



General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/44/PV.28
17 October 1989

ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 11 October 1989, at 10 a.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. GARBA	(Nigeria)
later:	Mr. SALLAH (Vice-President)	(Gambia)
later:	Mr. GARBA	(Nigeria)
later:	Mr. VRAALSEN (Vice-President)	(Norway)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Johnson (Liberia)
Mr. Semedo (Guinea-Bissau)
Mrs. Muyunda (Zambia)
Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda)
Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT: I should like to congratulate the delegations of the following countries for being in their seats at 10 minutes past 10 this morning: Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Burkina Faso, the Byelorussian SSR, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Finland, France, Gambia, the German Democratic Republic, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Iceland, Kuwait, Liberia, Mongolia, Nigeria, Norway, Singapore, the Soviet Union, Thailand, Turkey, the Ukrainian SSR, the United Kingdom, Vanuatu and Venezuela. I thank them for their co-operation.

Mr. JOHNSON (Liberia): On behalf of the delegation of Liberia and on my own behalf, I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. Your unanimous election to this high office is a tribute not only to Nigeria and Africa but also to your outstanding personal qualities as a statesman. The wealth of diplomatic experience and proven negotiating skills you bring to this assignment fully assure us of the successful conclusion of our deliberations and the efficient management of the affairs of the Assembly over the next 12 months.

Furthermore, given the very cordial and long-standing brotherly relations between our two countries, you can rest assured of my delegation's complete support and co-operation. We recall with satisfaction the very close working relationship which existed between the delegations of Nigeria and Liberia in 1969, 20 years ago, when my country, represented by Mrs. Angie Brooks-Randolph, had the distinction of occupying the high position of President of the General Assembly.

Let me also pay a well-deserved tribute to your distinguished predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, for the effective manner in which he conducted the work of the forty-third session. We wish him Godspeed in all his future endeavours.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

Allow me, finally, to extend to our illustrious Secretary-General sincere thanks for the outstanding performance of the Secretariat since the last session of the General Assembly. His many initiatives in, and continuing personal commitment to, the search for world peace and understanding deserve the highest commendation and approbation of the Assembly.

The establishment of the United Nations 44 years ago marked the beginning of a new era in international relations. By adopting its Charter and instituting a working system of international co-operation, we resolved to eradicate the scourge of war, to strengthen peace through justice and international law, to respect the equal rights of all nations, large and small, to promote social progress and to protect human rights throughout the world.

In this regard the United Nations has become increasingly a centre for harmonizing the efforts of nations in the attainment of the common aspirations of the international community.

The convening of these annual sessions has thus provided the opportunity not only to reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism but also to explore new ways of transforming our hopes for solidarity into concrete action for peace and development.

It is against this background that, while taking note of the continuing improvement in super-Power relations that has further reduced global tension, my delegation must none the less register its grave concern that since we last assembled here most of the regional conflicts that appeared to be on the verge of resolution have continued to defy settlement.

For example, in Afghanistan, civil war rages on despite the Geneva Agreements; in Lebanon, a resurgence of sectional and factional strife continues to be fuelled by the presence of foreign forces; in Iran and Iraq, differences in interpretation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) have stalled the process towards a

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

peaceful settlement; in the Middle East, the fighting goes on and tension remains high as various peace initiatives have been rejected; in Kampuchea, the announced withdrawal of foreign forces has not materially changed the situation; and so on.

In the meantime, most delegations at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly have highlighted, as they have done in the past, their respective Government's position on each of these and other regional conflicts. Pursuant to this tradition, therefore, the Liberian delegation, in its turn, wishes to state its position, as follows:

In respect of the situation in the Middle East, my Government maintains that a just and lasting settlement must take into account the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, as well as the rights of all other States in the region, including Israel, to exist in secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

In the meantime, while the many enlightened peace initiatives that have been proposed, including the most recent by President Hosni Mubarek of Egypt, constitute very useful contributions to the search for a solution, my delegation wishes to reiterate our call for the convening of an international conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with equal participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the authentic representative of the Palestinian people. We are convinced that such a conference would enhance the process leading to a durable peace in the region.

The factional strife in Lebanon, which has continued unabated, remains of grave concern to my Government, not least because of the very close relations which Liberia has enjoyed with that country over the years. We therefore support the call for withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity and the safeguarding of its independence. In this

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connection, we commend the efforts of the Tripartite Committee of the Arab Heads of State, which it is to be hoped will contribute towards ending the sufferings of the Lebanese people.

With respect to the problem of Kampuchea, we note that, while the recent Paris International Conference on Cambodia achieved progress in elaborating a wide variety of elements necessary for reaching a settlement, it was not possible to achieve a comprehensive political solution. My delegation therefore continues to support the call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from that country under international supervision, to enable the Kampuchean people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination through free and fair elections.

The renewed commitment of the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities would be a positive step in the right direction towards resolving the Cyprus question.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

In this regard, the efforts of the Secretary-General, in compliance with the mandate of good offices entrusted to him by the Security Council, continue to be most useful and should be fully utilized by the two sides to obtain an overall settlement, taking into consideration the legitimate interests and concerns of both communities.

The Secretary-General in his report (A/44/1) points to further constructive developments towards ending the dispute in Western Sahara and the acceptance, with some remarks and comments, of the peace plan presented to the parties by himself and the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. While accepting that some time will be required for the implementation of the plan, we urge both parties to muster the political will necessary for solution of this problem.

In connection with Korea, we encourage the resumption of dialogue between South Korea and North Korea with a view to easing tension. Furthermore, we believe that membership of the two Koreas in the United Nations should broaden the scope for their peaceful reunification.

With respect to Central America, significant developments have taken place which point towards prospects for peace in that region. The recent signing of the Tela Accord by five Central American Presidents is yet another manifestation of commitment to the undertakings assured under the Esquipulas II Agreement by the Governments and peoples of Central America.

Having summarized Liberia's position on these regional conflicts, we are convinced that there is now a need for the international community to go beyond these annual restatements of positions and muster the necessary courage to accept the rule of law as the basis not only for the settlement of disputes, but indeed for the conduct of international relations as a whole.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

In our view, quite apart from man's selfish nature and his insatiable greed for power and wealth, the one factor that seems to underlie most, if not all, regional conflicts, is man's failure to accept international law as an effective instrument for the achievement and maintenance of world peace and security.

That is why my delegation fully endorses the call of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries for a declaration of the 1990s as a decade on international law, to focus world-wide attention on the indispensable role of the rule of law in the search for peace. It is our hope that the Assembly will adopt this proposal and will formulate an appropriate program of action for its implementation.

A related matter of great concern to Liberia is the question of respect for human rights, the promotion of which constitutes a fundamental objective of this Organization. In this connection, we consider racist South Africa's policy of apartheid the most flagrant violation and abuse of human rights anywhere.

Despite the repeated appeals and protestations of the international community, the racist régime in Pretoria continues to perpetrate against the black majority the most horrendous atrocities, including all forms of torture and forcible removal of families and whole communities from their homes to live in so-called bantustans under harsh conditions of deprivation and despair.

Futhermore, the state of emergency, deliberately designed to crush the resistance of the opponents of apartheid, has been extended for yet another year to facilitate, inter alia, illegal detention, including of women and children. Bans and restrictions against anti-apartheid leaders, organizations and liberation movements remain in full force and effect.

The persistence of these conditions, which we have always described as resembling those obtaining in Nazi concentration and torture camps, makes all the more urgent the need for the international community to take concerted action to

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and the abhorrent system of apartheid, considered by this Organization as a crime against humanity.

My delegation continues to insist that the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions as laid down in Chapter VII of the Charter constitutes the last viable peaceful means of ending the explosive situation in South Africa.

It is ironic that those who ceaselessly advocate respect for human rights should be the very ones who continue to embolden the perpetrators of the system of apartheid by arguing that sanctions would only bring untold hardship and suffering to the black population and to the front-line States. But everyone knows that such arguments represent a mere pretext by these collaborators of the racist régime who may be interested more in securing profits on their investments than in protecting the human rights of the oppressed black people of South Africa.

Be that as it may, in our view the new minority Government in Pretoria does have a real chance to restore the human rights of the black majority and establish a non-racial democratic government. If its professed good intentions are to be taken seriously, however, the racist régime will have immediately to take the following minimum actions laid down by the international community: it must effect and unconditional release of all political prisoners and detainees, including Nelson Mandela; it must lift the ban and restrictions on all proscribed organizations and persons; and it must end the state of emergency and commence dialogue and negotiation with authentic non-white leaders.

At the forthcoming special session on apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa, to be held in December this year, my delegation will seize the opportunity to address further this vexing issue. Meanwhile, we wish to reaffirm our support for the Harare Declaration of 21 August 1989, adopted by the Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the Organization of African Unity, intended to eradicate apartheid and establish peace in the region.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

The role of my country in the independence struggle of Namibia began three decades ago. It can be recalled that, in association with the brotherly State of Ethiopia, the Government of Liberia in 1960 filed suite before the International Court of Justice contesting South Africa's right to administer Namibia and to impose upon that Territory its policy of apartheid. We have come a long way since then and are gratified by the progress which has been achieved thus far toward ending the illegal colonial domination of Namibia.

However, there can be no room for complacency in view of repeated manoeuvres by South Africa to circumvent full compliance with the provisions of resolution 435 (1978). We maintain that that resolution must be implemented in its original and definitive form to ensure that the people of Namibia participate freely, without intimidation, in the electoral process, under the supervision and control of the United Nations.

