



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

**Commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the  
adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and  
Duties of States**

1. The PRESIDENT: As members will recall, the General Assembly decided at its 3rd meeting [*para. 154*] that it would hold a plenary meeting today to commemorate, on the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1984/64, the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

2. Ten years ago today, the General Assembly adopted the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [*resolution 3281 (XXIX)*]. This commemoration provides a valuable opportunity for us to assess the global economic system as it has functioned in the past decade. In doing so, we should focus on what has been achieved or left unattended and what needs to be done to enhance international economic co-operation.

3. The essential premise of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States was, and still is, the promotion of development and international economic co-operation. Among other things, the charter declares, in its article 24, that "All States have the duty to conduct their mutual economic relations in a manner which takes into account the interests of other countries."

4. The process which led to the adoption on 12 December 1974 of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States should be seen in the broader context of the efforts which had culminated a few months earlier in the adoption of a related document, the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [*resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)*]

5. The economic crisis of the early 1970s had brought about a new awareness that the international community had to commit itself to the introduction of structural changes in the pattern by which international economic relations were conducted. The important decisions taken by the General Assembly in 1974 were therefore necessary in the interest of our interdependent world.

6. Today it still seems valid to emphasize that matters affecting economic relations among nations cannot be guided by parochial considerations or limited conceptual horizons. Institutions that play a dominant role in these areas should not function only within the original framework that shaped their creation. Rather, they should be responsive to the

changing needs and requirements of the countries and peoples which they now serve.

7. The growing importance of the developing countries as a whole in the global economy is perhaps the most significant single element which determines the call for a reorientation of the patterns of international economic relations. The developing countries provide a market for almost a quarter of the exports from the developed countries. Consequently, growth in developing countries favourably affects the economies of developed countries, in terms both of demand and of employment. Conversely, the buoyancy of the economies of the developed countries has a direct bearing on the economic future of the developing countries. In short, the interdependence of our global economy makes it evident that improvements in the world economic situation must be a collective enterprise.

8. The General Assembly has undertaken several initiatives in the past decade to improve the global economic environment. The results of these initiatives have been less than spectacular. The need for a rational exploitation of global resources and the equitable distribution of economic benefits remains an urgent and continuing priority.

9. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States is generally regarded by Governments as an embodiment of cardinal principles which must be allowed to govern inter-State relations. It is also considered to be a reasonable expression of the need for harmonious development in the world economy, as well as for the maintenance of international peace and security.

10. It is in this spirit that I should like on this occasion to appeal to all States, developed and developing, to implement this important instrument—the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

11. I now call on the Secretary-General.

12. The SECRETARY-GENERAL (*interpretation from Spanish*): Ten years ago the General Assembly adopted the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. It was a pronouncement of lasting significance, based on the realization that in a world of growing interdependence, international economic problems could be solved only through greater multi-lateral co-operation. While some issues arising from this premise may be open to debate, the basic principle articulated by this charter transcends all differences of perceptions and priorities. It is the principle of promoting an economic order based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all States, irrespective of their economic and social systems.

13. The last 10 years have been years of much tumult in the economic sphere. They have accentua-

ted certain harsh realities confronting the developing countries, and they have also underscored the need for more systematic co-operation among nations. Faced with this challenge, the world community expects the United Nations to develop the concepts and define the modalities appropriate to such co-operation. The Organization provides the only forum for a comprehensive discussion of issues relating to the long-term prospects for development and to the correction of imbalances in international economic relations. Many of the important economic issues to which the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States addressed itself continue to be on the agenda of the General Assembly. The problems of the least developed among the developing countries remain a subject of special concern, requiring urgent action. The adoption by the General Assembly of a very important declaration, The Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa [*resolution 39/29, annex*], testifies to this concern.

14. In the world of today, the existence of poverty results in a succession of severe economic and social crises for developing countries. These constitute not only a challenge to the international conscience but a threat to international stability as well. We have yet to achieve a new consensus on economic issues in the light of world economic and political realities. This will take time to emerge, but its absence need not prevent progress in critical areas. I believe that positive action in these areas would be the best reaffirmation of the purpose of ensuring a more peaceful and prosperous future for all the peoples of the world.

15. Mr. FISCHER (Austria), President of the Economic and Social Council: The Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1984/64, decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States in a suitable and appropriate manner at a plenary meeting on 12 December 1984. The General Assembly, in agreeing to this recommendation of the Council, has provided an opportunity to assess the importance of that historic event and to reflect on its continued relevance for our ongoing efforts to cope with the challenges of increasing global economic interdependence.

16. Through the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, its sponsors endeavoured to provide the international community of nations with an effective instrument for the establishment of a new system of international economic relations based on equity, sovereign equality and interdependence of interests of developed and developing countries. It was hoped that the evolution of economic and social principles meeting the requirements of more equitable international relations would make a major contribution to advancing the cause of development and to promoting social progress in larger freedom.

17. Today, 10 years after the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, we have to state that many of these hopes and aspirations remain unfulfilled. Many of our efforts to promote economic and social development in a manner which truly responds to the full dimension of this historic process of change still encounter major difficulties. Some of these difficulties are due to the sheer magnitude and complexity of the problems involved. Others are caused by the diversity of

interests and the difference of approach and perspective in pursuing the goal of achieving a more prosperous and more peaceful world.

18. As much as our views may differ on the reasons for the lack of progress in solving the world's pressing economic and social problems, we do, I believe, all agree on the need for closer and more effective international economic co-operation. It is in this sense that the basic aims underlying the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States are as valid today as they were a decade ago.

19. It is also in this sense that we should benefit from this occasion to recommit ourselves to the strengthening of international economic co-operation for development and to making better use of the United Nations as an instrument for such co-operation.

20. The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Ahmed Tawfik Khalil of Egypt, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77.

21. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt): We are gathered today in this forum to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption in 1974 of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, in implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/64 which, *inter alia*, recommended that the General Assembly, at its thirty-ninth session, should observe this occasion in a suitable and appropriate manner at a plenary meeting. We still recall the eloquent words of the former President of Mexico, Mr. Luis Echeverría Alvarez, when, at Santiago in 1972, before the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, he said: "Let us transfer the concrete principles of solidarity among men to the area of relations among countries". Then he proposed a charter of economic rights and duties, which culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly two years later of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

22. In view of the vital importance attached to this charter and its impact on international economic relations, the States members of the Group of 77 had hoped that enough progress in the implementation of the charter provisions since its adoption 10 years ago would have justified genuine celebration on this occasion. Today, however, we have to content ourselves with the commemoration of the adoption of a charter that remains to be fulfilled.

23. Ten years after the adoption of the resolution, several developed countries have not gone far beyond what in the language of the United Nations could perhaps be termed as merely "having taken note of" the provisions of this universal document. The gap between what the charter spells out concerning the various elements of international economic relations and what has so far been implemented cannot be overlooked or glossed over. To cite some examples, the charter calls for the promotion of rational and equitable economic relations and for the expansion and liberalization of world trade. At the level of implementation, what we really see and experience today is the marked increase in protectionism, which has become more specific in focus, more sectoral in scope and more discriminatory in effect. The growth in protectionism and its existing structures has had a major adverse impact on trade, particularly on the exports of developing countries.

24. Developed countries had pledged, even committed themselves, to desist from imposing new

restrictions and to work towards dismantling existing ones. But the practice still falls far short of a genuine expansion and liberalization of world trade.

25. The charter upholds the right of all States to participate fully in the international decision-making process in the solution of economic, financial and monetary problems. However, the past decade was marked by instability, punctuated by periods of crisis, against which background deficiencies of the international monetary system have become increasingly evident. The severe economic problems faced by developing countries during this period were largely of external origin, resulting primarily from a system in whose creation and operation the developing countries played a small but insignificant role. This is not to deny that this state of affairs has generated a certain impetus to a process of change. The importance of strengthening the role of developing countries in the decision-making processes of multilateral financial institutions has consequently gained a certain momentum. Nevertheless, institutional and policy changes within multilateral financial institutions have tended so far to fall far short of the expectations of developing countries.

26. On the other hand, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, as is well known, underlines the importance of the adjustment in prices of exports from developing countries in relation to prices of imports and calls for the conclusion of more multilateral trade agreements. Nevertheless, the Agreement Establishing the Common Fund for Commodities<sup>1</sup> has not yet been ratified by the required two-thirds majority to render that fund operational.

27. I shall not dwell here at length on several other articles enshrined in the charter, whether they are related to the elimination of colonialism, *apartheid*, racial discrimination, neo-colonialism and all forms of foreign aggression, occupation and domination, as in article 16; or to the duty to contribute to a balanced expansion of the world economy, as in article 31; or to the promotion of the achievement of general and complete disarmament and utilization of resources thereby released for development, as in article 15. Suffice it to remind ourselves of the recognition by Governments that the charter is a basic document in the field of political and economic relations. There is universal agreement that the charter properly reflects the realities of interdependence, particularly in the area of global economic relations. It underscores the importance of the expansion of international co-operation with a view to bringing about a balance in the world economy.

28. What we really need on an occasion such as today is to stress that good intentions alone are not enough. We need to pause for reflection. We need to ask ourselves, 10 years after the adoption of the charter, where do we stand? Has the charter been fully or adequately implemented? Do developing countries exercise full sovereignty over their natural resources in the context of the present international economic order? Have international economic relations been restructured on an equitable and democratic basis, as provided in the charter? Have global negotiations been launched? And in short, has the general economic situation of the developing countries improved since the adoption of the charter?

29. As the Group of 77 sees it, the answer to all such fundamental questions is, regrettably, in the negative on the whole.

30. The Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, adopted at the meeting held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 26 to 28 September 1984, succinctly described the critical state of the world economy when it stated:

“While the economic recovery in developed countries remained uneven and its durability was in no way guaranteed, most developing countries continued to experience stagnant or declining growth rates. The developing countries continued to be confronted with an adverse external environment characterized by declining commodity prices, sharp exchange-rate fluctuations, deterioration in the terms of trade, increased protectionism, very high real interest rates, crushing debt burdens, reverse transfer of financial resources, decline of official development assistance (ODA) in real terms and the resource crisis experienced by the multilateral development financing institutions. The Ministers observed that the ever-widening gap between the developed and developing countries was a result of the inequities and inequalities inherent in the existing system, and that the crisis was not merely a cyclical phenomenon but the manifestation of deep-rooted structural imbalances and disequilibrium. Therefore, they observed that sustained and balanced growth of the international economy required an equitable adjustment process.”

“The Ministers reaffirmed their belief in the concept of interdependence as a basis of mutually beneficial co-operation among all countries. They regretted that, while acknowledging interdependence, some developed countries continued to follow policies detrimental and damaging to developing countries. They reiterated that interdependence should lead to co-operative endeavours for the benefit of all countries and should eliminate the widening gap between the developed and developing countries.” [See A/39/536, annex, paras. 8 and 12.]

