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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KABORE (Burkina Faso)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

STATEMENT BY MR. ANTOINE BLANCA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

1. Mr. BLANCA (Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation) said that the role of the Third Committee was especially important as various social issues figured pre-eminently in the present day overall policy debate. The improvement of social conditions had been slowed down or reversed in the 1980s in a large number of countries, in particular in Africa and Latin America. One need not go far in the search of evidence. When average incomes declined, and the distribution of income remained the same, the number of people living in extreme poverty was bound to increase. Average incomes in Africa, for instance, were now some 40 per cent lower than they were at the beginning of the decade and back to levels that had been reached in the beginning of the 1970s. In Latin America they were 14 per cent lower, back to levels that had been attained in the late 1970s. Only a huge - and unimaginable - redistribution of income (and budget resources) towards the poorest segments in society could have buffered the impact on them of such a decline.

2. Today it was recognized not only in the United Nations but also in the financial multilateral institutions that structural adjustment programmes had to encompass social and distributional questions as well (and not only the targeting of macroeconomic variables). It was asserted that it was unacceptable to wait for growth alone to reduce poverty. And it was true that in a few recent instances adjustment programmes had included compensatory measures in order to soften the impact on poverty-stricken groups of population. But how much could such measures achieve against the fall-out of a 40 per cent reduction in average incomes? Without a growth-oriented approach, compensatory measures often were like a drop in the ocean.

3. In the present period of prolonged economic decline for so many developing countries it had not always been possible to distinguish precisely between the social damages from the decline and the social costs of adjustment programmes that had usually been implemented in a context of grave balance-of-payment difficulties. The usual components of adjustment programmes - currency devaluation, squeeze on credit, price decontrol, elimination of many public subsidies, and other measures to reduce the budget deficit - in several instances brought unbearable social costs. The poorer segments of the populations suffered directly from reduced incomes and increased prices for necessities, and receding prospects of access to adequate public social services. As was well known, in some cases, the resulting social tension mounted to the point of explosion.

4. The picture had become a familiar one in the indebted developing countries. With tax revenues being redirected to service external debt, Governments had either cut back on social services or they had made efforts to maintain services by charging them, which had been to the detriment, usually, of the weakest segments of society. As was well known, in the developing world the provision of social

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services had reached a far smaller share of the population than in developed countries. Thus, government budgets in developing countries were confronted with much larger unmet requirements. That was even more true of the least developed among them, where large portions of the population lived in absolute poverty. In those conditions, the social costs of adjustment could become dangerously high.

5. The impact on the development budget had in general been even more severe. In trimming public expenditures, developing countries had been first to cut investment. The reduction of investment in so many developing countries had obviously hurt their long-term development prospects.

6. The halt or even reversal in social progress in Africa and Latin America was very distressing. By comparison, Asia had been hailed as the success story of the 1980s. But satisfaction with real accomplishments in that region could not erase the magnitude of all that was left to be done. Asia was still the home of far more than half of all the people of the world living in extreme poverty.

7. The improvement of standards of living in developing countries would be essential also to stop the local degradation of the environment. Environmental issues were very diverse and the causes of environmental destruction had to be ascertained in each case. But clearly in many developing countries poverty was a major source of local degradation of the environment.

8. It was difficult to speak in specific terms of social problems because they were entangled with economic problems. Such an entanglement was even more evident in times of difficulty. Practical or institutional separations did not deny, however, the interaction of social and economic policies and the need for a multidisciplinary approach to development. They pointed to the high significance of tight co-operation between the Third and Second Committees and between the various parts of the Secretariat. In its last sessions, the Economic and Social Council had emphasized the need for an integrated approach to development. He recalled Council resolution 1989/113 which referred to the interrelationship between economic and social factors for development. He also referred to Council resolution 1989/120 on development of human resources and resolution 1989/55 on the social dimension of the International Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade.

9. With particular reference to the Strategy, there was a broadly based agreement that the central concern must be the revitalization of growth. After eight years of growth in the industrialized world, there was a wave of optimism in some circles. The most enthusiastic believed that the 1990s could well be a new golden age for the developed world. Such optimism must be accompanied by strengthened solidarity and the resolve to bring back growth and development to those parts of the world that did not have the least benefit from the growth of past years. If such a goal was not achieved, many countries might come to feel that only the negative face of interdependence was being shown to them.

