



General Assembly

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 26 September 1985, at 10 a.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. DE PINIÉS	(Spain)
later:	Mr. OYOUE (Vice-President)	(Gabon)
later:	Mr. DE PINIÉS (President)	(Spain)

- Address by Mr. Nicolas Ardito Barletta, President of the Republic of Panama

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- General debate [9] (continued)

- Statements were made by:

Mr. Genscher (Federal Republic of Germany)

Mr. Khan (India)

Mr. Dumas (France)

Address by Mr. Felipe González, Head of Government of the Kingdom of Spain

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. NICOLAS ARDITO BARLETTA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

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

Mr. Nicolas Ardito Barletta, President of the Republic of Panama, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

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

President ARDITO BARLETTA (interpretation from Spanish): It is in the most sincere spirit of the solidarity that should reign among all Member States of our Organization that I wish to reiterate the heartfelt condolences of Panama, in which I am certain we all share, on the tragedy which has recently stricken the noble brother people of Mexico and to reaffirm our readiness to help alleviate its sorrow and assist in its reconstruction at this time of such serious economic difficulties for Mexico caused by its foreign debt. I wish to express our satisfaction at the adoption by the General Assembly the day before yesterday of a resolution in support of Mexico.

Please accept our congratulations, Mr. President, on the wise choice which the General Assembly has made in selecting you to lead it on the occasion of this historic anniversary.

Panama's commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and our national interest in abiding strictly by it are an expression of the heartfelt desire of the Panamanian people to make of this planet a place where harmonious co existence, justice and peace prevail.

(President Ardito Barletta)

The celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations is unquestionable evidence of its vitality, of the need for it and of its role. Its preventive and moderating action has prevented or contained actions detrimental to the very existence of the human race which might otherwise have proved uncontrollable. However, despite four decades of vigilant efforts and tangible achievements and only 15 years from the 21st century, peace, justice and respect for the integrity of States and for human dignity are being breached or seriously endangered.

My country believes that détente and peace should reign everywhere.

In analysing the international situation we must give a very special place to Latin America, a continent which faces an enormous challenge.

For more than three decades now Latin America has been experiencing a high population growth whose pressure on our socio-economic and political systems we were largely able to bear because it was offset by an economic take-off which incorporated considerable sectors of the people in development. Latin America presented itself as a continent with a future.

However, from the mid-1970s, Latin America began to suffer under the pendulum effects of the world economy, the drastic increase in inflation and oil prices, negative fluctuations in international trade and in the prices of our raw materials and also in interest rates. At the same time, while we lost foreign exchange through adverse terms of trade, which tended to stifle growth, there was an increase in the massive availability of international capital, opening up to our countries the road to indebtedness, which we embarked upon in the hope of recovering our rate of economic and social development after the recession of 1974 to 1976.

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The results, however, were not those expected. Latin America's debt - necessary to a certain extent as a supplement to our own savings - grew at an average of 19 per cent a year between 1974 and 1981, until today it has reached the enormous level of approximately \$370 billion, dangerously exceeding reasonable limits. The financing period, which averaged eight to 10 years, was extremely short, since those funds were being invested basically in long-term economic and social projects, which were slow to recover. The disequilibrium in the terms of trade was sharply accentuated between 1979 and 1982. The price of imports from industrialized countries - oil for the second time - and interest rates rapidly increased, while the prices of Latin American products in international markets went down. For Central America and Panama the terms of trade worsened by 25 per cent between 1979 and 1982. More than \$80 billion of Latin American's external debt, 25 per cent of the total, was due to appropriate compensation for these factors.

The most significant problem of adjustment lay in the difference in the expectations of the economic policy. The developed countries decided to reduce inflation at a time when Latin America was applying an economic policy which required the persistence of world-wide inflation. In the end, cheap money became more expensive and the extent of the present crisis became clear.

This crisis in Latin America occurs in a context which makes it even more serious. At present population growth continues to be high, with an annual average rate of growth of 2.4 per cent in our countries. Half the population is under 20 years of age and it has important social needs in health, nutrition and education. The labour market is invaded every year by millions of new workers seeking jobs. Because of the rural to urban migration the population of the 80 principal Latin American cities has doubled in the past 20 years. The same phenomenon is expected

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in the coming decades, thus creating extraordinary economic, social and political pressures. Although the present population pressure has begun to subside, which is good, the important needs of the existing population will continue to be felt until the end of the century.

As a result of its own dynamics, Latin America is at a turning point in its history. Some Latin Americans have attained acceptable levels of development; others are moving in that direction amidst major difficulties; one third are still living in extreme poverty and alienation. But education, communications, and transportation systems have created expectation of a better future is possible and it is for us, the leaders, to channel that aspiration with realism, but also with faith and hope.

Large-scale efforts are necessary simply to maintain this situation; in order to improve it we require economic growth of 5 per cent a year in the region and a considerable change in Latin American economic relations.

The debt problem has exacerbated the difference between the worlds of the North and the South and has made more dangerous the gap between the poor and the rich countries. Latin America owes \$370 billion and developing countries owe more than \$850 billion. This makes necessary urgent changes of a financial nature which place relations between debtors and creditors on a more just and realistic level. We must recognize that the problem is not one of debt and our region only; it is a global problem because of the participants - developing countries, developed countries and international banking and financial institutions - and because it encompasses all areas of the international economy. Therefore, its solution must be global.

Recognizing this fact, in the last three years the world has implemented some solutions based on three fundamental premises: first of all, that Latin American countries would adjust their economies to new realities and that this would lead to

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a period of economic stagnation; secondly, that this effort at adjustment would be supported by the banking and financial community with additional resources and through a restructuring of the external debt; lastly, that, in addition to recovering their economic growth levels for their own good and in order to provide for world-wide recovery, the industrialized countries would keep their markets open to the exports of developing countries to assist in the recovery of their economies and their debt servicing. This solution was envisaged three years ago in recognition of the global scope of the problem. The results, however, have not been enough.

Latin America has done its part, but it cannot continue to make adjustments in the midst of stagnation. We are all part of the problem and we are all part of its solution. It behoves each one of us to shoulder our share of the responsibility in order to achieve results.

A solution which is based only on economic formulations is doomed to failure, because only one that takes account of human and social factors will open up the way to a global solution. A good agreement must take into account the potential of Latin American material and human resources, but also the constraints of its limitations. The peoples of Latin America cannot be pressured to the limit of their capacity. To try to push our peoples beyond what they can endure is to threaten the very foundations of our societies. The feeling that the time has come for democracy and human rights is vibrant in Latin America and it would be shortsighted to frustrate it by not providing economic paths more in tune with our needs.

Latin America must satisfy the needs of its people through economic growth, and for that it is necessary that in addition to contributing, with dignity our own efforts, we receive more co-operation from the two other major protagonists in the solution.

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International banking has undertaken a major effort in refinancing, but it must be recognized that in the last two or three years sufficient resources have not been transferred to Latin America, which has made the situation worse. We cannot think that the region can continue with a negative net transfer of resources. That is not the way in which any country has achieved development. It is essential to adopt policies that reduce interest rates, which are very high in real terms and which constitute a heavy burden on our balance of payments, limiting the capacity of the economies of the region to grow. The peoples of Latin America will never understand that they are working merely to pay interest.

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On the other hand, it is important for the industrialized countries to achieve a rate of economic development of at least 3 or 4 per cent per annum in real terms, and to keep trade as open as possible so that they may buy our products and we theirs; that is the only way to invigorate the world economy.

After three years of experimentation the time has come to re-define the rules of the game and to set goals which will enable us to resolve two crucial points: economic growth with greater social well-being, and debt payment on different terms.

We are aware of many serious studies which have examined constructive and appropriate alternatives with a view to reaching better solutions. If we must further adjust to our situation, then let us all do so, developed and developing countries alike, so that by giving free rein to new creative energies we may respond to the needs of our peoples.

Therein lies the challenge we all face, for peace and security in Latin America depend on our bringing concrete solutions to the needs of our peoples and on our meeting their legitimate demands for improved living standards, for a full exercise of democracy and for genuine respect for their freedom and dignity. We cannot think of paying the debt at the cost of our peoples believing that progress and happiness are not possible in the Latin American democracies.

We, the leaders of Latin America, will not accept being faced with the dilemma of choosing between keeping faith with our peoples and paying the debt; for we will keep faith with our peoples. Such a dilemma would affect us all, debtors and creditors alike; thus, it is obvious that it is for all of us to make the choice which will be of benefit to us all. It is our responsibility to guide our peoples along the path of progress, freedom, democracy, opportunity and solidarity.

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Good economic and social health in Latin America is advantageous to the industrialized countries, in particular those of the Americas. Our interests are complementary, just as our efforts to achieve well-being, security and peace should be joint efforts.

I believe it necessary to appeal to the conscience and historic responsibility of Ministers, heads of central banks, and the organizations which will soon meet in Seoul: The time has come for new decisions on international financing, trade among countries, and development; to act now, with a sense of balance and responsibility, will result in greater success for all, with a lower political and security cost. The road to peace depends on their action now.

I wish now to speak of our efforts to contribute to peace-making in Central America. We have come a long way towards honing the Contadora Act for Peace and Co-operation in Central America to the point at which it can be signed by all parties. The Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela and Panama have received many expressions of solidarity and support from the rest of Latin America, and recently, in more concrete terms, from the Lima Group made up of Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay, from the United Nations, from the Organization of American States, from the Non-Aligned Movement, from the European Economic Community, and from the international community in general. But we have reached the point at which we need more than mere expressions of support.

In truth, very few points in the Act are still under discussion, and differences of position have been considerably reduced, to the point at which a text of the Act which could be approved no longer seems an impossibility, or even a labour of years.

However, I insist once again - and I know that in this I am joined by the representative Governments of Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela - that in addition to the political will for peace that must soon be exercised by the

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countries of Central America - with which the Contadora Group has been holding discussions and co-ordinating meetings, drafting and refining agreements, promoting and fostering conciliation - the responsibility for peace goes beyond the scope of Contadora; it extends to the Governments of countries with interests and ties in this region, where violence among brothers sows grief and desolation.

We are close to peace, but we are also close to increasingly dangerous and serious risks of a general conflict, whose unforeseeable consequences could have an impact on the entire world. We are in the twilight between night and day; at this historic time for Central America, it is of fundamental importance that we opt for the dawn.

As an active Member of the United Nations, Panama energetically condemns the arms race, which continues to grow.

The rivalry between the super-Powers is of deep concern to us, as are the violent actions which threaten world peace on the various continents.

We support the peaceful settlement of the problem of the Korean peninsula through direct dialogue between its two parts. We also wish to express our wish that the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea may soon join the United Nations as fully fledged Members, so that both parts of the Korean peninsula may be present in this Organization.

It is our wish that General Assembly resolutions on the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan be faithfully implemented, and we support the Secretary-General's efforts to bring about a negotiated political settlement of the problems of that nation.

We reaffirm the need for respect for the rights of the Palestinian people and of the people of Israel, as well as those of the other States and peoples of the region, to live in peace within secure boundaries.

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We stress that the war between Iran and Iraq must come to a halt, along with the foreign occupation of Cyprus and the tragic situation in Lebanon.

We believe a solution satisfactory to Argentina should be reached in the situation of the Malvinas Islands.

The alarming situation in Africa is of great concern to us. We recognize Africa's vital need to develop and to free itself from the servitude which has condemned millions of Africans to hunger.

We support African nations in their struggle to free themselves once and for all from all systems and forms of domination, exploitation and racism. We support the efforts of the front-line countries against colonialism in the region and stand in solidarity with the desire of the people of the Sahraoui Arab Republic for self-determination and independence.

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We are outraged at South Africa's policy and practice of racism and apartheid which shocks all civilized nations and all those who believe in the dignity, equality and the inalienable right to justice and happiness of the human person. We strongly condemn its illegal occupation of Namibia.

Terrorism in all its manifestations is a practice which our country rejects and condemns because it violates the fundamental principles governing coexistence in societies and because it affects innocent men and women the victims of crimes which have been found reprehensible by all mankind.

