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Fortieth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 24 September 1985, at 3.00 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. DE PINIES	(Spain)
later:	Mr. IACOVOU (Vice-President)	(Cyprus)
later:	Mr. GAUCI (Vice-President)	(Malta)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Bodström (Sweden)
Mr. Abe (Japan)
Mr. Ellemann-Jensen (Denmark)
Mr. Palmer (New Zealand)
Mr. Papoulias (Greece)
Mr. Hallgrimsson (Iceland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. BODSTROM (Sweden): It gives me great pleasure to join those who have spoken before me, Sir, in congratulating you on your assumption of the high office of President of the Assembly. Your skills and ability, your experience and leadership, are well known. Consequently we could not have found a person better suited than you to guide our deliberations at this important juncture. Your election is a tribute to your personal qualities and to your country. We are confident that your guidance will make this session of the General Assembly fruitful and productive.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Ambassador Lusaka of Zambia, who served with great distinction as President of the Assembly during its thirty-ninth session. Like those who have spoken before me, I wish to express my admiration for the way in which Ambassador Lusaka carried out his task. His presidency has earned both him and his country great honour.

On behalf of the Swedish Government, I wish to express to the Government and people of Mexico our deepest sympathy for the great human suffering and extensive material damage the recent earthquake in Mexico cost them. The people of Sweden were deeply distressed to learn about that almost incomprehensible natural disaster. I wish to assure the representative of Mexico of my Government's readiness to contribute in assisting Mexico in its emergency and in its heavy task of reconstruction.

During this session of the General Assembly the United Nations will celebrate its fortieth anniversary. This gives me a welcome opportunity to confirm that Sweden's membership of the United Nations and the obligations it implies remain a cornerstone of Swedish foreign policy.

(Mr. Bodström, Sweden)

One of the most important changes during the past 40 years is that the United Nations has become almost universal. At a time of ever-growing interdependence it is more important than ever to safeguard this valuable asset. More than a hundred new independent States have been admitted as members. Largely owing to the United Nations, it was possible to accelerate the process of decolonization.

(Mr. Bodström, Sweden)

The basic task of the United Nations of maintaining international peace and security is more important than ever in the age of nuclear weapons. In this area, the Organization is facing a number of difficulties. The Secretary-General has stimulated a necessary international discussion on the possibilities of strengthening the role of the United Nations in this respect.

Under the Charter, a special responsibility has been placed upon the permanent members of the Security Council. It depends mainly on them whether or not the United Nations can be used as an effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security and for the promotion of a peaceful development in the world.

The arms race continues unimpeded. As emphasized in the United Nations study on security concepts, no State can any longer build its security exclusively on its own military strength. Even the nuclear-weapon States are ultimately dependent for their security on decisions taken in capitals far from their own territories.

Issues of war and peace and international development cannot be left exclusively to the great Powers. This has been underlined in the so-called Five-Continent Peace Initiative, signed by Heads of State and Government from six countries, including Sweden. In this initiative it is emphasized that non-nuclear-weapon States also have the right to make their voices heard with regard to nuclear weapons.

Today, nuclear weapons are a threat to the survival of mankind. More and more States are beginning to discuss nuclear weapons also in terms of international law. The Charter of the United Nations prohibits the threat or use of force. The use of force in self-defence that is recognized in the Charter must be proportionate to the force used by the attacker. Furthermore, it should be noted that existing international law relating to armed conflict contains some general

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principles which outlaw certain methods of warfare. Relevant principles in this context are inter alia the principle of distinction between military and civilian objects, the ban on methods and means that cause unnecessary suffering and the principle of proportionality. The latter principle prohibits attacks which may be expected to cause civilian losses that would be excessive in relation to the direct military advantage anticipated. Principles of international law place a heavy responsibility on any Government considering the use of nuclear weapons. The use of nuclear weapons in contravention of the principles to which I have just referred will be in conflict with international law.

Today, interest is focused on the bilateral negotiations in Geneva and the approaching summit meeting between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States. But at the same time as these negotiations are in progress, the arsenals are growing. The proposal for a nuclear-weapon freeze remains valid. A freeze could be a first step towards reductions in, and the elimination of, nuclear weapons.

However, the bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States cannot diminish the importance of the multilateral work done here in the United Nations, at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and in other forums. For Europe, the process initiated by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the ongoing Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures offer important opportunities of strengthening co-operation and détente. As the Stockholm Conference now approaches its final stages, it is essential that the negotiations enter into a more concrete phase as soon as possible.

The arms race knows no boundaries and is reaching to the oceans and out into space. Outer space is the common heritage of mankind. Peaceful space activities are today of great importance to all States for purposes of communication, for

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earth resources surveys and for weather observation. As far as security policy is concerned, satellites have important stabilizing functions, such as early warning and the verification of disarmament agreements.

The issue of preventing an arms race in outer space has attracted much attention recently. The Swedish Government believes that security cannot be achieved through technical solutions, as, for example, new military systems which can be introduced in outer space. They cannot solve the problem of reliance on nuclear deterrence, which is fundamentally a political problem. Only negotiated political solutions can be realistic. Sweden has also noted with concern the development of anti-satellite systems, which contribute to an increased risk of an arms race in outer space and to destabilizing development in a strategic area.

Another serious development in weapons technology is the obvious risk of a growing concentration on such weapons as sea and air-launched cruise missiles. The Swedish Government wishes in particular to emphasize the importance of reaching agreement on a ban on long-range cruise missiles.

The naval arms race has brought the military forces of the great Powers, including their nuclear weapons, to all continents. The United Nations study on the naval arms race, which has now been completed, demonstrates the importance of disarmament and confidence-building measures in this area as well as of measures to strengthen the rules of international law on naval warfare.

It ought to be of common interest to all States to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The best way of achieving this is to strengthen the international set of rules that has been drawn up through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Against this background, we regret that some nuclear-weapon

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States are not even prepared to negotiate on a complete nuclear-weapon test ban. This measure, above all others, would contribute to the prevention of a threatening proliferation of nuclear weapons.

There is also a risk that other types of weapons of mass destruction will spread to more States. The plans for the manufacture of binary chemical weapons are a cause of grave concern. All States must act to ensure respect for the existing ban on the use of chemical weapons. The Swedish Government hopes that the ongoing negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva will lead to a comprehensive ban on such weapons.

The relationship between disarmament and development has been highlighted in several international studies. A national study has been carried out in Sweden pursuant to a recommendation of the United Nations. Sweden will take an active part in the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development that the General Assembly has decided to convene.

The struggle of the great Powers for power and influence tends often to aggravate local and regional crises. A growing part of the transfer of resources to the developing countries is given in the form of military support. The international arms transfers are increasing in magnitude.

The situation in southern Africa today constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. In its defence of the abhorrent system of apartheid, the white minority régime in South Africa has demonstrated that it is prepared to use brutal force against the majority of the population as well as against neighbouring countries.

(Mr. Bodström, Sweden)

For decades we have appealed in vain to the white minority régime to abolish apartheid. Time is now running out. A peaceful solution should, however, still be possible. Therefore, decisive reforms must be brought about without delay in order to transform South Africa into a democracy with equal rights for all. Only in this way can enormous suffering for all, including the white minority, be avoided.

The state of emergency in South Africa should be lifted immediately, the political prisoners released and a dialogue initiated with the authentic leaders of the majority of the population.

Mandatory sanctions decided upon by the United Nations Security Council are, in the opinion of the Swedish Government, the most effective means of pressure at our disposal. They also represent a peaceful means, supported by prominent leaders of the black majority, its liberation movements and Africa as a whole.

Recently international pressure on South Africa has grown significantly. A further increase in this pressure is necessary. In the view of my Government the the Security Council resolution of 26 July this year was a step in the right direction. In that resolution member States were recommended to take certain measures against South Africa, such as the suspension of all new investments there.