31. Developing countries have always expressed and demonstrated not only their will but also their pragmatic attitude and determination to engage in a serious dialogue with their partners from developed countries with a view to the full implementation of the provisions enshrined in various global agreements and documents, such as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade [resolution 35/56, annex], all of which seek to establish a new world order in which justice, equity, peace and security could be achieved.

32. On a more optimistic note, let me say in conclusion that despite our frustrations and disappointments, the Group of 77 would also like to seize this opportunity to reiterate its determination to continue to engage in a constructive manner in the review of the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. We shall pursue our co-operative endeavours—and I underline co-operative—to identify the most appropriate action for the implementation of the charter that would lead to lasting solutions to the grave economic

problems of developing countries within the framework of the United Nations. On behalf of the States members of the Group of 77, I wish to express our sincere hope that the exercise of the review next April will identify the desired goals and that the relevant report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fortieth session will herald a new era of international understanding and co-operation.

33. The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Natarajan Krishnan of India, who will speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

34. Mr. KRISHNAN (India): It gives me great pleasure to address this gathering on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. It is fitting that on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations we are meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. The charter represents a landmark in the process which started with the establishment of the United Nations itself—the reassertion of the right of every nation, big or small, rich or poor, endowed or deprived, to full sovereignty and equality. The charter amplifies sovereignty in its economic manifestation, and it is one more step that the international community has taken towards a just and equitable economic order in the world. It seeks to redress the imbalance of rights and duties for those countries upon which a peculiar constellation of historical legacies imposed a perpetuating condition of poverty and deprivation and which were placed at a disadvantage in the prevailing set of international economic relations. In seeking to redress this imbalance, the charter represents a consistent principle of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

35. In spite of the historical significance of its adoption, it is increasingly clear that 10 years later the charter remains largely unimplemented and the world economy continues to suffer from severe structural imbalance, which has been exacerbated by the recent economic crisis of proportions unparalleled since the great depression. The worst sufferers in the global recession have been the developing countries, which are facing increasing balance-of-payments deficits, mounting debt burdens and deteriorating terms of trade along with sharp decreases in development assistance.

36. It should be noted that, while seeking to restore the balance in international economic relations, the charter takes due account of the legitimate interests of the more affluent and industrialized States as well. In fact, it is a remarkably prescient document. Even 10 years ago, it clearly foresaw the increasing interdependence of the world economy, the relationship between peace and development and the need for greater international co-operation for mutual benefit. It is in these basic premises that all our co-operative efforts originate. It is therefore a matter of particular regret that the consensus for development which is embodied in the charter and in so many other documents of the United Nations is itself being laid open to question. Nothing could cause greater harm to international economic co-operation at a time when it is most needed.

37. It is in this spirit that the non-aligned countries express their regret at the very limited response that the request of the Secretary-General for information on the review of implementation has evoked. It is our hope that the proposed meeting of an *ad hoc*

intergovernmental committee next year will make possible a careful examination of areas to which greater attention needs to be paid by the international community and will lead to a firm consensus on measures to reach those objectives. We are aware that some countries have reservations on some provisions of the charter. On this occasion we would like to invite them again to join the mainstream of international opinion on economic rights and duties.

38. One area which requires urgent consideration is the liberalization of trade. The provisions in articles 14 and 18 of the charter on increasing the access of exports of developing countries and for preferential treatment for such exports are particularly important. The broad thrust of trade liberalization since the Kennedy and Tokyo rounds seems to have been reversed, and protectionist barriers are taking increasingly arbitrary and discriminatory forms. To restore confidence in the international trading system, it is essential that existing commitments on standstill and rollback of protectionism be urgently implemented. In accordance with article 22 of the charter, a much greater effort is also required to increase the flow of financial resources to developing countries and progressively to reach internationally agreed targets for official development assistance. It is ironical that in the present grave economic conditions a net outflow of capital is taking place from developing countries as a whole.

39. The General Assembly has served to focus the international community's attention on the critical economic situation in Africa. The Prime Minister of India, in his capacity as Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, has expressed the solidarity of the Movement with the efforts of African countries and appealed to all members to join in the efforts to meet the immediate challenge, as well as the long-term task of fostering sustained economic growth. The objective of collective self-reliance through increased economic co-operation among developing countries, as enshrined in the charter, is one of the major principles of the Non-Aligned Movement. In this spirit, we are ready, along with the rest of the international community, to assist in any manner possible.

40. In conclusion, I should like to draw particular attention to article 8 of the charter, which places the highly significant responsibility on all countries to "co-operate in encouraging structural changes in the . . . world economy" in order to facilitate a more rational and equitable system of international economic relations. Article 10 further prescribes that all States "have the right to participate fully and effectively in the international decision-making process in the solution of world economic, financial and monetary problems". It is clear that this is one of the most pressing areas of concern. I need not dwell at length here on the reasons which prompted the heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, at their Seventh Conference, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, to stress the urgent need for the launching of global negotiations and to call for an international conference on money and finance for development.<sup>2</sup> Since that call was made, the need for change, be it described as improvement or reform, has become almost universally accepted. It would be particularly fitting if, on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the charter, we could reach an understanding on this most pressing area of concern and initiate a process of consultations which would

enable the convening of that international conference on money and finance for development.

41. The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Pascal Gayama of the Congo, Chairman of the Group of African States for the month of December.

42. Mr. GAYAMA (Congo) (*interpretation from French*): Only a few days separate us now from the adoption by the Assembly of the Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa [*resolution 39/29, annex*]. At a time when, on behalf of the Group of African States, we are undertaking a succinct evaluation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, this coincidence cannot but influence our perceptions.

43. Assuredly, the Declaration just adopted by the General Assembly does not mention this charter, adopted 10 years ago, which in its preamble stated that it is a fundamental purpose of the present charter to promote the establishment of the new international economic order.

44. Nevertheless, for many Africans the norms and principles defined by the charter remain of indisputable validity and retain a usefulness no one can underestimate for the realization of the objectives set forth in the Declaration.

45. Indeed, if the overall economic and social situation of the African continent is very far today from the conditions advocated in the charter when the General Assembly declared itself "desirous of . . . the promotion . . . of the economic and social progress of all countries, especially developing countries", we must certainly see here, above all, an effect of the particularly devastating natural calamities such as drought and desertification which have greatly afflicted the economies whose structures were still far from firm.

46. These natural disasters, however, are not the only factors involved here. They have only added to and aggravated other factors which are equally deplorable, such as laws and practices now in effect in the present international economic order. This being the case, we can ask whether effective implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, if it did not reduce the consequences of the African crisis, at least might have made it possible to discern their symptoms more systematically and to intervene with more effectiveness and assurance.

47. On this point, the Group of African States supports the idea of creating an intergovernmental committee of the whole which we hope would be able to determine the precise relationship between Africa's economic situation and the non-implementation of the charter.

48. It seems necessary for us to stress, on the occasion of this tenth anniversary, that despite the less than receptive atmosphere on the part of some developed countries to the goals and principles of the charter, that charter nevertheless remains more than ever the touchstone for all normative approaches made in recent years to give real meaning to the concept of underdevelopment that can no longer be considered a sad inevitability, but as a relative state, caused by a basically unjust, blind economic system.

49. Through the clarification of ideas and the redistribution of roles that it advocates, the charter offers prospects for lending substance to the concept of the right to development and proposes the implementation of essential structural reforms appropriate

for changing the picture of international economic relations.

50. The validity of the charter flows both from the goals that inspired it and from the conditions that made it necessary. The aim it was meant to serve 10 years ago remains as valid as ever.

51. First of all, it seems to us necessary to introduce into the indifferent play of market forces a minimum of ethical considerations such as would serve the goals of justice and equity which are the beginning and the end of any political undertaking. Then, it is important to stress that the conditions that some 10 years ago determined the economic and social crisis of the world have not changed. That crisis affects the developing countries, particularly those of Africa, much more than it does the developed countries. It is the gravest crisis the world has known since the 1930s. Its persistence or its aggravation definitively refuted the subjective theories that attributed all the evils of the situation solely to the rise in oil prices, and placed the responsibility on the developed countries which ceaselessly profit from a situation that is profitable to them in every aspect.

52. Thus the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States has to deal, in the implementation of its basic provisions, with the paralysing inertia, if not with the veiled or declared opposition, of those who since the beginning have seen in it a dangerous revolutionary operation, aimed at sowing chaos and desolation among the wealthier countries. They have therefore made efforts to play down its significance and to reduce its practical effect on those areas of international economic life where an attempt has been made to draw up new rules for the game, as regards production and trade as well as finance and development.

53. In all these areas lively resistance is noted, which does not even leave untouched such basic concepts as that mentioned in article 1 of the charter, "the sovereign and inalienable right [of every State] to choose its economic system as well as its political, social and cultural systems in accordance with the will of its people, without outside interference, coercion or threat in any form whatsoever."

54. There are circumstances also which show us that the provision in article 2, according to which "Every State has and shall freely exercise full permanent sovereignty, including possession, use and disposal, over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activities", is constantly the subject of negative assessment by those States whose technological capacities and economic or military power are considered to give them the right to dispose, for imperialist ends, of the resources and activities of the weaker countries.

55. However, institutions whose liberal intentions and initiatives no one can doubt, such as the World Bank, are saying the same thing when, evaluating the worrying economic situation of Africa, they advocate that international assistance for development should take into account, above all, the priorities and programmes formulated by the countries concerned themselves.

56. In this context, we remain convinced that if the global negotiations had been able to lead to operational agreements in the essential areas of raw materials, trade, development, currency and finance, this would have made it possible to achieve in a coordinated way the basic goals and objectives of the

charter, which are reflected in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

57. Opposition to the charter is shown, finally, in a general retreat from the spirit of co-operation, a retreat characterized by the adoption of protectionist policies, the cut-backs in contributions in the form of public assistance to development and, generally speaking, inadequate efforts to ensure the financing of multilateral development programmes and the re-establishment of bilateral procedures, which are not all free from responsibility in the present crisis of the developing countries in general and African countries in particular.

58. In article 17, the charter clearly states that "International co-operation for development is the shared goal and common duty of all States."

59. The lack of haste shown by our partners in the developed countries with respect to the recommendations of UNCTAD, in particular to the establishment of the Common Fund for Commodities, which is of major interest for Africa, demonstrates the nature of the obstacles that have to be overcome to promote the essential purposes of the charter.

60. There are other measures, such as those provided for in the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries,<sup>3</sup> which interest Africa above all, as most of the least developed countries are found in Africa. The implementation of that Programme is still the subject of discussions.

61. From the sectoral standpoint, the results hoped for from industrial development or agricultural development have not been forthcoming, despite the mobilization of the specialized agencies concerned.

62. Science and technology are important tools for development, as recognized in article 13 of the charter, which states: "Every State has the right to benefit from the advances and developments in science and technology for the acceleration of its economic and social development." Africa, more than other regions concerned, has not been able to profit satisfactorily from this in order to establish the bases for true endogenous development.