We must promote peace and justice. I am convinced that we can without delay take advantage of the possibilities which are opening up towards the realization of our own destinies and towards the elimination of inequality and imbalances in development that divide countries in two traditional blocs. We are convinced of the capacity for communication among men, of the wish of peoples to coexist and of the real possibility to achieve peace in the world.

Everyone can make a contribution towards enhancing communication between men and between peoples. We are especially proud to have had such an historical noble responsibility for almost 500 years, in facilitating the passage of goods and men between the oceans through the isthmus of Panama. Hence we have opted for peaceful negotiation in the highest spirit of consultation and mutual respect in our dealings with the United States of America over the thorny problem of the Panama Canal. The Torrijos-Carter treaties of 1977 show that both countries are well disposed to an orderly and harmonious transition of the primary responsibility for administering and defending this waterway until the last day of 1999, when it will be fully Panama's. Panama asked for and received international support for its cause. It pledged itself before the world to act with a great sense of responsibility, and it has done so. Today we continue to develop our democracy, our national independence and our economy. We are vigilant to ensure that those Canal pacts are adequately implemented, to resolve through bilateral negotiations

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any pending problems of interpretation of the treaties and to bring about the work of widening the canal in the Corte Culebra, which is necessary in order to maintain the efficient operation of the present canal in accordance with the needs of international navigation. At the same time, we are preparing to meet the long-term future. To that end, within the symbolic framework of the United Nations Headquarters, a few minutes ago my country signed with the United States of America and Japan arrangements to undertake studies on alternatives to the Panama Canal so that the people of Panama may be as well informed as possible when the time comes to decide, in sovereignty, its options to continue to offer on a long-term basis an efficient and safe service for international trade and transport.

Panama is on its way to becoming a major inter-American centre of international trade, as envisaged by the great liberator Simon Bolivar, always faithful to our history and Latin American heritage.

We are at a crossroads: to offer our peoples answers to find the path to peace and progress or to prepare ourselves to face violence which would go beyond our region and also affect the richer and more developed countries. We cannot go back to the path of inflation and to the draining of the scarce resources of our countries for the benefit of the rich nations. We cannot remain in stagnation, which brings about disenchantment and frustration. We have the technology and the know-how; we have leaders capable of seeing things within a true historical perspective; we have peoples who desire peace, freedom and progress. It is now our role to offer, with optimism, creativity and perseverance, the individual and collective leadership which history has placed upon us all.

On this new anniversary of the United Nations, let us renew the original commitment of mankind to win the war against hunger, poverty, disease, racism and inequality, for that is the true path to peace and the destiny God offered man when He endowed him with freedom and with creative force.

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

Mr. Nicolas Ardito Barletta, President of the Republic of Panama, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GENSCHER (Federal Republic of Germany) (spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation): Let me offer you my congratulations, Sir, on your election to the high office of President of the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. In this jubilee year your long diplomatic experience with the United Nations will be of inestimable assistance to us.

Let me offer my thanks also to Ambassador Paul Lusaka for his successful work as President of the thirty-ninth session. He helped to ensure that during the last session of the General Assembly the major problems of Africa were dealt with pragmatically, realistically and in a genuinely sympathetic spirit.

Forty years ago, in founding the United Nations, the nations learned the lessons of the Second World War. The Federal Republic of Germany, though not a founding Member of the United Nations, has always, since it was constituted, worked for the fulfilment of the United Nations mission to preserve world peace. We do this by means of our policies in pursuit of peace in Europe and throughout the world.

For 40 years Europe has lived without war. In the North Atlantic Alliance, to which the Federal Republic of Germany as a liberal democracy has firmly hitched its destiny, a community of States was established which is a model of peaceful co-operation on a basis of equality and makes a contribution to peace and stability beyond its own frontiers.

In the European Community, friendship and co-operation have taken the place of centuries of rivalry and confrontation. From the original Community of six States the present Community has developed with its 10 members, and there will soon be 12 members. The forthcoming accession of Spain and Portugal to the European Community

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will bring great enrichment and new strength to the liberally and democratically constituted States of Europe. We want to put closer common foreign and security policies on a contractual basis. The way to European union is signposted. We regard an active policy in pursuit of peace as a historical duty to our own continent and to the world.

Europe is more than the States of the European Community. When we speak of Europe, we mean the whole of Europe. Peace in the world is particularly dependent on the relations between West and East in Europe. Through the partition of Europe, the German nation was torn apart. Tension between West and East affects us most acutely. For us, therefore, a policy on Germany is a policy in search of peace in Europe and a policy in the spirit of the United Nations. It is not possible to secure peace in Europe without a contribution by both German States. War must never again emanate from German soil. Joint efforts for peace are imperative. That is the essence of the community of responsibility in which both German States fulfil their special mission and duty to ensure peace. Our co-operation merits the support of all States sincerely interested in stability and genuine détente at the heart of Europe.

It is encouraging that on 12 March 1985 Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, Erich Honecker, jointly recognized the opportunity for a new phase of West-East relations presented by the resumption of the arms control dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Federal Republic of Germany will do everything in its power to help improve relations between West and East. The treaties concluded during the seventies by the Federal Republic of Germany with its neighbours continue to be a

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solid basis for such improvement. The starting point was the 1970 Treaty of Moscow, which put relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union on a new footing. Through the Treaty of Moscow and the treaties with the People's Republic of Poland and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, as well as the Treaty on the Basis of Relations with the German Democratic Republic, we opened up, out of a national and historical responsibility for peace, new long-term prospects for relations between West and East. We stand by these treaties. Our contractual policy is not inconsistent with the political aim of the Federal Republic of Germany to work for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation will regain its unity through free self-determination. That is the wording of the "Letter on German Unity" handed over by the Federal Government to the Soviet side on the occasion of the signing of the Treaty of Moscow. These treaties and the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin cleared the way for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

On 1 August 1985, at the meeting marking the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, all participating States affirmed their determination to continue the CSCE process and to implement all parts of the Helsinki Final Act. This Final Act is a realistic and balanced document. It is not a peace treaty but sets the course towards a future peaceful order in Europe. The CSCE process is intended to combine the precepts of peaceful coexistence between States and a wide range of co-operative options, on the one hand, with respect for the fundamental rights and interests of people regarding exchanges and information, on the other. It has encouraged States to pool their resources and creative powers. Co-operation is intended to check and reduce the potential for conflict inherent in the existing

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clashes of interests and differences between systems of values. The opportunities offered by international co-operation will become even more important in the light of the dawning technological revolution. A robust and enduring peaceful order that takes account of the legitimate interests of all concerned must be based on efforts to build confidence and establish co-operative security, combined with the participation of all in economic, scientific and technological progress. Cultural exchanges play a particularly important role in the creation of such an order.

Free and creative contacts and exchanges among all nations and presentation of cultural achievements on a reciprocal basis impart knowledge and deepen understanding of one another. In Europe the joint cultural heritage has always remained a unifying bond in spite of horrific wars, a bond transcending ideological frontiers.

Awareness of the cultural identity of Europe is growing, as is the realization on all sides that Europe will continue in future to have a common fate. The Cultural Forum to take place shortly in Budapest within the CSCE process will give all participating States the chance to substantiate their desire for cultural co-operation and exchanges.

The network of diverse connections developed between West and East in Europe has stood up in past years to serious strains. Our aim now must be to reach more extensive, more comprehensive results than in the seventies. The sound beginnings made in those days must be exploited.

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We welcome the forthcoming summit meeting between the President of the United States and the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. The Federal Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, has repeatedly advocated such a summit meeting. The meeting in Geneva is intended to become the new beginning of a top-level dialogue. Above all, we hope for a significant impetus to the negotiations in Geneva.

On 8 January 1985 the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to resume negotiations. They began on 12 March. The document of 8 January is of great political importance. It creates new opportunities for arms control, dialogue and co-operation within the West-East relationship. Far-reaching negotiating objectives are laid down in the document: to prevent an arms race in space and to terminate it on Earth; to reach effective agreements to limit and reduce nuclear weapons, both intercontinental and intermediate-range; and to strengthen strategic stability. The Federal Government unreservedly supports those negotiating objectives. They are in the interests of all nations.

We are well aware that results take time. The subjects under negotiation are intricate and complex. Each side must heed the security interests of the other. Tension and distrust must be reduced. Success depends on the negotiating parties endeavouring seriously and flexibly to reach co-operative solutions. They must consider themselves responsible for a common task. In the relations between West and East, no side must try to achieve a level of security that means less security for the other side.

Developments in the balance of military power between West and East since the 1970s are drastic evidence of that fact. The massive arms build-up by which the West has increasingly felt threatened since the period of détente in the 1970s has brought no major advantage to its originators; on the contrary, it has promoted the search for new types of space-based defensive options. Drastic and reliably

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verifiable reductions in nuclear offensive potential will therefore necessarily influence the need for, and the scope of, future defensive weapons. Both questions must be considered and resolved in their natural and political interrelationship, as was agreed on 8 January 1985.

The efforts to achieve co-operative security are a key to the development of a stable relationship between West and East, on which world peace is largely dependent. If success is to be achieved during the present negotiations, existing arms control arrangements must be adhered to. The Federal Republic of Germany welcomes the decision made by President Reagan regarding continued observance of the SALT limitations. Co-operative solutions to the central security issues require a political environment marked by a minimum of mutual trust. A particularly important factor in that trust is predictability of the long-term intentions of the other side. That is why a sound and constructive relationship between the super-Powers is indispensable. But confidence-building and arms control are not a matter for the super-Powers alone: the medium-sized and small States, too, must endeavour to establish an enduring, stable basis for West-East relations. Distrust must be reduced wherever it exists.

Not only nuclear weapons, but also the other potential weapons must be reduced. That is why the multilateral negotiating forums remain for us indispensable components of the arms-control process.

It is an encouraging sign that the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has had a successful outcome. The Non-Proliferation Treaty has proved its worth as an important element of international arms control and of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It has shown that multilateral arms control is possible.

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The mutual and balanced force reduction negotiations in Vienna and the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe concentrate on conventional forces and are an essential complement to the nuclear negotiations in Geneva. The aims of those negotiations, too, are stability at a low level of forces, openness, transparency, predictability and the renunciation of force by means of specific confidence-building measures. Here in New York we launched an initiative aimed at drawing up guidelines for confidence-building measures that could be applied throughout the world.

Without reliable verification, arms-control agreements would be built on shaky foundations. The attempt to establish a universal prohibition of chemical weapons is still being hampered by the outstanding verification issues, which must now be tackled with vigour. It is high time that an end was put to the scourge for mankind constituted by those chemical weapons of mass destruction that have been outlawed for decades. Partial, regional solutions do not achieve that. They would make the question of verification even more complex. However, we welcome every effort by other States to bring about reliable verifiability. In that spirit, we are studying the suggestions made to us by the German Democratic Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The States at the heart of Europe have every reason to help resolve the verification question, thereby ensuring that chemical weapons are banned worldwide.

We know that a state of non-war through nuclear deterrence cannot be the ultimate method of securing peace. If deterrence against attack, deterrence against war - in other words the strategy of preventing war - should ever fail, there would be inconceivable consequences. The fortieth anniversary of Hiroshima renewed our awareness of that truth. In the nuclear age security can no longer be based solely on autonomous efforts. The long-term preservation of peace, however,

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requires co-operative solutions; for that reason, disarmament and arms control are integral components of our security policy. We want to avoid any type of war, including war waged without nuclear weapons.

No one must reserve the option to make the first use of conventional weapons. Given the present state of technology, a conventional war would be a thousand times more dreadful than the Second World War. In Europe, with its high levels of armaments, even a conventional war would be a catastrophe. Our Alliance has declared that it will never be the first to use arms. We do not seek superiority. We do not wish to defeat or control anyone, nor do we wish to make any side arm itself to exhaustion.