These measures should now be made mandatory through a decision of the Security Council in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter. Only if applied by all States can they become truly effective. If South Africa does not fundamentally change its policy, the sanctions should be extended to cover other important areas, such as the economic field as a whole and communications.

Economic sanctions against South Africa are particularly appropriate as a contribution to the peaceful abolition of the policy of apartheid, as apartheid is also a system of economic repression. The apartheid policy facilitates the exploitation of the black population, which in turn is a prerequisite for the very

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high standard of living of the white minority compared with that of the black majority. The short-term economic benefits of the apartheid policy are an important explanation as to why the white minority adheres so strongly to that inhuman system.

The Swedish Government will continue its efforts to help increase pressure on South Africa. In addition to the measures already taken in Sweden this year - among them the strengthening of the ban on new investments introduced in 1979 - we shall take certain unilateral measures over and above the measures recommended by the Security Council. In particular, I should like to mention a recommendation to Swedish companies to seek markets and suppliers outside South Africa, as well as a ban on all imports into Sweden of agricultural products from South Africa.

Together with the other Nordic countries, we are working on an extension and strengthening of our 1978 joint Nordic programme of action against South Africa. A new, revised programme will be presented at a meeting of the Nordic Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Oslo next month.

Namibia is a country under foreign occupation. Again South Africa is trying to force its political solutions on the Namibian people. This is a flagrant violation of the plan for independence and free elections in Namibia which was adopted by the Security Council as long ago as in 1978. Questions that fall outside the United Nations plan must not be used as a pretext to prevent its implementation.

However, South Africa shows no sign that it is willing to abandon its delaying tactics. The Security Council should, therefore, as envisaged in its resolution of June this year and without further delay, take effective action against South Africa, including mandatory sanctions, with a view to ensuring the implementation of the United Nations plan.

(Mr. Bodström, Sweden)

Sweden is increasing its assistance to the liberation movements, the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), to the refugees and to the victims and opponents of the apartheid system. Some of this assistance is channelled through various United Nations agencies. Together with our development assistance to the front-line States and to the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), Swedish assistance to southern Africa for the current fiscal year amounts to more than 1.7 billion Swedish Krona. This represents one third of our total bilateral assistance to developing countries.

The situation in the Middle East remains grave. Different initiatives taken in the region indicate, however, a strong desire for peace. The efforts to advance the peace process must receive support.

A lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East requires that the parties meet in direct negotiations. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) must have the right to participate on an equal basis in such negotiations. An international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations might be a way of bringing the parties together and could serve as a framework for direct negotiations.

The right of Israel and other States in the area to exist must be recognized. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) should be the basis for a negotiated settlement. In our opinion, these resolutions mean that Israel should withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967 in exchange for peace being ensured within secure and recognized boundaries. For a settlement to be lasting, it is also required that the Palestinian people achieve self-determination. They have, if they so wish, the right to for a state of their own on the West Bank and in the Gaza strip.

(Mr. Bodström, Sweden)

The deep crisis in Lebanon remains. Apart from the many Lebanese victims of this tragic conflict, aggravated by the Israeli invasion, the fighting has caused suffering to the Palestinian refugees. Those refugees find themselves in an increasingly vulnerable situation. The main responsibility for finding a solution to the country's crisis rests with the Lebanese parties themselves. At the same time, external powers must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

The war between Iran and Iraq has now lasted for five years. Widespread suffering and casualties on both sides have resulted. Civilian population centres have been bombed and chemical weapons used, in violation of the rules of international law.

It is the fervent hope of the Swedish Government that it will be possible to bring the conflict to an early end by peaceful means. We fully support the United Nations efforts in this respect. In particular, the elements of a peaceful solution presented to the parties by the Secretary-General should be recalled. The Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Olof Palme, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, is closely following the development of the conflict and remains in contact with the parties concerned in order to promote such a solution.

The continuing armed intervention in Afghanistan by the Soviet Union constitutes a violation of the fundamental rules of international law and must be unequivocally condemned. The Swedish Government supports the efforts of the United Nations to find a negotiated solution to the conflict. The main element in a peaceful solution must be the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the possibility for the people of Afghanistan to determine their own form of government and their own future. It is important that a report to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights has drawn attention to the violations of human rights in Afghanistan and the suffering of its people.

(Mr. Bodström, Sweden)

For many years Kampuchea has been the victim of foreign intervention and convulsive internal strife. We recall the terrible suffering that the Kampuchean people went through under Pol Pot's régime. Human rights must be respected. It is our firm opinion that the Vietnamese occupation must end without delay, since it represents a violation of fundamental principles of international law. It is necessary to pursue the efforts to create conditions for the Kampuchean people again to determine their own future without external intervention and internal repression. We urge the parties concerned to spare no effort to achieve a negotiated settlement which ensures such a future.

The conflicts in Central America have their origin in economic and social injustices. They can only be solved by negotiations. The Contadora group, strengthened by the support group formed by four countries, must be given the opportunity of completing its work for peace in a climate which is not marked by East-West tensions and increased militarization. The international community must reject measures in violation of international law to overthrow a legitimate Government, such as boycott actions and support of armed groups. All States must pursue a policy which reduces the level of military armaments in the area and promotes negotiations. The peace talks in El Salvador should be resumed, as well as the bilateral talks between the United States and Nicaragua. The United States has a great and undeniable influence in this part of the world, and thus an important role to play to promote a peaceful development.

We note with satisfaction that the two Korean States have now begun to take cautious steps towards increased mutual contacts. These initiatives represent a possibility of allowing the armistice of the past thirty years to be followed by real peace in the Korean peninsula.

The protection of human rights is the concern of the international community as a whole, and not only an internal matter for individual countries. Violations of

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human rights in a country often have international repercussions in the form of increased tension and risks of international conflict. Equally, it is apparent that tension between States often leads to increased oppression within States.

For a long time Sweden has been involved in the struggle for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We actively participate in the further development of international norms in this field. The two Human Rights Covenants were adopted as early as 1966. Sweden has ratified these Covenants and has furthermore acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. My country has thereby accepted international supervision of the implementation of that Covenant. We urge all States to adhere to these fundamental treaties. We also urge them to accept the competence of the supervisory bodies as regards individual complaints as well.

The Swedish Government welcomes the fact that the international norms and principles in the area of human rights have been further supplemented by the Convention against torture which was unanimously adopted by this Assembly last year. Sweden intends to ratify that Convention before the end of the year.

The question of the abolition of the death penalty should remain on the international agenda. These efforts must not be delayed.

Unfortunately, there is a gap between theory and practice as regards human rights. Violations of human rights should be pointed out wherever they occur.

Sweden was pleased to support the adoption of the forward-looking strategies at the United Nations Women's Conference in Nairobi. The consensus that was reached conveys optimism for the future and constitutes a firm ground for all to build on in order to promote equality between women and men.

The imbalances in the world economy represent a continued threat to international economic development. Determined and mutually supportive actions by all countries are essential. The struggle against protectionism is of the utmost

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importance. Both industrialized and developing countries must strive to expand and strengthen free trade. A new round of multilateral trade negotiations, carefully prepared, would constitute an important step in such a process. The special trade problems of the developing countries must be one area of priority.

Increased access to the markets of the industrialized countries is a prerequisite for the developing countries if they are to achieve a long-term solution to their serious debt problems, which are a threat not least to the development of the poorest countries.

Studies by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) clearly show the great need for increased development assistance to those countries. Furthermore, these studies demonstrate that the major part of all development assistance has given positive results. Donor countries must now increase their assistance, especially through the multilateral development agencies. Above all the International Development Association (IDA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with their knowledge, size and co-ordinating capacity, have an important role to play in solving today's development crisis. Without a determined and consistent financial strategy, based on co-operation between donors, recipients and financial institutions, we shall not be able to achieve sustainable progress, above all not in the poorest countries.