In this connection, my delegation takes this opportunity to extend special thanks to the Secretary-General for his vigilance in the implementation of resolution 435 (1978), and urges him to continue his efforts, in pursuit of which we pledge our fullest co-operation and support.

Turning now to the issue of disarmament, Liberia maintains that, if peace and development are to be fully achieved, the world simply cannot continue to spend over one trillion dollars annually on armaments and related activities. The international community must therefore intensify its efforts towards disarmament, so that funds released in the process could be allocated to improving the world's socio-economic situation, particularly in developing countries.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

In the meantime it may be recalled that my Government last year welcomed the ratification of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - by the super-Powers as a positive step in the disarmament process. Likewise, this year also we wish to welcome the recent progress achieved by the United States and the Soviet Union on conventional and strategic arms reduction.

Notwithstanding these positive bilateral initiatives, however, we must reiterate that disarmament is a concern of the international community as a whole, and should be undertaken comprehensively within the framework of the United Nations with all countries participating on the basis of equality.*

In this regard we recall with satisfaction the high-level Conference on chemical weapons held in Paris last January, which reaffirmed the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of chemical weapons and stressed the need to intensify multilateral negotiations on a convention not only to ban the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, but also to destroy all existing stocks. That Conference was a step in the right direction.

However grave the global economic situation, of equal concern to my delegation is the growing incidence of environmental degradation. But before I address the problem of the environment and the economy let me first reflect briefly on a few social issues of critical importance to the international community, such as the problems of drug abuse, terrorism and hostage-taking, and the special problems of children, as addressed in the draft convention on the rights of the child.

* Mr. Sallah (Gambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

With regard to the last of these the Liberian Government believes that the draft convention contains important safeguards for the protection of children, and we therefore call for its adoption during this session of the Assembly.

Liberia is also concerned about the growing wave of terrorism which puts innocent lives at risk and has the effect of impairing normal intercourse between nations and peoples. We deplore the abduction of individuals and hostage-taking as acts which deprive people of their fundamental human rights. In this respect my Government will continue to lend its co-operation to efforts by the United Nations and other international bodies aimed at completely abolishing terrorism and hostage-taking.

The Government of Liberia is similarly concerned about the alarming incidence of drug trafficking and drug abuse, which have already destroyed and continue to ruin countless lives and have undermined the integrity and stability of Governments.

The monetary value of the illicit drug trade, which according to estimates far exceeds that of the international trade in oil and is second only to that of the arms trade, underscores the difficulty involved in the eradication of this pernicious global problem.

Consequently we must commend those Governments that have taken bold action to prevent and eradicate drug trafficking and drug abuse. But since, as we know, the illicit trade in drugs transcends national boundaries and involves for its success not only producers but, to an even greater extent, consumers, it is the collective responsibility of the international community to find an urgent solution to this menace before it is too late.

Nowadays, environmental degradation occupies a very high position on the agenda of virtually every international conference, as well it should. For what is at stake here is nothing short of the continuing existence of life on this planet.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

Indeed, the depletion of the ozone layer, global warming as a result of the greenhouse effect, desertification and toxic waste rank among the most immediate of our concerns as regards their effect on the ecosystem.

Particularly, though, my delegation wishes to focus attention on the dumping of toxic and other hazardous wastes on the territories of developing countries. In this connection we must register our disappointment that the Basel Convention, adopted in March 1989, does not address all the issues of interest to us on this subject. For instance, the Convention is inadequate in prohibiting transboundary movements of these wastes, contrary to the intent of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which in a recent resolution has determined that dumping of hazardous wastes is a crime against Africa and its peoples. Accordingly, that resolution goes on to appeal to OAU member States not to enter into agreements that would permit the dumping of toxic and other hazardous wastes within their borders.

As developing countries in general lack the technical capability to ensure effective control and disposal of hazardous wastes, it is necessary to effect a total ban on transboundary movements of these wastes. For its part, my Government has enacted laws banning the dumping of toxic wastes on Liberian soil, prescribing penalties no less stringent than those in the 1989 Basel Convention. As a regional attempt to find solutions to this problem, a workshop held in Monrovia from 8 to 12 May 1989 recommended, inter alia, the establishment of a third-world bureau on environmental protection with certain clearly defined functions.

In a broader context, my delegation supports the proposal made by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the Belgrade summit of non-aligned countries for the establishment of a planet protection fund. By the same token we welcome the proposal of the Prime Minister of New Zealand, presented in his statement to the Assembly, for the establishment of an environmental protection council within the

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

United Nations system. These proposals warrant the serious and timely consideration of the Assembly.

Finally, since the developed countries are the prime source of environmental degradation it is only fair and proper that they shoulder a greater share of the responsibility for global environmental protection, including the provision of adequate resources for that purpose.

In this connection their development assistance to and investment programmes in third-world countries should now be designed to ensure sustainable development at no extra cost to these countries, and the developed countries should not begin to impose any form of environmental conditionalities on resource transfers to the developing countries.

To conclude on this point, permit me to recall that the question of the environment goes beyond toxic wastes. There are also issues of the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect and desertification - to name a few - which warrant the urgent attention of the international community. In this light the proposed international conference on environment and development, to be held in 1992, should go a long way towards addressing the issues.

While the world community has of late witnessed a thaw in super-Power relations, the resulting easing of tension and improvement in the political climate have shown no sign of relieving the desperate economic plight of developing countries. Living standards in third-world countries continue to decline as a result of the current hostile economic environment, which is characterized mainly by a crushing external-debt burden, a drastic fall in commodity prices, deteriorating terms of trade, and the increasingly protectionist stance of developed countries.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

We find it rather unacceptable that more than 1 billion people in our world today should be chronically undernourished, and that 13 million to 18 million of them die each year from hunger and starvation, 40 per cent being children. It is no less alarming that nearly as many people should be illiterate this far into the twentieth century.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

As we know, such problems are not due to the lack of resources, but more to the persistence of an unjust international economic order which appears to thrive on exploitation and the inequitable distribution of the world's resources.

How else can the present phenomenon of developing countries being net transferers of resources to developed countries be explained? According to the 1989 annual report of the World Bank, the net resource transfer to the developed countries, which amounted to \$10.2 billion in 1984, has reached a staggering \$50 billion today, with a total debt stock estimated at \$1.3 trillion.

Meanwhile, the developed countries of the industrialized North, both in the East and the West, appear to be concerned primarily with consolidating their already strong grip on the world economy. Not only have their economies registered consistent growth over the last decade; these countries have now embarked upon wide-ranging reforms aimed at their closer integration. Eastern Europe's new perestroika is providing the basis for tighter links to the free market economies of the West, and the Group of Seven could soon be due for expansion towards the East. At the same time, Canada and the United States have initiated a free trade agreement, while Western Europe moves steadily towards a single market in 1992.

What are the implications of all of this consolidation in the North? Do these and similar moves in the developed countries promise new opportunities of expanded markets for the primary commodities and the few industrial products of the developing countries? Or do they portend further protectionist tendencies against the developing countries of the South on an even grander scale?

These concerns on the part of my delegation arise not from any desire to be confrontational; far from it. In fact, Liberia has always espoused dialogue and co-operation over dispute and conflict. Our concern stems rather from the current stalemate in global negotiations, which renders prospects for any solution to the critical economic problems facing developing countries quite distant and uncertain.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

That is why my delegation fully supports the call of the Organization of African Unity and the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement for a resumption of the North-South dialogue to address these problems.

None the less, while awaiting the resumption of that dialogue, we believe that the countries of the South will have to realize that, in the words of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Chairman of the South Commission:

"The only people responsible for the development of the South and the freedom of the South are the Governments and peoples of the South".

In this connection, my delegation considers that the time is now for the developing countries to make good their avowed commitment to South-South co-operation in a spirit of collective self-reliance, even in their dealings with the North.

It is in this light also that Liberia welcomes the decision of the States of our region to evolve an African alternative framework for structural adjustment, tailored to our own situation. No doubt this approach will be useful to other regions in making structural adjustment more relevant.

I cannot end this portion of my statement, however, without paying tribute to the United Nations for its tireless efforts in promoting a better standard of living for peoples throughout the world. We thus welcome the decision to convene a special session of the General Assembly in April 1990 to consider strategies for the reactivation of economic growth, particularly in developing countries. That session will no doubt prove useful in preparations being made for the ensuing fourth development decade of the United Nations.

As we enter the last decade of the twentieth century, mankind is faced with challenges, old and new, requiring nothing less than the concerted action of the international community.

(Mr. Johnson, Liberia)

The continuing economic crisis in developing countries, the persisting threats to peace, the escalating incidence of drug abuse and other social ills, the rising tide of racism and human rights violation even in developed countries, and the increasing pollution of the environment - all such problems can best be resolved if they are addressed at all levels of international co-operation.

In this context, whatever its shortcomings and imperfections, the United Nations remains the most appropriate forum and instrument for the harmonization of national efforts towards the attainment of durable peace and sustainable development in our world.

We therefore reaffirm our full commitment to the strengthening of this Organization, thereby to contribute to making it all the more effective in the pursuit of its aims and objectives in the years ahead.