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10. Beyond the overall goal of creating a framework for growth and development, there was also a broad consensus that the Strategy should emphasize the need to improve the social situation, in particular of the developing countries, a concept derived from Council resolution 1989/55. At the same time, the Strategy should highlight the eradication of poverty and hunger, give a central place to human development, and support the advancement of women, social integration and the participation in development of all segments of society. The pursuit of social goals would be eased by a better understanding of the interactions between social and economic policies. It was not just that economic policies had by necessity social consequences. The choice of certain economic policies had represented *de facto* at the same time the choice of an implicit social policy, both at national and international level. Thus the challenge before the authors of the future strategy would be the true weight given to its different goals and policies to reach them.

11. The battle against drug abuse and drug traffic was now being given high priority by the international community and thus in the work of the present session of the General Assembly and of the Third Committee. Drugs were a social plague causing ravage both in developed and developing countries. It was estimated that the amounts involved in international illicit drug trafficking were higher than the value of international trade in oil. For some developing countries the traffic provided at times the only means of life for parts of the rural population and an important source of hard currency. Thus, countries now in the front line of the battle against drugs needed all the international support that could be mustered, including the support that would provide alternative export earnings. It would be a sad record for international solidarity and for consistency in matters of international policy if the outside help given to a country to fight illicit drug traffic were allowed to be drained completely by the deterioration of the terms of trade in its licit traffic.

12. The United Nations was the forum in which all the international aspects of the drug scourge could be addressed. It was to be hoped that all member countries would accede to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. At the same time, the reduction of demand for drugs must be tackled and emphasis must be put on preventing addiction and on treatment and rehabilitation.

13. There was another area of social concern, where progress in many developing countries seemed to have been checked by the development crisis of the 1980s. The most recent update of the United Nations World Survey on the Role of Women in Development had shown that the economic crisis affected certain sectors in particular. Typically, still, in countries where school enrolment had stagnated in the 1980s the slow-down had been more marked in the case of girls than of boys. In 1990, the United Nations was scheduled to carry out a mid-term review of the implementation of the Forward looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000. That would provide a good opportunity to make a tally of advances and failures in the campaign for women's equality and participation during

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the difficult 1980s, and would allow all States to redefine their commitment to the changes still needed to promote greater participation by women in the economy and in society.

14. In part XIII of his most recent report on the work of the Organization (A/44/1), the Secretary-General said that "the internationalization of certain major social issues can no longer be discounted", and stressed the need for common strategies to deal with them. A corpus of internationally agreed plans of action and guidelines supplying the elements of a world social strategy was already in existence; the guiding principles for welfare policies, the Nairobi strategies for the advancement of women, the world-wide agreements on youth, the disabled and the elderly, the results of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, and the recommendations of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and treatment of offenders. Other agreements might be adopted on children and migrant workers. One landmark agreement was the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (1969), whose twenty-fifth anniversary would be marked by special meeting of the General Assembly in December. The Declaration was an expression of faith in the democratic ideal and all that that implied, nationally and internationally. It was a detailed document which could still provide a lesson in the importance of being able to dream. In an era which demanded realism it was necessary to dream, if only a little, in order to summon up the strength to contribute to the building of a better world.

AGENDA ITEM 89: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (A/44/240, A/44/409-S/20743 and Corr.1 and 2, A/44/574, 575, 595; A/C.3/44/L.3; E/1989/42 and Add.1-4)

AGENDA ITEM 100: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (A/44/18, 171, 190 and Corr.1, 238 and Corr.1, 240, 271 and Corr.1, 310, 327, 330 and Corr.1, 336, 342, 346, 348, 360, A/44/395-E/1989/128, A/44/405, 409 and Corr.1 and 2, 411, 412, 442 and 593)

AGENDA ITEM 105: IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIVERSAL REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND OF THE SPEEDY GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES FOR THE EFFECTIVE GUARANTEE AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (A/44/526 and 548)

15. Mr. NYAMEKYE (Deputy Director, Centre for Human Rights), speaking on behalf of Mr. Jan Martenson, Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, introduced agenda items 89, 100 and 105, saying that the three were closely related.

16. On the subject of item 89, he said that the prevention of discrimination was of paramount importance to the international community. Racism was one of the most virulent cancers to attack mankind, and the international community could not tolerate it without risk to the peace and human rights of every one of its members.