This applies particularly to Africa. The international community has already made a considerable effort to relieve this crisis-stricken continent. However, much remains to be done. Our aim must be to link disaster relief to long-term efforts. Productive agricultural capacity must be restored and the process of desertification and deforestation reversed.

The international programme of action for the most vulnerable group of countries, those least developed, will soon be reviewed in Geneva. This will be a

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suitable occasion for donor countries and the least-developed countries to approach the problems jointly in a practical way.

The refugee situation in the world continues to be of the utmost concern. More and more people are forced to leave their countries. In addition to well-grounded fears of persecution, this is increasingly the result of war, internal conflicts and natural disasters. The need for immediate relief is growing, while at the same time greater resources are required in order to achieve lasting solutions. In the poorest countries assistance to refugees should be combined with long-term development assistance, taking into account the needs of the local population in areas with many refugees. The Swedish Government greatly appreciates the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and will continue to support this important humanitarian work.

During the past decade, the United Nations and the United Nations system have become an increasingly important instrument for joint efforts by Member States to cope with large-scale environmental problems such as soil erosion, air pollution and the handling of hazardous waste. International environmental co-operation requires that, through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), environmental aspects be included in large areas of the activities of the United Nations and of most of the specialized agencies.

Sweden is of the view that one of the really great challenges for the United Nations is to develop into an effective instrument for the co-operation of the Member States in counteracting the disastrous destruction of the environment which affects all mankind.

(Mr. Bodström, Sweden)

The narcotic drug situation in the world is alarming. Illegal production of narcotic drugs is increasing. Illicit trafficking is becoming better organized and more difficult to combat. The international struggle against illegal drugs must be intensified. Sweden welcomes the various initiatives taken to achieve better co-ordination of United Nations efforts. We also welcome the Secretary-General's proposal for a world conference on drug abuse and illicit trafficking. It is our hope that the proposal will be adopted and that the conference will lead to global support for a concrete programme of action.

The Swedish Government is deeply concerned that an organization of such importance as the United Nations should have serious financial problems. The principle of collective financial problems responsibility flows from Article 17 of the Charter. It should be obvious to all Member States that they must meet their obligations. The largest part of the financial deficit, which at the end of 1984 was estimated at \$US 360 million, pertains to contributions withheld from important peace-keeping operations. In practice, this means that the deficit is largely financed by the troop-contributing countries.

Unilateral national decisions not to pay the contribution assessed by the United Nations, for whatever reason they are made, undermine morale and the fundamental principle of collective responsibility for the financing of the United Nations. Developments in this respect are alarming and we appeal especially to the Soviet Union and the United States to consider their responsibility. The work of the United Nations must have a financially sound foundation which enables the Organization to carry out its tasks in an effective and rational way.

The United Nations is a unique forum in which the States of the world can seek solutions to their ever-more-pressing problems. In every field interdependence

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grows stronger. Only through joint efforts can we create the necessary conditions for lasting peace and security, respect for human rights, economic and social progress and a genuine commitment to the fulfilment of our responsibility towards our environment and the finite resources of our planet.

This anniversary year calls for reflection. We must safeguard our indispensable Organization. We must also provide it with the opportunities and resources it needs to fulfil the functions vital to the future of humanity.

Mr. ABE (Japan) (spoke in Japanese; English text furnished by the delegation): On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I should like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. Please be assured that the delegation of Japan will spare no effort in co-operating with you as you carry out your important duties.

At the same time, I should like to express my sincere appreciation to the President of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Mr. Paul John Firmino Lusaka, for the very capable manner in which he discharged his awesome responsibilities.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute once again to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his determined efforts and capable leadership in the face of the harsh international situation.

Before proceeding further, I wish on behalf of the people of Japan to express deep sympathy to the Government and people of Mexico in the terrible tragedy wrought by two earthquakes last week, which took thousands of lives and caused untold material damage. I wish to pay a tribute to the people of Mexico, who, under the leadership of their President, Mr. Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, are working courageously to overcome this unprecedented calamity. Japan, for its part, is urgently taking every possible action to assist them.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

Now approaching its fortieth anniversary, the United Nations has grown into a truly global organization with the participation of virtually all the countries of the world. Although the United Nations has had some success in containing regional conflicts and mobilizing world opinion to deter aggression and censure it whenever it occurs, other factors, including East-West discord and the divergent interests of conflicting parties, have prevented the United Nations from fulfilling the peace-keeping functions envisaged for it at the time of its founding.

In looking back over the 40-year history of the United Nations, I am struck by the progress made in decolonization in Africa and elsewhere and by the fact that over 150 countries with differing cultures, traditions, political systems and policy positions have been able to gather here and, through lively discussion, share ideas on how to overcome the many grave problems facing the world and reaffirm their interdependence within the international community.

The important role which the United Nations has played in promoting economic and social development, environmental protection and human rights, in enhancing the status of women and in progressively developing and codifying international law must be fully recognized and duly acknowledged. I also wish to note the welcome trend whereby Member States are seeking general agreement among all interested parties in order to adopt resolutions by consensus rather than by majority vote, in an effort to enhance their effectiveness.

Yet, looking ahead to the 21st century, I believe we have reached a major turning point if the United Nations is to be a vital and effective force for succeeding generations. I should like here to highlight two specific areas requiring immediate attention.

First, the United Nations must discharge its responsibilities in the field of peace-keeping more fully, and it behoves the permanent members of the Security

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

Council and, indeed, all United Nations Member States seriously to study ways of enhancing the Security Council's peace-keeping functions. At the same time, I believe that, with the support of all Member States, the peace-keeping functions of the Secretary-General should be strengthened so that his quiet diplomacy can be more effective.

Another crucial issue which the United Nations must tackle is that of administrative and financial reform. In carrying out its activities over the past 40 years the secretariats of the United Nations and its specialized agencies have steadily expanded and it may well be that some of their activities are outdated, not urgently needed or even redundant. I am concerned that the United Nations system may be losing the unwavering support of peoples around the world. It is thus imperative that the Organization itself make a determined effort towards effective administrative and financial reform so that it can function more efficiently. Only in this way will Member States - developing countries beset with difficulties in economic management as well as major contributing countries experiencing severe financial strain and striving to regain fiscal health - be able to gain the understanding of their peoples and continue their support of the United Nations for many years to come.*

* Mr. Iacovou (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

I wish on this occasion to pay high tribute to the Secretary-General for the serious efforts he has been making in this regard. In his report on the work of the Organization this year, the Secretary-General appeals for "the support of national domestic constituencies in each Member State" (A/40/1, p. 13) and strongly urges the need for more "practical international service" (ibid.). I concur fully with this appeal.

In an effort toward comprehensive administrative and financial reform, I should like to propose the establishment of a "group of eminent persons for a more efficient United Nations," so that the world body and its specialized agencies would function efficiently into the twenty-first century. Comprised of a small number of individuals from developed and developing countries, the group would contribute to a thorough review of the administrative and financial operations of the organizations within the United Nations system. At the same time, it would provide an opportunity for undertaking an objective study of the management of those organizations with a view to guaranteeing their efficiency, so that they would be of greater use to the people of both developed and developing countries in meeting their genuine needs now and in the future. I hope that a concrete proposal on this question will be considered at this session of the General Assembly, and I call upon all Member States to act today to assure that this irreplaceable Organization will operate more efficiently.