Mr. SEMEDO (Guinea-Bissau) (spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation): Mr. Garba's election to the presidency of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly is for my country, Guinea-Bissau, a source of great satisfaction. His qualities as a wise and experienced diplomat and his deep knowledge of the United Nations system and the major world problems all guarantee enlightened leadership in the work of this session.

We are pleased that the unanimous choice of the international community has this year been the representative of Nigeria, to which Guinea-Bissau is tied by particular links of friendship, fraternity and co-operation. I assure him of our full co-operation.

The excellent work done by his predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, equally merits our full appreciation and thanks.

(Mr. Senedo, Guinea-Bissau)

We should also like to make a special mention of the Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his perspicacious and innovative leadership of the United Nations and for his personal contribution to strengthening the role and prestige of the Organization.

(Mr. Seredo, Guinea-Bissau)

His report on the work of the Organization certainly reflects the complexity of the problems still facing the world; but it also reflects the efforts made by the United Nations over the past year to consolidate the ongoing peace process in some regions of the world, lessen dangers and attenuate conflicts in other areas of the planet. It also speaks of the specific initiatives aimed at strengthening international co-operation with regard to peace, security and development.

The past year has been marked by events of great importance for mankind that seemed to confirm the depth of the changes occurring in the world in recent years.

In this context the beginning of the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) on the independence of Namibia is doubtless one of the most significant events in world political life, an event whose effects go far beyond the borders of that African country. Namibia's independence will mark a decisive stage in the process of total liberation of the African continent and usher in a new era in the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa to establish a lasting peace and a climate of trust, understanding and co-operation in the region.

The process of dialogue already begun in Angola and Mozambique, thanks to the openness and clear desire for peace demonstrated by the Governments of those two countries, deserves the unanimous support of the international community.

There are numerous examples in contemporary history of international solidarity and joint action to meet the aspirations and common interests of mankind, especially when these aspirations and interests are linked to international peace and security. The positive developments in the world political climate are largely the result of an awareness that the growing interdependence and integration in the world is in the common interest.

(Mr. Semedo, Guinea-Bissau)

Détente between the two super-Powers, the tendency towards lasting peaceful solutions, the establishment of dialogue and harmony over confrontation and use of force, as well as the primacy of law in the settlement of disputes between States, are now exerting a growing influence in structuring international relations at the end of this century.

Thus we note with satisfaction the encouraging progress made in solving the questions of Western Sahara and Kampuchea and in working out a final settlement of the Chad-Libya dispute.

Solidarity in the struggle to preserve the environment or against such destructive scourges as terrorism and drugs is a positive sign allowing for a new vision of the future.

But in speaking of the future we must now take into account the current negative aspects that daily continue to weigh heavily upon mankind.

The persistence of the apartheid system in South Africa, repression in Palestine, confrontations between communities in Lebanon, the tragic situation in East Timor and the tensions still afflicting others areas in the world - especially in the Korean peninsula, Afghanistan and Cyprus - as well as the remaining vestiges of colonialism in some regions - all are still, unfortunately, matters of great concern to the international community, to which must be added the social and economic problems affecting much of mankind.

The elimination of extreme poverty and misery in the world and meeting essential human needs - such as hygiene, health, education and housing - remain formidable challenges for individuals, States and the international community as a whole. The overwhelming majority of the world's population is daily confronted with shortages and disease as a result of conditions of extreme deprivation.

(Mr. Semedo, Guinea-Bissau)

Africa, for example, is poorer today than it was 20 years ago. The World Bank predicts that this decline will continue over the next 10 years.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, if the trends of recent years continue, per capita food production will continue to fall until the year 2010, and food self-sufficiency in Africa south of the Sahara will decrease by 85 per cent. The cereal deficit will increase from 20 million to 100 million tons, and food imports will reach, in constant prices, the figure of \$2.5 billion, the equivalent of twice the amount envisaged for agricultural exports.

What can be said of this indebtedness and its harmful consequences for our economies? The developing countries' debt service exceeds very greatly the flow of foreign capital, a situation that will worsen if urgent measures are not adopted to reverse this trend. The continued fall in the prices of our countries' products in international markets is a grave and constant obstacle to our development efforts.

It is logical, therefore, that the question of development should be the focus of the international community's concerns and should no longer be regarded simply as "assistance".

Development problems should be analysed in terms of concrete measures to guarantee minimal living standards and progress for all, by stimulating growth and promoting beneficial interaction between the economies of the developed and developing countries.

This is really a major imperative of our times and a vital prerequisite for the full affirmation and enjoyment of mankind's political, economic and cultural rights. The adoption of appropriate and courageous measures to solve developing countries' economic and social problems is indeed a genuine priority, and tackling these problems requires now more than ever the eradication of their underlying causes.

(Mr. Semedo, Guinea-Bissau)

In this context it is essential to stress the need for a new coexistence between States based on solidarity and reciprocity, a partnership consciously assumed by each one of us in a world where the ability of a small number of economically strong States to affect positively or negatively the future of the majority of mankind has never been as great or as real.

(Mr. Semedo, Guinea-Bissau)

This coexistence will require the final elimination of the psychological gap between the northern countries and the southern countries and the promotion of a constructive global dialogue on issues of vital importance for all mankind. But, as Amílcar Cabral stated, "To coexist, one must first exist." The real challenge is not to ensure the survival of disinherited populations, but rather to create conditions that guarantee their full rights and basic freedoms, and the blossoming of their creative abilities, making it possible for them to determine, consciously and responsibly, the best way to achieve development compatible with their true aspirations and the needs of our times. We believe it is this process that will ultimately yield true freedom for us, because, in our times, any scientific, technological or economic backwardness will inevitably affect the present and mortgage the future.

The special session of the General Assembly to be devoted to international co-operation scheduled for 1990, will offer an appropriate framework for joint reflection on the best way to resume a constructive global dialogue on questions of development. We expect from the developed countries the openness and commitment that will make it possible to bring a new dynamism into international economic relations.

The international development strategy for the 1990s must also reflect the commitment, desire and will of the entire community of nations to make the next decade a period of profound changes conducive to the economic rebirth of the third world countries. Mankind will then be able to begin the next millennium on new bases and to correct the imbalances created by unequal development in the twentieth century.

(Mr. Semedo, Guinea-Bissau)

In this regard, we should stress at this time the role of the United Nations, a role which is irreplaceable in the constant search for peace, the strengthening of international co-operation and development. The results obtained in carrying out this mission have made the Organization more credible and effective today and has earned it the confidence of mankind. The strengthening of the United Nations is the most tangible expression of the unique nature and unity of mankind's aspirations and indicates that multilateralism, without which no world problem can truly be resolved, is as vital as ever. We are certain that ever more impressive results will be achieved in our quest for peace, world security and development.

Our joint march along this path is the only viable choice for mankind. We must have the courage to take that path if we truly wish to build a more prosperous and more equitable future and to adjust to our world by better preserving it from any threat to its balance and potential prosperity. Therefore, the rich countries and the poor countries must build together a new humanism that will confirm our shared desire and will to make irreversible the present changes, which are so necessary for the establishment of a new type of relationship between States, based on the vision of a world with greater solidarity.

Mrs. MUYUNDA (Zambia): Let me start by expressing my delegation's sincere congratulations to Mr. Garba on his unanimous election to the presidency of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. His election to that high office is clear testimony of his widely acknowledged deep understanding of the many and complex problems that beset mankind today. He represents a friendly and peace-loving country with which Zambia and the other front-line States have joined efforts to bring about peace in southern Africa. We are therefore happy to see him in that hot seat.

(Mrs. Muyunda, Zambia)

To his predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, the former Foreign Minister of Argentina, we wish to pay a deserving tribute for the very able manner in which he guided the deliberations of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. He came to the throne at a very crucial time during the developments in southern Africa. We wish him well in his new endeavours.

To the Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, we wish to express Zambia's profound appreciation for his continuing efforts and commitment to the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. We wish him success in his noble and difficult task.

We meet today against a background of great hopes and expectations for the success of multilateralism, which is so vital for the well-being of mankind. The climate of co-operation and accommodation between the two super-Powers has had global ramifications and augurs well for the gradual elimination of tensions. We look forward to the end of the cold war era which has been characterized by the unprecedented arms race.

As we approach the last decade of this century, which has witnessed two major and destructive wars, among others, our efforts should be geared to ensuring that we lay a solid foundation for the eventual elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

The issue of arms control and disarmament must be of high priority if we are to avoid a nuclear holocaust, which could be triggered either by accident or by miscalculation. Indeed, there are also other compelling reasons in favour of ending the arms race, one of which is that the limited resources of the world cannot sustain the ever growing production and improvement of weapon systems of mass destruction. It goes without saying that the world, particularly the developing countries, would have a lot to gain from the reallocation of resources

(Mrs. Muyunda, Zambia)

into economic and social development. In this regard, we welcome the ongoing efforts for a reduction not only in the levels of nuclear weapons of the super-Powers, but also in the conventional forces in Europe. We also welcome recent initiatives to stop the production of chemical weapons. It is our hope that these efforts will lead to the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth.