The many trouble-spots in the world, the regional conflicts, must not be seen only from a European point of view; above all, they must not be fitted into the mould of the West-East confrontation. That is why we regard genuine non-alignment of the States in the Third World as a tremendously important contribution to world peace and to the realization of the purposes of the United Nations. The great idea of equal rights and self-determination of peoples must not remain empty words. Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations makes it clear that all nations possess the same right to determine their own national life and political actions, including the political pursuit of peace. That right entails respect for the special needs of peoples in their own regions. No State and no power bloc has the right, or can usurp the right, to decide on issues vital to other nations.

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We, along with the vast majority of the United Nations, therefore demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Striving for ideological supremacy means rejecting real non-alignment. That was recognized with the utmost clarity at the summit conferences of the non-aligned countries in Havana and New Delhi and most recently at the Foreign Ministers Conference in Luanda. Real solutions to the problems of the third world must come from the regions in question.

The European Community, our regional Community, is also an attempt to solve regional problems by means of an increasingly close association of the European democracies. Together with our European partners, we support regional co-operation and associations of States in all other parts of the world too. We actively support the peaceful settlement of conflicts among neighbours. That helps to keep East-West confrontation out of the third world.

On the basis of this concept of regional co-operation, we support the Contadora process in Central America, a process initiated in the region itself. It is the only realistic way for Central America to approach the solution of its problems. In Luxembourg, on 11 and 12 November, another conference is to take place between the Foreign Ministers of the European Community, Spain and Portugal and those of the Central American States and the Contadora group. We want to continue the dialogue between the two regions of Central America and Europe; we seek close co-operation between them.

We also seek structured economic and political co-operation between the European Community and the Gulf Co-operation Council. In the Middle East we support regional efforts to increase the willingness of all parties to the conflict to negotiate and bring about peace. We acknowledge the positive elements of the Fez plan. We welcome the initiative of King Hussein and hope that it will help pave the way towards negotiations. Only through negotiations and the renunciation

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of force can accommodation be found between the right of Israel to exist within secure and recognized boundaries and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

We support the regional efforts for peace of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The European Community recognized from the very beginning that the economic and political co-operation pursued by the ASEAN States was an exemplary form of regional co-operation that pointed the way ahead. The ASEAN countries' Kampuchea initiative in the United Nations can count on our vote.

We are pleased that talks have been resumed between the two parts of Korea. We support all efforts to eliminate tension on the Korean peninsula. That should also open the way for accession to the United Nations.

To work for peace in the world also means to co-operate in order to meet together the economic and social challenges faced by mankind. North and South must co-operate to bring about successful development in the third world. North and South must also co-operate to come to terms with the global structural transformation that the third industrial revolution will cause once the transition has been made to the age of information and communication technology. This new age offers great opportunities to mankind. It will enable the world to grow even closer together and will extend the scope and the need for international co-operation. It will open up new opportunities for the individual responsibility and personal development of everyone.

The one world in which we live today cannot remain a peaceful world for long if it remains divided into rich and poor nations, into technically advanced and technically backward nations. The establishment of a truly peaceful world means overcoming hunger and poverty in all regions of the world.

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Our look back at 40 years of the United Nations is also a look back at 40 years of development co-operation. Despite all the problems that remain unsolved, the last 40 years have been a period of unprecedented economic growth, particularly for the third world. The gross national product in Asia, Africa and Latin America grew by 5.6 per cent annually during the 30 years from 1950 to 1980; that means that it increased fivefold. Between 1960 and 1982 life expectancy rose from an average of 42 to 49 years; infant mortality was cut in half; and whereas in 1960 only 50 per cent of the children received primary education, 94 per cent receive it now.

Two central themes of this session of the General Assembly are the debt crisis and the situation in Africa. Since 1982 we have made progress towards overcoming the debt crisis, but the crisis is far from having been mastered. It continues to tick like a time-bomb in the world economy and jeopardizes the growth and social stability of the developing countries, as well as the health of the banking system in the industrialized countries. What can be done?

First of all, we must find joint methods for restoring credit flows to a normal level and for enabling adequate resources to flow into the developing countries. However, the very volume of such funds means that this task cannot be fulfilled by the international financial institutions alone, nor even principally by them. Private banks and investors must continue to play the main role. I appeal to the commercial banks not to shirk this responsibility. For their part, the debtor countries must also make every possible effort during the coming years to reform their internal economic policies and to fight inflation. Only in that way can they strengthen their international creditworthiness, create a favourable climate for investment and terminate the flight of capital. We must, however, be aware also of the fact that the debt issue is not only an economic and financial

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issue; it is also a political question. It is a question of the social peace and internal stability of the debtor countries. They must not be confronted with impossible demands. The servicing of foreign debt must not be paid for in the third world with recession, unemployment and hunger, or with a threat to freedom, democracy and independence.

Secondly, if the debt crisis is to be resolved, further interest-rate reductions are required. The industrialized countries must pursue an economic and financial policy that enables interest rates to be reduced further. They must reduce their budget deficits.

Thirdly, the markets of the industrialized countries must remain open to developing countries; they must be opened even wider. Protectionism is a danger not only to economic growth in the industrialized countries; protectionism is a deadly danger to the developing countries. Free world trade is of vital importance to the developing countries. Only if the industrialized countries open up their markets to exports of finished and semi-finished products from the developing countries can the latter be more firmly integrated into the world economy. Whoever denies the third world access to its markets is denying it development. The Federal Republic of Germany supports open markets, particularly with regard to the third world. The high trading surpluses on our market, particularly those of the African and Latin American countries, bear witness to that fact. So that free trade can be secured and consolidated, we advocate that the next round of negotiations in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) be commenced as soon as possible. The acute danger to international free trade stems particularly from the great trade imbalances in the world. It would however be a fateful mistake to seek to overcome them by means of trade barriers. It would mean misunderstanding the roots of the problem.

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An interdependent world economy does not permit any isolationist economic policies pursued with no regard to their effects on other countries. The stronger the economy of a country, the greater its responsibility.

The call to open up markets to the third world is also addressed to the socialist industrialized countries. They still continue to take less than 5 per cent of the finished products exported by the third world. That is in no way compatible with their international economic position and the responsibility that they also bear.

The second great task facing us at this session of the General Assembly is that of aid for Africa. After the last session of the General Assembly, the international community organized assistance to combat the threat of starvation. The Federal Government helped with food, transport and medicines. Innumerable people in my country gave generous donations. Assistance for Africa must continue and, indeed, be increased. Donors and recipients are agreed that external help alone cannot bring about the breakthrough. Africa knows that it needs economic reforms and that it must make agriculture the focal point of its development efforts. Good producer prices are essential as an incentive to farmers to increase production, but the reforms in Africa can be implemented only if they are supported by adequate help from outside. Acting on a mandate from the Bonn Economic Summit, the seven industrialized States represented there prepared proposals for the fight against hunger in Africa which were approved here in New York yesterday by the seven Foreign Ministers.

The Federal Republic of Germany regards development policy as part of its policy in pursuit of peace. We want the developing countries to become economically more self-sufficient and independent. We want to strengthen the economic foundations of genuine non-alignment. The Federal Republic of Germany has

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not concentrated its assistance on a few selected countries; on the contrary, we have helped wherever the need was greatest. We have remitted the debt of the world's poorest countries to an extent unequalled by any other industrialized country.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany considers population policy to be a necessary component of a successful development strategy. We therefore also support the United Nations Population Fund. It has performed valuable work and played a considerable part in slowing down the rate of population growth. However, further successes are needed.

Worldwide interdependence is particularly clearly illustrated in the field of environmental protection. In that field "international home affairs" are becoming an element of international policy, and in that field mankind is making collective decisions regarding its own future. Our forests are in danger. Our agricultural land is being eroded; deserts and steppes are spreading; seas, lakes and rivers are becoming increasingly polluted; animal and plant species are becoming extinct. It is vital to preserve the natural sources of life on which we all together depend on the shrinking planet Earth.

In the field of North-South co-operation it is vital to begin dealing in good time with the questions raised by the new forms of technology, microelectronics and bioengineering. These forms of technology present great opportunities, particularly for the developing countries. Gene technology offers great potential for a solution to the world food problem. The new telecommunications and radio satellites offer the opportunity to equip entire regions of the third world quickly and relatively cheaply with a communications infrastructure. However, the opportunities are accompanied by risks. For instance, the new forms of information technology in the industrialized countries are accelerating automation. This poses

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the danger to the developing countries that the advantage they derive from lower labour costs will be eroded. North and South must co-operation to take the opportunities offered to the third world by these new forms of technology and to avert dangers. What seems to me to be the greatest opportunity is, that the new technological revolution will permit many developing countries, at least in some sectors, to enter the new information age at practically the same time as the industrialized nations.

The United Nations has recognized the dignity of man as the supreme principle. All States must follow this principle at home and in their foreign relations. The United Nations has created a comprehensive system of universally binding standards to protect human rights. The 1984 Convention against Torture is a document directed against humiliation, inhumanity and cruelty. I hope that the next agreement in this sphere will be a further optional protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights concerning the abolition of the death penalty. We are faced with the task of putting human rights not only into words but also into practice. For this, we need international institutions that strengthen the protection of human rights. We call for the appointment of a high commissioner for human rights and for the creation of an international court of human rights at the United Nations.

In many parts of the world human rights are still violated. One special human-rights problem that depresses us all is that of apartheid in South Africa. We seek the peaceful elimination of apartheid in the Republic of South Africa. That is consistent with the ethical basis of our constitution, with the demands of the Christian churches and with the deep conviction of the people of my country. At issue are equal rights for all South Africans, irrespective of the colour of their skin. The world watches with horror and outrage the escalation of the bloody

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clashes in South Africa. We appeal to the responsible authorities in South Africa to release each and every political prisoner, to end forced resettlement, to put a stop to arbitrary detention without trial and to terminate the state of emergency. Only in negotiations with the authentic leaders of all groups of the population can a permanent solution be found. The form that solution will take must be decided by the people in South Africa themselves; no one outside South Africa has the right to lay down how this should be done. The South African Government has recently given indications of specific reforms. These must now be implemented quickly. Further, increasingly extensive reforms are essential, until apartheid has been fully eliminated. We hope that the responsible leaders do not miss the last opportunity given them by history.

The right of peoples to self-determination must be the basis of the solution to the question of Namibia. Security Council resolution 435 (1978) remains for us the indispensable basis for any Namibian solution. We appeal to the Government of South Africa to make the way clear at last for the internationally recognized independence of Namibia. It is free elections that must decide which Government the majority of the people wishes.

The United Nations is 40 years old. This year, we shall rededicate ourselves solemnly to the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar has called on us to pursue a new co-operative internationalism. We support his practical proposals. We do not need a new Charter, but we do need a new spirit in the United Nations. It is here, it is in this building, that the preservation of peace must begin. The United Nations was created to reconcile differing interests. It must not be abused for propaganda and for short-term voting successes, useful as they may be for domestic political purposes and votes. To be sure, the United Nations is a political Organization,

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and politics means struggles over power, influence, values, programmes and personalities. And yet we must not forget that the United Nations is a precious instrument in our hands. Our war-scarred fathers have created it. We still have to learn to make the best possible use of the instrument offered us by the United Nations for the preservation of peace. History will not judge us by occasionally small tactical successes; it will judge us solely by whether we succeeded in avoiding the final catastrophe and enhancing the human dignity of all mankind. The dignity of man, his inalienable and fundamental rights, must remain the yardstick against which all our actions are measured.

Mr. KHAN (India): Sir, I should like to begin by congratulating you on your unanimous election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at the fortieth session. You are a distinguished son and eminent representative of a country with which India has close and cordial relations, and your association with the United Nations goes back many years. We are confident that you will provide this Assembly with able stewardship.

I should also like to place on record our appreciation of the effective and statesmanlike leadership given to the Assembly at the thirty-ninth session by your predecessor, Mr. Lusaka of Zambia.

I wish also to pay a tribute to our Secretary-General for his untiring efforts in the cause of peace and for his patience, perseverance and wisdom. He has won our admiration for his skilful handling of several crisis situations. We wish him continued success and reiterate to him our support.