1945 was the year that saw the birth of the United Nations as well as the atomic bomb. Since then the world's nuclear arsenals have undergone tremendous changes both in quantity and in quality, and an overkill capability has long since been achieved. Thus the prime imperative for the world today is that of working to halt this nuclear arms race and ultimately to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons. Indeed, the urgency of arms control and disarmament grows greater with

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each passing year. Yet at the same time it must be admitted that world peace and security is sustained by the balance of power which includes nuclear arms. In promoting disarmament, we must recognize these realities of the international situation and seek to achieve a balance at the lowest possible level of armament.

Thus I welcomed the initiation last March of a new round of arms control and disarmament talks by the United States and the Soviet Union. Both States have a special responsibility toward the international community. No matter how trying these negotiations may prove, it is important that they be aware of the awesome burdens they must bear as the world's two most powerful nations, and that, responding to the hopes of all peoples, they negotiate seriously and constructively for the achievement of substantive results. I strongly hope that at their summit meeting scheduled for November the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union will be fully cognizant of their grave responsibilities and will do their utmost to build a framework for world peace and security.

The call for the United States and the Soviet Union to take the initiative in efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament was unanimously supported at the Third Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which closed just a few days ago. The participating countries also reaffirmed the significance of the NPT régime, and Japan would like to point out again the need to maintain and strengthen the NPT régime, as well as strongly to urge nuclear-armed China and France and, indeed, all other non-signatory countries to recognize the importance of the NPT régime and to become parties to the Treaty without delay.

Japan has long emphasized a comprehensive nuclear-test ban as an important aspect of nuclear disarmament, and last year at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament I proposed a step-by-step formula under which the nuclear-test ban would be steadily extended to include lower-yield weapons as multilateral

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verification capabilities improved. I also suggested the creation of an international co-operative framework for nuclear-test detection. Japan is confident that this approach, modest as it may seem, is a most realistic means of achieving an effective nuclear-test ban. I hope that an ad hoc committee will be established as soon as possible at next year's Conference on Disarmament to study these proposals as well as other substantive questions.

Disarmament issues are not limited to nuclear weapons, however. In the non-nuclear field, as I stated in my address to last year's session of the General Assembly, I strongly hope that all countries will take a realistic approach to the banning of chemical weapons and that a global and comprehensive treaty will be drawn up as soon as possible. On the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, I welcome the fact that this year's Conference on Disarmament has established an ad hoc committee and has taken the first steps toward examining this important issue.

I should like next to say a few words on some of the international issues which I believe are especially important and to explain Japan's foreign policy efforts as they relate to these issues.

It is impossible in today's increasingly interdependent international community for a country in one region to be oblivious to conflict in any other region. This is not to imply, however, that countries are justified in intervening in regional conflicts for their own purposes. Japanese policy is one of working in close consultation and co-operation with the United Nations to create a climate that would contribute to the efforts of the countries directly involved as well as of other countries within the region to settle the conflict on their own.

Regarding the situation on the Korean peninsula, Japan welcomes the various efforts toward establishing a North-South dialogue and the progress that has

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recently been made. We are very hopeful that these discussions will yield substantive results. Japan, for its part, will continue to co-operate in every way possible to create a climate conducive to the relaxation of tensions on the Korean peninsula. In this regard we were sincerely pleased that young men and women from both North and South were able to compete side by side in the Universiade Games recently held in Japan.

Moreover, if both North and South would consider joining the United Nations as a step toward the reunification of the Korean peninsula, Japan would welcome and support membership for both of them as a means of relaxing tensions and furthering the universality of the Organization.

Elsewhere in Asia, the problem of Kampuchea remains a threat to regional peace and stability. Japan holds the view that this problem cannot be solved until all foreign troops are withdrawn from Kampuchea and the people's right to self-determination is restored. Japan has insisted that determined efforts based on this view must be made, bearing in mind Kampuchea's future needs. Thus, at the Post-Ministerial Conference with the Dialogue Partners, held by the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) last July, I proposed the following four principles which should underlie our future efforts on this problem: first, the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces and self-determination for the Kampuchean people; secondly, the promotion of dialogue between the countries concerned; thirdly, the reaffirmation of our support for the coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea so as not to acquiesce in the present situation as a fait accompli; and fourthly, education and vocational training assistance for Kampuchean refugees as part of a human resources development effort.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

In the belief that these refugees have an important role to play in Kampuchea's eventual reconstruction, Japan hopes that, with the co-operation of the parties concerned, appropriate plans will be drawn up for their education and training. We are prepared to co-operate in every possible way with the implementation of such plans.

Hoping to foster a climate conducive to the peaceful solution of the Kampuchean problem, I have made an active effort over the past year to meet and discuss issues with the leaders of the Governments concerned, including Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach of Viet Nam and Prime Minister Son Sann of Democratic Kampuchea. I intend to continue these efforts to promote an early and peaceful solution to this situation.

I find it most regrettable that there are as yet no signs of a solution to the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq which has gone on for five long years. At last year's General Assembly session I presented an urgent proposal for the prompt implementation of a ban on the use of chemical weapons and the assurance of safe navigation in the Gulf, including the safety of port and harbour facilities. I have since taken every opportunity to urge the leaders of both Iran and Iraq to accept this proposal. Convinced that it provides an effective means for achieving a gradual scaling down of hostilities leading to the attainment of a comprehensive settlement, I very much hope that they will respond positively and proceed with discussions on the basis of this proposal.

I deeply appreciate the Secretary-General's efforts in visiting Iran and Iraq and in making various proposals for the de-escalation of the conflict there. I hope that further progress will be made so as to bring about some form of dialogue between the two sides through the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

Furthermore, in appealing to the Security Council, whose primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security, to play an impartial and even more active role for the resolution of the conflict, I earnestly hope that the day will soon arrive when the two sides come before the Council to present their positions there.

Mindful of the positions of the two parties, Japan will continue, in close consultation with like-minded countries, to make strenuous and patient efforts to create a climate conducive to peace in the region.

The problem of Middle East peace and the situation in Lebanon remain causes for deep concern. Japan has the highest regard for the serious efforts being made by the parties concerned for peace in the Middle East. In the belief that present circumstances offer an excellent opportunity for progress towards peace in the region, Japan strongly hopes that all parties will redouble their efforts towards this end. This July I visited Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia, where I discussed the issues personally with the leaders of these countries as well as with Chairman Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Subsequently I also had a frank exchange of views with the Israeli leadership. Through such dialogues with the leaders of the countries concerned, Japan will continue its efforts to foster conditions that will lead to peace in the Middle East.

On the problem of Afghanistan, I once more call upon all parties concerned for the prompt withdrawal of all Soviet troops, the restoration of the Afghan people's right to self-determination and a safe and honourable return for the refugees. At the same time, I strongly support the efforts of the Secretary-General and very much hope that progress will be made in the ongoing proximity talks.

Japan finds the racial discrimination in South Africa intolerable and takes the firm position that it must be abolished totally and without delay. The internal reforms being advanced by the Government of South Africa fall far short of

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

the expectations that had been raised in South Africa and abroad. Japan deeply deplores the present situation in South Africa - a situation that has taken a toll of hundreds of lives over the past year.

Under the circumstances, Japan believes there is an urgent need for the Government of South Africa to state clearly and in no uncertain terms that it intends to disband apartheid and enter unconditionally into discussions with the leaders of the black community on specific steps towards ending that system. Japan calls upon all involved to join their energies in the search for a negotiated solution.

Japan has been a steadfast opponent of apartheid, and its measures against South Africa are among the strictest of those taken by industrialized democracies. Moreover, Japan is determined to take whatever steps it considers necessary until the Government of South Africa embarks upon drastic and specific reforms for the abolition of apartheid.

On the issue of Namibian independence, Japan hopes that it will be attained speedily through the complete implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions 385 (1976) and 435 (1978). Japan, therefore, considers null and void the establishment of the interim government through the Multi-Party Conference, and any other measures taken by the Government of South Africa in contravention of these resolutions.