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Nearer home, there is now some hope of an end to the colonial situation in Namibia. After more than 100 years of colonialism, the settlement plan embodied in Security Council resolution 435 (1978) is in the process of implementation. But the implementation process remains a matter of serious concern to the international community. With the elections less than four weeks away, a number of issues pertaining to implementation of the resolution remain unsolved.*

We have repeatedly stated, in this Assembly and elsewhere, that South Africa has sinister intentions in Namibia, aimed at denying the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) its deserved electoral victory. It is no secret that South Africa intends to retain its influence in Namibia by arrogating to itself a role in the evolution of the Constitution of the new State of Namibia by ensuring that SWAPO does not get the required two-thirds majority. Widespread intimidation of SWAPO supporters, particularly in northern Namibia, by Koevoet elements must be seen as one of South Africa's desperate attempts to achieve that objective - no doubt, the last kicks of a dying horse.

The assassination of a prominent SWAPO member, Mr. Anton Lubowski, in Windhoek, underscores our expressed concern for the security of the leadership of SWAPO. The existing law-enforcement agents in Namibia are, by their training and background, unsuitable for the protection of SWAPO leaders. It must be stated that if assassinations of SWAPO leaders continue, the process of implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978) could be seriously jeopardized. We call on the Secretary-General to take urgent measures to resolve this problem.

* The President returned to the Chair.

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Under the settlement plan, all military, paramilitary and citizen forces, commandos and ethnic forces were to be disbanded, and their command structures dismantled. Regrettably, South Africa has not, so far, complied fully with the requirements of resolution 435 (1978), and has thus created an atmosphere of uncertainty and uneasiness, which is not conducive to the conduct of free and fair elections in Namibia. We wish to reiterate that failure to implement resolution 435 (1978) in its original and definitive form could seriously tarnish the image of the United Nations, under whose supervision and control the elections in Namibia are being conducted.

South Africa's sincerity is on trial in Namibia. Its behaviour during the electoral process will determine whether its promises to end apartheid can be believed by the international community.

The United Nations should ensure that all the remaining discriminatory and restrictive laws in Namibia are repealed, as provided for under the settlement plan. Similarly, both the electoral law and the Constituent Assembly proclamation should conform to the provisions of Security Council resolutions 435 (1978) and 640 (1989), in keeping with internationally accepted standards, so that the people of Namibia can freely exercise their right to self-determination and national independence. Indeed, in his comprehensive report to the General Assembly at this session, the Secretary-General, referring to implementation of the settlement plan, stated, "there are serious problems to be overcome" (A/44/1, p. 3).

We wish to reiterate that the United Nations has direct responsibility for Namibia until independence is achieved. For that reason, it is absolutely essential that the General Assembly provide the necessary financial resources to enable the Council for Namibia to carry out its programme of work for 1990 until

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independence. Indeed, in this regard, the United Nations should mobilize resources to assist Namibia during the transition period and beyond.

It must be emphasized that the newly independent Namibia will need further assistance in the integration of various military units into the national defence force. In this connection, we believe that the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) can play a role to ensure orderly integration. We therefore call on the United Nations to consider retaining some military elements of UNTAG in Namibia after independence, for this purpose.

In South Africa nothing much has changed, despite recent pronouncements, including yesterday's, by the new leadership. The system of apartheid, which the United Nations has rightly condemned as a crime against humanity, is still intact. There are still no clear indications pointing to the immediate abolition of apartheid. Nelson Mandela and many other political prisoners remain in South African gaols. The Group Areas Act and the state of emergency are still in force.

In order to achieve peaceful change in South Africa, the Pretoria régime must, as a matter of urgency, engage in serious dialogue with genuine leaders of the black majority. To that end, we call upon the Pretoria régime to: release unconditionally all political prisoners, and not just a few; unban the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and all other political organizations in South Africa and ensure the return of all political exiles without hindrance; lift the state of emergency; halt political executions and detention; and withdraw the army from the townships.

Those demands are contained in a very important document adopted by the Organization of African Unity's Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa, which met in Harare, Zimbabwe, in May this year. That document is, in our opinion, the blueprint for ending apartheid peacefully.

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Much has been said about the effectiveness of economic sanctions against South Africa. In our assessment, the economic and financial sanctions now in place are having the desired effect. In this regard, we wish to express our appreciation to the countries that have individually imposed sanctions on South Africa, and we urge them to continue applying those sanctions until apartheid is completely eradicated. Similarly, we appeal to those countries which, for selfish interests, are opposed to sanctions against South Africa to reconsider their position, because the alternative is a bloody armed conflict, which would not be in the interests of any of the peace-loving nations. We wish also to appeal to the international community to observe strictly the mandatory arms embargo, in terms of Security Council resolution 418 (1977), and the United Nations oil embargo against South Africa. Economic interests cannot supersede human rights.

Apartheid is the root cause of tension and conflict in southern Africa. It is in defence of apartheid that South Africa has, over the years, engaged in acts of aggression against, and destabilization of, front-line and other States in our region. This has been done through direct action and the use of surrogate elements, such as UNITA bandits in Angola and RENAMO bandits in Mozambique. In a recent United Nations Children's Fund publication, the overall cost, so far, of aggression and destabilization in the region is estimated at \$46 billion.

As a result of South Africa's direct military action against Angola and Mozambique and its support of bandit groups, thousands of refugees from these countries have sought sanctuary in Zambia and other neighbouring countries. Until recently, Zambia also gave sanctuary to thousands of refugees from Namibia, most of whom have since returned home under the terms of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

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We stress that despite its limited resources, Zambia will continue to give shelter and sanctuary to our displaced brothers and sisters who are victims of aggression by the apartheid régime. So far it is estimated that South Africa's aggression has resulted in the loss of 1.2 million lives. We therefore call on the international community to continue to give diplomatic and material assistance to the front-line and other independent African States in the region in order to enable them to withstand the effects of South Africa's aggression and destabilization.

Zambia welcomes the mediation efforts currently under way for the attainment of peace in Angola and Mozambique. We believe that, without external interference in the internal affairs of those countries, solutions for a lasting peace can be found. To this end, we continue to appeal to the United States Administration to cease all its assistance to UNITA so that Angola's efforts for national reconciliation may yield fruit. Similarly, South Africa should cease its assistance to the RENAMO bandits in Mozambique in order to facilitate the current mediation efforts by Kenya and Zimbabwe.

Since its independence Zambia has developed and maintained friendly relations with neighbouring countries. We strongly believe in the resolution of disputes through dialogue as one way of promoting good-neighbourliness. Indeed, this is in conformity with the United Nations Charter which provides for the resolution of international disputes by peaceful means, in such a manner that international peace, security and justice, are not endangered. As members are aware, after years of dialogue, Zambia and Zaire have bilaterally resolved a long-standing border dispute between them.

In Western Sahara, we remain supportive of the efforts by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to organize a referendum in which the

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Sahraoui people would be given the right to decide the political destiny of their country.

Zambia wishes to express its pleasure at the turn of events regarding the relationship between Chad and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. We welcome the agreement signed at Algiers on 31 August 1989, establishing diplomatic relations between the two neighbouring countries.

Elsewhere in Africa, we are following with great interest various efforts that are being deployed to reduce tension and strife.

In the Middle East, one long-standing issue is the question of Palestine, the core of the conflicts in the region. Unless the question of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians is justly addressed, peace in the Middle East will be unattainable. Zambia therefore supports unequivocally the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, on an equal footing. The heroic intifadah is a clear demonstration that nothing will stop the Palestinian quest for freedom, dignity and their right to a homeland.

In Lebanon, we call for the cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of all foreign forces in order to create an atmosphere conducive to the resolution of the problem by the Lebanese people on their own. Meanwhile, Zambia welcomes the mediation efforts by the League of Arab States.

In the Gulf, the guns have fallen silent but the cease-fire remains precarious because Security Council resolution 598 (1987) has not been fully implemented. Further effort on the part of the international community is necessary in order to bring lasting peace to the region. We therefore call upon the parties directly involved to co-operate with the Secretary-General in his continuing efforts to implement Security Council resolution 598 (1987).

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In Afghanistan, the withdrawal of Soviet forces, far from bringing about a conducive atmosphere for a peaceful resolution of the problem, seems to have set the stage for self-annihilation. The wounds of a prolonged conflict in that troubled country have endured beyond expectations. We appeal to all who may have an influence on the parties to the conflict to play their role in bringing about a climate conducive to the full implementation of the Geneva Agreements.

In Cyprus we must work for the elimination of mistrust, which is the root cause of the present situation. In this regard, we call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the area in order to pave the way for the success of the intercommunal talks. The Secretary-General of our Organization should similarly be encouraged to continue his mediation efforts.

Kampuchea has seen long years of devastation and extreme suffering. We are encouraged by the recent announcement of the Vietnamese authorities concerning total withdrawal of their forces from Kampuchea. We call on the international community and the member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in particular to ensure the success of the peaceful efforts through the Jakarta Informal Meetings.

In the Korean peninsula we must work for the dismantling of the artificial barriers which have long prevented the reunification of the two Koreas. In this connection, the presence of foreign forces in the peninsula must be seen as a serious obstacle to the peaceful resolution of the Korean problem. We call upon all concerned to take advantage of the improved international political climate to seek out ways of bringing an end to this long-standing problem.

The situation in Central America is a source of serious concern to all peace-loving people in the world. Zambia has supported the peace initiatives of the Contadora countries and the Esquipulas II Agreement aimed at the peaceful

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resolution of the problems in Central America. The Tela meeting held recently is a further step by the people of the region to see to it that their problems are resolved by peaceful means. This meeting, which has sought the active involvement of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and that of the Organization of American States, deserves the fullest support of the international community.