63. In sum, confined to a minor role in the redistribution of international economic activities, which are essentially perceived in terms of neo-colonialist schemes, the African continent has not been able, despite its enormous potentialities and resources, to convert itself into a pole of development activities "to contribute to the balanced expansion of the world economy", as article 31 of the charter states, taking due account of the interdependence of the elements which make up the entire international community.

64. Africa had already tried to reformulate the principles of the charter in accordance with its basic priorities through the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa, adopted on 29 April 1980.<sup>4</sup> The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, whose twentieth ordinary session was held at Addis Ababa from 12 to 15 November 1984, advocated the revitalization of this Plan in the light of the present situation. In this regard, an economic summit conference is scheduled in 1985, which certainly will be able, in addition to dealing with pressing immediate problems, to undertake an evaluation of medium- and long-term projects, such as those for the Trans-

port and Communications Decade in Africa and the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, as well as of the implementation of sub-regional economic projects.

65. The Lagos Plan of Action, completed by the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa, thus constitutes Africa's positive answer to the appeal in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States which embodies these objectives. The effective implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action will make Africa the privileged partner it wishes to become, in the framework of co-operation and the new international economic order.

66. In the area of political independence and sovereignty, we Africans know very well the cost of becoming and acting as a sovereign agent of international law to which the terms of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States would apply.

67. By expanding the horizons of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the charter gives valuable support to all those struggling, as in Namibia and South Africa, for recognition of the inalienable rights of peoples, as article 16 of the charter states clearly when it says:

"It is the right and duty of all States, individually and collectively, to eliminate colonialism, *apartheid*, racial discrimination, neo-colonialism and all forms of foreign aggression, occupation and domination, and the economic and social consequences thereof, as a prerequisite for development."

It also says that: "No State has the right to promote or encourage investments that may constitute an obstacle to the liberation of a territory occupied by force."

68. Need we stress the extent to which in this context the South African *apartheid* régime and its illegal occupation of Namibia constitute an obstacle to the full satisfaction of the conditions for the application of the charter in Africa?

69. South Africa, which always lags behind an evolution, is here in the paradoxical position of contemporary colonial Powers when, despite the adoption of the mother instrument, the Charter of the United Nations, followed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, they did not hesitate to carry out atrocious colonial wars, putting themselves at odds with the juridical instruments they themselves had elaborated.

70. In the final analysis, Africa realizes very well that the principles which should govern international economic relations, peaceful coexistence and the independence of States are disrupted by the tension that persists at present in East-West relations, which some are happy to extend to our continent. The arms race and the attempts to establish spheres of influence that result from it are hardly conducive to the promotion of the provisions of article 15, according to which: "All States have the duty to promote the achievement of general and complete disarmament . . . and to utilize the resources released by effective disarmament measures for the economic and social development . . .".

71. Among the instruments worked out to supplement the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States has a very significant place.

72. Certainly, the Charter of the United Nations exists, and it already includes among its objectives

“international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social . . . or humanitarian character”. Article 55 of the Charter of the United Nations in Chapter IX, on economic and social co-operation among nations, goes even further, and states:

“With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote:

a. higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development;

b. solutions of international, economic, social, health, and related problems . . . ”

73. In fact, the Charter of the United Nations had so stated; but if the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was needed to specify those stipulations in the area of individual freedoms, no document had yet dealt to this extent with the matter of equality of partners in world development, in the context of a more just and more equitable international order.

74. The norms and principles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States refer essentially to the hopes and the underlying realities of the world we live in. The General Assembly reflected their spirit and exigencies when, 10 years ago to the day, on 12 December 1974, it adopted its historic resolution 3281 (XXIX). Human evolution has been marked by moments and acts of universal importance, in which mankind has united in a determination to blaze a path to peace and prosperity by assuring conditions of maximum security and progress.

75. To establish the bases of civilization for all men, all nations to benefit, the crisis through which we have been passing for more than a decade has shown that it no longer suffices to create a technological network in which men are mere puppets in the hands of puppeteers who have no respect for ecology and the environment.

76. The rediscovery of our unity and our common destiny imposes on us other attitudes towards the poverty, hunger and misery which today challenge human ingenuity.

77. The crises and insecurity that characterize the existence of most of our planet, the threats and dangers that haunt our very lives, require that we drastically change our behaviour.

78. For our part, the option is clear: the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States constitutes one of the pivots for a rebirth which the current political, juridical and socio-economic factors make imperative. The new international economic order forms the essential framework for this rebirth.

79. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is Mr. Abdullah Salah of Jordan, Chairman of the Group of Asian States.

80. Mr. SALAH (Jordan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The General Assembly is commemorating today the tenth anniversary of the adoption, in 1974, of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. It is indeed an important occasion, on which the Assembly recalls the spirit on which the charter was based and the objectives for which it was formulated, foremost among which are to strengthen co-opera-

tion, to solve all international problems in the area of economic and social rights and to strive towards a new economic order based on justice, equal co-operation, to common interests, interdependence and equal, sovereign rights of States.

81. This charter, which stems from a clear recognition of the importance of economic interdependence between States, strives to create an appropriate international atmosphere for establishing the principles that would serve the progress and economic development of all the States in the world. It stresses particularly the necessity for encouraging and assisting developing countries to achieve a better life for all their peoples through accelerating economic and social development, making available the necessary means for that development through the encouragement of international trade, and facilitating the transfer of technical and financial resources and the required technology. The charter also stresses the importance of reinforcing co-operation among developing countries and calls for the creation of conditions for international co-operation that foster progress and economic stability.

82. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the charter, we would like to commend the initiative that led to its adoption. That initiative was taken by Mr. Luis Echeverría, the former President of Mexico, whose effective role led to further important initiatives being taken on the international scene. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Group of 77, which met in 1974 and were also chaired by the representative of Mexico, initially took an important part in formulating this charter. Since its adoption, there have been important developments on the international economic scene, which must be referred to when the charter is considered. Of particular note are the development and strengthening of co-operation among developing countries and the efforts of the Group of 77 to enhance that co-operation, which extends to different areas, the most important of which are the promotion and development of technical and commercial co-operation among developing countries, in the field of science and technology and the preparation of a system of preferences among developing countries themselves. The means for strengthening this co-operation are still being put into effect through different meetings and through the specialized co-ordinating mechanism within the Group of 77. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has also taken part in establishing a similar co-operation. The two groups, namely the Group of 77 and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, have been active in their efforts to bring about a new international economic order through constructive negotiations between developing and industrialized countries. Of note also were the results of the North-South dialogue and the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. A historic achievement was the adoption of the Convention on the Law of the Sea. After prolonged and difficult negotiations, the overwhelming majority of States of the world joined those negotiations and acceded to the Convention. There was also the establishment of the Common Fund for Commodities.

83. The global negotiations between developing and developed countries are stalled. Those negotiations are aimed at establishing a new international economic order that would lead to stability and an improvement in the international economic situa-

tion. We hope that those negotiations will be resumed as soon as possible, as the present economic conditions call for expediting the common efforts of States to contain the current international economic crisis and the negative impact of this crisis on developing countries. We cannot, of course, talk about the charter on this occasion without referring to the developing countries. Obviously the developing countries suffer more than other countries from this crisis. The economies of those countries are experiencing negative growth rates, if not recession. At a time when the burden of servicing the foreign debt is also increasing and when participation in international trade is becoming more and more limited, there is no doubt that, among measures aimed at the liberalization of international trade, the most important measures are those that favour the exportation of industrial products from developing countries to industrialized countries. We also have to eliminate protectionism, intensify the transfer of financial resources and loan concessions and improve the terms of lending. While we welcome the signs of recovery in the economies of industrialized countries, we hope that a similar recovery will occur in the economies of developing countries.

84. Working with a positive spirit and with constructive co-operation is the best way to achieve our objectives and to implement the articles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which is based on the Charter of the United Nations itself.

85. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

86. Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The socialist countries on whose behalf I am speaking—the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic—on this tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of States have the honour to make the following statement.

87. The Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of States is one of the most important basic instruments of the United Nations in the economic sphere. The importance of the charter lies primarily in the fact that, along with the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [*resolution 3201 (S-VI)*], it has determined the main areas for restructuring international economic relations on a just and democratic basis. An evaluation of the implementation of the charter is in essence an evaluation of the progress achieved by the world community towards implementing the ideas of the new international economic order and of the difficulties which hamper the process of democratization of international economic relations.

88. The particular concern of the socialist countries, in a profound objective evaluation of the results of the implementation of the charter over the last 10 years, is based on their sincere desire, along with all other countries, to take concrete, purposeful steps to

restructure international economic relations on a just, democratic basis.

89. The principles and provisions of the charter determine not merely economic, but also political, relations among States. Equality, the recognition of the total sovereignty of States in their economic activities, the inadmissibility of any interference in the internal affairs of other States, peaceful coexistence and the duty of States to promote the implementation of general and complete disarmament—these political principles of the charter are fully sympathized with and supported by the overwhelming majority of Member States of the United Nations.

90. However, the process of international détente, which in the mid-1970s was marked by an expansion and sustained development of economic, scientific, technological and cultural relations and links among States, has been disrupted because of the action of the imperialist States.

91. The policy adopted by the United States of America in the late 1970s and early 1980s to change, to its advantage, the existing military and strategic balance and its desire to attain a dominating position in the world had an extremely negative impact on the development of normal relations among States. That policy flagrantly conflicts with the Charter of the United Nations and with the basis of international economic relations which is set forth in chapter I of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and also the provisions of its articles 1, 4, 15 and 26.

92. As a result of the aggressive policy of the imperialist States, a dangerous situation has been created in the world. As was stressed in the communiqué of the thirty-ninth session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance [CMEA] at Havana, the intensification by these forces of the arms race is one of the most important reasons for the deepening of political and economic instability in the world, which has increased the danger of nuclear war, threatening the very existence of mankind and imposing an increasing burden on the peoples of the world because it diverts enormous material and financial resources and slows down economic and social progress. The member countries of CMEA believe that the implementation of realistic measures to curb the arms race and bring about disarmament is a pressing task.

93. Of particular value for putting into practice the provisions of the charter concerning the maintenance of international peace and security could be the implementation of the specific proposals of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries set forth in decisions of the high-level Economic Conference of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, held in Moscow from 12 to 14 June 1984 [*see A/39/323*]; the proposal by the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty to the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] regarding negotiations on the freezing and the reduction of military expenditures, dated 5 March 1984;<sup>5</sup> the Prague Political Declaration adopted at a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty on 5 January 1983;<sup>6</sup> the communiqué of the thirty-seventh session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, dated 20 October 1983;<sup>7</sup> and the many other joint instruments of the socialist countries regarding the halting of the arms race, the non-increase in and reduction of



military expenditures and the move towards disarmament in order to ensure that the resources released may be used for purposes of social and economic development, particularly that of the developing countries.