The situation in Latin America is notable for the progress being made towards democratization in recent years. Believing that democratization contributes to Latin America's long-term political stability, Japan welcomes this trend. At the same time, however, international political and economic difficulties, such as the conflicts in Central America and the problem of burgeoning debts, continue to beset the region.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

Indeed, the situation in Central America is still dangerous, and Japan is watching developments there with concern. Japan continues to support the peace efforts being made by the Contadora group. I hope these efforts will gain broad international backing, including that of the recently formed South American support group, and that they will be pursued even more vigorously. At the same time, Japan strongly hopes that the Central American countries themselves will make even greater efforts for peace in the region, as well as for democratization and national reconciliation within their respective borders.

Japan has been maintaining a close dialogue with the countries of Latin America. After leaving New York I shall visit Panama and Brazil to hold a wide-ranging exchange of views with the leaders of those countries. I am also pleased to state that while I am here the Foreign Minister of Panama and the United States Secretary of State and I will be exchanging notes on the Arrangement Concerning the Commission for the Study of Alternatives to the Panama Canal. Japan is prepared to take an active role in the matter and in this way further strengthen its relations with the countries of Latin America.

I should like next to say a few words on Japan's relations with the Soviet Union. As I pointed out in my address to this General Assembly last year, it is extremely unfortunate for both countries that the Northern Territories issue and the conclusion of a peace treaty remain unresolved after all these years. Continuing without surcease its quest for a negotiated settlement, Japan hopes to expand and strengthen its dialogue with the Soviet Union, and I hope that the Soviet Union will respond in the same spirit.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

In seeking true world peace, we must not neglect the need to eliminate the causes of instability. Unless this is done, we cannot possibly take the next step towards achieving world prosperity. As basic prerequisites to true peace, starvation and refugee problems must be overcome, population problems solved, and international terrorism and drug abuse curbed.

In November of last year, following my participation in the General Assembly session, I visited the region of Africa that has been stricken by drought, saw for myself the tragic situation there, and issued an appeal for emergency assistance for Africa. According to the most recent report of the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, there are still some 20 countries in Africa needing emergency assistance. Especially urgent action is needed to save the children of Africa from their terrible plight, in light of the serious effects it will have for the future of the world we live in.

I regard as outstanding the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General, and the alacrity with which the United Nations moved to extend emergency aid to Africa. Japan has done everything it can to help with this aid effort. Having proposed last year that all United Nations agencies be mobilized to draw up a unified plan of action for Africa, making the most effective use of the total range of United Nations capabilities, I am gratified that the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa was established on 1 January this year and has swung into action.

The Government and people of Japan feel keenly the urgent need for support for Africa. Just as the Japanese Government has extended foodstuffs and agricultural assistance worth a total of approximately \$165 million between January of last year and the end of March this year, the people of Japan have joined together in an unprecedented outpouring of public support to collect over 1.7 million blankets and more than \$5.8 million in individual donations of money for Africa.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

There is a complex combination of structural causes for this crisis of starvation and food shortfalls, and it is imperative that we respond not merely with emergency assistance but also with stepped-up co-operation with the African countries' own self-help efforts in the agricultural sector, for example, in increased food production, over the medium and long term. I am confident that a green revolution to improve agricultural yields can be achieved in Africa, as it has in Asia. It is for this reason that I have submitted my "Green Revolution for Africa" proposal, a comprehensive plan that would include not only agricultural research but also afforestation, and I intend to work to implement this proposal in full consultation with all the countries concerned.

I remain convinced of Africa's potential for development. As stated in the declaration of the recent Organization of African Unity summit, the nations of Africa are taking the initiative to overcome the crisis facing them. The international community has a responsibility to lend them a helping hand.

There are today over 10 million refugees around the world, and it is imperative that the international community take responsibility for alleviating their plight as soon as possible. In great part, these people have been displaced as the result of political problems; improving the political climate is thus the key to solving the refugee problem. At the same time, it is also important that every country lend increased support and co-operation to the efforts of the United Nations and especially the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to provide the most effective refugee relief, and move with determination to expand the scope of action available to it.

Japan for its part has provided nearly \$600 million in contributions to these organizations over the past five years and has increased the number of refugees accepted for resettlement in Japan. We intend to continue to do everything we can to contribute in this field.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

Aware of the importance of the population problem, Japan will continue its unstinting co-operation in this field as well.

Hijackings and other forms of international terrorism, and drug abuse and the illicit trafficking in narcotics, pose a threat to the peaceful lives of people everywhere. Japan, as a responsible member of the international community, intends to extend all possible co-operation to eradicate these problems. In this regard, I should like to express my support in principle for the Secretary-General's proposal that a global conference on drug abuse be convened in 1987.

Generally speaking, the economic recovery is spreading from the industrialized countries to the entire world economy. However, protectionist pressures have intensified to an unprecedented level against the background of continuing high unemployment in Europe and elsewhere, global trade and current account imbalances, and the awesome budgetary deficits many countries are facing.

While the outlook is somewhat brighter for a number of developing economies, many others in Latin America and elsewhere still face such problems as stagnation of the prices for their primary commodities and accumulated debt and must continue their efforts for economic adjustment. There is thus a considerable political and social burden on them. At the same time, we should provide all possible assistance to the least-developed countries and other impoverished countries in general as they struggle to achieve economic independence.

Japan realizes that no one country can pursue prosperity without regard to the quest by others for prosperity world-wide. It is determined to preserve and strengthen the free trade system and fulfil the role and responsibilities accruing from its international position. As a manifestation of this policy, Japan, on its own initiative, formulated the Action Programme for Further Improved Market Access based on the principle of free trade, permitting restrictions only in exceptional cases. We are now hard at work on its prompt and faithful implementation.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

Likewise, Japan believes that a new round of multilateral trade negotiations is indispensable to contain the rising tide of protectionism and promote free trade in the true sense, and has been calling for the prompt start of such a new round. It is most gratifying that the international momentum favoring this new round has increased and that the Contracting Parties of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) will meet shortly to discuss matters including the scope of the negotiations. Japan will continue to do everything it can to promote the preparations for this new round and to help the negotiations start with the participation of the greatest possible number of countries, industrialized and developing alike.

Japan views official development assistance as an important international responsibility, and has twice formulated medium-term targets in a sustained effort to increase and expand such assistance. Japan intends to continue these efforts, and it was with this in mind that the third medium term target for official development assistance was just recently formulated. The aim of this ambitious programme is to bring the total official development assistance disbursement for the period 1986 through 1992 to more than \$40 billion. For this purpose Japan, expanding bilateral grants, multilateral assistance and yen loans, will make efforts to double the amount of official development assistance in 1992 compared to that in 1985, and to improve as much as possible the quality of its official development assistance. This third medium term target is a renewed expression of Japan's determination to play its rightful role in the international community.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

The development of human resources is fundamental to a nation's overall development. Realizing this, Japan has long attached importance to human resources development and placed priority on technical co-operation as central to this effort. This topic was also discussed within the context of Pacific co-operation at the Post-Ministerial Conference of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) with the dialogue partners, in which Japan actively participated. I am pleased to report that agreement was reached at this year's meeting on the Immediate Action Programme for ASEAN-Pacific Co-operation on Human Resources Development. Japan intends to take an active role in the implementation of that ASEAN programme.

A long-time advocate of the importance of human resources development through United Nations efforts, Japan welcomes the movement within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other programmes towards placing a higher priority on this area.

In addition to continuing to co-operate with the development efforts of the South Pacific island countries, Japan intends to step up its friendly and co-operative relations with them.