Drug abuse and drug trafficking have become a serious social menace. Encouraged by the high yields from the sale of illicit drugs, the drug cartels have acquired the status of private armies, threatening the security of both supplier and consumer countries. The world must take a united stand against this new threat and make it impossible for drug money to be laundered and for the drugs to reach intended users. In this regard, Zambia has enacted legislation against drug trafficking and consumption.

At this session the Assembly cannot fail to focus attention on the serious international economic situation. The positive and encouraging signs the world community is witnessing in the political and military spheres are at variance with the trends of international economic relations.

For the majority of the people of the world, the problem of external debt continues to pose a great danger to their economic and social well-being. Last year, developing countries received \$92 billion from developed countries in various forms of development aid. In turn, these countries exported \$142 billion to the developed countries to repay old loans, thus producing a net transfer of financial resources worth \$50 billion to the developed countries. This trend of negative transfers has been rising since 1984, when it first emerged. In simple economic terms, the trend translates into a dehumanizing life of poverty, malnutrition, infant mortality and moral degradation faced by many people of the developing world.

Over the years, many developing countries have embarked on various programmes to restructure their economies, which have yielded positive rates of growth.

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We are happy that debt reduction has been widely accepted as a means leading towards resolving the critical debt problem. However, debt reduction as envisaged in the Brady Plan still remains widely unrealized. Practical results remain elusive because of the problem of under-financing owing to the lack of a consensus on how far the commercial banks and international financial institutions should be committed to debt reduction. The international financial institutions must obviously continue to play a major role in the process of debt reduction. This will inevitably require extra resources being made available to these institutions so that funds committed to debt reduction are additional to current levels of financial flows.

My Government appreciates the efforts made by creditor countries to cancel some outstanding debts in respect of developing countries. In the case of Zambia, this measure has provided the critical financial support so urgently required to establish a minimum level of import capacity and ease the burden of adjustment. Notwithstanding this support, further measures of debt reduction are still needed to stimulate sustained growth. This is a reality not only for Zambia but for all debt-distressed countries.

The case for more liberal access by developing countries to markets in developed countries remains as valid as ever. More positive commitments to liberalization within the framework of the Uruguay Round are needed in order to give real opportunities to developing countries to expand output and export earnings.

It should be remembered that the relative weakening of the growth of the output of developing countries and the decline in foreign exchange earnings caused by the shrinking import capacity brought about by debt-servicing and poor export prices has also had the unfavourable impact of reducing trade among themselves. From a share of 7.8 per cent of global trade in 1981, trade among

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developing countries shrank to 5.1 per cent in 1987. This negative development has come at a time when preferential trading arrangements have been evolved to establish better complementarities in the production structures of developing countries as a way of rapidly modernizing their economies and improving their position in the international division of labour. In the face of formidable regional trading blocs emerging in the industrialized countries, this shrinkage threatens to marginalize the developing countries further, since they are already less important markets for developed countries.

Trends in markets for primary commodities, as reflected by the recent collapse in the prices of coffee, palm oil, bananas, aluminium and maize are far from favourable. This is due to a number of factors, including substitutes and recent advances in science and technology, which are reducing demand for primary products. My delegation welcomes the launching of the Common Fund for Commodities as a viable means of stabilizing export earnings from primary commodities.

The international community is not without opportunities and means for a global attack on underdevelopment. We have the opportunities offered by the spirit of multilateralism, to which we all subscribe. The United Nations and its specialized agencies remain indispensable forums for negotiating a liberal, viable and durable system of international relations to govern sustained development for all the people of the world. Multilateralism offers commonality of interests, a basis upon which joint efforts to combat underdevelopment can be adopted and implemented. It is in this context that my delegation welcomes ongoing preparations for the special session of the United Nations devoted to international economic co-operation, scheduled for April 1990, the international development strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and the United Nations conference on environment and development, scheduled for 1992.

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We also have the opportunities offered by the growing interdependence of the economies of the world. Interdependence remains a valid means of expanding global economic opportunities so that the awful waste of human resources now going on in the developing countries is halted. The rapid developments in science and technology, coupled with changes in factor endowments and market forces, provide the world economy with comparative advantages that are potentially beneficial to the vast majority of countries currently faced with the crisis of underdevelopment. It requires only the political will of the major actors in the world economy to let the laws of the market forces take their course.

As called for by the General Assembly in its resolution endorsing the new international economic order, developing countries must be enabled to participate meaningfully in the world economy. The political, ideological and moral dangers inherent in the present global imbalances far outweigh the risks of enabling developing countries to participate more fully in the formulation of a global economic policy and have a greater share in the vast opportunities for development.

There is now widespread awareness of the critical role played by a safe environment in the survival and sustained development of mankind. Indeed, there must be a serious attempt to produce without destruction. In this context, Zambia has enacted legislation on the environment. This legislation makes it mandatory for policy makers to ensure that all issues concerning the environment are fully incorporated in national development plans.

Zambia welcomes international co-operation on environmental issues because the various agents of stress on and damage to the environment are essentially of an international character. It is in this spirit that Zambia looks forward to the

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convening in 1992, in Brazil, of the United Nations conference on environment and development. It is our hope that the conference will provide guidelines on a global scale for maintaining the man-nature balance.

Co-operation is very new in the long history of mankind. The heroic spirit of multilateralism now emerging with the growing prestige and constructive role of the United Nations in world affairs has laid a firmer foundation for mankind's supreme struggle for oneness, comfort, security and prosperity. My delegation would like to leave the Assembly with the firm conviction that this foundation will be used scrupulously by all countries of the world to resolve the outstanding problems of peace, democracy, underdevelopment, illicit drug use and trafficking and environmental degradation. Heads of State and Government and national delegations who have spoken before me have shared with us the same view.

I wish the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly all success in its deliberations.

Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda): Mr. President, I bring you the fraternal greetings of my people and our congratulations on your elevation to your high office. Your country, Nigeria, and mine have deep historical and cultural links which underscore the need for mutual support and co-operation. However, on account of your personal qualities and the vision which you bring to the presidency, you are assured of the unfailing support of my delegation.

Permit me here to express my thanks to the former President, Mr. Dante Caputo, for the skilful manner in which he has directed our deliberations over the past year. His guidance was most encouraging and the results, I must add, most gratifying.

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I wish to offer my country's sincerest thanks to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and to the organs of the United Nations for the support extended to Antigua and Barbuda in the wake of one of the most devastating hurricanes ever to have unleashed its fury upon the eastern Caribbean. The damage to my country was severe but the response of the international community reaffirms my faith and my people's faith in the effectiveness of the United Nations organs and in the goodwill of mankind.

Fifty years ago the havoc, brutality and destructiveness of the Second World War was visited on mankind. The United Nations, be it remembered, was created at the end of the conflagration to promote peace, security, economic reconstruction and self-determination. Today the role of the United Nations is pivotal in the continued promotion of peace, in the stride towards economic development and in the reconstruction efforts of so many nations where the ability to function has been impaired by disasters, man-made and natural.

This year, as the people of Antigua and Barbuda struggle to overcome the devastation of a hurricane, the *raison d'être* of the United Nations is made manifest. The Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and the United Nations Development Programme deserve high commendation for the support and pledges of continued assistance extended to my nation immediately following upon the consequential dangers of this natural disaster.

Two very disquieting and unrelenting man-made dangers which alarm my country and menace the most powerful countries in this hemisphere are terrorism and the trafficking in narcotics. Both are grave causes of concern to the decision makers in my twin-island country.

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It was less than one year ago that mercenaries unsuccessfully attempted to invade the Republic of Maldives. That blatant act of terrorism is a threat to the sovereignty of all small countries in every hemisphere and an unsuspecting drain on our limited resources. My country can ill afford to spend our scarce foreign currency earnings on acquisition of military hardware. The choice for us is whether to buy more tractors, or to bring telephones into a distant village, or to offer scholarships to deserving youth, or to repair secondary roads for our farmers to transport their goods to market, or to increase our promotional budget for attracting business and visitors to our shores. But this looming terrorist threat requires a diversion of those scarce resources to rifles and ammunition and military uniforms. It is a threat which causes us to look towards the United Nations for support. My country will join forces with a score of small countries to sponsor a draft resolution proposed by the Republic of Maldives requiring the creation of a type of United Nations peace-keeping force to come to the assistance of any small State when requested so to do by its legitimate authority in the face of a terrorist threat to its sovereignty.

In my immediate region, the eastern Caribbean, eight nations, including my own, have formed a regional security force which offers greater protection than any single member State can provide on its own. But Antigua and Barbuda none the less endorses a broader approach as proposed by Jamaica in a pending United Nations draft resolution. The creation of a multilateral unit established under the aegis of the United Nations is most appealing. Such a unit would possess the ability to provide assistance in situations requiring intelligence and interdiction capabilities; both are currently beyond the wherewithal of the extant Caribbean regional security system. The mere willingness of many small countries and many

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island developing countries to lend their support to the concept evidences our increased faith in the United Nations

Over the past two weeks every Head of State from the Americas who has addressed this body has expounded on the scourge of drug trafficking. The Presidents of the United States and of Colombia have noted that the threat to democracy posed by the drug cartels is real and present. The threat to my nation's sovereignty is not imagined. Wealthy and powerful drug barons, when driven from their castles in one nation, will look to less defensive States from which to continue their criminal activity. To forestall the prospect of elevation from transit points in the trafficking of drugs to distillation centres for the production of the substance our island countries intend to seek increased United Nations protection. For an industry which ranks second in economic activity only to the arms trade and whose profits exceed the global cost of debt-servicing, we are fighting a disaster more horrendous in its implications than an entire summer of hurricanes.