94. The basic purposes of the charter are also to promote the establishment of the new international economic order, to strengthen international co-operation for the purposes of development and to resolve the basic impediments to the economic development of the developing countries.

95. Now, 10 years after the adoption of the charter and of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, there has been virtually no real progress in restructuring international economic relations on a just, democratic basis. A start in this process could be global negotiations on the most pressing world economic problems, in keeping with General Assembly resolution 34/138. However, since the adoption of that resolution, not only have we not seen any positive progress on this matter but we have witnessed attempts to deny the agreements already achieved. The deadlock on the launching of global negotiations is due to the reluctance of imperialist circles to give up their privileged position in the world capitalist economy. Their policy is aimed not merely at maintaining but also at extending their neo-colonial exploitation of the developing countries and at continuing to drain those countries of colossal financial and material resources.

96. The socialist countries firmly support the speedy launching in the United Nations of global negotiations, in keeping with the decisions taken by the Organization, with the participation of all States and taking into account their legitimate interests.

97. As was emphasized in the Declaration adopted at the high-level Economic Conference of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance entitled "The maintenance of peace and international economic co-operation" [*Ibid.*, annex II], the member countries of CMEA are consistent advocates of the adoption of effective decisions and actions aimed at eliminating any kind of exploitation in international economic relations; ensuring unimpeded international scientific and technological co-operation; eliminating discrimination, artificial impediments and unequal exchanges in commercial relations; and establishing an economically fair system of justified pricing for commodities, food and manufactured goods and, with this in mind, monitoring more closely the activities of the transnational corporations.

98. They advocate streamlining monetary relations and they are opposed to any policy driving up interest rates. They advocate normalization of the terms of granting credit, so that such terms, particularly with regard to the indebtedness of the developing countries, will not be used as a means of exerting political pressure and interfering in the internal affairs of others.

99. The socialist countries are profoundly convinced that acceleration of the development of the newly liberated States and the attainment by them of economic independence are possible only by radically breaking off unjust economic relations inherited from the colonial past. It is precisely that approach that is reflected in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

100. Recently, increased pressure has been placed on the developing countries by the imperialistic States to force them to give up progressive social and economic transformations, to reduce the size of the public sectors of their economies, to review their national plans and development programmes, to rescind legislation that seeks to protect their national industries and to open the door to the uncontrolled predominance of foreign private capital.

101. This pressure is an open manifestation of latter-day neo-colonialism, and it grossly violates the provisions of the charter, in particular articles 1, 7, 10, 16 and 24.

102. Accordingly, the establishment of effective control over the activities of transnational corporations is particularly important in order to limit their harmful effect on international relations and development. The well-known "package proposal" of the Chairman of the special session of the Commission on Transnational Corporations is a realistic basis for concluding work on a code of conduct for transnational corporations. Its adoption could be an important step towards implementing the relevant provisions of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

103. The socialist countries strictly abide by the progressive principles of the charter and in a practical manner are promoting their implementation.

104. This is shown in their political support for the just demands of the developing countries struggling for economic decolonization, for the elimination from international economic relations of diktat, blackmail and threat, and for the development of broad-based, economically advantageous and equitable international economic co-operation.

105. The socialist countries are giving the developing countries all-round broad-based assistance, as far as they are able, in forms that reflect their socialist structure, the effectiveness of which has been acknowledged by the developing countries themselves. This is graphically illustrated by facts relating to this assistance that have been referred to by a number of socialist countries in the United Nations.

106. As far as the contents, principles and goals are concerned, trade and economic, scientific and technological co-operation between the socialist countries and the developing countries constitutes a new type of international economic relations countering the system imposed by imperialism, which is one of exploitation of the natural and human resources of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The nature and type of co-operation that exists between the socialist countries and the newly liberated countries are fully in accordance with the provisions of the charter, in particular articles 4, 14, 18 and 19, and represent a basic contribution by the socialist countries towards the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and towards a restructuring of international economic relations on a just and equitable basis.

107. The assistance given by the socialist countries promotes progressive structural transformations in the economies of the developing countries and makes a substantial contribution towards their attainment of economic independence. With the participation and assistance of the socialist countries, many hundreds of enterprises have been built and are being built—for example, in the fields of metallurgy, energy, mining and light industry—the transfer of

technology on concessional terms is being carried out, and there is widespread training of nationals.

108. Foreign trade between the socialist countries and the developing countries is increasing apace. In their trade policies, the socialist countries strictly abide by and will always abide by the principles of the charter as regards the inadmissibility of any discrimination in international trade and in other areas of economic co-operation, as well as the need for developing international trade on a basis of equality and mutual advantage, irrespective of differences in political, economic and social systems.

109. The increase of protectionism in the developed capitalist countries has seriously hampered international trade and economic co-operation as a whole, as has the use by imperialistic countries of sanctions and embargoes of various kinds. The use of economic pressure for political purposes, despite the clear prohibition of such measures in articles 16 and 32 of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and the practice of sanctions, blackmail, blockade and other means of economic coercion have become extremely widespread. In this connection, of great importance is the adoption by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session of resolutions entitled "Confidence-building in international economic relations" and "Economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries", and the adoption by the Second Committee, at the thirty-ninth session, of draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.98,<sup>8</sup> on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, resolutions which seek to oppose the use of measures to exert pressure on the developing countries or to interfere in their internal affairs. The fact that many imperialistic countries voted against those resolutions shows that the policies of sanction and blockade are part of their foreign policy strategy. This is a gross violation not merely of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, but also of the Charter of the United Nations.

110. An important contribution towards the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States is the co-operation of socialist countries within the framework of CMEA.

111. The socialist countries have created a new type of international economic integration which is an example of genuinely equitable and mutually advantageous co-operation among all countries. The affinity in political and socio-economic goals of these States makes it possible for the member countries of CMEA to move successfully towards a radical solution of a whole range of socio-economic problems.

112. A new stage in economic socialist integration was embarked upon at the high-level Economic Conference of the member countries of CMEA, which laid down the basic areas for mutual economic co-operation for the long term.

113. As was stressed in the statement adopted at the Conference, on basic lines for further developing and intensifying economic, scientific and technological co-operation among the member countries of CMEA,

"consistent implementation of the decisions adopted will give a new and important impetus to the further progressive development of their economies and to mutual co-operation, enhance the prestige and appeal of socialism in the world, and further expand and strengthen the unity of the CMEA member countries, joined in a community

of fundamental class interests and linked by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism" [*ibid.*, annex I].

114. The present tense political situation, the disruption by the imperialist States of world economic relations, the absence of real progress towards the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis: all this has further increased the significance of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

115. The communiqué issued after the recent meeting of the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, held on 3 and 4 December 1984 at Berlin, emphasized that the States represented at that meeting condemned the imperialist policy of force and expressed their solidarity with and support for peoples fighting for their freedom, the strengthening of their independence and their socio-economic progress; they took note of the important role played by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in fighting for the elimination of the danger of war, the halting of the arms race, disarmament and the improvement of international political and economic relations; and they expressed opposition to any forms of domination and exploitation by States [*see A/39/763, annex*].

116. The socialist countries believe that the task of the comprehensive review of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States that is to take place in 1985 will be to promote the elimination of the obstacles to the effective implementation of the charter's provisions and to do everything possible to ensure that the progressive principles of the charter, which seek to bring about a radical improvement in international economic relations, are implemented.

117. The PRESIDENT: Because of our heavy programme of work for this afternoon's meeting, this commemorative meeting of the General Assembly must be completed this morning. I therefore appeal to representatives to make their statements as brief as possible. I also propose that, if there is no objection, the list of speakers be closed now.

*It was so decided.*

118. The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Henri A. M. Guda of Suriname, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American States.

119. Mr. GUDA (Suriname): Today we commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States by the General Assembly at its 2315th meeting, held on 12 December 1974. As Chairman of the Group of Latin American States for the month of December 1984, I therefore wish to make the following observations on behalf of our group of States on this solemn occasion.

120. Article 34 of this charter stipulates that:

"An item on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States shall be included in the agenda of the General Assembly at its thirtieth session, and thereafter on the agenda of every fifth session. In this way a systematic and comprehensive consideration of the implementation of the Charter, covering both progress achieved and any improvements and additions which might become necessary, would be carried out and appropriate measures recommended. Such consideration should take into account the evolution of all the economic, social, legal and other factors related to the principles upon which the present Charter is based and on its purpose."

121. However, the General Assembly in its resolution 37/204 requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of this charter for consideration by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1984.

122. Before the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States is considered, it is deemed both necessary and useful to present a brief overview of the background against which it was proposed, promoted and adopted.

123. In 1971, President Luis Echeverría of Mexico expressed the opinion that the plight of the developing world would be served if and when the economic rights and duties of States were codified by the nations of the world. He reached a consensus on this matter with Brazil and Chile, documentation of which was approved by the Group of Latin American States prior to the planning session of the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which was held at Santiago from 13 April to 21 May 1972.

124. At that session, UNCTAD took up President Echeverría's idea and established a working group to prepare a draft charter for submission in its final version to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The working group was instructed to use as a basis the principles adopted at the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the suggestions made at the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Declaration and Principles of the Action Programme of Lima<sup>9</sup>, the principles set forth in the Charter of Algiers<sup>10</sup> and the documents of the Second United Nations Development Decade. After many obstacles had been overcome and after an extended mandate, a final report was requested from the working group for the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

125. On 12 December 1974, the General Assembly adopted the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, contained in its resolution 3281 (XXIX).

126. What has been its effect? What progress has since been made?

127. In our opinion, the charter placed special emphasis on the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, the equality of rights, the promotion of international social justice and the abstention by States from attempts to seek hegemony and spheres of influence. Our Governments have regarded and continue to regard this charter as an adequate instrument both for the harmonious development of the world community and for the maintenance of international peace and security.

128. But, on balance, it appears that the charter has remained unimplemented in general. If we review the fundamentals of economic relations and the economic rights and duties of States as laid down in the charter, we cannot but be disappointed. Intervention in the internal affairs of States and economic coercion still take place in many parts of the world, thereby threatening the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political and economic independence of States. Disputes are still not being settled peacefully in many instances and international obligations are often not fulfilled in good faith.

129. The Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the

Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States states, *inter alia*:

"Since the adoption of the Charter . . . considerable progress has been made with regard to the lowering of tariffs to trade . . . Parallel with that progress, however, has been the marked increase in protectionism, which has become more specific in focus, more sectoral in scope and, in general, more discriminatory in its effect. It now appears that protectionism is geared not only to the defence of domestic markets but also, in certain cases, to the capture of foreign markets by means of export subsidies . . . . The growth in protectionism and its existing structures have had a major impact on trade, particularly on the exports of developing countries. . ." [See A/39/332, para. 6.]

It is now generally recognized that protectionism is especially harmful to the trade and development of developing countries and that measures should be taken as a matter of urgency to ensure the removal of all impediments to trade.