The North-South problem remains an important issue for the international community. However, one hopeful sign for the future is the global effort in support of Africa in which the international community truly came together. I believe that North and South must co-operate and co-ordinate their efforts and that concerted efforts between Governments and private sectors of donor countries must be encouraged. I am convinced that such efforts will contribute substantially to a solution of the North-South problem.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

At last year's session of the General Assembly, I spoke of Japan's determination to pursue creative diplomacy in response to the international community's expectations. Looking back on the year just past, I am acutely aware of the need for us to redouble our efforts in this direction. The times are rapidly changing and there is an increased number of situations that cannot be adequately handled with traditional approaches, means or technology. Be it the maintenance of international peace, the expansion of exchanges among countries and peoples, or the implementation of economic and technical co-operation, we need creative thinking and new approaches. The new century demands that mankind draw upon its infinite potential and bring forth new wisdom for the future.

As the United Nations reaches the age of 40, we should recall the global catastrophe which led to its founding and rededicate ourselves to the cause of world peace.

Mr. ELLEMANN-JENSEN (Denmark): Allow me, first of all, to offer Ambassador de Piniés my sincere congratulations on his election to the presidency of the fortieth session of the General Assembly. I assure him of the full co-operation of the Danish delegation in his performance of the duties of his high office.

Next, I express the deep sorrow of my country for the victims of the earthquakes in Mexico. The tragic events caused by the earthquakes must call forth the sympathy of the international community, and I am therefore glad that the General Assembly this morning adopted by consensus an appeal calling for international relief assistance to Mexico. I assure members that my country stands ready to assist Mexico.

(Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

An anniversary often provides an occasion for stock-taking. The fortieth anniversary session of the United Nations will be no exception. The anniversary celebration in October will be a more appropriate occasion to review the performance of the Organization over the past four decades and to look ahead at what should be done to improve and strengthen the United Nations in the decades to come. Consequently, I shall not make a traditional anniversary statement today.

Rather, it seems to me that the main purpose of the present general debate is to provide a welcome annual opportunity to review the state of world affairs both politically and with regard to the international economic situation.

The General Assembly serves to remind us of the complexity of the problems facing mankind. To a country like Denmark these problems appear first and foremost in the perspective of our own security situation viewed in the light of the overall relations between East and West.

When compared to the situation prevailing last year, East-West relations of today do perhaps lend themselves to a slightly more optimistic assessment. After all, a measure of dialogue has been restored between the United States and the Soviet Union. Like others, Denmark looks towards the summit meeting in November with expectation - but also with some apprehension lest the summit should fail to provide the impetus for a sustained process of dialogue and confidence-building. Dialogue for the sake of being seen talking to - even at - each other clearly does not suffice to bring about viable solutions. A genuine willingness to concede, to compromise and to co-operate must be demonstrated at the negotiating table, not merely professed in public statements.

No one can disregard the particular importance of arms control negotiations, both as an essential contribution to the current dialogue and as a means of

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promoting stability. Arms control negotiations are important also as a process - agreements or understandings already reached should be respected in order to preserve the prospects for further progress.

But in addition the East-West dialogue must be given a more comprehensive foundation encompassing all aspects of East-West relations. Small and medium-sized countries should also contribute towards greater confidence between East and West or at least towards a reduction of mistrust, in order that wider co-operation may be achieved. In this respect the recent commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Final Act of Helsinki highlighted the role of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) as a basis for broad dialogue between East and West in Europe.

Just before the Assembly proceeded to consider the draft resolutions dealing with disarmament at last year's session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General made a sober and thoughtful judgement. In concluding, he said:

"Many words have been spoken in the cause of disarmament. We are all aware of the goals, as outlined in the Final Document of the first special session. Only the political decisions of Governments can take us towards the realization of these goals...". (A/39/PV.97, p. 126)

The Secretary-General was pointing to the core of the matter - the necessary political will of Governments - and his words are fully shared by my Government. Disarmament is not achieved or implemented through resolutions and will come true only by political decisions.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission held its annual session a few months ago. That session may serve as a sad example of what lack of political decisions can lead to. Much to the regret of the Danish Government, no concrete recommendations were agreed and little, if any, progress was made.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

At the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, on the other hand, some progress, although modest, has been made this year. The agreement to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space and the ongoing negotiations on a ban on chemical weapons are examples of steps in the right direction.

One of the more positive experiences in the past year has been the recently finished Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The spirit of that Conference was one of general willingness to reach a consensus, despite differing views. We hope that that preparedness by all parties to bend their views to reach common ground will have spill-over effects in other forums.

The debate and the final declaration confirmed the strong commitment to the non-proliferation régime of the 130 States parties. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is an important measure in enhancing international security, which is also to the benefit of States not parties to the Treaty. In view of the important achievements in Geneva, we urge those States now to consider acceding to the Treaty.

Nuclear disarmament remains an issue of the highest priority. However, conventional arms and the conventional arms race are also a matter of great concern. The report of the Secretary-General containing the views of Member States regarding the study on conventional disarmament initiated by my country has shown that that concern is shared by a great number of countries. It is the hope of the Danish Government that the United Nations will in the future, too, give this question the full attention it deserves.

In the Middle East, war, violence and terror reign. Indiscriminate warfare, cruelty and killing are the resort of the strong as well as of the weak. Innocent lives have been lost in peace-keeping efforts that have failed. Mediation has been frustrated.

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Worse yet, where is the glimmer of light that could raise hopes that the turning point might be at hand?

So, everyone has failed and everyone must try to do better. The primary responsibility and opportunity lie with the parties themselves, but others can help.

It is the responsibility of all of us in this Organization to work for reason, moderation, good will and justice. We must be constructive. If we base our efforts on unreliable and biased assessments we shall fail. Equally, if we choose self-righteous positions and inflammatory language we shall fail.

On the premise that no one is perfectly right or perfectly just, we should in this Organization, with caution and perseverance, support those in the troubled areas who seek peace rather than those who seek victory.

The situation in Lebanon is a human tragedy which has reached the point of anarchy. The Danish Government wishes to see Lebanon restored, independent, sovereign and united. We appeal to all concerned in Lebanon to bring about urgently the necessary national reconciliation.

My Government urges that the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) be allowed to do the job for which the United Nations has mandated it, to assist the Lebanese Government in controlling the Lebanese border area and to provide security on both sides of that border.

The position of the Danish Government on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Palestinian problem in particular, is well known. The ongoing efforts to bring the parties concerned to direct negotiations deserve to succeed. We appeal to all parties, in the region and outside, not to jeopardize those efforts, which hold out the prospect of peace with security for all States and justice for all peoples.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen, Denmark)

As to the conflict between Iran and Iraq, Denmark remains strictly impartial, but also strictly opposed to continuance of the bloody warfare. We condemn any violation of the Geneva Conventions; in particular, we condemn the use of chemical weapons and indiscriminate aerial attacks on civilians. The Danish Government calls upon both parties to settle their differences peacefully through negotiations. It commends the efforts of the Secretary-General to de-escalate the warfare and bring the parties into negotiation.

The misfortunes befalling the African continent call for our deepest compassion. Drought and other natural disasters have ravaged the majority of African countries, bringing in their wake untold suffering, privation and death to their peoples. Owing to a successful international relief effort, the worst of the hardships caused by natural disasters have been at least to some extent alleviated. The drought also seems to be coming to an end in many parts of Africa. However, it will be years before the affected countries have recovered fully from its effects.

In South Africa, however, the situation is only deteriorating. The man-made disaster known as apartheid persists. The Pretoria régime is going to ever-greater lengths and using ever more brutal means to oppress the majority. The state of emergency declared on 20 July of this year has only made matters worse.

The South African Government has so far seemed unable to realize that increased oppression will not break the will but only strengthen the resistance of the oppressed. It has given no sign of being ready to implement fundamental reforms in South Africa leading to the abolition of the apartheid system and the introduction of political and civil rights for the black majority. President Botha's speech on 15 August was yet another example of the intransigence and insensitivity to the demands for change which are presented with ever-increasing force both in South Africa and in the outside world.