17. The drafters of the United Nations Charter had been fully aware of the dangers of racism which, in the years before The Second World War, had reached an

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unimaginable level of horror. The most striking example of racism and racial discrimination in modern times was the apartheid system in South Africa, where a long period of discrimination had spawned a bitter cycle of conflict, power and death. It was, however, encouraging that efforts by the United Nations generally and the Secretary-General in particular had revived the peace process in southern Africa where, with support from the international community, preparations were being made for elections for Namibian independence.

18. In 1973, the General Assembly had proclaimed the 10 years from 1973 to 1983 the United Nations Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The first World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been held halfway through that period and the Second World Conference in 1983. As a result of the Second Conference, the General Assembly had proclaimed the period from 1983 to 1993 the Second Decade; he outlined its main objectives. With those objectives in view, the General Assembly had approved a broad programme of activities backed up by detailed plans of action for the periods 1985-1989 and 1990-1993.

19. The elimination of apartheid was one of the main objectives of the Second Decade. The body mandated to lead the campaign against apartheid was the Special Committee against Apartheid. In addition, the Commission on Human Rights and almost all the other human rights bodies of the United Nations had taken firm stands against apartheid.

20. The importance of co-ordinating the many activities of United Nations bodies and organizations under the Programme of Action for the Second Decade had been recognized by the General Assembly in resolution 42/47. The Secretary-General fully shared the concern of the General Assembly in that regard, and in October 1987 had requested Mr. Martenson to take charge of the co-ordination of the Decade. The Co-ordinator had taken a number of steps to improve contacts between various bodies and organizations. During the past year he had raised the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Decade with the executive heads of the specialized agencies, at the Geneva session of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, in order to mobilize the resources of the entire United Nations system in the fight against racism.

21. The important contribution made by non-governmental organizations had been recognized by all United Nations bodies and had been singled out by the General Assembly in numerous resolutions. The United Nations, in turn, contributed actively to meetings and seminars organized by non-governmental organizations on the fight against racism and racial discrimination.

22. Another priority area was the strengthening of public information activities in order to make known the part played by the United Nations in the fight against racism. The launching of the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights by the General Assembly was giving new impetus to efforts by the United Nations to combat discrimination and carry on its fight against racism. In activities related to the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, great importance had been given to the objectives and purposes of the Decade. As

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Co-ordinator, Mr. Martenson had stressed the importance of meeting regularly with the media; for example, in connection with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, he had met journalists to go over recent developments in the campaign against racism.

23. In order to co-ordinate all the international activities under the Second Decade, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to hold a global consultation on racial discrimination involving representatives of the United Nations system, regional intergovernmental organizations and interested non-governmental organizations in consultative status. The Global Consultation had been held in Geneva in October 1988. In January 1989 the Centre for Human Rights had held a seminar in Geneva on the effects of racism and racial discrimination on economic and social relations between indigenous peoples and States; a representative of an indigenous community had been elected Rapporteur. In September, in co-operation with the Greek Government, the Centre had organized an international seminar in Athens on cultural dialogue between migrant workers' home and host countries. Finally, it planned to offer a practical course in early 1990 on the political, historical, economic, social and cultural factors contributing to racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

24. In order to implement the objectives of the Decade, the international community had been carrying out a wide range of activities, which should be continued with increasing vigilance and effectiveness. It might be useful in the future to include activities intended to strengthen national legislation and institutions for the prevention of racism and the promotion of racial harmony, to prepare model legislative texts combating discrimination which could be presented by interested Governments to their Parliaments, and to provide advisory services to assist Governments in integrating model norms into their constitutions, training courses on international anti-discrimination norms and information materials on basic human rights.

25. He called attention to some of the documents submitted to the Committee in connection with the item before it which provided information on activities related to the Decade and noted that the capacity to implement those activities depended upon the adequacy of the resources made available for that purpose by Member States.

26. Noting the documents submitted to the Committee in connection with agenda item 100, he said it was encouraging that in the current year, which marked the entry into force of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the number of States parties to the Convention had risen to 128, which was the highest number of States parties to any international human rights instrument. On the other hand, it was regrettable that only 14 States parties had made the Declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would continue to urge the States parties which had not yet done so to accept article 14 and thereby to contribute to the effective implementation of the Convention.