Before proceeding further, allow me to express on behalf of the people and Government of India our profound grief at the heavy toll in human and material terms claimed by the earthquakes which so tragically struck Mexico last week. We express our solidarity with and support for the people and Government of Mexico in their hour of travail and in their heroic efforts to overcome this unprecedented calamity.

Mr. President, you preside today over a historic session. The United Nations has completed 40 years of its existence. These have been years not only of tribulation but also of promise and even achievement. The world is surcharged with suspicion and uncertainty, with incipient as well as overt conflict, but the ideals of the United Nations continue to instil optimism. The dawn of independence and freedom for the overwhelming majority of mankind, particularly in the erstwhile colonial and imperial domains in Asia, Africa and Latin America, has been a significant and welcome development of our times.

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The generation that launched the United Nations also saw the launching of the nuclear age. While conventional attitudes towards this world Organization are still shaped by the memories of the Second World War, there is today a new spectre that haunts our civilization, the spectre of a nuclear catastrophe. Hostile military blocs are poised against each other with an armada of nuclear weaponry that could wipe out all life on this planet many times over. Survival in this nuclear age has become the key issue of our times.

The United Nations today is the hub of diplomatic activity for the nations of the world. Whatever their divergence in political systems, economic structures or cultural mores, they come together in almost daily contact on a variety of bilateral, multilateral and global issues. Yet this so-called democratization of international relations is only part of the story. On the other hand, the pressures and divisions that characterize contemporary international relations seriously hamper the Organization and reduce its capacity for effective action. As Jawaharlal Nehru stated at the United Nations as early as 1948:

"We have got into a cycle of hatred and violence, and not the most brilliant debate will get you out of it, unless you look some other way and find some other means. It is obvious that if you continue in this cycle and have wars which this Assembly was specially meant to avoid and prevent, the result will be not only tremendous devastation all over the world, but the non-achievement by any individual Power or group of its objective."

In his thought-provoking report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General has very aptly characterized the United Nations as an essential element in the historic choice before humanity - between a world of technological promise and one of potentially terminal danger. He has rightly stressed the need to strengthen the concept of international authority embodied in the United Nations

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as one that should serve as a substitute for "unilateral action, exclusive alliances and spheres of influence" (A/40/1, p.2). His specific suggestions deserve careful study and reasoned application.

We in India and in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries believe that the United Nations represents, in a real sense, the best hope of mankind. As the late Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, stated in her address to the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, "Firm faith in the United Nations is central to the non-aligned" (A/38/PV.9, p.3). Our affinity for the United Nations is rooted in our world view. We cherish peace. We believe in the equality, sovereignty and independence of States. We have a fundamental conviction in the dignity and worth of the human person. The United Nations embodies in itself these lofty principles and more. It constitutes a unique international forum where nations can resolve their differences and work together for the common good of humanity.

Throughout the years of India's freedom struggle, our leaders viewed independence not in narrow national terms but as part of the struggle of oppressed peoples everywhere for justice - political, social and economic. Following India's attainment of independence in 1947, our democratic institutions have stabilized and given to our people a deep sense of participation and commitment in determining the nation's priorities in the political and economic fields, as well as in the building up of its social and cultural ethos. In our international relationships, the commitment to the policy of non-alignment has been both instinctive and inevitable. As the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, has stated:

"We have inherited a well-tested and consistent foreign policy which serves our national interest. We have always believed in working for peace. Our policy is to be friends with all countries on the basis of reciprocity and

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mutual benefit. Our commitment to non-alignment and a new world economic order based on justice means a total dedication to the twin causes of peace and development. We also believe in safeguarding the independence of States and upholding the principles of non-interference and non-intervention.**

*Mr. Oyoue (Gabon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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Only a few weeks ago we marked the fortieth anniversary of the dropping of the first nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Memories of that catastrophe make us even more acutely aware of the devastating potential of nuclear arsenals today. As we begin this fifth decade of the nuclear age, the attitudes of nuclear-weapon States towards the possession and use of their nuclear weapons have not undergone any basic change. There is a wide gap between public fears of a nuclear war and the calculations of statesmen and strategists of the efficacy of the nuclear balance of terror. Ever increasing expenditures are being undertaken for the qualitative development of weapons. New generations of weapon systems have come into existence and the militarization of outer space appears imminent. Indeed a whole range of new strategic concepts are being built which seek to smother any sense of moral outrage that humanity may feel over the politics of nuclear confrontation among the most powerful States of the world.

All nations stand to suffer to a greater or lesser degree from the impact of the arms race. No one can predict with certainty the devastation that would be caused by a nuclear war. When the immediate effects of the blast and fire are combined with the long-term effects of the fall-out, the erosion of the ozone layer and the damage to all our planetary life support systems, it is clear that another world war might well bring an end to human history.

It is time for us to go to the roots of our predicament. If the States most responsible for creating this threat are as yet unprepared to suggest urgent measures for preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war, others should take the lead. There is clearly today a rising tide of protest all around the world against the wasteful and dangerous arms race. The political climate generated by the spontaneous popular movements against the accretion of armaments, against the testing of nuclear weapons and against the use of science and technology for

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purposes inconsistent with humanitarian principles, makes it imperative for us to take bold action now.

The tendency towards the legitimization of nuclear weapons should be reversed. The process of reduction of nuclear arsenals should be commenced as the only way to build up confidence and trust among States. A commitment by leaders of the major nuclear-weapon States to follow a path of arms limitation rather than arms build-up is the need of the hour. The evolution of healthy national societies in the world can only be ensured if the pervasive influence of an armaments culture, particularly of a nuclear armaments culture, is curbed and the massive expenditure now being directed towards perfecting and modernizing the instruments of war is channelled towards securing more equitable and better conditions of livelihood for the peoples of the world. Even a token reduction in arms expenditure can produce dramatic results if channellized into the development of the less affluent sections of the world. In this context we welcome the convening of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development next year.

We have welcomed the resumption of negotiations in Geneva between the United States and the USSR on a complex of questions concerning space and nuclear arms, to be considered and resolved in their interrelationship, with the declared objective of working towards the complete elimination of nuclear arms everywhere. All nations have a stake in the success of the Geneva negotiations and it is, therefore, with some concern that we note that these talks have not produced any concrete results so far. We hope that the forthcoming summit meeting between the leaders of the two countries will give a significant impetus to this process.

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I should like at this stage to refer to the Delhi Declaration issued at the end of the meeting of the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania who, in January this year, issued a fervent appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to halt all testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, to be followed by substantial reduction in their nuclear forces. The Delhi Declaration specified two steps for special attention - the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the early conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. These leaders from five continents called for a continuing programme of arms reduction leading to general and complete disarmament accompanied by measures to strengthen the United Nations system and to ensure the urgently needed transfer of substantial resources from the arms race to economic and social development.

In determining our international political and economic policies we, the non-aligned countries have consistently refused to tailor our responses to the dictates of cold-war predispositions. We do not mortgage our decisions to foreign dictates. We do not seek confrontation. But we urge the necessity of change as the key to the transformation of the world community. India does not believe, however, that such a transformation can be achieved merely by resort to strident rhetoric or by destructive criticism. The test for the international community consists in managing change by peaceful and co-operative means, recognizing the objective imperatives of our situation in the present-day world. Therefore, we seek the widest co-operation of all nations of the world. But we ask that such co-operation be based on equality, justice and a genuine recognition of our mutual interdependence.

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As nations subjected to colonial domination and racial discrimination we stand firmly committed to the complete elimination of the pernicious practice of apartheid or racism in any form. The situation in southern Africa is an affront to the conscience of mankind. The policies of apartheid of the racist régime in Pretoria constitute a source of tension, instability and conflict, endangering both regional and international peace and security. The recent tragic developments in South Africa, as a result of the fresh wave of terror and repression unleashed by the racist régime following its imposition of a state of emergency, testify to Pretoria's determination to continue its reprehensive policies. Mr. Botha's statement in Durban of 15 August provided ample proof, if proof were indeed needed, that Pretoria remains wedded to apartheid, that it will continue to turn a deaf ear to the legitimate aspirations of the oppressed majority in South Africa and to the voice of the entire international community, that it will persist in its attempts to divide the struggling majority in South Africa, and that it will show no scruple in killing, maiming and detaining arbitrarily those who dare raise their voice in protest.

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Recent events make it clear, at the same time, that the people of South Africa will not be cowed into submission. As the special communiqué on South Africa, adopted by the non-aligned countries at their recent ministerial Conference in Luanda, stated: "The countdown to the collapse of apartheid has started in earnest". We call once again for the immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and other valiant freedom fighters under detention. We are convinced that the struggle for a united, democratic and non-fragmented South Africa will, before long, find culmination in final victory. We reiterate to our brothers and sisters in South Africa the assurances of our total solidarity and support.

Equally, our hearts go out to the suffering people of Namibia who have now completed a century under oppressive colonial occupation. The same abhorrent regime that persecutes its own people persists in its illegal occupation of Namibia, now close to two decades after the United Nations assumed direct responsibility over the Territory. The attempts by that régime to set up another puppet administration in Namibia through the so-called Multi-Party Conference, have met with the universal contempt and repudiation that they deserve. The Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on Namibia, held in New Delhi from 19 to 21 April this year, reaffirmed the clear and consistent support of the Non-Aligned Movement for the cause of Namibia and set out a concrete Programme of Action to advance that cause. During that historic meeting, India took an important step forward by according full diplomatic status to the representative of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in New Delhi, thereby reaffirming its firm support for the Namibian cause. The United Nations Security Council, convened in response to the call made by the non-aligned countries at New Delhi, has once again called for the immediate and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which constitutes the only basis for a peaceful settlement of the

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Namibian question. Once again, South Africa has spurned that call. It is incumbent on the Council to meet again.

It is clear that South Africa could not have persisted in its defiance of the will of the international community for so long but for the diplomatic and moral support and the wide-ranging collaboration in the economic, military, nuclear and other fields that it has been receiving from its friends and allies. The pursuit of apartheid, the occupation of Namibia, and the repeated acts of aggression against independent African States, jointly and severally, all constitute threats to peace. Yet the Security Council has, time and again, been paralysed into inaction on account of vetoes cast by one or more of its permanent members against mandatory measures aimed at the total isolation of South Africa. The Pretoria régime is beyond persuasion. Clearly, policies such as those of "constructive engagement" have failed. Comprehensive mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter are the only answer. Meanwhile, States have a moral duty to sever all links with Pretoria. The recent upsurge of public opinion in many parts of the world for more resolute action against South Africa is a welcome development. My country is proud to have led the way in 1946, when we became the first voluntarily to impose comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

Nearer to our own shores, the destabilising and escalating great-Power military presence in the Indian Ocean causes us great concern. Only the elimination of such presence can enable the nations of the area to shape their own destinies without hindrance or military tutelage from beyond their territorial boundaries. The 1971 Declaration adopted by the United Nations laid down the objective of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean area, which is universally supported by all non-aligned States of the region. These States now call for the early convening in 1986 of a conference on the Indian Ocean in Colombo in order to achieve the realization of the objectives of the Declaration. The participation of all the great Powers at such a conference is crucial, indeed indispensable, to its

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all the great Powers at such a conference is crucial, indeed indispensable, to its success. The presence of military bases, command structures and other forms of military presence against the express wishes of the countries of the area only add to the tensions already prevailing in the Indian Ocean littoral and should be progressively reduced and eliminated.

Meanwhile, in our own neighbourhood, the countries of South Asia have embarked on a process of regional co-operation which holds out significant prospects for the betterment of our peoples. It is important that these developments are not adversely affected by the political and military factors involving the introduction of sophisticated arms serving external strategic interests. As we have repeatedly stressed, it is necessary that the existing thresholds are not crossed or new elements of controversy introduced which could adversely affect the security environment in our neighbourhood. We, for our part, are committed to promoting good neighbourliness and harmonious relations in the area. It is in this spirit that we look forward to the first summit meeting of the South Asia Regional Cooperation organization in December this year in Dhaka.