130. This is seen as an important obstacle on the road to implementation of the provisions of the charter. We of the Group of Latin American States are of the opinion that too much damage has been done to our economies by the open or covert protectionism existing in the world today.

131. The pressure exerted by the reduced prices of raw materials and commodities, the excessive rise in prices of imports, which are mostly quoted in the strong United States dollar, the necessary loans for development and the debt-servicing and amortization costs, that pressure has been too much to bear and has devastated our economies. It is now widely known that the external trade balance for 19 countries in Latin America which had a surplus of more than \$US 13 billion in 1980 changed into a negative balance of over \$US 1 billion in 1982; while, compared to previous years, the prices of 14 out of 18 main export products from this group of States fell in 1982 by as much as a quarter. In the meantime, the total Latin American debt amounts to three times the value of exports from this region.

132. With regard to the generalized system of preferences, it was agreed after a review by the Special Committee on Preferences that the objectives of the system had not been fully achieved and that the duration of the system should be continued beyond the initial period. Although the amount of trade carried out under the system has been increasing, it still represents a little less than one quarter of the preference-giving countries' dutiable imports from beneficiaries. We are of the opinion that the system should be expanded and liberalized.

133. With regard to the international monetary system, the Secretary-General's report stated: "The severe economic problems faced by developing countries during the period under review were largely of external origin and partly attributable to the workings of a system in whose creation and operation developing countries played no significant role." [Ibid., para. 10.] If any change is to be made in this regard it is imperative that developing countries play a greater role in the decision-making process of the multilateral financial institutions. To a certain extent, this already seems to be materializing; however, not to an extent satisfactory to our group.

134. Aid to the developing world has been slow over the last few years and has, in fact, been

overshadowed by private bank lending, carrying high interest rates. However, funds disbursed through multilateral financial institutions grew rapidly in the eight years from 1974 through 1982. In our opinion, these institutions have started to move in the right direction with some positive initiatives. They could, and indeed should, play an important catalytic role in development financing in the near future. Their resource base should, therefore, be expanded. It is unfortunate that the replenishment process of these institutions has met with so many obstacles and shortfalls.

135. In general, it can be stated that our group of developing countries has had some measure of success in shifting the ownership of production facilities to our countries. The concept of establishing joint ventures seems to be preferred in some instances, especially in manufacturing, and certainly where know-how is externally controlled and markets are situated abroad. Therefore, transnational corporations can still exercise effective control over local affiliates. But some progress has been achieved in this sector. It is encouraging that many of our countries have been able to ensure, through general measures or individual agreements, that the affiliates of transnationals operating in our countries indeed contribute to national development. Performance requirements and effective transfer of technology are in many instances more or less standard practices. Understandably, we consequently take a great interest in a code of conduct on transnational corporations.

136. It is not our intention to discuss all aspects of the charter at this time. We have highlighted some aspects which, in our opinion, needed special attention today. The Group of Latin American States reaffirms its support for the charter, which aims at restructuring the existing international economic order to bring justice, development, peace and stability to the world.

137. The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Hans-Werner Lautenschlager of the Federal Republic of Germany, Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States.

138. Mr. LAUTENSCHLAGER (Federal Republic of Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

139. An anniversary lends itself to both a retrospective view and a look ahead into the future. Whoever sets out to chronicle the history of the North-South relationship in the 1970s will certainly have to mark 12 December 1974 as an outstanding date. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted on that day, provides us with a concise record of the concepts which have guided our third-world partners in the North-South dialogue, on which these concepts have their bearing. It would be less than honest to pass over in silence the fact that not everyone among us has been able to accept the charter in all its parts. However, as a manifestation of the political will of a majority of United Nations Member States it deserves respect.

140. As a landmark, it justifies our looking back at the ground covered since 1974 in the dialogue between North and South. Nobody can deny that we have jointly achieved significant progress on substantive questions as well as on the ways and modalities by which the dialogue is carried on. Developed and developing countries may still be separated by differ-

ent views, but preparedness for co-operation has become the basis of our actions, not least in the United Nations system. The most conspicuous testimony to this is the fact that today we are able to adopt nearly all resolutions that are relevant to the North-South relationship by consensus. This was borne out convincingly in the case of the Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa, which we adopted a few days ago [*resolution 39/29, annex*].

141. As I have already mentioned, an anniversary also invites a look ahead. The progress achieved in the course of the last 10 years does not warrant any complacency. The problems of the developing countries are multitude, and the overall picture has become more complex. The challenge to the international community, however, remains unchanged. We have come to understand that interdependence is not a hollow slogan. If we want to master the pressing problems confronting us, if we want to overcome poverty, hunger and distress, then we must act jointly. Only joint action will bring us nearer to our goal of genuine and lasting partnership between North and South—a goal to which we are all committed. The progress achieved in recent years should encourage us to continue along the way we have embarked upon.

142. The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Saoud Bin Salim Bin Hassan Al-Ansi of Oman, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

143. Mr. AL-ANSI (Oman) (*interpretation from Arabic*): On behalf of the Group of Arab States, which my delegation has the honour to represent this month, we are pleased to participate with the rest of the world today in commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. It is not often that we in the United Nations commemorate positive achievements in the work that has extended over nearly 40 years.

144. Most of the items on the agenda relate usually to conflicts, wars or differences in the social, economic and political spheres. The present occasion is a positive landmark in the course of work of the international Organization, as we commemorate today the passage of 10 years since the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and review together what has been achieved and what should have been achieved in this regard.

145. The adoption by the General Assembly of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States by its resolution 3281 (XXIX)—and resolution 3201 (S-VI) is relevant—in fact acknowledged the importance and greatness of the Charter of the United Nations itself, which is designed primarily and fundamentally to maintain international peace and security and to achieve international co-operation for the solution of mankind's social, economic and political problems. This charter is inspired in its preamble by the lofty, great principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, which we all cherish.

146. The world order with its social, economic and political aspects is a single indivisible whole. If any part of that order malfunctions, the other parts will be undermined under the influence of that malfunctioning part, and the economic order in this regard surely plays the same role. If all the elements of that order function properly, then the whole will function properly. Is there anybody who expects that the world will witness stability in the political and social

spheres in the absence of an economic order based on justice and understanding among all the countries of the world? Can man in any part of the world live in isolated economic stability while his fellow man in other parts of the world dies of hunger and thirst?

147. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States was adopted to consolidate the principle of justice in the economic sphere. It also reflects deeply the new international economic order energetically sought by the developing countries to take into account the development of all economic, social and legal factors and other factors of relevance to the principles on which the charter is based and to its genuine aim: to define the most suitable measures for its implementation and to find lasting solutions to the grave problems, especially to those problems afflicting developing countries Members of the United Nations. These countries look forward to the day when they will witness the fruit of continuous work and positive dialogue with the other parties concerned.

148. Surely, no one disputes the importance of this question, coming as it does in the wake of a long era marked by the exploitation of the resources and wealth of the third-world countries which today find themselves facing new realities and evolving economic conditions requiring that they demonstrate more care and diligence, lest they lose the opportunity. The new international economic order serves not only the developing countries but, at the same level, the developed countries. The development of the economies of the developing countries will open new vistas to the benefit of all countries of the world, regardless of their economic systems.

149. The Group of Arab States, which is made up of developing countries, and in turn falls within the scope of the Group of 77, is gratified and pleased to join the world in commemorating the tenth anniversary of the adoption of this charter and hopes that this anniversary will move all the countries of the world to more action and to constructive dialogue excluding marginal differences, with the aim of achieving a more peaceful and prosperous future.

150. Mr. MUÑOZ LEDO (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In response to a recommendation of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly is commemorating today the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. In so doing, it is reliving one of the great moments in the life of the Organization.

151. This, to be sure, is a ceremonial occasion, but it is also a political act of clear unmistakable meaning. Paying a tribute to this basic instrument of relations among States means reaffirming the commitment of the United Nations to the principles that gave it birth and reaffirming the economic reordering of international society.

152. Indeed, the Charter is the culmination of a long process of developing awareness of the deep injustices which survived political decolonization and aggravated inequalities among nations. It also constitutes a tangible, specific response to the conclusion of the cycle initiated at Bretton Woods and to the disarticulation of the economic order designed in the wake of the great conflagration.

153. The expansion of the society of States which took place for three decades had not been in harmony with an adjustment of the policies or the institutions conceived for the stability and the recuperation of

the post-war period. Quite to the contrary, the interests of the emerging countries had been ignored and progress confined to a small group of industrialized economies. Progress for the rest was barely marginal.

*Mr. Gumucio Granier (Bolivia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

154. The developing world had discovered that political liberation was not necessarily accompanied by economic liberation. On the other hand, the rigidity of the system and the competition created between the main actors on the international economic scene had led to the violation of the rules which had been agreed upon and to the establishment of the disorder which lasts to this very day.

155. The initiative in working out the charter and the efforts to promote the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order took place in the same historical period and have the same purpose. An epoch of growth that was intensive and at the same time unbalanced had concluded, and it was urgently necessary to establish on the basis of mutual agreement the foundations of universal, shared development.

156. It was necessary to reconstitute rationally the organization of the world economy, based on the needs and potential of all countries. The changes in the political structure of the society of States had to be reflected in the economic sector in order to ensure the full exercise of sovereignty within a truly democratic international system.

157. Demands for a new international economic order were formulated at the beginning of the crisis in anticipation of the catastrophe we are faced with today. The suspension, in 1971, of the convertibility of the dollar into gold, the pivot of the international monetary system, heralded the collapse of the established order. Subsequently, protectionist measures, financial disruption, generalized inflation, the dislocation of international trade and the world-wide insufficiency of the means of production occurred, which led to an unprecedented concentration of resources and to unacceptable conditions of poverty and want in the majority of nations.

158. During the 20 years which preceded the charter initiative, world production increased threefold and the larger part of the industrial capacity of the world today was established. It might have been supposed that the scientific and technological revolution of the present-day world, which took man into space and by the same token made possible the annihilation of man, would have served his redemption. This would have required only a little intelligence and solidarity, but that was what the most powerful lacked.

159. As various delegations have mentioned at this session, on 19 April 1972, Mexico proposed the preparation of a charter of economic rights and duties of States, presaging the hour of change in Latin America and our own country. The validity of a dependent and frequently repressive development model having been exhausted, we were trying, through a democratic opening and just participation in the world economy, to overcome centuries of backwardness and enter into an era of full autonomy, a new stage of civilization.

160. The charter was to many countries both a national definition and a project for international

reform. It was a consistent, well-reasoned offer from the working peoples to the owner peoples, as it were. It offered the possibility of a new social contract that would have made possible, had it been heeded, progress for all with dignity for each.

161. It is not a coincidence that the proposal to work out the charter was presented by a country threatened by foreign intervention, and where those threats were confirmed by the cruel overthrow of a democratic nationalist régime. Struggles for economic justice are inseparable from the defence of basic human rights and the sovereignty of States and nations.