Drug abuse eats away the very foundations of civilizations and cultures which generations passed have bequeathed to us. It turns its victims into unrecognizable creatures and destroys our youngsters as surely as no tempest can. The purveyors of this evil must be apprehended and punished. Small countries such as my own are conscious of the superior strength which the drug barons possess. Antigua and Barbuda will therefore be a co-sponsor of the draft resolution to be tabled by Trinidad and Tobago proposing the creation of an international criminal court of justice empowered with jurisdiction to bring to trial and to convict those dealers in death who have no nationality and for whom the sanctity of life has no meaning.

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The traffic in drugs and the threat of terrorism have the potential to undermine our sovereignty. But the harm to the environment, resulting in global warming, threatens the coastline of every country with flooding and our low-lying island nations with complete submersion.

In March of this year we witnessed the convening of a summit meeting on the protection of the global atmosphere. The leaders of 24 countries adopted a common declaration addressed to all nations. The Hague Declaration emphasized that the environmental problem is world-wide and requires solutions devised on a global scale. The nature of the dangers involved necessitates the seeking of remedies to preserve the ecosystem and to enable humanity to live in dignity in a viable global environment. All States have an obligation both to our populations and to future generations. There is therefore need for regulatory, supportive and adjustment measures to take into account the participation and potential contribution of States which are at varying levels of development.

Many developing countries contribute to the degradation as their burgeoning populations cut down forests to provide timber and to make land available for cattle ranching and agriculture, much as the developed countries have done for centuries.

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The grave nature of the resulting, looming crisis can be gleaned from computer projections which indicate that the accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere as a consequence of development could increase the earth's average temperature by 3 to 9 degrees Fahrenheit before the year 2050. Resulting weather patterns could make infertile large tracts of land now under food production, and oceans could rise by several feet to flood large areas of coastal land, thereby causing innocent, non-contributing island countries to disappear under the sea.

There is undoubtedly an increased recognition in all countries of the gravity of the environmental problem and collectively there are specific measures which can be taken by the nations of the world to safeguard our planet. There should be the imposition of special taxes on carbon-dioxide emissions, which would serve to encourage conservation. Environmental review should become an integral part of lending procedures within countries so that local banks could be prevented from providing funds for projects that destroy habitats. Funding should be increased for research on alternative energy sources, including that of solar power, and safer designs for nuclear reactors. Financial assistance should be given to developing countries to enable us to construct high-efficiency power plants. And, although a number of other costly measures could be implemented, the simple act of establishing an international tree-planting programme is highly recommended.

My country appreciates that the problem is most complex. Antigua and Barbuda accepts the view enunciated by the Commonwealth Secretary-General that

"the current work on greenhouse gases and global warming requires the combined skills of physicists, meteorologists, biologists, geographers, economists, lawyers, engineers ... To deal with such problems satisfactorily is a challenge to both statesmen and thinkers."

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It is widely accepted that all solutions require multilateral co-operation. We insist that the principle of multilateralism be applied, conscious of the fact that the mechanism of the United Nations must again be called upon to provide technical leadership and support.

Antigua and Barbuda also seeks the support of the United Nations community in promoting a new approach to measuring the economic well-being of island developing countries. We again reiterate that the use of conventional economic indicators to measure the economic standing of island developing countries is neither apt nor realistic.

Conventional indicators distort our economic soundness, ignore the fragility of our economic base, and fail to compensate for the disproportionately high costs attached to providing routine services to small populations. The gross national product per capita is the major culprit. It does not take into account that tourism, the economic lifeline of many developing countries including my own, requires massive expenditures for promotion. The export of manufactured goods does not. Promotional spending takes place in the developed countries from which the tourists come, resulting in a continuous transfer of our hard-earned hard currency to developed countries. But this spending must take place. Promotion is the sine qua non of a successful tourist-based economy; 60 per cent of the gross domestic product of my country is generated by tourism. The gross national product per capita measuring device does not take that major fact into account; nor does it give an adequate representation of our country's vulnerability. Last month a single hurricane destroyed in 12 hours the 50 years' work it took my Government to provide a functioning electricity delivery system. The damage to our homes, our schools, our single hospital, agricultural crops and, most particularly, our fishing industry exceeds in dollars the aggregate export earnings of five years.

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combined. The difficulties resulting from hurricane Hugo are compounded by economic constraints posed by our smallness, by an increasing disappearance of preferential markets, by a decline in official development assistance and by access restrictions to soft-loan financing. Island developing countries once again present our case for the use of more reliable economic indicators and for special assistance from the United Nations and its many organs.

Over the past six sessions Antigua and Barbuda has been in the forefront on the question of Antarctica. Again we seek to remind this body that Antarctica is mankind's last frontier. Man's intrusion there, if not carefully monitored and regulated, can dramatically alter the global ocean currents and weather patterns. Antarctica is a most significant regulator of the earth's weather systems; any change in the Antarctic environment can have a dire impact on the climate and environment of other parts of the earth.

Last year we had much cause for regret when we learned of the decision of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to disregard totally and completely General Assembly resolution 42/46, of 30 November 1987, which called for a moratorium on negotiations to establish a minerals régime until all members of the international community are able to participate fully in such negotiations. This year we are greeted with a glimmer of hope as three of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have declared that they will not sign the minerals convention and are advocating instead the establishment of an antarctic wilderness park. We welcome this development. Antigua and Barbuda continues to call for the direct involvement of the United Nations and the fullest co-operation of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties with the Secretary-General or his representative.

Many recent developments in technology have brought about major changes in the domestic well-being of several developing countries. As the pace of technology

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quickness, small developing countries seeking to keep pace experience a strain on their resources. My country is nevertheless determined to use the products of science and technology to realize its development goals. Our long-standing efforts to build and strengthen our endogenous capacity in science and technology have taken on a sense of urgency as we seek to improve social and economic conditions through expanded production, increased export earnings and international competitiveness. If we are to enhance the infrastructure of our learning institutions in the fields of science and technology, if we are to improve the management of science and technology, then my country must press the international community to increase the flow of technology to small countries on conditions acceptable to us.

The islands of the Caribbean were once populated by an ancient, robust, sea-faring people; because of man's greed and viciousness, their populations were decimated to the point of near extinction. Relics of their civilization can be found throughout every Caribbean island. Antigua and Barbuda is thus compelled to raise its voice in calling for the protection of indigenous peoples in the modern world.

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We make this appeal in the knowledge that in this century there have been more ethnocides, genocides and extinctions of distinct ethnic and tribal groups than in any other period of history. In 1988 more than 200,000 indigenous people around the world were murdered and more than 2 million were forced to flee their homelands.

The violence manifested against indigenous peoples is in no sense random. The violence occurs, most frequently, when States or dominant groups attempt to exert complete control over ethnic or tribal minorities. Many indigenous people live in the more remote and least-explored areas of their countries. They have been pushed so far that they are making a final stand against aggression. But they fight, like the heroic Caribbean peoples of centuries past, against more formidable foes, to which they will most certainly succumb. Not many decades from now the fate of the world's remaining indigenous peoples could be decided once and for all. Antigua and Barbuda will readily give its support to the proposal by the Group for the Studies of Indigenous Populations - a part of the United Nations Sub-Committee for the Protection of Minorities - that 1992 be declared the international year of the indigenous peoples of the world.

Africa's struggle for total liberation will come only with the eradication of apartheid. We are convinced that the oppressed majority of South Africa - the black people of South Africa - will soon win its freedom, with the unfailing support of the United Nations. This year the General Assembly will again devote a special session to apartheid. But we are certain that the racist Pretoria régime will completely ignore the resolutions which are likely to emerge since it has, with impunity, ignored those which were adopted last year. South Africa must be compelled to lift all state-of-emergency regulations, end its ban on all political organizations, restore free speech and movement, and commence a dialogue with the representatives of the majority population. My country reiterates its call for the

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adoption of mandatory sanctions of a comprehensive nature against the racist régime as a means to compel it to comply. Antigua and Barbuda calls once again for the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners and seeks the cessation of the harassment of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Reverend Alan Boesak.

Antigua and Barbuda condemns the racist South Africans for creating impediments to an independent Namibia. The States Members of the United Nations cannot become complacent; we must not allow South Africa to jettison the agreements reached through our efforts here. If we fail to deter South Africa we shall disappoint the world, which is watching us, eager to see Namibia take its rightful seat as the one hundred sixtieth State Member of the United Nations. The men and women of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), international civil servants who are on site in Namibia, have placed their lives in jeopardy; several nationals of my small country are serving in Namibia under UNTAG. The Assembly must ensure that they do not labour in vain, that South Africa complies with Security Council resolution 435 (1978). We cannot allow the effort to end in failure.

Continuing on the subject of the African continent, we turn now to Western Sahara. Antigua and Barbuda actively supports the peace plan of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. We lend our support to the people of Western Sahara in their struggle for self-determination and endorse all international efforts aimed at securing peace and stability in the Maghreb region.