Our solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to secure the establishment of an independent State in Palestine and the return of the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied by Israel has been a well-recognised plank in the non-aligned platform. The plight of the Palestinians today is indeed one of the supreme tragedies of history. Few people have been more systematically brutalized, oppressed or humiliated in their own lands. The dispersal of the heroic Palestinians will not weaken their will to fight for their inalienable rights. Nor will it bring peace to the area. Occupation of land belonging to its neighbours will not guarantee Israel its security. There is now an increasing understanding of the fact that no comprehensive solution of the problem in the

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Middle East is attainable without the active involvement of the PLO, the sole and authentic representative of the Palestinian people. A comprehensive solution of the question can only be achieved by a forward-looking approach based on a recognition of the realities of the Palestinian right to an independent State and the right of all the States of the region to live in peace within secure international frontiers. Any such solution must comprise the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since 1967 and the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national and human rights, including the right to establish an independent State in their homeland. The situation does not brook delay.

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We underscore once again the importance of the early convening of the proposed international conference on peace in the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all parties concerned, for securing a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region in accordance with well-established principles. India is ready to extend its full support and co-operation in this connection, and is appreciative of the efforts being undertaken by the Secretary-General.

The tragic conflict between Iran and Iraq, two valued members of the non-aligned fraternity, continues to be a matter of concern and anguish. India, along with other non-aligned countries, has taken repeated initiatives to resolve this conflict. Our efforts continue, along with the efforts of the Secretary-General and others.

In spite of the valiant efforts of the Contadora group to bring about a peaceful negotiated solution to the problems in Central America, the situation in the region continues to be marked by instability, tension and conflict. Policies of interference and intervention and the threat of the use of force imperil peace and security in the region, complicating its serious social and economic problems. The Government and the people of Nicaragua live under constant threat, harassment and intimidation. The problems of Central America can be resolved only by peaceful means, through political dialogue and negotiation. The Contadora group must intensify its efforts to overcome the obstacles in its bid to bring lasting peace to the region. We are distressed by the last-minute impediments which prevented the signing of the revised draft Contadora Act for Peace and Co-operation in Central America of 7 September 1984. However, we have noted with satisfaction the presentation of a further revised draft, following the meeting in Panama earlier this month. It is our earnest hope that the meeting of plenipotentiaries scheduled for next month will finally pave the way for durable peace to return to this

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troubled part of the world. The endeavours of the newly constituted Lima group will no doubt strengthen Contadora's hand.

We have always affirmed the inadmissibility of interference in the internal affairs of States, as also of the introduction of foreign troops into any country. The situation in South-West Asia can be resolved only through an overall political settlement based on the principles set out in the New Delhi Declaration. India's own efforts have been directed towards this end. We support the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan. We have closely followed the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, which deserve the fullest support of all concerned.

Tension, conflict and instability afflict other parts of the world, including South-East Asia. Cyprus continues to face travail and threats to its sovereignty, independence, unity, territorial integrity and non-aligned status. Tension continues to prevail in the Mediterranean, the South Atlantic and the Pacific region.

Colonialism, as I observed earlier, persists in its most virulent form in Namibia. In other parts of the world as well, the task of decolonization remains incomplete. In this twenty-fifth year of the United Nations Declaration on decolonization, tribute is due to the commendable role the United Nations has played in the field of decolonization. We must also reaffirm our resolve to eliminate the colonial phenomenon altogether.

The world economic environment continues to cause grave concern. At the Seventh Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi in March 1983, our Heads of State or Government stressed that

"the international community cannot be assured of durable peace so long as the economic disparities between nations are widening". (A/38/132, p.64)

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The Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries, meeting at Luanda earlier this month, were constrained to point out that the world economic situation had not improved since 1983.

The limited and fragile recovery achieved in some of the industrialized countries, whose spread has remained uneven even amongst them, is now faltering, because it has been based on unsustainable macro-economic policies. The projections for the rate of growth of the economies of industrialized countries for 1985 and 1986 remain low. The 1985 rate of growth may not exceed 2.8 per cent; it may well be lower.

At the same time, the economies of the developing countries remain under heavy pressure. Their overall growth rates remain well below levels which would offset population growth, let alone secure development gains. Combined with the severities of the adjustment process which marked the first three years of this decade, this decline in growth rates has brought into sharp focus the constraints on their economies, threatening wider social and political strife. The developing countries have been making adjustments without any parallel improvement in the world economic environment and in the face of serious resource constraints, the growing menace of an increasingly intolerable debt burden, reverse transfer of financial resources and intensifying protectionist barriers against their exports to developed countries. Against this background, the weakening of the commitment to the spirit of international economic co-operation and an erosion of the multilateral system is a deeply disturbing trend. It is paradoxical that this should be happening when there is an increasingly wider recognition that the world economy has become more interdependent, calling for a greater need to sustain and further the international consensus in favour of development.

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We have also seen with growing concern the increasing resort to bilateralism or selective multilateralism with the adoption of policies and practices which run counter to the agreed goals and objectives of international economic co-operation. This is a negation of the consensus which the developed countries themselves had helped to achieve.

It is apparent that the prevailing international economic crisis cannot be explained away as a cyclical phenomenon. It has its origin in structural inadequacies which have been working to the particular detriment of the developing countries. It calls for a fundamental review of the existing structures.

It is essential that the international community renew at this fortieth anniversary session its commitment to the resumption of international negotiations with the objective of stimulating world economic recovery and ensuring sustained growth, particularly of developing countries. This requires in particular an integrated approach in the interrelated areas of money, finance, debt and trade, and a restructuring of international economic relations.

The Luanda Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries reaffirmed the strategies for international economic negotiations adopted by the Seventh Summit at New Delhi. The Conference also defined a framework for the commencement of a dialogue.

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I would like to suggest that our immediate efforts should concentrate on the following:

First, rectifying through appropriate measures and actions the "inadequacies and malfunctioning" of the international monetary and financial system.

Secondly, the adoption of policies and actions to implement the agreements on rollback and standstill with a widening of the access to exports from developing countries and the removal of all infringements on principles, rules and regulations of the international trading system.

Thirdly, the adoption of methodologies which would ensure multilateral co-ordination of macro-economic policies pursued by developed countries and the placing of their monetary and financial policies within the purview of international discipline.

Fourthly, the increase of financial flows to the developing countries, in particular concessional flows to the low-income countries.

Fifthly, making the international adjustment process symmetrical and equitable.

I would also like to propose that during this session high-level discussions be undertaken to achieve understandings that would commence the process for the convening of an International Conference on Money and Finance for Development.

The critical economic situation in Africa and the drought and famine conditions have evoked a spontaneous response from the international community, including many non-aligned countries. The leaders of the African countries at the twenty-eighth summit Conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) have adopted a bold and courageous Declaration in which they have expressed Africa's determination to deal with the challenge of development. It is incumbent on the international community fully to support their efforts. As a token of solidarity, the Non-aligned Movement has adopted a Plan of Action. India has, on its own part, made a contribution of 100,000 tons of wheat, followed by another contribution of

(Mr. Khan, India)

\$US 10 million to the OAU Special Fund. Under the Plan of Action, India has already identified nine agricultural projects in Africa. Our participation in these projects, which is in an advanced stage of preparation, shall assist in priority areas for the rehabilitation of the agricultural infrastructure. The efforts by India that I have mentioned are additional to the bilateral programme that my country has on an ongoing basis with the African countries as a part of which a large number of African experts are undergoing training in Indian institutions, and Indian experts are working in several areas with their African brethren in African countries. This, too, is a contribution to the priority areas of socio-economic development in Africa.

As one of the original signatories of the United Nations Charter, India has remained steadfast in its commitment to the values and ideals enshrined therein. To quote once again the words of India's first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, from a speech he made in 1946 even before we attained our independence:

"Towards the United Nations, India's attitude is that of whole-hearted co-operation and unreserved adherence, in both spirit and letter, to the Charter governing it. To that end, India will participate fully in its various activities and actively play that role in its Councils to which her geographical position, population and contribution towards peaceful progress entitle her."

By the same token, the United Nations and its system of specialized agencies have been a valued partner for India in the task of nation building and economic development. For the assistance and co-operation that the United Nations has given us, we are deeply grateful. That, however, is not the only vindication of the trust, hope and confidence that we repose in the United Nations. The importance

(Mr. Khan, India)

and utility of the United Nations for us, for the non-aligned and other developing countries, indeed for the entire international community, is to be measured not only by the material assistance the United Nations provides in bettering the quality of life on this planet, but by the higher and more noble aspirations of humanity embodied in this remarkable institution. The greatest tribute that we can pay to the United Nations on this occasion is therefore to rededicate ourselves to the Purposes and Principles of the Charter and to reaffirm our commitment to give them full effect. As this Assembly proclaimed last year, let 1985 "mark the beginning of an era of durable global peace and justice, social and economic development and progress and independence for all peoples". We hope indeed that we are on the threshold of such an era.

Mr. DUMAS (France) (interpretation from French): I should like first to congratulate the President on his election. I see it as a tribute not only to him personally but also to his country which holds a distinguished place in international co-operation. Everyone knows how much Spain means to France. In the very near future, our peoples will be together in the European Community. I am pleased that a common future now stands before them.

I should also like, before beginning my address proper, to add my expressions of sympathy to those already voiced by numerous speakers before me regarding the tragic events that have just occurred in Mexico.

The international community quickly demonstrated its solidarity, and my country joined in this widespread movement. I should also like to express here the respect that France has for the courage and dignity shown by the Government and people of Mexico in the face of their terrible ordeal. The catastrophe there reminds us that the happiness of men is uncertain and their destiny precarious. May they by their actions avoid compounding the suffering caused by nature.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

This session of the General Assembly marks the fortieth anniversary of our Organization. It is the age of maturity, a time for reflection and for taking stock.

Speaking on behalf of France, a Founding Member of the United Nations and permanent member of the Security Council, I should like to refer to the three main ideals of this Organization which are the reason for its existence, namely, security, freedom and development.

With respect to security, the power of the atom is the dominating factor.

Peace through deterrence has so far prevented East-West conflicts from taking the form of direct confrontations between nuclear Powers. Maintenance of the balance of forces - nuclear as well as conventional - is of vital importance. This armed peace must be maintained for the future at a verifiable level of arms at the lowest possible level.

The Soviet-American talks in Geneva on nuclear arms and space should lead the two countries directly concerned to proceed to deep cuts in their most destabilizing offensive weapons while maintaining strategic equilibrium.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

France welcomed the resumption of contacts between East and West and is particularly pleased that the General-Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, is to visit Paris shortly.

New technologies have led some people to think that we could be turning a page of the nuclear era in 10 or 20 years, at the end of some ill-defined transitional period. This idea, which is attractive at first sight, merely reopens an old debate which has nurtured an illusion in mankind - the illusion that security can be achieved through invulnerability. Have we realized the extent to which a would-be aggressor could turn this risky situation to his own account?

At the Geneva Conference on Disarmament in June 1984, and then again this year, France made two proposals: first, that the two super-Powers limit the military uses of space at the same time as they reduce their offensive nuclear systems; and, secondly, that multilateral negotiations strengthen the international administration of the organization of space for peaceful uses.

The use of devices in space to see, listen and communicate contributes to security; satellites already constitute guarantees for peace and could fill this function even better if the international satellite monitoring agency my country proposed more than seven years ago were established. But, on the other hand, let us acknowledge that the deployment of new types of anti-missile or anti-satellite weapons on earth or in space would lead to a new race, with its risk of destabilizing effects. We see that possession of anti-missile and anti-satellite operational devices by one of the two super-Powers is viewed as justification for the other's efforts. It is high time that the two super-Powers agreed not to continue in this direction, they should distinguish very well between research, testing and development.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

During the same time, the Conference on Disarmament should in our view set forth the rules limiting anti-satellite systems. It should also establish real confidence-building measures for space, strengthen the existing system of notification of launches of objects into space, and, lastly, extend to the satellites of other countries the bilateral commitments already made by the United States and the Soviet Union concerning the immunity of their observation satellites.