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27. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination represented the most comprehensive United Nations instrument regarding discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or national or ethnic origin. It was therefore regrettable that the important work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which was to examine the measures adopted by the 128 States parties to give effect to the provisions of the Convention, had again been impaired, for the fourth consecutive year, by financial difficulties which affected its normal functioning. Those difficulties were a consequence of the non-payment by several States parties of their assessed contributions under the Convention. It had consequently been necessary to cancel the spring session of the Committee, which was to have met in Geneva from 27 February to 17 March 1989. He urged States parties to meet their financial obligations in order to allow the Committee to carry out its important task of combating the scourge of racial discrimination.

28. The extension by one week of the Committee's thirty-seventh session, which had been held from 7 August to 1 September 1989, had enabled the Committee to consider a large number of pending reports. Nevertheless, at the close of the session, there had still been a large number of reports pending consideration. During that session the Committee had also considered the question of overdue reports and decided to request the General Assembly to take appropriate measures and to urge the States parties concerned to submit their overdue reports as required under article 9 of the Convention as soon as possible. It had also authorized its Chairman to address personal letters, on behalf of the Committee, to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of States parties to which 10 or more reminders had so far been addressed and to urge them to submit their overdue reports as soon as possible. In that connection, the Committee had noted that there was often a correspondence between non-payment of assessed contributions and non-submission of periodic reports.

29. In 1990 the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination would commemorate its twentieth anniversary. For that event, the Committee had decided, subject to the availability of resources and the approval of the General Assembly during the current session, to hold a three-week commemorative session in New York to coincide with the commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March 1990, which would also mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre. The Committee had decided to allocate a limited number of meetings to a round-table discussion for the evaluation of its work during its first two decades and to consider ideas for its future work. The Committee intended to invite all of its former Chairmen, as well as the representatives of the States parties, the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, representatives of non-governmental organizations and representatives of ILO and UNESCO. The Committee had also invited the States parties to the Convention to give the widest possible publicity to the work of the Committee. The views expressed during the commemorative meetings would form the basis of a pamphlet to be issued by the Centre for Human Rights for world-wide dissemination.

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30. With regard to the sub-item concerning the status of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, the Third Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on that subject. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/97, the report also included a section on the implementation of that Convention. A list of the 88 States which had signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention as at 1 October 1989 was given in the annex to the report. The Group of Three of the Commission on Human Rights established under the Convention and composed of the representatives of Ethiopia, the German Democratic Republic and Mexico, had met at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 23 to 27 January 1989. It had considered reports submitted since its 1988 session and made a number of recommendations concerning the form and content of reports and other matters of concern to it. In its resolution 1989/8 of 23 February 1989, the Commission on Human Rights had recommended once again that all States parties should take full account of the general guidelines laid down by the Group of Three in 1978 for the submission of reports.

31. Turning to agenda item 105, he noted that one of the most important contributions of the Charter of the United Nations to international law was the recognition of the universal character of the right of peoples to self-determination. On the basis of Article 1 (2) of the Charter, the United Nations had in its early years set up machinery to assist colonial countries in their realization of the right to self-determination, a right which constituted the cornerstone of both International Covenants on Human Rights.

32. The General Assembly, as early as 1969, had decided to review annually the progress achieved in the implementation of resolution VIII of the International Conference on Human Rights held in Teheran in 1968. Since that time the item had been considered at 19 sessions of the General Assembly. At its forty-third session, the Assembly had adopted three resolutions under that agenda item. By resolution 43/105, it had reaffirmed the universal right of all peoples to self-determination and requested the Commission on Human Rights to give special attention to the violation of human rights, especially the right to self-determination, resulting from foreign military intervention, aggression or occupation. By resolution 43/106, the Assembly had reaffirmed the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for their independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial domination, apartheid and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle. The report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to resolutions 43/105 and 43/106 appeared in document A/44/548, which was before the Committee.

33. At its forty-third session, the General Assembly had condemned the use of mercenaries as a means to violate human rights and to impede the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination. At its forty-fifth session, the Commission on Human Rights had approved six resolutions relating to the question of Western Sahara (resolution 1989/18), the situation in Kampuchea (resolution 1989/20), the use of mercenaries (resolution 1989/21), the situation in southern Africa (resolution 1989/22) and the situation in Afghanistan (resolution 1989/23). He also pointed out that at its first regular session of 1989, the Economic and Social

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Council, by decision 1989/156, had endorsed Commission on Human Rights resolution 1989/20 and had requested the Secretary-General to continue to monitor closely the situation in Kampuchea.