Permit me to focus upon my own region briefly. Antigua and Barbuda applauds the developments in Central America, which are certain to bring peace. We endorse Security Council resolution 637 (1989), which relates to the Esquipulas II Agreements. We adhere to our earlier statements that economic injustice is the

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root cause of many of the local conflicts there; these conflicts were exacerbated by the cold war. The number of proxy wars, though, is fast diminishing, and we welcome the demobilization and repatriation of irregular forces. Poor nations with bare material storehouses can ill afford the squandering of scarce resources brought on by wars. The strengthening of democracy in the region will continue if peace lasts; economic reform must also be instituted in order to guarantee peace. The people of Central America, and especially the people of Panama, are assured that our hearts are with them in this era of extreme difficulty; it is our sincere hope that their many crises will soon be resolved.

Further afield, we are discouraged by developments in Afghanistan. Despite the Agreement on the Settlement of the Situation relating to Afghanistan, and despite the unanimous adoption of resolution 43/20 of 3 November 1988, the suffering of the sturdy Afghan people continues. My country reiterates its support for that people's struggle to achieve self-determination and total autonomy.

In Lebanon, the people must be allowed to settle their differences without undue interference. My country stands ready to endorse any proposal that will lead to full Lebanese sovereignty over the entire country and guarantee the withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanese soil.

The entire Middle East conflict continues to have the propensity for generating repercussions in a far wider sphere. The decisions taken by the Palestine National Council at Algiers in November 1988 and at Geneva the following month created a diplomatic momentum which has since been supplanted by mistrust and doubt. It is imperative that there be an international peace conference. The interests of all concerned are best served through dialogue and negotiations in an atmosphere propitious to peaceful resolution. The United Nations must continue its

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quest to find a lasting settlement, premised on the rights of all States and peoples in that region to exist within recognized and secure borders.

In South-East Asia, two Koreas seem permanent. The Republic of Korea has repeatedly expressed its desire to become a Member of the United Nations. Antigua and Barbuda can find no logical cause or explanation for denying it membership; further, we consider it unjust that it is barred from membership for reasons other than those stipulated in the United Nations Charter.

Last year at this time we were encouraged by developments relating to Cambodia. Unfortunately, the Conference convened in Paris at the initiative of the Government of France fell short of getting a direct commitment from the various factions. But it succeeded in working out significant elements of a comprehensive settlement and in identifying necessary aspects of a solution. It is hoped that there will be no slackening of efforts to bring about peace and justice in Kampuchea.

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In Cyprus, the fact that the leaders of the two sides involved in that conflict have committed themselves to achieving an overall settlement augurs well for the future. We are heartened by our Secretary-General's announcement that a critical juncture has now been reached. Antigua and Barbuda consequently gives its full support to the effort and urges the two parties to reach an acceptable solution within the year.

Like small countries Antigua and Barbuda looks increasingly to international law for protection, and we are keenly aware of the role of the United Nations in promoting respect for law. The lawless dumping of hazardous wastes in developing countries requires immediate United Nations action. It is unfair and unthinkable to burden with the by-products of affluent societies those that are endeavouring to keep their fragile ecosystems safe for this and future generations. It would be suicidal to accept the wastes of industrial societies in the Caribbean given the complete reliance of our peoples on every square mile of our land and sea. Antigua and Barbuda calls for a strict international régime to protect all developing countries from becoming dumping-grounds for hazardous wastes.

My delegation's request for United Nations assistance and support in our hurricane recovery efforts, in the establishment of a multilateral force, in the creation of an international court of criminal justice, in the provision of leadership and support on environmental issues, and a few other matters catalogued earlier, might appear to suggest that my small island developing country and maybe other small countries are willing to surrender, or to trade in, elements of our sovereignty for greater security and improved conditions. My country guards its sovereignty jealously. Antigua and Barbuda will remain a free and fully independent country just as long as the nation-State system survives. My Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Doctor Vere Cornwall Bird, has for 50 years been in

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the forefront of the struggle to win our independence, to improve our standard of living and to foster in us pride in our heritage. He continues to pass on to us a legacy which we shall never abandon. Antigua and Barbuda will do all in its power to ensure our continued development, to ensure lasting peace, and to secure humanity's survival through multilateral efforts. However, we are willing to part with no more of our sovereignty than is the most powerful country in any hemisphere.

Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Minister of Foreign Affairs, would have liked to be here today to address this Assembly, but compelling reasons relating to developments in the efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to help bring about a settlement of the Lebanese problem made it necessary for His Highness to remain in the Kingdom at this time. He asked me to convey his greetings to you, Mr. President, and to deliver his statement on his behalf.

"It gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of this forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, a tribute to you personally and to your wide experience in international affairs, and a tribute to the important role played by your country both regionally and internationally. I am confident that your presidency of the General Assembly at this session and your efficient conduct of its affairs will help to bring about good results.

"I avail myself of this opportunity to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, President of the General Assembly at its forty-third session, who conducted our work with objectivity and wisdom that earned him the gratitude and appreciation of all.

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"It is also my pleasure to reiterate our thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his untiring efforts during this year, as in previous years, to strengthen opportunities for peace and reduce tension in crisis areas, as well as for his persistent endeavours to solve international problems, whether political or other. His personal qualities have contributed greatly to what has been accomplished in these fields.

"The role of the United Nations in providing for a climate of détente, thereby contributing to the processes of reconciliation and the resolution of disputes, and in facilitating the means to eliminate the causes of dangerous conflicts between States is a major objective of the United Nations Charter. It gives us pleasure to witness the fact that the United Nations is performing this role and to see that the super-Powers in particular have recognized that in the United Nations they have a body to which they can turn for help in realizing the present stages of détente. There is no need to explain our appreciation of the importance of multilateral relations and their positive influence on bilateral relations. In discussing the importance and usefulness of multilateral relations, I must mention the constructive role the Gulf Co-operation Council is playing within the framework of the Arab League in co-ordinating and unifying the foreign and internal policies of its member States. We welcome the formation of the Arab Co-operation Council and of the Maghreb Unity Council, which incorporate two groups of Arab countries within the Arab League and which aim to consolidate co-operation and cohesion among them. We see in this regional cohesion within the framework of the Arab League an effective practical support of the League's objectives and of the goals of the United Nations.

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"Just when we are witnessing the many indications of relaxation in the relations between the great Powers and indications of improvement in the nature of the dealings between adversary international blocs, at a time when the world is looking forward to the transformation of confrontation among the great Powers into a process of understanding and of the solution of conflicts by peaceful means, and just when the threats of a global war with weapons of mass destruction are gradually abating, raising great hopes that the danger of a nuclear war between the two blocs has receded far enough to give us a feeling of peace, we now find that world-wide dangers are beginning to appear on the scene, impede mankind's development and jeopardize the very existence of the human race if they are not dealt with in time.

"The multifaceted environmental problems and the dangers created by industrial progress make air and water unsafe for use, imperil the livelihood of man and the life of animals and jeopardize agriculture and the soil. Moreover, the damage and disruption to which the upper strata of the atmosphere are being subjected will affect life on Earth in general.

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"Then there are these deadly scourges, such as the spread of drugs by dangerous and criminal organizations with abundant means at their disposal that cross geographic borders, violate the sanctity of families and societies, break all moral, human and spiritual bounds and spread these poisons fatal to the human spirit, sapping human vitality in its march for a safe existence, and leading to the destruction of citizen's character, the disintegration of social bonds and the dissolution of the individual's commitment to family, society and State. The United Nations has been alert to all those dangers at an early stage and, thankfully, it has called for the mobilization of the efforts worldwide to face them.

"In the economic field, the situation of the developing countries is increasingly deteriorating, and the poor countries are becoming poorer and the rich countries richer. The problems of debt, protectionist policies and declining prices of raw materials, as well as the gap between the developing and the developed countries, and the underlying causes and consequences, are the most important problems requiring an urgent solution.

"The fact that the leadership of the United States and the Soviet Union have reached the present stage of understanding and are convinced of the need to co-operate is a development worthy of our great appreciation, for their wisdom and ability to open up prospects favourable for their peoples and for mankind. If the steps taken during the last two years are sufficient indicators, we have reason to hope that despite difficulties this spirit of agreement will continue, unhampered by any elements of destructive rivalry, which must be guarded against. We hope that the present understanding, mutual negotiation and co-operation portend a period of stability that will help us solve global non-military problems as well as regional problems which impinge

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upon the rights, security and peace of peoples. If this trend continues, we see an important role for the United Nations and its organs as effective instruments facilitating international understanding.

"At a time when international détente holds out promise for the solution of problems, the question of Palestine is entering such a critical phase that a special stand is required of the United Nations and its Member States, and all of us must shoulder our responsibilities in this regard.

"More than 22 years have elapsed since Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In order to annex those areas, the Israeli authorities resort to prevarications, despite the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and the overwhelming opinion of the international community rejecting and condemning those Israeli attempts and calling for their termination.

"Then there was the sweeping Palestinian uprising. Twenty-three months have passed since the intifadah began. The Palestinian people, all of them - men, women, the elderly and children - have risen up against occupation and injustice. They confront the Israeli occupation authorities and all their instruments of oppression and tyranny as people defending their right to their land against an occupier that threatens their livelihood and existence. Peace is still an aspiration that Israel rejects, and it continues to place obstacles in the way of its attainment. That has been so since the Arab peace initiatives began to receive the support of the international community. In this regard, I refer to the initiative of the Paz Summit of 1982, the

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resolutions of the Palestine National Council of 1988 and the steps taken by the Palestinian leadership, including its proclamation of the State of Palestine.*

"On this occasion I extol the role of our sister State Egypt under the leadership of President Hosni Mubarek in supporting the inalienable legitimate rights of the Palestinians, even as Israel's intransigence hinders every initiative to solve the problem and obstructs every effort to achieve peace.