Those proposals are intended to be constructive and realistic. They take into account both the destabilizing nature of certain military activities in space and the difficulty of verifying the dismantling of systems already in place.

Let us therefore define the true nature of the challenge in space so as to avert the risk of a new arms race. But, in so doing, let us not forget the main objective: the reduction of the offensive nuclear weapons systems of the two most heavily armed countries.

As far as my country is concerned, the President of the French Republic defined in this very body two years ago the conditions in which France would be ready to participate in this undertaking. Our willingness on this score has not changed; it has not diminished.

It is in the context of such a process that France judges it necessary to raise again the question of nuclear testing designed to modernize its defensive force. I know that many delegations consider this a painful problem for which a solution is long overdue. We respect their concern, but in the case of issues like this we cannot settle for fine words or an imprecise assessment. So let us examine the facts.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

To date, France has carried out less than one-tenth of the total number of nuclear tests carried out by the Soviets and the Americans. As of 1974 it ceased tests in the atmosphere. It takes every precaution in carrying out its tests, and this was confirmed, in particular, by the team of international experts that went to the site last year. No other nuclear Power did this before and none has done it since. Only recently, in Mururoa, the President of the Republic renewed the invitation he had extended to the countries of the South Pacific to see for themselves, at the actual site, the harmless nature of French nuclear tests.

Though not bound by any negotiated agreement, France has reduced the power of its tests below the threshold of 150 kilotons, a figure that the Soviet Union and the United States have presented to this Assembly for the past 10 years as a step deserving of the highest praise. At every opportunity, France demonstrates its goodwill, but it will never compromise its security interests; nor will it renounce the legitimate exercise of its sovereignty, whatever the cost to it. Continuation of the tests is in fact necessary to maintain the credibility of its forces. The limitation of tests could only be understood and be meaningful in the context of an eventual de-escalation by the most heavily armed Powers.

But the debate on international security is not limited to the problems of nuclear disarmament.

The Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe is to our mind very important. Thirty-five States are participating and are seeking to define concrete measures to establish confidence among all.

In addition to threats of conventional conflicts, the spectre of the use of chemical weapons has also resurfaced recently. I should like to repeat strongly my country's condemnation of any violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, wherever

(Mr. Dumas, France)

it takes place. France supports and will continue to support the efforts of the international community and, in the first place, those of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to proceed without delay to an impartial establishment of the facts where allegations of the use of these weapons have been made. France has not hesitated to speak out in favour of the work of the Conference on Disarmament toward negotiating a convention banning the manufacture of chemical weapons and providing for the destruction of existing stockpiles under international supervision.

More generally, the deterioration of the security conditions in the world is a check to development when it does not wipe it out altogether. That is why we repeat that disarmament and development must be linked. The President of the French Republic made this point in 1983 from this very rostrum. France is ready to serve as host to an international conference on this subject in Paris.

The recent work of the preparatory committee of the United Nations conference on the relationship between disarmament and development has confirmed during the course of the summer the readiness of everyone. I am therefore pleased to state again here France's offer.

I come now to the second part of my statement.

France will speak out against all attacks on liberty, on the physical and moral integrity of the individual and the dignity of the human person, and will act indefatigably wherever these values are threatened.

We recently celebrated at Helsinki the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

That anniversary reminds us of the great ambitions we had at that time: to formulate for the old continent rules other than those imposed by threat, force or ideology, building not only between States but also between their citizens, new and peaceful relations based on the sovereignty and equality of each State and on the right of peoples to self-determination, with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Let us look back at the record of the past 10 years. It is mixed. Certainly, Europe has escaped the wars that are devastating so many other parts of the world, and its borders have been respected, and that is the main thing. But economic co-operation, cultural exchanges and contacts between people have not developed as they should. Human rights are still all too often, sometimes seriously, violated or ignored. Much still remains to be done, therefore.

Governments must win the confidence of their citizens. Let us earn that confidence by guaranteeing them the exercise of all their freedoms, without which there can be no genuine democracy.

Let us reunite families. Let us allow people to move and ideas to circulate without hindrance. Let us guarantee free exchanges. Let us agree to live in the diversity of our cultures.

How can I fail to mention under this heading one of the tragedies of our time - apartheid? The origin of the conflicts that are convulsing South African society is to be sought in that system, which is based on an odious doctrine and shameful practices.

Responses to our many appeals have been announced by Pretoria; they are not enough. Only by the speedy and total elimination of apartheid will there be salvation for South Africa.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

The opening of genuine dialogue between all the communities and recognition of the same civil and political rights for all South Africans constitute the only possible and acceptable basis for change. The current repression and violence can only lead to an impasse.

Faced with the deteriorating situation, France felt the time had come to take concrete initiatives. As early as May 1985 the Prime Minister announced the Government's intention to take measures against Pretoria if significant progress was not made within a reasonable period of time. Because of the worsening situation resulting from the imposition of a state of emergency, France recalled its Ambassador and decided on the immediate suspension of any new investment in South Africa. It then won adoption in the Security Council of resolution 569 (1985), which recommends that States take voluntary measures against South Africa in order to induce its Government to engage in dialogue. Since yesterday all the members of the European Community are taking actions to that end.

Since we took action other countries have joined us. That is what is most important. The freedom and dignity of a people are at stake.

The intransigence of the South African Government over Namibia is not acceptable either. After the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola in April 1985 there was some ground for hope. But the establishment of a so-called interim government in Windhoek, the action of South African military forces in Angola last May and again a few days ago and the raid on the capital of Botswana have shattered those hopes and helped to block negotiations. Despite those setbacks and difficulties, the international community must continue tirelessly to repeat that only Security Council resolution 435 (1978) constitutes an acceptable basis for a definitive settlement to the question of Namibia.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

Too many conflicts are causing bloodshed in the world, bringing suffering and death in their wake. In the Middle East the United Nations is endeavouring to secure respect for the principles enshrined in its Charter.

France supports all initiatives that will help lead to progress towards a solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict through dialogue and negotiation. It approves the initiative of the King of Jordan last 11 February, in agreement with the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and will continue to provide assistance and support, just as it will encourage the Head of the Government of Israel in that regard.

My Government, as it has demonstrated on many occasions, is ready to support the efforts of those who sincerely desire to work for peace, which can be based only on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). In order to be lasting, that peace must take into account two principles that are indivisible: the right of Israel to exist in security and the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, with all that that implies.

As for Lebanon, which has been so sorely tried, it, too, has the right to peace and its inhabitants have the right to security, whatever the community to which they belong. France has continually asserted that the solution to the crisis in Lebanon must be based on the respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of that country. That in turn presupposes a genuine national reconciliation among all the Lebanese. My Government is working ceaselessly to that end, giving assistance and support to the lawful authorities of the country.

I wish also to mention here the fate of individuals, French and others, held hostage in Lebanon. The French Government condemns categorically that odious blackmail, and solemnly appeals to all those who may be able to help secure their release.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

I turn to the conflict between Iran and Iraq. The international community has often expressed its extreme concern about that endless and bloody confrontation.

It is essential that there finally be a cease-fire and that the relevant Security Council resolutions, which have lost none of their value and relevance, be accepted at last by the two belligerents and implemented in their entirety.

In order to speed up the start of the necessary negotiations, France encourages and supports international initiatives - in the first place, naturally, the action taken by our Organization.

In Afghanistan, foreign intervention has been sustaining the war for almost six years. Far from abating, the fighting is spreading and growing in intensity, exacerbating the trials of a courageous people. There as elsewhere, justice is consistent with good sense. An answer is to be found only in a political solution that will secure simultaneously the withdrawal of foreign forces, the free self-determination of the population and the stability of the region.

We know that those are the principles that guide the good offices of our Secretary-General. France supports them, without overlooking the fact that their success depends first on the intentions of the occupying Power, which alone is in a position to remove one of the major causes of international tension. Did the head of the Soviet delegation, when he spoke the day before yesterday open the door to hope?

(Mr. Dumas, France)

With regard to the distressing and dangerous situation in Cambodia, France reiterates its condemnation of the occupation of that country by foreign forces. It deplores the exacerbation of suffering inflicted on civilian populations by the recent military operations on the Khmer-Thai border. It stresses the urgency of a peaceful solution based on the withdrawal of foreign troops and the national reconciliation of the Khmer people.

The division of the Korean people - a tragedy that has been with us for 40 years - still continues. In the last few months a few encouraging signs have appeared. Recently, separated families were able to meet again for a few hours. I see in that reason for hope.

At this point I should like to mention the hope that is emerging from the changes in an entire continent: I refer to South America. Happily, democracy continues to be consolidated there. France welcomes that, especially as a difficult economic situation and the burden of considerable foreign debt have imposed difficult economic policies on Governments.

In Central America, clearly the conflicts cannot be resolved by military means. The countries of that region should be encouraged to find quickly among themselves the path to negotiation. The Contadora group therefore has our support and backing.

I now come to France's third priority in external policy - development. The overriding need for solidarity between the industrialized and the developing countries derives from the conviction - which has been repeated many times by the French Head of State - that the future of the North and the South is linked and that there can be no lasting growth for the developed countries if the developing countries are excluded. For the past two years the international community has accomplished a great deal towards helping these countries - first of all, during crisis situations.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

Who could deny that Governments and public opinion responded rapidly and generously to the extreme hardships of the African countries? I should like to praise the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, in particular the organization last March of a donors' conference in Geneva and the creation of the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa.

This aid drive is without precedent. Almost 7 million metric tons of grain have been collected for Africa - a considerable figure commensurate with the tragedy that is taking place. The European Community and France made a substantial contribution to that effort, as the representative of the presidency has indicated from this rostrum. But the main problem is to avoid a recurrence of such a situation, thereby ensuring a resumption of the development process on a permanent basis.

It is essential to maintain the flow of official development assistance. For its part, France will contribute more than 0.55 per cent of its gross national product in 1985, a figure close to its 1988 target of 0.7 per cent.

The poorest countries deserve priority attention, for without an increased flow of financial resources it will be difficult, if not impossible, for them to face a particularly unfavourable international economic climate. The establishment of the Special Fund for Africa under the auspices of the World Bank - to which France has made a decisive contribution - constitutes an important step in that direction.

It is also with the hope of eradicating famine that France has proposed to our industrial partners a "plan for Africa", which provides among other things for increased agricultural development and a co-ordinated programme to combat desertification. We are pleased that that plan has been adopted and that work currently being carried out by experts will make it possible to implement it soon.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

Finally, I should like to confirm here the French President's intention to convene an international conference on forest protection in Paris next February. That conference could, in conjunction with other international organizations concerned - primarily the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) - propose concrete answers to the concerns of countries which see their forests disappearing and with them often all forms of life.

Those efforts were a response to the most critical situations. For the rest, this past year has seen a relative improvement in the situation of the third world.

But I should like to make two remarks on this subject. First of all, this progress is related to the economic improvement in the developed countries. The relative decline in real interest rates and the value of the dollar have accentuated this trend. But these phenomena, while positive, are primarily and essentially cyclical and short-term, and therefore remain precarious. Let us hope that the decisions taken here in New York last Sunday by the finance ministers of the five most industrialized countries will help to consolidate this trend.

The second point is that we must guard against excessive optimism. Admittedly, the problem of international debt has been brought under control for the time being, thanks to the joint action of the Paris Club, banks and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and especially the extremely austere and courageous adjustment policies adopted by the debtor countries and their peoples. But let us be careful.

The improvement in external accounts has come about at the cost of lowered income for populations - a situation that cannot continue for long.*

*The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

Debt-servicing, principal and interest, still absorb often considerable amounts, if not all, of annual export earnings.

The fragile nature of this improvement is therefore blatantly obvious. An entire continent of which I have already spoken, Africa, remains on the sidelines of this progress and continues to become increasingly impoverished. The same danger will beset the other continents; and unless we manage steadily to channel capital from the developed to the developing countries, whose financing needs remain structural, the situation will be aggravated.