34. The Commission on Human Rights had first appointed the Special Rapporteur to examine the question of the use of mercenaries in resolution 1987/16. In 1988 the Special Rapporteur had submitted a report to the Commission reviewing the current state of international law on that subject and outlining a Typology of mercenary activities. The Commission had then decided to extend his mandate for another two years and had requested him to submit a preliminary report to the Assembly at its forty-third session. In that report, Senator Bernales had described a visit he had carried out to Angola and analysed acts of mercenarism brought to his attention in southern Africa. The Special Rapporteur's third report, submitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-fifth session, had focused on a visit to Nicaragua and had described the position of the Nicaraguan Government with respect to mercenary activities on its territory. As a follow-up to that mission, the Special Rapporteur had paid a visit to the United States of America in July 1989, where he had held talks with the government officials concerned. The latest report, now before the Assembly in document A/44/526, gave an account of that visit.

35. The Co-ordinator of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was determined to pursue his efforts to promote concerted international action for the eradication of racism and racial discrimination. In spite of the impressive achievements of the United Nations in the area of self-determination and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, there was a need for continued and increasing vigilance in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination and, especially, against apartheid. In that respect, the Co-ordinator was sure that he could rely on the support and co-operation of the international community.

36. Mr. BLANC (France), speaking on behalf of the twelve States members of the European Community, said that the struggle against racism and racial discrimination would end only when those intolerable scourges, which were impossible to reconcile with the ideals of freedom and democracy, were completely eliminated. The Community had passed laws and regulations to support the efforts of the international community to that end. Such action was, of course, insufficient, because it was also necessary to ensure that the laws and complementary measures were fully implemented, particularly in the areas of education and information.

37. The United Nations played an essential role in making countries aware of the horror of racism and in establishing the legal instruments and international machinery required for its elimination. The will of the international community had been clearly demonstrated in its proclamation, by consensus, of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the corresponding Programme of Action. The Twelve welcomed that consensus and were determined to do everything possible to ensure that it was maintained.

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38. The Secretary-General's reports in that connection provided exhaustive details of the pertinent activities of United Nations organs and the specialized agencies, as well as of non-governmental organizations. The European Community accorded priority to both basic and continuing education and information activities because they constituted an essential extension of legislative action: it therefore endorsed the world public information campaign, during which special attention would be devoted to the struggle against racial discrimination. Efforts to facilitate the elaboration of effective norms and recourse procedures for victims of racism were also important. The Twelve also shared the Secretary-General's view of the importance of co-ordinating activities for the Second Decade and fully endorsed the statement by the Deputy Director of the Centre for Human Rights concerning the need to strengthen such co-ordination.

39. Although racial discrimination was a world-wide phenomenon, the case of South Africa was a special one, since in that country racism existed not in spite of but by virtue of the law, in an institutionalized and systematic form. The European Community was deeply concerned by the lack of progress in abolishing apartheid and deplored the continued application of restrictive measures against many organizations involved in the peaceful struggle against apartheid, the detentions of members of the clergy and trade unions and the sufferings of innocent men, women and children. That situation could only serve further to aggravate relations between the Community and South Africa. The Twelve took note with interest of the electoral promises made by the new President, Mr. de Klerk, and urged him to carry out his expressed intention of abolishing apartheid: the system was not susceptible to reform and must be completely eliminated, not by violence but through dialogue, under conditions which the new Government was responsible for creating. However, no dialogue would be possible until the state of emergency was lifted, the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress and other political parties were legalized and Nelson Mandela and the other political prisoners were set free.

40. The European Community spared no effort to help the victims of apartheid and had, since 1986, funded 287 projects for basic and continuing education, social and humanitarian assistance and legal aid, amounting to a total of 74.4 million European Currency Units (ECUs), equivalent to \$89.28 million. In that context, the Twelve were concerned by the difficulties in receiving the necessary funds which might be encountered by the organizations responsible for carrying out those projects as a result of the recent entry into force in South Africa of restrictive legislation in that connection. The Community also provided assistance to countries neighbouring South Africa; under the third Lomé Convention, the equivalent of ECU 1,600 million, i.e., \$1,800 million, had been allocated directly to the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference for transport, infrastructure, agriculture and food security programmes.