"The Israeli authorities' inhuman treatment of the Palestinian Arab people is the greatest threat to any peace plan, and the worst possible policy that they could pursue if they wish to establish a proper human relationship with the Arab people. Israel must accept reality; there is no alternative. And the reality is that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It should realize that the sacrifices made by the Palestinian Council in putting forward a formula for peace in Palestine provide Israel with an opportunity for peace. The Israeli authorities must realize that this great sacrifice by the Palestinian people is the high price they are paying in the quest for peace and security and preservation of their national identity.

"Also of concern to Palestine are the Arab lands occupied by Israel in the Syrian Golan and in South Lebanon. Invasion and occupation are not acceptable; they are intolerable, and must be brought to an end as quickly as possible.

* Mr. Vraalsen (Norway), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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"But Israel views the Middle East as a single field, including the Arab Maghreb and some countries of South West Asia, and in that regard its policy is to build rockets and prepare weapons of mass destruction, including deadly nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons. We must never forget that those are all weapons of total annihilation, and it is our inescapable obligation to see to it that they are destroyed in their entirety. Calling for their partial destruction is contradictory, as is the demand that weapons of mass destruction be 'limited'. The long-range missile the Israeli authorities fired at the Libyan coast, in the Mediterranean, confirms that peace and security based on humane considerations is far from the minds of Israeli politicians. But of course they will frighten no one.

"Are we likely this year to see a better understanding of the components necessary for the achievement of peace, with the Israeli authorities proving there has been a change in their assessment of what is right? Or will Israel ruin all opportunities for peace by insisting on an Israeli kind of peace that can never be achieved?

"With respect to the situation in the Gulf, we express our appreciation to the Governments of two neighbouring countries, Iran and Iraq, for adhering to their commitment to the cease-fire. That is a necessary step towards ending the war and for progress towards building essential bridges of peace between two neighbours following the horrors of bloody warfare they endured for eight years.

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"It must be pointed out that the state of no war, no peace is always characterized by unacceptable surprises, and that peace must be the goal. Both parties accepted Security Council resolution 598 (1987). We commend Iraq for its initiative in this regard. The Secretary-General and his staff have made great efforts to break the deadlock in the current negotiations. There is an urgent need to remove humanitarian problems as points of contention, precisely because they are humanitarian and because that will have a very positive effect on the spirit of the negotiations. In this regard, I want to refer in particular to the prisoners of war. As always, we shall support the Secretary-General and his staff in their efforts to reach a final solution to this conflict which threatens the security and peace of the countries in the Gulf region, as well as international security.

"The tragedy of Lebanon has reached a stage at which it threatens the foundation and the safety of the State. At the recent emergency Arab summit conference held in Casablanca a decision was taken to authorize the high-level Arab Tripartite Committee - composed of the custodian of the two holy sites, King Fahd bin Abdulaziz; His Majesty King Hassan II and His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid - to find a comprehensive solution to the Lebanese crisis. The Committee has put forward a special perspective to solve the problem - a perspective that includes a draft plan for national reconciliation.

"Thus far, the High Committee has had important successes. It achieved a cease-fire, and it convened a meeting of the Lebanese parliamentarians, which is taking place at present in Taif, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. For 12 days those parliamentarians have been working continuously to reach an

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agreement that will restore peace to the country, and constitutional institutions to the State, will result in political reforms, and will establish Lebanese sovereignty over all Lebanese national territory.

"The custodian of the two holy sites, King Fahd bin Abdulaziz, in the name of the Tripartite Arab Committee, has emphasized the need for the brothers in Lebanon to have a unified conception that will enable them to define the future of their country according to the formula that they think will preserve the unity of the State: its land and people, and will ensure lasting peace and comprehensive stability. King Fahd has exhorted all the Lebanese parties and other parties concerned with the Lebanese issue to intensify their efforts to secure success for the endeavours to achieve the beneficial goals that everyone is striving for in this respect.

"The Israeli forces must be withdrawn from South Lebanon in accordance with the Armistice Agreements of 1949 and in implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978). We are very hopeful - indeed, confident - that stability, security and peace will return to the land of Lebanon, and that that country will regain its civilized and constructive role and will be able to look forward to a tomorrow when peace will repair what war destroyed.

"We reiterate our appreciation of the Soviet Union's courage in deciding to withdraw from Afghanistan and to adhere strictly to the withdrawal date. We hope that the Soviet Union, having made that brave decision, recognizes that the régime holding out in Kabul brought upon Afghanistan the horrors of more than eight years of civil war. It will not be easy for the mujahidin and their provisional Government to reward that régime by having it share in governing the country and administering the affairs of the people who suffered at its hands, the horrors of war, destruction and expulsion, and at the same

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time to honour the régime with the prestige of a State and the esteem of Afghanistan's people.

"The continuing intransigence of the régime will do nothing to repair the rift with its neighbours. It will do nothing to build bridges of understanding and good neighbourliness. A failed régime that could not ensure safety and tranquillity, or even impose itself by force when it was propped up by a superior foreign army is finished and is on its way out. Attempts at bargaining will only serve to prolong the tragic suffering of the Afghan people. This heroic people set one of the best possible examples in sacrifice, in defence of their religion, their honour and their homeland. They demonstrated to all who seek freedom that there is a clear way, which does not tolerate bargaining.

"The problem of Namibia is entering its final stages. That country is on the threshold of enjoying independence. We hope that the world community will continue to press for a comprehensive solution until Namibia attains complete independence. The methods of prevarication and procrastination to which the Government of South Africa is resorting, in order to foil the implementation of the United Nations plan in one way or another, will only have negative results in South Africa. That Government should learn from the experience of others who preceded them in colonizing Africa and who preceded them in departing from Africa. We will be glad, in the near future, to welcome Namibia as a free, independent State and as an active member of the community of nations.

"South Africa, with its system of apartheid, is abdurately resisting the winds of change and the storms of adjustment that are overcoming apartheid and racial discrimination everywhere, especially on the African continent. Despite some signs of comprehension and understanding brandished by the régime

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in South Africa, the wide gap between the white minority and the black majority and the repugnant relationship between them, to which the minority is clinging, are a warning of the dangers to the security and stability of the region, a warning of what will happen if the responsible officials in South Africa do not wake up quickly to the evil consequences of their present policy, which is condemned by the whole world and which all States, including Saudi Arabia, are standing together to end.

"It will not do South Africa and its Government any good to co-operate with the régime in Israel, overtly or covertly, in the field of trade, industry and finance or in the field of nuclear armaments, intelligence, illegal operations and training, because a system founded on apartheid is bound to change or come to an end.

"As we all know, politics cannot be set straight unless economics is set straight as well. In many respects the international economy was strong last year and at the beginning of this year. Gross national product in the industrial States increased by 4 per cent in 1988, and international trade increased by 9 per cent - one of the greatest increases over the last 10 years. The rate of employment in industrial countries increased by 2 per cent in 1988, while the rate of unemployment decreased from 7.5 per cent to 7 per cent.

"Against that picture, we still see the gap between the industrial countries and the developing countries widening. Official assistance and financial support to the developing nations have decreased. Many developing countries use considerable amounts of their financial resources to make payments to debtor countries. The gap is therefore widening between the

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industrial countries, where economic performance is improving, and most of the developing countries, where economic performance is worsening because of their economic problems, which constitute one of the most serious obstacles to international understanding, despite the climate of détente to which we pointed earlier.

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"The decrease in the price of the raw materials exported by the developing countries still represents a major obstacle on the path to their growth and economic development, at a time when those countries are also facing a rise in the price of manufactured goods imported from the industrialized countries. The developing countries are still dealing with development problems in the face of increasing difficulties because the industrial countries, especially those which used to rule some of them, have left to their present Governments the burdens of poverty and backwardness. These industrial countries have not carried out their responsibility to support human and material development projects in the countries that have gained independence. We still persistently call for the resumption and revitalization of the North-South negotiations and for them to work earnestly for solutions to the problems that are impeding progress in this field. We also call for a curbing of the protectionist policies in the industrialized countries in tariff and non-tariff forms, which constitute basic obstacles to balanced trade and impede economic development, not only in developing countries, but also in the industrialized countries themselves. We also call for an intensification of the co-ordination of economic policies between industrialized countries in order to revitalize the world economy, support its stability and facilitate the incorporation of the developing countries into that world economy.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is playing a positive role in serving the world economy, and at the same time in giving assistance and support - mostly in the form of grants - to developing countries. We stress the importance of the fact that the improvement in international relations should be accompanied by a reasonable balance in economic relations, especially since military

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expenditure is supposed to decrease in the industrial countries which can thus demonstrate their good intentions by setting aside part of those savings to support development in the developing countries and improve the trade balance.

"We look forward to the coming year and we are hopeful that international problems will be solved. At the same time, we shall shoulder our responsibilities, which are of no less importance, for solving those regional problems that are threatening peace and security. We are hopeful that, when we meet next year, we shall be able to report actual achievements, so that we can assure coming generations that the prospects for humanity are better than they were in the past."

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.