Here, we cannot be satisfied with the trend of these past few years which have seen a slow-down in direct investment, a reduction in bank credits and repayments to multilateral financial institutions of amounts greater than withdrawals. All this has led to an inversion of North-South capital flows. The developing countries are now paying more to those in the North than they receive from them.

It is essential to improve the existing mechanisms for debt management by providing developing countries with adjusted financing. This is the objective of France's repeated appeals to increase World Bank capital, issue additional special drawing rights, and more generally increase official development assistance.

It is also to be feared that in the months to come the slow-down in the American economy - inadequately compensated for by the growth in Europe and Japan - may have serious consequences for the developing countries; or that rising protectionist pressures in the North will stifle developing countries by limiting their export possibilities and therefore their ability to repay debts.

Certainly, as I said a moment ago, increased dialogue among the main industrialized countries is leading to an improved international climate. That dialogue should be stepped up in all existing forums and on all occasions. The time has come for a comprehensive and serious consideration of this subject.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

Let us take another example - monetary affairs. France, on several occasions - in particular when the President of the Republic addressed this Assembly two years ago - has called for an international monetary conference that would seek to define new guidelines, thereby making monetary fluctuations more stable. Industrialized countries and groups of developing countries, in particular the non-aligned countries, advocate a comparable move. It is only through such discussions that we can make the progress the world needs so urgently.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

France for its part is ready for dialogue and action. In the monetary, financial and commercial fields, its determination remains firm.

At one time the North-South dialogue inspired much hope, in particular within our Organization. However, global negotiations never took place, and meetings between experts in international forums have yielded very few concrete results. Today, approaches based on sectoral strategies, integrating emergency aid and giving priority to rural development and training, are being launched and developed. My country approves these approaches, which meet today's needs. But it remains essential that we formulate without delay reforms that will bring about deep and lasting changes in relations between States for the benefit of peoples, their individual liberties and their rights.

In reviewing the principal tasks incumbent upon the United Nations I have been forced to recognize that the present state of the world is far from satisfactory. More than ever, we need the United Nations, the forum par excellence for meetings and discussion. During the fortieth anniversary we shall have a special opportunity to underscore the need to make negotiation prevail in conflicts and solidarity triumph over selfishness.

This unfortunately gloomy picture does, however, have its bright spots and more encouraging prospects. I wish to conclude on a positive note by mentioning an undertaking on which my country sets great store. I refer to the construction of Europe.

Forty years ago Europe was a devastated battlefield. What has it become today? It is a community without precedent in history, a force for peace and equilibrium in the world, a community that has learned its lesson from its past and that practices, among its members and vis-à-vis the rest of the world, the peaceful settlement of disputes and solidarity with the very poor.

(Mr. Dumas, France)

Our colleague from Luxembourg has reviewed the main lines of our action. A few words will suffice to recapitulate: the coming expansion of membership to include Spain and Portugal; the renewal of the Lomé Convention with 66 countries in Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific; the establishment of direct relations with the countries members of the Contadora Group and also the work now in progress to improve institutions and technological capacities with the Eureka project and to move towards a Europe of citizens, a political Europe. Indeed, European construction will be one of the great ventures of the second half of this century.

In conclusion, let me say that France wishes, together with others, to pursue its work for peace. It has heeded the message that has come to us from the depths of history. To those who are distressed by the future of the world, it hopes that we may respond together in the name of the principles that, 40 years ago, were the cornerstone of our action.

ADDRESS BY MR. FELIPE GONZALEZ, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Head of Government of the Kingdom of Spain, His Excellency Mr. Felipe González.

Mr. Felipe González, Head of Government of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): No one will be surprised if I take a few minutes from the exigencies of protocol and, as a Spaniard and as President of the General Assembly, welcome the President of the Government of my country, Mr. Felipe González, who governs the destinies of our nation. As President of the Assembly, it is my great honour to welcome the President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, His Excellency Mr. Felipe González, and to invite him to make his statement.

Mr. GONZALEZ (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): First, I should like to express the satisfaction and pride of the Spanish Government at seeing you, Sir, preside over this session of the General Assembly during which the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations is being celebrated. Your long professional experience and well-known personal qualities constitute a guarantee that the work of this session will take place under the best possible conditions.

I would also like to note the skill and mastery with which your predecessor, Ambassador Lusaka of Zambia, directed the previous session of the Assembly.

Lastly, I should like to congratulate Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar for his professional qualifications and devotion to his duties.

I come to this celebration in order to share with the great family of the United Nations wishes, but also fears, hopes, but also doubts, aspirations as well as frustrations. I come so that all of us together might evaluate four decades of experience and find paths towards the solution of the many problems that still confront us. I come, in short, in order to try to help make this Organization, the repository of so many hopes, more efficient, more dynamic and more own own.

This shared celebration should result in a collective act of faith in the United Nations and in an expression of political will, so that our plans shall not remain, as they have on numerous other occasions, mere words filed away together with many other good projects in the archives of this Organization.

It is now 40 years since, in a world levelled and impoverished by a war that brought death and destruction to all corners of the earth, a group of statesmen laid the foundations for a new international order whose basic pillar would be the United Nations. The drafters of the Charter did not limit themselves to drawing the historical lessons of the League of Nations, but wanted to give new juridical expression to the desire for brotherhood felt by all human beings.

(Mr. González, Spain)

The United Nations was thus conceived as a centre to harmonize efforts on behalf of international peace and security; to further friendly relations among peoples; to encourage international co-operation for the solution of economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems, and also to foster respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The world turned hopeful eyes towards the city of San Francisco and to this attempt to organize the coexistence of nations around the ideals of peace, justice and freedom. But it did not take long for the crude realities of a political confrontation that divided the world into antagonistic camps to fall upon this historic moment and on the United Nations. In various parts of the planet conflicts fed by old and new rivalries once again flared up. Obstacles arose to plans for the ordering of international economic relations on more equitable foundations, while millions of persons continued to be subject to discrimination and persecution for political, religious or racial reasons.

(Mr. González, Spain)

At the beginning of my statement I referred to the origins and purposes of the Charter, as well as its first clashes with reality because I belong to the generation of Spaniards who were born during the period when the United Nations was founded; because in our "youngest youth", in the words of Antonio Machado, a Spanish poet, we used as an instrument of struggle clandestine copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, distributing them to our fellow citizens as pamphlets that the existing authoritarian régime considered subversive; because for us fundamental human rights were not facts of life, as they were for some others of my generation around the world but something achieved in Spain by peaceful means. Yet for us those rights were not merely Utopian ideals or unattainable goals, and the proof of that is my presence here in this Assembly as President of the Government of Spain, chosen by the free and sovereign will of our people.

For these reasons, it is no mere rhetorical expression or courtesy for me to reaffirm before this Assembly the firm commitment of the people and Government of Spain to defend the principles of the Charter and to strive to achieve its objectives. On the contrary, it is a profound conviction, born of the difficult but encouraging experience of our nation during the recent past.

These features of our own experience in turn affect our external outlook, and is reflected in the position we adopt towards international problems.

Our world is certainly very far from being the world that the drafters of the Charter wanted to build. The international community is passing through a period of uncertainty and confusion which seems to be testing the principles contained in the Charter and even bringing into question the very authority and efficiency of our Organization.

We are all suffering from a climate of international tension exemplified by the persistence of international conflicts, and by the disproportionate accumulation of conventional arms and, above all, of nuclear arms, but also, as

(Mr. González, Spain)

already stated in this debate, by the existence of serious economic and social imbalances and by violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms endured by millions of human beings. All this - war, poverty, discrimination - is immediately known in every corner of the world through the powerful communication media of present-day society, giving rise to disillusion among many and despair among even more.

I do not intend to make an exhaustive analysis of each and every one of the problems of the international community, nor to make excuses for the responsibilities that any one of us might bear for them, and still less do I intend to rest content with declaratory statements full of good intentions but lacking in realism. I only wish to fulfil a responsibility to contribute to the joint meditation that the fortieth anniversary of this Organization - which has been, is and will continue to be whatever its Members as a whole desire - should stimulate among us.

It is my belief that the three great problems which confront today's world probably would be even graver than they are if the United Nations did not exist. These three problems - the arms race the violation of human rights and the serious international economic crisis - represent challenges to the United Nations aims of peace, liberty and justice. Because of their scale and the complexity of their causes they concern the whole of mankind to a greater or lesser degree. Moreover, they are interrelated, so that we can affirm that peace is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for meeting the other two great challenges we face. On our capacity to meet these problems and find solutions for them will depend the judgement that history will render on the United Nations and - let us not deceive ourselves - on all of us, political leaders who collectively determine the course of our Organization.

(Mr. González, Spain)

International détente, as the road to peace, depends upon disarmament, and the actual state of the arms race is more than discouraging, it is a situation which is shocking to any moral sense and is leading us towards collective suicide.

The great Powers continue to pay little heed to the recommendations of the United Nations and are investing enormous sums in nuclear arsenals with an overkill capacity to destroy our planet. As if it were not enough to end human life once, we seem to be intent on accumulating sufficient weapons to destroy all traces of life on this planet several times over. On the other hand, many developing nations are endowing themselves with costly conventional armaments that far exceed their defence needs. Both groups of countries are ignoring the many voices crying out for the use of those resources for the eradication of poverty and hunger. We hope that the forthcoming Conference on Disarmament and Development will provide a powerful stimulus in this area.

During its last session the General Assembly urged the United States and Soviet Governments to renew their arms control negotiations without delay or preconditions. Today it is fitting to express the satisfaction and relief of the international community at the reopening of these negotiations, whose results and implication go far beyond those of a simple bilateral dialogue.

In the unavoidable challenge of disarmament and arms control, much, in fact nearly all, remains to be done. Indeed, given the acceleration and increasing sophistication of the arms race, the road to disarmament seems longer than ever. Nevertheless, we cannot permit ourselves the least discouragement when dealing with our own survival and our legacy to future generations.

The United Nations has not remained inactive in the face of this challenge. It has approved important agreements as a first step towards the goals we have set

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for ourselves. It has promoted the creation of large denuclearized zones; and it has served as a forum for multilateral negotiations that proceed slowly but steadily in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

We must insist once again that the steps already taken should be completed through the strong determination of the great Powers to arrive at significant agreements that will open the road to a new era of confidence and mutual security. These are essential and complementary conditions for establishing verifiable disarmament measures as a firm basis for détente.

In addition to these structural problems, there are situations of conflict of a particularly serious nature. I will refer to only two of these, while stressing that this does not imply any lack of concern on the part of any of us, particularly my Government, over conflicts such as that between Iran and Iraq and occupations such as those of Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Namibia.

The conflict in the Middle East, with its never-ending train of human suffering and its enormously destabilizing effect, continues any sign of finding a just and peaceful solution. Such a solution would have to be based on the withdrawal by Israel from the Arab territories occupied since 1967; on respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, on the right of all nations in the region, including Israel, to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.

The Spanish Government follows with interest and hope the praiseworthy efforts now being made to open a path towards peace through dialogue among the parties directly concerned, on the basis of the guideline set by the relevant United Nations resolutions. We have publicly expressed our support for these initiatives.

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The Central American crisis continues to cast a destabilizing shadow over the whole region. The vigorous efforts of the Contadora Group have succeeded up to now in containing the conflict and avoiding its spread. Nevertheless, the deep roots of the crisis, that is to say, the unjust economic, social and political structures, made worse by the increasing trend to militarization continue to bring about a deterioration in the living conditions and in the security of the inhabitants of the region.

In these circumstances, the Contadora Group needs, now more than ever, the committed support of the entire international community, and, in particular, that of the countries with special ties to the region, in the task of outlining a framework for coexistence in Central America that will guarantee the independence, territorial integrity, and relations of friendship and co-operation among all the countries of the area, as well as full freedom for their peoples.

In this sense, it is promising to see the backing given Contadora by the four countries of the Lima Group, as well as the possibilities offered by the channels of co-operation already established between the Central American countries and the European Community, including Spain and Portugal.

The second great problem confronting us is the systematic violation of human rights in a number of countries and the indifference of their leaders to the appeals from this Organization.