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The Pretoria régime must realize before it is too late the need for a dialogue with genuine representatives of the non-white population groups with the clearly defined goal of securing the right of proper representation for black South Africans on the national level. No just and lasting settlement will come about in South Africa unless it is based on the total eradication of the apartheid system and the establishment of a free, united and democratic society in South Africa.

The Danish Government strongly believes that international pressure on the South African Government must be increased and made more effective with a view to the total abolition of the apartheid system. Denmark supports the imposition of binding economic sanctions against South Africa in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. Lack of agreement among the members of the Security Council should not, however, keep individual countries or groups of countries from implementing their own measures against South Africa.

To put the apartheid régime under effective economic pressure, concerted international measures adopted by the Security Council or decided by a wide group of countries, including South Africa's major trading partners, will be needed. But a range of varying measures implemented by individual countries or even by private citizens, organizations or companies will constitute significant political pressure and warning. Let us recognize every individual step as a contribution to the common effort.

(Mr. Ellemann-Jensen,
Denmark)

Unilaterally as well as with the other Nordic countries and with our partners in the European Community, Denmark has already, starting more than seven years ago, been implementing a number of concrete measures aimed at reducing our economic and other relations with South Africa. The Danish Government urges other countries to do the same. A good way to begin would be with the voluntary measures urged upon the Member States in Security Council resolution 569 (1985).

Any delay in the dismantling of the apartheid system would reduce the possibilities for a peaceful solution to the conflict in South Africa and increase the risk of a far more serious and comprehensive conflict.

The internal conflict in South Africa has had negative implications for the efforts to bring about the independence of Namibia. The negotiations which have gone on for so many years have ground to a halt. The Danish Government remains convinced that there is only one internationally acceptable solution to the Namibian question: the implementation of the United Nations plan for Namibia's transition to independence based on Security Council resolution 435 (1978). It sincerely hopes that progress towards such a settlement will still prove possible through a continuation of the process of dialogue, which in the past has brought promising results.

The international community is profoundly concerned at the situation in Afghanistan. That most unfortunate country has become a symbol, as the world witnesses the courage, dedication and determination of this traditionally neutral and non-aligned nation fighting to regain its freedom from an increasingly brutal military occupation. We appeal to the occupying Power to allow internationally recognized humanitarian relief organizations to assist those millions in Afghanistan who are innocent victims of the situation.

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Denmark)

We pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for their tireless efforts to promote a political settlement in observance of United Nations resolutions calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops, an end to violations of the territorial integrity of Pakistan, which have escalated recently, and the return of the refugees to their homeland in safety and honour.

International concern is equally deep with regard to the situation in Kampuchea, which parallels the situation in Afghanistan. My Government appeals to all parties to work actively for a just and lasting negotiated settlement in accordance with United Nations resolutions. We welcome the proposal of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for indirect talks. However, flexibility and a sincere willingness to solve differences at the conference table are needed from all quarters if the occupation is to end and the Kampuchean people are to be allowed to decide their own destiny.

My Government welcomes the initiation of direct talks between the south and the north of Korea, and we hope that the dialogue established will make a lasting contribution towards the establishment of a state of peace on the Korean peninsula in which the division of the nation may be overcome in accordance with the freely expressed will of the people.

Developments in Central America during the past year have shown how difficult it is to find peaceful, long-term solutions to the complex problems of that region. In spite of all setbacks, the four Contadora countries have continued their untiring peace efforts. On behalf of the Danish Government I should like to pay a tribute to them for their perseverance.

It is the firm conviction of my Government that there is no alternative to the Contadora peace process. It must be fully supported. We urge the Governments of Central America to observe and implement the principles embodied in the Document

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Denmark)

of Objectives, adopted within the Contadora framework in September 1983. All Governments must refrain from acts which run counter to the principles of international law.

In this connection, I can associate myself fully with the views stated by the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg on behalf of the 10 members of the European Community.

The Danish Government is greatly encouraged by the successful outcome of the World Conference in Nairobi marking the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. It is a source of satisfaction and inspiration for all 153 participating States that consensus was achieved in Nairobi on a substantive document concerning forward-looking strategies. We now have to live up to the commitments undertaken at Nairobi by a determined follow-up to the Conference. The conclusions of the Nairobi Conference form an integral part of the impressive body of international human rights standards developed by this Organization and in other international forums, in particular over the last 20 years. It is tragic, however, that the universal consensus on these standards is not matched by a similarly universal adherence to the same standards in the practice of States.

Those who exercise their internationally recognized fundamental human rights and those who are active in ensuring the protection of the human rights of others, are often the first to be victimized. Unfortunately, human beings are often subjected to persecution for less, or for no reason at all. Respect for the right to know and act upon one's rights is indeed an indispensable prerequisite for the realization of all human rights.

The political will to co-operate fully with international institutions established to safeguard human rights is another prerequisite for the realization

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of international human rights standards. Time and time again, however, States have refused to co-operate with the international community.

It is the responsibility of Governments to respect and ensure the realization of human rights. Fortunately, however, others share our concern for human rights. Without the activities of individuals and private humanitarian organizations the international effort to promote and protect human rights would lack much of its substance. They deserve our respect and support.

The international economic situation remains characterized by features of transition. In many industrialized countries the economic recovery, which was vigorous in 1983 and especially in 1984, has still to find a level which is sustainable over the medium term.

Invigorated efforts must be made to broaden the recovery and to promote economic development in the third world. In this respect, the role of an open and truly international trade system is of paramount importance. The responsibility for ensuring that this system does not fall victim to the strains inherent in transition should be viewed as one we all share. Other important objectives are the achievement of a further reduction of international interest rates and a higher degree of exchange-rate stability.

However, if developing countries are to benefit fully from the economic recovery their own economic policies are of crucial importance. Many Governments have already taken steps towards the painful but necessary adjustments in the economic conditions their countries are facing. Such endeavours aiming at further mobilization and necessary reallocation of domestic resources for development should, of course, be pursued, but they can only succeed if complemented by determined support from the international community.

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Concessional flows thus remain of the utmost importance to developing countries, in particular to the poorest and least developed among them. The improvement of the global economic situation has been uneven but the recovery now in progress in the industrial world should enhance the possibilities of further increases in official development assistance in the years ahead. Strenuous efforts must be made by the industrialized countries to reach the aid targets agreed upon by the international community.

Denmark remains committed to contributing its share of development aid. In the spring of this year the Danish Parliament adopted a resolution aimed at reaching the 1 per cent target for official development assistance by 1992. Next year Danish development assistance will rise to 0.82 per cent of our gross national product.

As in the past, the major part of Denmark's development assistance is allocated to the poorest countries. The present disturbing downward trend in these countries' share of development assistance must be reversed quickly. The Danish Government sincerely hopes that the midterm review of the substantial new programme of action for the least developed countries, which is to be undertaken in a few days' time, will lead to renewed commitment by all donors to increase substantially their assistance to the least developed countries.

In Sub-Saharan Africa the urgent need for emergency relief is likely to persist for some time. But solidarity with the millions of people who suffer today should divert neither attention nor funds from the long-term development needs of the African countries. Emergency aid and development aid must be closely interrelated if the vicious circle is to be broken.

The multilateral development institutions play an indispensable role in providing assistance to developing countries. It is, therefore, vitally important to secure a stable flow of funds to these organizations. Eroding their budgets by

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reducing contributions - be it little by little or suddenly and sharply - would very seriously affect the development prospects of the third world.

The survival of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is threatened by lack of agreement among donor groups on the principles for a new replenishment. This fund has proved to be a remarkable field for the pursuit of new ideas, new principles, and new approaches to providing assistance to the rural poor of the developing world. Let us make a strong effort to settle the disagreements quickly so that IFAD will be enabled to continue its highly commendable work.