162. During the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held from 13 April to 21 May 1972 at Santiago, we set forth the urgent need to strengthen the precarious juridical foundations of the international economy. We affirmed that neither a just order nor a stable world would be possible until the rights and obligations protecting weak States were defined and the democratic principles on which the Organization is based were given tangible form and effect in the area of economic relations.

163. We said that our era was marked by a worldwide struggle for development in which every form of colonialism or dependence would have to be discarded. We denounced the tendency to relegate to the sidelines problems of productivity and employment generated in the industrial economies, the price of which was the serious impoverishment of the majority, and we proposed the basis for an era of genuine economic co-operation based on equality and in the mutual interest of all nations.

164. The value and validity of the principles we set forth at that time have been confirmed with the years. They resulted from a calm, objective analysis of the world economy and its perspectives, and what has occurred in the meantime has shown many times over how right was our initiative and how obstinately wrong the opposition to it.

165. The picture we foresaw a decade ago has materialized in such a serious form that, we must confess now, we did not even imagine at that time how frighteningly true it was to prove. The economic crisis has come about and been institutionalized, as it were, as a progressively spreading world-wide phenomenon, whose most severe effects can be seen in the developing countries, but which no people escapes. This is indeed, basically, a structural disorder, which grievously wastes the great accumulated potential of nature and the abilities of man.

166. The distribution of the world income by regions, social groups and individuals is irrefutable proof of disregard of the basic principles of the United Nations. The ruin of whole countries, owing to the arbitrary vicissitudes of foreign debt, the depression experienced by most economies, unemployment rates, the abysmal level of hunger and ill health and the recurrent reductions in world production levels should force us to react in a responsible way.

167. Unfortunately, the response to the economic crisis has been the dismantling of the institutions we established to confront such crises. The principles of the new international economic order are disregarded, the provisions of the charter we are commemorating today are ignored, the North-South dialogue is trivialized, the International Development Strategy is

not complied with, the commitment to global economic negotiations is not honoured, the International Conference on Money and Finance for Development is postponed, the code of conduct for transnational corporations is rejected, the immediate adoption of measures to alleviate the serious effects of the crisis is resisted, international economic co-operation is paralysed, a humiliating bilateralism is practised and multilateralism is deliberately sabotaged. These are indisputable facts which provide clear evidence of persistent conscienceless behaviour.

168. These phenomena are greatly aggravated by the recurrent tensions between East and West. Their competition for world domination and the incredible consequences of the arms race have made all countries indeed into silent tributaries of militarism and have made all their peoples hostages of a nuclear economy which threatens to destroy everything tomorrow, and today allows for precious little growth indeed.

169. On behalf of the States Members which are members of the Group of 77, a draft resolution entitled "Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States" was introduced to the General Assembly. It is proposed in the draft resolution that, because of the deep concern at the gravity of the world economic situation, a thorough and systematic review of the implementation of this instrument be made in order to identify the most appropriate means to ensure its viability. The task would be entrusted to an *ad hoc* intergovernmental committee of the whole, which would meet for three weeks in 1985. That would be the best opportunity to begin the reversal of prevailing trends.

170. We fervently hope that the essential unity of the developing countries, those who promote the principles of the Organization, will overcome the obstacles cast in our path by a scarcely dissimulated neo-colonialism. We hope that we may build, with full exercise of independence by all and full recognition of the interrelationships of our objectives, an economic society that will effectively utilize the resources of this earth and its people to achieve a development based on genuine peace, a peace which will be reflected in equitable progress.

171. We repeat today, as we did 10 years ago, the commitment of Mexico to the United Nations, and recall the words of our President, Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado:

"The crisis of the world economy is breaking down the post-war system established to orient and promote the expansion of production. This can be dramatically seen in the exhausting of the mechanisms and models and the prolonged deterioration of trade and exchanges, and a sequel of inequality, increasing obstacles and backwardness, to an extent that threatens an economic deterioration of unforeseeable consequences.

"It is urgent to reactivate the productive forces and the exporting power of the developing countries, to extend the horizon of the economic and social progress of the world, to revitalize international co-operation, to initiate the series of global negotiations for development. We must admit that interdependence implies responsibilities and benefits for all States, in order that development may be translated into stability and constitute a collective interest of the community of nations. The objective of establishing a new international economic

order is not to divide the world into antagonistic poles of development. It is not an exclusive project; it is an integrating process.

"International co-operation for development is one of the basic mainstays and objectives of the foreign policy of Mexico. We are convinced, and have been for a long time, that only through conscientious responsible practice of such co-operation will it be possible to aspire to live in the future in an international order that is more just and equitable."

172. That is the unswerving position of my country in the struggle in which we will never waver.

173. Mr. ORAMAS OLIVA (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Government of the Republic of Cuba attaches high priority to the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States as the important tool it is in the struggle of the developing countries to achieve more just and equitable international economic relations within the framework of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. In the 10 years following the adoption of that document, international economic relations have constantly deteriorated and international co-operation has sunk to the lowest level in its history. This situation affirms more strongly than ever the validity of the charter and the need for an analysis of the failure to implement it, which would contribute to identifying once again the causes that have given rise to the appearance and the aggravation of many negative phenomena and trends such as we witness in the world economy today.

174. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States was conceived as a valuable legal instrument for governing economic relations between States regardless of their economic and social régimes, their size or their levels of development. The close link between its postulates and the realities of the contemporary world and with the main instruments that govern the destiny of the Organization, including the Charter of the United Nations, make it a document of great importance indeed. They give it a significance that goes far beyond the conditions of the international situation in which it was adopted.

175. The charter was conceived for the purpose of contributing in a decisive way to the economic and social progress of peoples, of speeding their economic growth and eliminating the gap between the developed and the developing countries, as well as eliminating the main obstacles to the economic progress of the developing countries. In this context, the preamble of the charter reaffirms the need for establishing a more just and equitable economic and social order, to which end it recommends the achievement of a new sort of international economic relations and the promotion of structural changes in the world economy, as well as the creation of conditions permitting the expansion of trade, the strengthening of the economic independence of the developing countries and the promotion of international economic relations which would take into account the specific needs of the developing countries and the differences that separate them in the economic sphere from developed countries.

176. We now note with alarm that international economic relations, instead of showing progress—as foreseen by the charter—towards substantial improvement, which would promote the development

of the so-called third-world countries, are radically deviating from this objective, and instead of promoting the restructuring of international economic relations to make them more compatible with the interests and development needs of the so-called third world, these tend to reinforce existing unjust and inequitable structures.

177. The imposition of protectionist measures, aggravated by new methods which do greater harm to the trade interests of the developing countries, the reduction in the prices of the raw materials and commodities which these countries export, together with excessive increases in the prices of their imports, high rates of interest on loans and increased expenditure on amortization and debt-servicing, among other negative elements, have reached an unprecedented level in recent years and have contributed to the fact that the effects of the crisis in the world capitalist economy are being felt more strongly by the third world. The spiral of external indebtedness and debt-servicing, the increasing deterioration from the point of view of the developing countries of the trade-price relationship, their difficulties in gaining access to resources, capital and technology are but a pale reflection of the critical situation these countries are experiencing.

178. The way in which the principles embodied in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States are applied at present is very different from what it was in 1974, not because there has been an improvement in their application, but because the failure to apply them is even more flagrant than it was then.

179. Thus, no progress has been made in the international co-operation advocated in the charter, which was to have taken place within the framework of the United Nations. Since 1979, when, on the initiative of the sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana, the General Assembly adopted resolution 34/138, the member countries of the Group of 77 have worked assiduously and in a flexible manner to ensure the launching of global negotiations which would make a decisive contribution to confrontation of the main problems of the economies of the developing countries and to the just and democratic restructuring of international economic relations. In this context, we have been confronted for five years now with inflexible, discriminatory, delaying actions designed to change substantially the very nature of those negotiations.

180. At the same time, the international economic conferences held within the framework of the United Nations system, which should have made substantial contributions to the development of the so-called third-world countries—including, most recently, the sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Fourth General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Code of Conduct for Transnational Corporations and the examination and evaluation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade—have not had any tangible results. On the contrary, it is clear that these efforts become more negative with every passing day and are facing increasing difficulties and an ever-growing number of obstacles, instead of being positive and heading towards a system of reasonable and effective international co-operation.

181. The Cuban delegation supports the draft resolution on the charter which was presented by the Group of 77 to the Second Committee, and we feel that it is very important to establish an *ad hoc* intergovernmental committee of the whole to meet in 1985 to examine exhaustively and systematically the application of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States in order to identify the most appropriate means of applying the charter that could lead to lasting solutions to the serious economic problems of the developing countries.

182. In sum, the decade which has passed since the adoption of the charter shows the full validity of all its provisions and the need to strengthen the efforts of the international community to implement these provisions. Otherwise, the development of peoples will become more remote with each succeeding day and we shall sink further into an unpredictably disastrous abyss.

183. In conclusion, I will repeat something our President, Fidel Castro, said from this rostrum at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly: "... unequal exchange is ruining and impoverishing our peoples and must cease. Inflation, which is being exported to us, is impoverishing our peoples and must cease. Protectionism impoverishes our peoples and must cease." [31st meeting, paras. 86-88.]

184. Mr. XIE Qimei (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): We meet here today to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which is an event of significance. The Chinese delegation sincerely hopes that this meeting will have positive effects and contribute to the promotion of the North-South negotiations and the strengthening of international economic co-operation.

185. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted by the General Assembly 10 years ago, is an important document. This document, together with the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, sets forth the basic principles for the establishment of a new international economic order and points to the orientation of the democratization and rationalization of world economic growth and social development for a fairly long period. The charter provides that every State has the right freely to choose its economic system and freely to exercise full permanent sovereignty over its natural resources and economic activities, and also establishes the right of developing countries to participate on a basis of equality in international economic relations. Based on the fact that developing countries are in a disadvantageous position in the existing international economic system as a result of the long years of colonialist rule they were subjected to, the charter lays down a number of more just and equitable principles to guide international economic co-operation. They include the granting of preferential treatment to developing countries, stabilization of their export earnings, the right of every State to benefit from the advances in science and technology and the need to give developing countries development assistance. These principles are aimed at restructuring the world economy and establishing a new system of international economic relations so as to facilitate the acceleration of the economic development of the developing countries and seek to bridge the economic gap between themselves and the developed countries,

in the interest of promoting the common prosperity of all countries. All this is conducive to the maintenance of world peace and stability and conforms to the interests of the peoples of all countries. The principles I have mentioned will therefore remain valid for a considerably long period of time.

186. As we commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the charter today, we cannot but point out with regret that the charter remains largely unimplemented and that the economic development of the developing countries still faces a most unfavourable external environment.

187. Primary products, the main source of export earnings for the developing countries, are seriously affected by the violent fluctuations in the international commodity market and their terms of trade are deteriorating. The principles and rules for the multilateral trade system have been grossly violated, and protectionist measures are multiplying. The generalized preferential system has not been fully implemented owing to the many restrictive measures imposed on the variety and quantity of commodities.