41. The European Community also intended to persist in its efforts to persuade and to exert pressure on the South African authorities. To that end, it had in 1985 adopted a series of restrictive measures against South Africa, which were complemented in 1986 by the prohibition both of further investments in that country

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and of imports of iron, steel and krugerrands. In 1985, the code of conduct for the Community's transnational corporations with branches in South Africa had been updated and strengthened, and new provisions had been introduced to promote the activities of independent trade unions of black workers.

42. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which 126 States were parties, was one of the most important international instruments in the field of human rights. The Twelve hoped that those States which had not yet acceded to the Convention would do so as soon as possible. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, whose task it was to ensure that the Convention was implemented, had for several years faced serious financial difficulties which hampered the effective discharge of its functions. The European Community considered it paradoxical that, on the one hand, all the States parties to the Convention were as one in condemning racial discrimination while, on the other hand, the body responsible for ensuring its implementation was unable to function for want of the necessary resources. The situation was rendered even less acceptable by the fact that the outstanding sums represented, with rare exceptions, an insignificant burden for the States concerned. The United Nations was responsible for ensuring that the financial difficulties of the Committee and other bodies established under conventions be settled appropriately. Until such time as the matter was solved, the Community urged those States parties whose contributions remained outstanding to fulfil their financial obligations at the earliest opportunity. In that connection, it was regrettable that the Secretary-General's report on the financial situation of the Committee and possible administrative and legal measures for improving that situation, as requested in General Assembly resolution 43/96, was unavailable.

43. With respect to agenda item 105, the right to self-determination was a right of peoples rather than of States and applied to all peoples without distinction. The Twelve were committed to ensure universal enjoyment of that right and affirmed their determination to promote it, as they had done in the past.

44. It was a matter of deep concern that there were still many situations in which peoples continued to be deprived of their right to self-determination. The efforts of the United Nations and the Secretary-General to correct that situation were laudable, and it was to be hoped that they would soon be crowned with success.

45. With regard to Western Sahara, the Twelve welcomed the positive response of the interested parties to the peace proposals of the Secretary-General. It was to be hoped that the plan which he had submitted would be implemented without delay in order that a referendum might be held for the self-determination of the territory, under United Nations auspices. They also hoped that co-operation within the framework of the Arab Maghreb Union would facilitate those efforts and prepare the way for a just and lasting solution of the conflict. The Twelve had taken note with great interest of the meeting between the King of Morocco and the representatives of Frente POLISARIO and hoped that the negotiations might continue.

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46. With respect to southern Africa, the Community supported efforts to bring about the independence of Namibia, on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), and welcomed the measures which had been taken since 1 April 1989. It also endorsed the process of reconciliation in Angola and Mozambique.

47. The Community, which had expressed its satisfaction at the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, was concerned by the continuation of the conflict in that country and believed that only a comprehensive political solution could guarantee the existence of a non-aligned, independent and democratic Afghanistan and create the conditions for a voluntary return of refugees. All Afghan parties must work for the establishment of a fully representative Government through an act of genuine self-determination.

48. As for Kampuchea, the Twelve reaffirmed their conviction that only a comprehensive solution could be of lasting effect. They therefore urged all parties to strive for national reconciliation and to make an additional effort to attain a political agreement.

49. In the Middle East, the situation in the occupied territories had grown even worse and the number of dead and wounded and the suffering of the population were mounting steadily. The repressive measures imposed by Israel were making it even more difficult to arrive at a peaceful settlement, which required recognition of the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to security within recognized, guaranteed borders and the right of all peoples of the region, including the Palestinian people, to justice and self-determination. The Twelve viewed as very positive the decisions taken by the Palestine National Council, as supported by the Arab summit held at Casablanca. They believed that the Israeli proposal for elections in the occupied territories could contribute to the peace process, provided that such elections formed part of a comprehensive solution based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and on the principle of "land for peace", and were also used to settle the issue of East Jerusalem, and that no solution was ruled out in the negotiations. The Twelve also viewed Egypt's contribution, as expressed in the 10 points put forward by President Mubarak, as very positive.