At the same time, it must be recognized that the denunciations which have originated here have at times suffered from selectivity, and the discussions on the primacy of individual and collective rights have often concealed a struggle of ideological interests.

But in many parts of the world, political convictions or religious beliefs are still grounds for persecution or exile, not to say torture or forced disappearance.

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The exploitation and lack of protection for workers, even child labour, continues to prevail in many places.

Racial discrimination, one of the most odious affronts to human rights, is still a regular practice in many societies. In particular, the policy of apartheid of the Government of South Africa has once again shown its most repressive side by causing further suffering to the majority of the population and carrying within it the seeds of regional destabilization.

Our Organization, and with it the international community, must rise up with one voice to condemn unequivocally one of the most flagrant and massive violations of human rights in our time. The measures recently adopted by a significant number of the members of the international community are practical proof of the importance given to this problem and of the need for attaining real advances. Only the disappearance of this institutionalized system of racial discrimination can restore human dignity to the majority of the South African population and ensure a future of peace and harmony in southern Africa.

From this rostrum, I wish to appeal to the South African authorities to immediately and unconditionally free Nelson Mandela along with the other political prisoners, with a view to creating the minimum conditions for a dialogue that might avoid impending disaster.

Faced with the challenge of human rights violations, the United Nations has opened a new era in which it has been possible to establish international means for the promotion and defence of human freedom and dignity. Now, it is possible to hold States accountable for their actions.

Spain can legitimately say that it is at the forefront of the countries that have freely agreed to submit themselves to these international controls, both of the United Nations and the even stricter controls of the Council of Europe.

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To defend human rights is also to protect citizens against terrorism, whose objective is none other than to eliminate coexistence and freedom. Like fascism, terrorism attempts to impose itself on democratic society by force. This new form of totalitarianism, which tramples equally upon the life and liberty of man, each day has a greater international element, and so our response to it must also be international.

The international economic crisis continues to have harmful effects in many countries of the world, especially the least-developed nations. The meagre recovery of economic activity, and with it that of international trade, has not sufficiently involved large areas of the world. Neither has it permitted a significant reduction of the most serious problems faced by many industrialized countries and their economies, that is to say, unemployment and technological obsolescence.

The burdensome foreign debt of many developing countries is one of the major problems posed to the international community today. Together with natural disasters, such as when our hearts went out to our brothers in Mexico following the earthquake, there are also financial earthquakes. Of major importance is the debt problem of the debtor nations subjected as they are to overwhelming burdens. But it is also important for the industrial countries, since it leads to fragility in financial markets. It is important, finally, for the international economy as a whole.

Developments which in little more than ten years have led to present difficulties are a complicated story. But it is worth-while to note that in the genesis for these problems, responsibility has been widely distributed. It is important to recognize that the problem of the debt is not an isolated phenomenon, rather that it forms an integral part of economic development in an interdependent

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world, and its solution, therefore, is a task for all countries, debtor and creditor countries alike.

For the heavily indebted nations, their inevitable contribution to the solution of this problem must be centered on the development of policies of economic reform and adjustment. These imply austerity programmes, but also the bringing up to date of productive systems and resources. These are thankless economic policies, I know them well, almost always besieged by those who are impatient and attacked with proposals which are as simplistic as they are deceitful. But these policies deserve our respect, encouragement and assistance. We should support them, especially when they are adopted by democratic governments which must with great effort seek means to overcome the crisis and maintain liberties which they have conquered at high cost. That respect and support must be expressed through effective co-operation.

We must recognize that, however firm the determination of debtor nations to apply policies of adjustment, there is a limit beyond which undeniable aspirations for human dignity generate social tensions which become irresistible. It is necessary, therefore, that when these countries practise sound economic policies they may count on effective international co-operation to enable them to stagger their actions within tolerable limits, and at the same time to permit them to create a climate of hope for their peoples. The co-operation of creditor nations cannot be limited to dealing with financial problems on a case-by-case basis or to considering the debt problem in isolation.

The fact is that the monetary, fiscal and commercial policies of the industrial countries directly and seriously affect the developing countries and condition their ability to pay.

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This may produce the paradox that the industrial nations maintain disjointed financial policies while by the pressure of external restrictions they force the debtor countries to fight to preserve their international solvency, sometimes at a very harsh social and political cost. It is even more unreasonable to ask the debtor nations to apply policies of structural change while the industrial nations increasingly resort to protectionism as a way of avoiding adapting themselves to the changing conditions of the world economy.

Thus, the debt problem demands effort and discipline on the part of the debtor nations, but also requires from the industrial nations clear-cut, intensive co-operation far exceeding mere financial agreements on the renegotiation of liabilities.

Spain, because of its relatively modest size economically, cannot hope to play a leading role in dealing with these problems, but it will not succumb to the temptation of irresponsible rhetoric. We believe that the existing difficulties must be overcome through international co-operation within an adequate time-frame and by taking fully into account all the interests involved.

I can assure the Assembly that Spain, which, like other nations, has interests of its own in the issue, and has a deep understanding of the problems of the debtor nations and very close ties with some of them, is willing to participate in this co-operation and to stimulate it. To this end, we shall defend these points of view in all the international forums in which we participate and in forums in which we shall participate in the very near future, such as those of the European Community.

This, in broad outline, is the disturbing picture that a rapid survey of the international scene reveals. This is not the world to which we aspire or in which the Charter of the United Nations has led us to believe. Nevertheless, this

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Organization has done much in the last 40 years for the peace of mankind and human progress.

The judgement of world public opinion on the United Nations depends in great part on its contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. In this regard, it would be unjust to forget what the Organization has contributed in keeping situations of tension from degenerating into open confrontations or in limiting the effects of local conflicts. In the final analysis, the obligation of all States to justify their international actions in this forum increases the political cost of any behaviour that is contrary to the spirit or the letter of the Charter.

There are other arenas in which the work of the United Nations, seen in historical perspective, is impressive. Now that we are on the verge of commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, how can we fail to recall that the United Nations has been a protagonist of decolonization and that its influence has been decisive in accelerating that process?

It is true that there are still questions pending, but in all of them this Organization has drawn up an appropriate framework for a solution, whether it be through the exercise of the right of self-determination or through the application of the principle of territorial integrity.

One of the pending colonial questions directly affects my country. I refer to the case of Gibraltar. Recently, Spain and the United Kingdom have taken an important step towards the definitive solution of the problem by concluding the Brussels Declaration, which provides for the opening of negotiations on all questions, including, therefore, the question of sovereignty. We are confident that we can thus put an end, in accordance with the directives of the United Nations, to an anachronistic dispute which, like others in the world no longer has

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any reason for existing between two nations united by their common membership in European institutions.

Unfortunately, the decolonization effort has not been sufficient. Many countries have remained trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty, made worse on many occasions by the consequences of natural disasters. In this area too, the United Nations has made prodigious efforts through the establishment of funds and development programmes, technical co-operation and humanitarian and emergency aid, which have benefited millions of human beings.

The record of the United Nations, therefore, is not insignificant, but we must admit that compared with the enormous task that still lies ahead it has not responded fully to the hopes of the founders of the Organization or met the expectations of the peoples. This has brought about a certain devaluation of multilateralism as a method of ordering international society.

It is paradoxical that in an increasingly interdependent world that needs international co-operation there is ever more insistent talk about the alleged crisis of multilateral channels and the United Nations is criticized, at times ruthlessly. This anniversary provides a good opportunity for analyzing the causes of the crisis and diagnosing which are due to a lack of will and which to structural deficiencies, so as to be able to introduce suitable remedies and necessary reforms.

In order to make the principles of the Charter fully applicable the Organization would have had to be provided with much more comprehensive means. Instead, the Organization's capacity for action was strictly limited. This disproportion between objectives and the means given to the Organization is one of the constant sources of disenchantment and frustration among the world public.

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The lack of real power on the part of the Organization could have been compensated for by fuller co-operation among the great Powers. But, after having reserved for themselves a privileged position in the Security Council, these have limited themselves in practice to using the Organization frequently as a marginal forum for political and ideological confrontation.

Furthermore, as we near the objective of universality, the composition of international bodies has become more complex and heterogenous. Some countries find it difficult to accept this heterogeneity, which is a reflection of today's world, and criticize the action of specific organs or agencies because they do not correspond to their own interests or aspirations. But neither the policy of leaving seats empty nor the attempts to manipulate an international organization are constructive foundations for the future.

The crisis of multilateralism thus has its origins in the interaction of very diverse and complex causes. We should not therefore cherish false hopes as to its rapid solution. Nevertheless, there is a great deal that each of us can do.

All Member nations must develop a greater sense of their responsibilities towards the Organization, renouncing any unilateral interpretation of the principles of the United Nations. The permanent members of the Security Council have, moreover, a special responsibility in accordance with the role conferred on them by the Charter. Only improvement of the international political climate and greater co-operation by the great Powers within the context of the Council will make it possible to lay the basis for re-establishing the authority of the United Nations.

The subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies should reaffirm their original objectives so that an authentic differentiation of functions may allow the United Nations system to develop all its potential in the cause of international co-operation.

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Finally, we should strengthen the authority of the Secretary-General to enable him to carry out fully the mission entrusted to him by the Charter. The joint appeal for the strengthening of the United Nations, which I recently signed, together with other Heads of States or Government, stresses the central importance of the Secretary-General by affirming that he "should play an active role in the solution of international crises" and that "the conflicting parties should use his good offices in a constructive fashion and co-operate with him in mediation efforts".

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Before concluding my speech, I think it necessary - although not without risk - to try to draw up a balance sheet. These first 40 years in the life of the United Nations have been, in my judgement, positive ones. Most of the shortcomings on which I have commented here are not the fault of the Organization itself, but rather of a lack of political will on the part of Member States, at times because of selfishness or a lack of solidarity, at other times because of indolence, and on not a few occasions because of a lack of trust. We should try to eradicate all these shortcomings. It is certainly true that in order to reach that goal we shall need a different world, but such a world will not be possible without determination on our part to overcome the setbacks of the past and not fall prey to discouragement. The very fact that the leaders of so many and such diverse nations have gathered here to engage in collective contemplation should help us objectively to pinpoint our successes and our failures.

Let us prevent the phrase "too little, too late" from becoming the epitaph of all those institutions unable to give an adequate, timely and just response to the great problems of their time.

We must force ourselves to understand the present with the concepts of today and not with those of yesterday, so that we can prepare for tomorrow. The United Nations should not be only a meeting place for prolonged deliberations on issues of current interest or much less a hospital for the fevers and infirmities of the international community. The United Nations should be, first and foremost, the place where solutions to our global problems and great plans for the future can be jointly worked out and put into practice through multilateral co-operation.

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In the past we have reacted to crises instead of foreseeing and preventing them. As a result, many of our problems today seem insoluble or insuperable. In the future, we should strive to ensure that our Organization is not limited to being a safety net in times of danger, but that it also - and above all - serves as the centre for long-term efforts to resolve the pressing problems and challenges of a world which is in transition and becoming increasingly interdependent every day.

Today we face the challenge of having to respond to ambitious objectives with limited means. The forces of reason and solidarity must prevail over those of violence and selfishness if we do not wish to be denounced by the men and women of tomorrow for having been blind to the opportunities offered to us by technological advances and for having used them for destructive ends rather than for the building of a better world.

Nevertheless, realism obliges me to insist that the only catalyst capable of bringing about the positive synthesis of these extremes is the political will of the States Members of this Organization. The time has come to expect less and contribute more.

In a world where the instruments of peace are few and fragile, the United Nations, with all its deficiencies, is our best hope. Let us ensure that this fortieth anniversary will transcend ceremonies, proclamations and good intentions and that from it will emerge a true commitment to advance with determination towards universal peace, prosperity, justice and freedom.

I assure this Assembly that the people and the Government of Spain will spare no effort in this common enterprise, to which we are all summoned.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I thank the Head of Government of the Kingdom of Spain for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Felipe González, Head of Government of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted from the rostrum.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