188. The developing countries call for a more just and effective international division of labour, so as to change the structure of world production and speed up their industrialization. However, for many years the negotiations on protectionism and structural adjustment have produced no concrete results, and the formulation of a code of conduct on transnational corporations and an international code of conduct on the transfer of technology have long remained unfulfilled; consequently, the process of industrialization in the developing countries has been very slow, and to this day, their share of world industrial production has been small. Should this be allowed to continue for long, the prospect of reaching the Lima target will remain dim.

189. With regard to development funds, public assistance for development has stagnated since the beginning of the 1980s, being less than half of the international target of 0.7 per cent. Moreover, there is a tendency to stress the bilateral approach while reducing multilateral assistance. The capital of the international monetary institutions has become even less commensurate with the needs, while the terms for obtaining credits and loans from those institutions have become increasingly harsh. Loans from international private banks have been drastically retrenched and the interest rates on bank loans are very high. As a result, developing countries have run into a serious shortage of development funds. The factors I have mentioned, combined with the reduction of export earnings, an increase in real interest rates and the over-valuation of some key currencies, have resulted in a sharp rise in the foreign debts of developing countries, going up from about \$US 160 billion 10 years ago to over \$US 800 billion today. By 1983, interest payments outflows of the developing countries were already more than the net inflow of credit.

190. In short, the charter has largely been unimplemented in the past 10 years, and irrational and unjust international economic relations remain basically unchanged. Especially the recent economic crisis has further weakened the position of many developing countries in the world economy, thus making the structural imbalances in the world economy even more prominent. The economic growth of these countries has been stagnant, and the gap between the



rich and the poor countries is widening. This cannot but cause grave concern to the international community. At the current session of the General Assembly, many countries have stated the basic reasons for the lack of progress in the implementation of the charter and the measures that should be taken. Here we also wish to offer our observations and suggestions.

191. It is true that there are domestic causes for the serious economic difficulties in the developing countries. However, to a great extent those difficulties are the result of the structural malfunctioning in the world economy. International economic relations must be transformed along the lines pointed out by the charter and the basic documents on the establishment of a new international economic order. Should we fail to take reform measures to remove those malfunctions, developing countries will face long years of low growth rates or stagnation and fall into an ever-deepening whirlpool of indebtedness, or even a crisis of survival. That will make it hard for the world economy to regain vitality.

192. The launching of global negotiations is, after all, an important instrument worth trying by the international community in the course of establishing the new international economic order. We hope that the few major developed countries that still take a negative attitude towards this will reconsider their positions. At the same time, we believe that the international community should not rest content with merely issuing declarations of principles, nor should it wait passively. Instead, it should promptly adopt a set of comprehensive, interrelated, practical and effective measures designed genuinely to help the developing countries solve their pressing problems and regain their development momentum.

193. The United Nations provides an excellent venue for North-South dialogue and multilateral economic co-operation. In recent years the role of the Organization has been somewhat weakened, which is not beneficial to the implementation of the charter. We hope that one major developed country will change its present position and contribute to strengthening the competence of the United Nations in making and implementing decisions in the economic field.

194. The People's Republic of China has made and will continue to make efforts for the implementation of the charter. China is a socialist developing country which pursues the principle of "maintaining the leading role of the planned economy supplemented by market regulation" and the policy of "opening to the outside world". It has established trade relations with 174 countries and regions on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, and it actively promotes its economic co-operation with other developing countries. By the end of 1983, China had helped 76 developing countries build over 1,300 projects and had dispatched over 180,000 engineers and technicians to those countries.

195. China respects the sovereignty of the recipient countries, attaches no political strings to its aid, offers them low-interest or interest-free loans and transfers to them those technologies that are suited to their domestic conditions with a view to helping them to promote their national economies. China has consistently taken a positive approach towards the North-South dialogue and stood for the promotion of economic co-operation between the developing and the developed countries on the basis of continuous

transformation of the unjust and inequitable international economic relations. We are ready to join all other countries, particularly developing countries, in making unremitting endeavours for the implementation of the charter, the establishment of the new international economic order and the revitalization of the world economy.

196. Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): Ten years have passed since the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. It is a relatively short period, but a sufficient one to prove that the validity and importance of the charter have only increased with the passage of time. This document is among the achievements of the United Nations, marking the most brilliant pages of its history. It is a vision of the world for which we are all striving.

197. Although the charter deals with economic rights and duties of States, it necessarily and rightly involves principles and a wider scope of international relations. All segments of international relations are today mutually intertwined and interdependent. Only joint action can enhance and accelerate progress in the world. It is often quite difficult to point out the individual achievements of economic, social and other measures and actions taken in order to promote international relations in general and in some spheres, including the economic sphere, in particular.

198. In the preamble to the charter, the General Assembly states that its fundamental purpose is to promote the establishment of the new international economic order, based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all States, irrespective of their economic and social systems.

199. In order to reach this goal, action cannot be confined to efforts in the economic sphere. Therefore the charter proceeds from a set of principles which regulate, as explicitly stated in the charter, "economic as well as political and other relations among States". The principle of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States is rightly placed at the top of the list. It is followed by others, including the principle of international co-operation for development, which is found in numerous other United Nations documents, and first of all, explicitly or implicitly, in the Charter of the United Nations.

200. In the context of economic rights and duties, these principles have a particular purpose and meaning, since they express the entire complexity of the conditions to be fulfilled in order to achieve substantial economic and social progress in the world.

201. Like any other document of a similar nature, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States is future-oriented. It contains far-reaching and progressive aspirations in the most important fields of international relations. On the other hand, it perhaps overlooks some realities of the world we live in. Although it did not receive universal support, we nevertheless keep returning to it, as on this occasion, in order to be inspired by it and to continue to act in its spirit with greater resolve.

202. This is more necessary today than ever, since there is a dangerous exacerbation of relations in the world, with acute crises, conflicts and disputes, with a critical situation in the world economy, particularly in the developing countries, and with a dramatic situation on the continent of Africa.

203. It is our desire that this occasion will serve as a contribution to greater awareness of the need to overcome those negative trends by proceeding to constructive negotiations within the United Nations framework and by implementing its decisions, in which the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States has a prominent place.

204. All creative and significant initiatives emerge at times when circumstances demand them and when there exist subjective forces able to express them and sooner or later to carry them out and translate them into practice. The charter whose tenth anniversary we are observing is yet another confirmation of that simple but historic truth.

205. All this does not lessen but, on the contrary, emphasizes the far-sightedness and statesmanship of Mr. Luis Echeverría, who, as President of Mexico, initiated and elaborated the concept of the charter. The non-aligned and other developing countries remain its natural source and stronghold. The charter, however, also enjoys the support of some developed countries, which we hope will be greater in the future, since what is involved here is the common interests of the entire international community.

206. Mr. PÉREZ GUERRERO (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States is an event of great importance for the international community and for the United Nations which represents it.

207. This charter originated on the initiative of the President of Mexico, at the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in Santiago in 1972. It was my privilege to invite President Echeverría to take the Chair at that Conference. That happy and daring initiative was broadly supported, and the relevant resolution was adopted with certain reservations on the part of a few countries, as tends to be the case when a forward-looking position is called for in the United Nations, as in these years of transition towards a new, more just and equitable international economic order.

208. Following the arduous work carried out at UNCTAD, the adoption of the charter by the General Assembly constituted a very important contribution to bringing order to economic relations, which already were showing signs of great instability and were becoming the focus of deep concern.

209. Ten years later, we find ourselves in a situation of great difficulty and suffering for most of mankind which those in some circles try to hide. However, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States remains an undeniable contribution to the new international economic order. It is an instrument which must survive all these vicissitudes. It is part of international law, and this position can only be consolidated with the progressive forward movement—which has now been practically halted—towards a new international economic order, thus leaving behind for ever the present injustices which afflict us.

210. The international community cannot allow a world that is already adrift to continue to be subjected to developments resulting from the collapse of an anachronistic order of things. We must ensure, from both the global and the sectoral points of view, that when the most economically powerful countries realize that this is in their interest as well as in that of all the other countries, the United Nations is able,

without any further vacillation or hesitation but also without undue haste, to take the positive path indicated by our common needs and interests.

211. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States is of great assistance to us in undertaking this difficult but indispensable task.

212. Mr. PLECHKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Soviet delegation fully agrees with the statement made at the present meeting by the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic on behalf of the socialist countries concerned.

213. We, in turn, wish to make a few additional points.

214. Throughout its existence, the Soviet State has tirelessly pursued a foreign policy designed to bring about, in the words of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "international relations making it possible for all oppressed nationalities to throw off the imperialist yoke".

215. The adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States was an important stage in the struggle of the progressive forces of the world to improve and democratize international economic relations. It became possible as a result of the consistent, joint efforts of the socialist and developing States to break with the old order and establish a new, just international economic order.

216. The first few years of the charter's existence coincided with the process of international détente, and there were favourable prospects for its successful implementation. However, the policy adopted by the imperialist forces, particularly the United States, in the late seventies and early eighties, of winding down détente and stepping up the arms race, of seeking military supremacy and imposing their systems on other peoples, broke off this process of improving international conditions and did substantial harm to the emerging structure of mutually advantageous economic relations among States with different social and economic systems. As a result, progress in the implementation of the purposes of the charter has been insignificant.

217. In recent years, the imperialist Powers have increasingly been grossly violating the basic principles of international political and economic relations, by pursuing a policy of blackmail, diktat and so-called economic sanctions. It is the fault of imperialism that political tension has spread to international economic relations, causing very dire consequences for the prospects of the democratization of world economic relations. Certain developing countries are being increasingly involved by aggressive Western circles in the recent spiral in the arms race that has been imposed by those circles, and this has had a negative impact on the state of international economic relations.

218. The Soviet Union has always stressed the basic importance of the intrinsic link between development and disarmament for the successful process of the improvement of international economic relations. In the letter on this question addressed to the Secretary-General on 18 May 1984, Mr. A. A. Gromyko, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, stresses:

"The growth of the arms race leads to an intensification of the distortion and instability of international economic relations and worsens the prospects for restructuring them on just and democratic principles and creating a new international

economic order free from exploitation and diktat".<sup>11</sup>

219. The Soviet Union, which has consistently put forward important disarmament initiatives, seeks the adoption of realistic measures to curb the arms race. That would enable us to increase significantly the resources allocated to development, including that of the developing countries.

220. The developing countries, whose economic problems are a direct consequence of the colonial and neo-colonial policies of the imperialist States, continue to suffer the dire consequences of the crisis in the capitalist economy today. The debt problem may become irreversible because of the colossal drain of financial resources from the developing countries through the channels of the transnational corporations to the developed countries. As a result of this phenomenon, the net losses of the developing countries in foreign currency from 1980 to 1982 alone were, according to the Group of 77, about \$200 billion.