50. The Twelve believed that the exercise of the right of self-determination was a continuing process, not an isolated event. Peoples must be able to choose their governments and social systems freely, as provided in the International Covenants. They must be able to change their system, if they so desired, without the threat of outside intervention, a coup d'état or the proclamation of a state of emergency. Accordingly, all individuals must be able to exercise the other rights established by the Covenants: freedom of opinion and expression, the right of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, either directly or through freely chosen representatives, and the right to vote for the candidate of their choice and to be elected at genuine periodic elections.

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(Mr. Blanc, France)

51. The United Nations had a fundamental role to play in that struggle and must intervene whenever the right of self-determination was violated, in order to hasten its universal attainment. The Twelve therefore hoped that the work of the Third Committee at the current session would reflect a common approach on the part of Member States which would allow constructive action to be taken in favour of that cause, which was essential to the progress of world peace.

52. Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco) said that the issues which the Third Committee was addressing as usual - racism and racial discrimination, apartheid and the right of all peoples of the world to self-determination - had been the concern of the international community for decades, which was why it had adopted conventions and declarations on the subject, proclaimed international decades and held numerous international conferences and seminars. At the current session, debates were being held in a hopeful and almost optimistic atmosphere as a result of the favourable trend in international relations, which seemed to be making possible what had for many decades seemed impossible.

53. The recent adoption by the General Assembly, by an impressive majority, of a resolution on the intifadah confirmed that view, but also the gravity of the situation created by Israeli policies. World public opinion no longer remained indifferent to the repression of the civilian population of the occupied Palestinian territories, of children who, with stone in hand, had dared to rise up against soldiers armed to the teeth to demand their most basic rights. The situation had become so alarming that participants in a seminar on those children held in May 1989 near Jerusalem had wondered whether they would be the "pilot generation" of a future Palestinian State or the "lost generation". The unsettled life of those children, some of whom were not yet 10 years old, was also having a profound impact on Palestinian traditions and the family unit, where the authority of the father was being weakened or challenged.

54. The same repression and flagrant human rights violations were taking place in South Africa, where the majority of the population was suffering under the worst of all policies: apartheid. Changes were taking place, however. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco had told the General Assembly, the world was witnessing the collapse of the last bastion of colonialism in Africa, following the launching on 1 April 1989 of the process envisaged in the plan for the independence of Namibia embodied in Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Morocco, which had always supported the Namibian people and SWAPO, welcomed that prospect and hoped fervently that the terrible sufferings of the South African people were also nearing an end.

55. South African intellectuals and certain members of the ruling class appeared to have finally understood that apartheid must go. The Legal Affairs Commission of the South African Government had also recognized the need to draft a charter of citizens' rights based on the United Nations Covenants and even that such a charter would be meaningless without the introduction of universal suffrage. That progress was neither satisfactory nor rapid, however, and the international community should remain vigilant and demand that the South African people regain their dignity and full rights.

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(Mrs. Warzazi, Morocco)

56. Racism was a scourge which knew no borders and would not disappear, despite all the initiatives taken under the two Decades proclaimed by the United Nations. It often manifested itself where it was least expected: in political differences, in electoral campaigns, in economic crises, in selfish individualism, in the determination to hang on to power and perpetuate injustice. The struggle against that scourge, in which UNESCO, by mission and vocation, could continue to play a fundamental role through its studies on the impact of social, economic and cultural factors on racist activities, must therefore be intensified. The alarming situation faced by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination threatened the first oversight mechanism established by the General Assembly in the fight against racism, however. It would be unforgivable if CERD's activities were discontinued for lack of funds, when racism caused as many deaths as drugs and AIDS, if not more.

57. More than ever, vigilance was needed in the face of a phenomenon which appeared to manifest itself wherever there were points of weakness, vulnerability or crisis: indigenous populations, minorities and, above all, migrant workers were ideal targets for racism. The international community must protect itself and put an end to that scourge, wherever it occurred, by teaching children that human beings were born free and equal and must enjoy their rights and assume their obligations, whatever their race, sex, colour or religion.

58. Mr. RAVEN (United Kingdom), referring to agenda item 100 and document A/44/595, said that because of a bureaucratic error the United Kingdom contribution to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had not been paid with the customary promptness. He was pleased to announce that it had now been paid through the Bank of England.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.