developing countries have resulted in a decreased demand for manufactured goods from the industrialized world. These have been analysed as the principal causes of the world recession. High interest rates have resulted not only in reduced capital inflows from the developed to the developing world but, in many cases, in a reverse flow. At current rates, the aggregate of less than five years' repaid interest equals the capital sum borrowed. This is nothing short of usury and exploitation.

200. Economic growth in the developing world holds the key to sustained recovery in the industrialized world and, while there is a large reservoir of unsatisfied demand, with low commodity prices and high interest rates even the tenuous recovery which we now experience will not long endure.

201. As long ago as 1969, the Pearson Commission recommended in its report⁸ that the industrialized nations pledge a mere 1 per cent of their gross national product as economic assistance to the developing world. That plea was repeated in the Willy Brandt report.⁹ Many were the pledges, but few were honoured. In fact, the World Bank has reported a substantial decrease of concessionary aid flows in both real and actual terms since 1975, and there has been a disappointing response to the call for the seventh IDA replenishment. The Nordic countries are therefore to be commended for having continued, the world recession notwithstanding, to honour their commitments and, in some respects, to exceed the required target.

202. The economies of island developing States have been identified as areas for special attention. But it would appear that the concept of their special position within the international system is being eroded, as the report by UNCTAD that was to have been prepared for this session of the General Assembly is not yet available and no satisfactory explanation has been forthcoming. It would appear, therefore, that in these cases the international community responds only to crises, and then too hastily and in too ill-considered a way, and consequently at too great a cost and therefore ineffectively.

203. As small countries, we are here because of the insistence of the United Nations that all countries have a right to independence, and that size and economic circumstances should not be criteria. But independence should mean more than a flag, however colourful, or an anthem, however stirring; or even a place in this body. It should mean, among other things, the ability to provide one's people with the basic amenities of civilized life. Small countries cannot, like the Israelites of old, emerge from the bondage of colonialism to die in the desert of neglect. Small countries cannot be left like orphans stranded on the international shores by the receding tide of colonialism, only to be gobbled up by international predators or to become client States of powerful neighbours. Small countries such as our own need the umbrella of the social and economic programmes of the United Nations. They need help to help themselves without being dragged into the slip-stream of ideological struggles. Their entry into the international community must mean more than the right to address the Assembly.

204. We sit here as equals whatever our size or importance, military or economic. It is because of the interdependence of the world community that each nation, like each man, should be his brother's keeper. The plight of the dirt farmer in the Sahel should evoke a sympathetic response in the vaulted halls of Moscow. The thirst for knowledge of a Saint Lucian child should tug at the heart-strings in Tokyo. Those who by accident of geography or history now possess most of the world's resources or the world's storehouse of knowledge must share with those who wish to cast off the bondage of underdevelopment. The goal in world politics today should therefore be not the exercise of power over the less fortunate but, rather, the dispensing of social justice to those in greatest need. This is what I referred to as the moral underpinnings of the United Nations and this is what membership of this family of nations should be all about.

205. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Lucia for the important statement he has just made.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

NOTES

¹*Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII, document A/CONF.62/122.

²A/39/118-E/1984/4, annex.

³A/39/331-E/1984/126, annex.

⁴*Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 140, document A/38/193.

⁵United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 402, No. 5778.

⁶See A/38/707, annex.

⁷Concluded at Basseterre on 18 June 1981.

⁸*Partners in Development*, Report of the Commission on International Development, Praeger Publishers, Inc., New York, 1969.

⁹*North-South: A program for survival*; report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, under the Chairmanship of Willy Brandt (Cambridge, Massachusetts, the MIT Press, 1980).