221. The situation has been further compounded by the fact that the Western States have disregarded such provisions of the charter as equal participation by all States in the international decision-making process in the solution of world economic, financial and monetary problems, promotion of the transfer of high technology to the developing countries, and the granting of assistance to developing countries free of any conditions derogating from their sovereignty—provisions in articles 10, 13 and 17 of the charter.

222. On the whole, in recent years we have witnessed a clear hardening by the major Western countries of the political and economic conditions not only in regard to development assistance but also in regard to virtually all areas of economic relations.

223. Capitalizing on the serious economic situation of young States, the imperialist circles are bent on forcing the developing countries to renounce the support given by United Nations bodies to the progressive demands of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 for the restructuring of international economic relations. Because of the position of the Western countries, all the basic economic initiatives of the developing countries have been blocked.

224. In contrast to this obstructionist policy of the imperialist Powers, the Soviet Union and the other socialist States have always given and will continue to give political support to the developing countries in their efforts to achieve economic independence and the democratization of international economic relations. It is precisely thanks to that support that in recent years the United Nations has been able to adopt important resolutions for the development of the progressive provisions of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. I am referring in particular to such resolutions adopted at the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions of the General Assembly as those on "Economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries" and "Confidence-building in international economic relations".

225. In the Declaration of the high-level Economic Conference of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, held in Moscow from 12 to 14 June 1984, it is stated that:

"In international economic relations, there is a vital need for mutually advantageous and equal co-

operation among all countries. Without that, there can be no sound material basis for consolidating and expanding détente." [See A/39/323, annex II.]

226. The Soviet Union actively and consistently supports the proposal of the developing countries to hold in the United Nations a round of global negotiations, in keeping with General Assembly resolution 34/138, which is being sabotaged by the West.

227. A significant contribution by the USSR in implementing the goals of the charter is the consistent policy to have an all-round development of trade, economic, scientific and technological co-operation with the developing countries. In our country, that policy has been institutionalized as State policy and is a new type of international economic relations. Specific facts relating to the magnitude and form of our economic assistance to the developing countries are well known. In this area, the USSR continues to do more than any developed capitalist country.

228. The Soviet Union will continue decisively to seek to implement the progressive decisions taken by the United Nations in the area of restructuring international economic relations on a just and democratic basis, in particular on the provisions and principles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

229. Mr. KOROMA (Sierra Leone): Ten years ago today, the General Assembly, with tremendous prescience, adopted the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States on the initiative of the Government of Mexico. The intention of the charter then, and now, is to enhance the legal and binding character of international economic relations, removing economic co-operation from the realm of good will and grounding it in the law by transferring consecrated principles of solidarity among men to the sphere of relations among nations.

230. It is a tribute to the tremendous foresight of the Assembly that the objectives of the charter, namely, to promote the establishment of the new international economic order based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all States, particularly in the economic field, have remained as valid today as when they were first enunciated some 10 years ago. Another clarion call in that document is for a just and equitable economic and social order through structural changes in the world economy and other measures that take into account the specific needs of developing countries.

231. Commemorating the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States provides us with an opportunity to determine how many of its objectives, if any, have been achieved, and if the answer is negative, to work out new strategies to ensure its implementation.

232. In taking stock, it is of concern and regret to the Sierra Leone delegation that 10 years after the adoption of the charter, its economic, social and political goals have remained largely unfulfilled. Today, the economic climate for many of our countries is even bleaker than when this instrument was adopted 10 years ago. The failure of the international community to rise to the challenges and opportunities of the charter is partly responsible for the present dire economic consequences that now afflict most of our countries and threaten our very survival.

233. Today, the stark economic reality of the African condition is that millions of people are afflicted by hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy and abject poverty. Over the last few years, the economies of African countries have suffered severe declines in growth and output of goods and services. This trend, already apparent in the 1970s, has worsened over the last three years, leading to depressing growth rates or total stagnation. The result is a dangerous fall in already precarious living standards, mass starvation and widespread decay of the small but vital infrastructure and even the environment.

234. The reasons for this decline are many and varied. Foremost among them are the recent severe world recession which has had such a damaging effect on the economies and productive capacity of many African countries, and the stubborn refusal of our trading partners to pay fair, remunerative prices for our commodities and raw materials, as called for in the charter. Furthermore, the international trading system still requires developing countries to negotiate the prices they receive for their major raw materials and commodities, while they must pay the ever-increasing prices that are set by the manufacturers using those same raw materials and commodities. It is thus inevitable that the weakest members of the system are driven into bankruptcy.

235. For Africa, these various factors have been further aggravated by the most severe drought the continent has suffered in this century, resulting in a catastrophic fall in food production and the consequent loss of human lives through famine and starvation.

236. The acute debt problem of third-world countries, particularly those in Latin America, has preoccupied the international community over the last two years. The harsh conditions attaching to those debts are today hampering economic recovery and development in many of the affected countries.

237. Given the magnitude and severity of the problems that I have just been describing, it is clear that the African people cannot on their own prevent the imminent economic collapse that threatens many of their impoverished nations, nor can they, on their own, implement the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. While we recognize that our Governments must continue to bear responsibility for our own well-being, on the other hand, we expect the international community, in a spirit of solidarity and in a reaffirmation of our mutual interdependence, to help to avert the catastrophe that now threatens the African continent.

238. Specifically, the international community has to come to grips with the continuing adverse terms of trade which now plague the economies of much of the third world in general. In this connection, the reform of existing financial institutions, the reduction in the present crippling rates of interest and the liberalization of world trade—as demanded in the charter—must be considered imperative.

239. Furthermore, it is the view of the Sierra Leone delegation that in seeking solutions to the manifold problems now facing the African continent, intensification of economic co-operation within the multi-lateral and specialized institutions, especially the World Bank, FAO and UNDP, cannot be overemphasized. Those institutions must be given increased financial support and provided with the necessary

resources to enable them to perform their tasks more effectively.

240. The aspiration of the charter to solve the real economic problems facing the developing countries today and the attainment of a just and equitable distribution of resources make the charter more timely and relevant than ever before.

241. Until we can begin to solve some of the economic problems facing the developing countries today, the impact of this document will remain limited, much against the will of the overwhelming majority of the members of the international community.

242. What is required, therefore, is a bold, imaginative and generous response to implement the provisions of the charter so that together we can find a lasting solution to our manifold economic problems.

243. Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): The position of the German Democratic Republic on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and its implementation has already been expressed in the joint statement of socialist countries which was just presented by the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Mr. Vladimir A. Kravets. I would like to refer to that statement and affirm that this Magna Charta of international economic relations, which was adopted 10 years ago, remains as topical as ever and is fully valid. It is one of the fundamental documents of international economic relations which, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, defines the basic criteria, tasks and guidelines for United Nations activities in the politico-economic field. In this connection, we would like to pay tribute to the initiative and constructive activities of Mexico, which were highly conducive to bringing about the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

244. The active share of the German Democratic Republic in the elaboration and in the adoption by an overwhelming majority of General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX), together with the adoption at the sixth special session of the Assembly of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [*resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)*], was one of the first steps the socialist German State took within the framework of the United Nations in the politico-economic field.

245. Pursuant to its policy directed towards the safeguarding of peace and towards social progress, the German Democratic Republic has made all possible efforts to translate the charter into the practice of international economic relations. Full equality, respect for sovereignty, non-discrimination, mutual benefit and non-interference in internal affairs—these are the principles marking the relations of the German Democratic Republic with States having different social systems, not least developing countries. A constituent part of this policy is the solidarity and support rendered by the German Democratic Republic to those countries in their just struggle for economic independence and social progress.

246. The adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States took place at the time of the process of international détente, which also made possible a number of other important initiatives in the politico-economic field within the framework of the United Nations.

247. At the same time, the last decade has shown that a long distance remains to be covered from the adoption of progressive international instruments to their full implementation, with major obstacles having to be overcome on the way. The imperialist course of confrontation and arms build-up undermines the realization of the principles set forth in the charter. The artificial obstacles in international economic relations ensuing from such a policy, the threat or use of economic boycott, embargo and economic aggression, as well as other internationally illegal measures, run counter to the purpose of the charter. They must be excluded as a means of politics. What is equally needed is measures of confidence-building in international relations, including international economic relations. Such steps are as indispensable as are effective measures to halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament, particularly in the nuclear field.

248. It is these aspects underlying the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States that guided the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty at its meeting held at Berlin on 3 and 4 December 1984. The Communiqué on the meeting [A/39/763, annex] recalls the proposals which the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty have submitted to the United Nations since the Prague Political Declaration of 5 January 1983<sup>6</sup> to evolve and strengthen a policy of disarmament, safeguard peace and ensure equal and peaceful international co-operation. Among them are the proposals of the Warsaw Treaty States aimed at establishing a new international economic order and directed against the policy of interference in the internal affairs of States and all actions designed to undermine the socio-political systems in other States. The Ministers further stressed that the application of discriminatory restrictions in economic relations and any other kind of pressure contradict the basic principles of State-to-State relations.

249. It may be by chance that the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the meeting of the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty coincide. But it is not by chance that the contents of the meeting's Communiqué, the latest document of socialist States, and those of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States are largely identical in terms of their tasks and objectives, not least because both documents are inspired by the desire to make an effective contribution to the peaceful co-existence between States having different social systems.

250. We are under no illusion that the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of

States and the struggle for equal and mutually advantageous international economic relations will not meet with strong resistance in the future also. The experience of the past 10 years has confirmed that progress on the road to normalizing and restructuring international economic relations can be achieved only by joint action between all anti-imperialist and peace-loving forces in the world. The activities of the United Nations in the politico-economic field over the past decade have proved that there is no reasonable alternative to the peaceful, mutually advantageous and equal co-operation of States in solving the great and complex tasks mankind is facing today.

251. The tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States should and must induce all sides concerned to redouble their efforts towards giving effect to the progressive principles and norms of international economic relations embodied in that document.

252. The German Democratic Republic, as in the past, remains ready and willing to make its contribution to that end.

253. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States is thus concluded.

*The meeting rose at 2.20 p.m.*

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>TD/IPC/CF/CONF/24.

<sup>2</sup>See A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, chap. III, paras. 35-39 and para. 42, E.

<sup>3</sup>*Report of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 1-14 September 1981* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.8), part one, sect. A.

<sup>4</sup>A/S-11/14, annex I.

<sup>5</sup>A/CN.10/64.

<sup>6</sup>*Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1983*, document S/15556, annex.

<sup>7</sup>A/38/537, annex I.

<sup>8</sup>Subsequently adopted as resolution 39/163.

<sup>9</sup>See *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Third Session*, vol. I, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.II.D.4), annex VIII F.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, *Second Session*, vol. I and Corr.1 and 3 and Add.1 and 2, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.68.II.D.14), p. 431.

<sup>11</sup>See A/CN.10/57/Add.10.