Being one of the major contributors to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Denmark has noted with particular satisfaction the steps which were taken at the United Nations Development Programme's last meeting of the Governing Council to further improve the quality of UNDP's work and to enhance both the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme. It is to be hoped that this will encourage increased support from those donors who at present contribute less than could be expected of them.

Improving the health situation is a major task of United Nations development assistance. In accordance with resolutions adopted by this Assembly in 1976 and 1982 children have been the main target group for immunization programmes to eradicate by 1990 the six most common communicable diseases. It seems highly appropriate that at this fortieth anniversary session we should solemnly confirm our common commitment to take all necessary steps towards the fulfilment of this target.

In my introductory remarks I pointed out that the anniversary celebration in October would be a good occasion for both stocktaking and for looking ahead.

The theme chosen for the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations: "The United Nations - for a better world" covers both these aspects: the stocktaking

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and, in particular, the forward looking. And with good reason. For while we can all agree that despite the efforts of the United Nations the world is not a perfect one, there is fortunately still time for all of us to recommit ourselves - as the Secretary-General has urged on numerous occasions - to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to give the United Nations the priority it deserves in order to enable it to fulfil its vast potential.

Mr. PALMER (New Zealand): I must begin by expressing the profound regret of the New Zealand people at the terrible earthquakes in Mexico. Our thoughts are with the people of Mexico. New Zealand is a country which is subject to earthquakes - we know the devastation they can cause.

It is a privilege and a pleasure for me to address the Assembly over which Ambassador de Piniés presides. I first came to the United Nations as a student intern in the 1960s. By then Ambassador de Piniés had already been a prominent figure here for some years. It is entirely appropriate that he should now have been elected to the Assembly's highest office. I offer him my congratulations, and the full support of my delegation for his efforts to make this fortieth session a fruitful and memorable one.

As we celebrate this fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, the thoughts of all of us must turn to reflect on the aspirations and objectives that were pursued with such energy and confidence when the Charter of this Organization was drawn up. For a New Zealand representative it is natural to remember with pride that our Prime Minister of the day, the Right Honourable Peter Fraser, contributed to this original process with statesmanlike vigour. Today especially I wish to recall and pay homage to the leading role he played in seeking to assert the rights of small countries to the maximum possible protection under the Charter against the vicissitudes of international life and in the aftermath of two World Wars.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

Now, forty years on, this is no less cogent a problem. My Government, by irony of fate, finds itself at this rostrum again concerned to see maintained, in difficult circumstances, the sovereign rights of a small state against the increasingly complex and sophisticated pressures that are generated from larger countries within the international community.

It continues to be my Government's apprehension that, forty years on, the atomic weapon has kept its malign pace along with the existence of the United Nations. No less than in 1945, the horrific atomic shadow still falls across all our proceedings.

In saying that, I am not expressing a platitude. My point is that the continued development of this weapon over the lifetime of our organization has in fact succeeded in distorting the fabric of international life. In our own experience it conditions the sovereign freedoms we had thought in 1945 were once and for all assured to us. At the very least as policies of power are pursued it has impinged on standards of international morality and behaviour.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

In such a political climate, it is natural that smaller countries may turn to the possibilities of collective self-help that the Charter of the United Nations encourages. It is indeed to the advantage of the United Nations that each country contributes the perspective of that part of the world in which it finds itself - the South Pacific - there has over recent years been a growing perception that great Power rivalries could start to extend to our region. The fact is, however, that the strategic circumstances of the South Pacific are not those of the northern hemisphere; nor has the South Pacific so far been an area of great-Power confrontation. It need never be; and our own security is best served by keeping it so.

Against that background the countries in the region have acted. We have set in being the best practical measure of agreed arms control available to us to guard against the emplacement of nuclear weapons in our midst. As was announced earlier this year, the South Pacific Forum countries endorsed and opened for signature on 6 August, the anniversary of Hiroshima Day, a treaty establishing the world's second nuclear-weapon-free zone in a permanently inhabited area. This South Pacific nuclear free zone Treaty signals in no uncertain terms the deeply anti-nuclear sentiments of our peoples, and their desire to live in peace and independence and to run their own affairs in accordance with their own wishes.

It is basic to their peace of mind that there should be no use, testing or stationing of nuclear explosives in the South Pacific, and that the activities of the South Pacific countries themselves should fully respect and fulfil the aims of such applicable international measures as the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

To these ends, all parties to the South Pacific nuclear free zone Treaty undertake not to possess, manufacture or acquire nuclear explosive devices anywhere, nor allow them to be stationed on their territory. They also undertake

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

to prevent the diversion of fissionable material to non-peaceful purposes, and not to dump radioactive waste at sea in the zone.

Under the Treaty, South Pacific countries retain their unqualified sovereign rights to decide for themselves, consistently with their support for these objectives, their security rights, and such questions as the access to their ports and airfields by vessels and aircraft of other countries. The Treaty is not, therefore, some sort of disguised attempt to undermine existing military alliances. It is a determined effort to ensure that the South Pacific is not riven by the tensions which have overshadowed so many other parts of the world.

To the South, the Zone borders the area of another and much older agreement - the Antarctic Treaty. We value that Treaty not just because of the nuclear-free and demilitarized zone it establishes for Antarctica but because for 25 years it has effectively guaranteed the stability of the region to the South of New Zealand. It remains the only possible guarantee that that region will continue to remain free from international rivalry and conflict.

To the East, the new zone borders the area covered by the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The joining of the areas covered by that Treaty and the Antarctic Treaty with the vast area covered by the new Treaty means that a large part of the Southern hemisphere has declared its determination to be free of nuclear weapons. As my own Prime Minister said last year to this General Assembly:

"This initiative represents, I believe, a major advance for the region. It would not, we know, spare us from the consequences of nuclear war but, when in place, it would significantly strengthen the existing measures, both global and regional, to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons." (A/39/PV.7, p. 11)

Now in 1985, with the Treaty concluded and awaiting in due course its entry into force, we see it as a fitting contribution to this anniversary of the United Nations that we are celebrating.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

I should add that the South Pacific Forum countries hope that the five nuclear States will, after consultation with them, sign the relevant Protocols to this Treaty. Thereby they would agree not to use, or threaten to use, nuclear explosive devices against any country or territory in the zone. They would also undertake not to test nuclear explosive devices there.

In this anniversary year of the United Nations, it is painful to have to point out once again that one of the nuclear-weapon States continues to test nuclear explosives in the South Pacific, against the manifest and long-established wish of all the countries in the area that this activity should cease.

These nuclear testing activities have this year led to a new turn of events in the region which, because of its gravity, I am bound to bring to your attention.

Politically motivated offences and terrorism have been virtually unknown in New Zealand in the past. But the scene has changed as a result of the incident in July 1985 in which the Greenpeace vessel "Rainbow Warrior" was sunk at its berth in Auckland, New Zealand, by a bomb attack which killed a crew member. The circumstances indicated international terrorism. It was well known that the vessel was intended to sail to French Polynesia to protest against the continuation of nuclear explosions at Mururoa Atoll. The incident has gained world-wide attention, and the New Zealand Government has made known its determination to bring those responsible to full account for this outrage. Large scale investigations by the New Zealand police are still under way. Within New Zealand, two French nationals have been arrested and charged with murder, arson and conspiracy, and are due to come before the court in New Zealand in November this year.

I shall not expand upon this notorious incident in detail, except to note that the latest public pronouncement by the Prime Minister of France, after the French Government's own most recent investigations, has acknowledged that agents of the French secret services did indeed sink the "Rainbow Warrior", acting under orders

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

to that effect. It had earlier been established that, for the purpose of surveillance of the Greenpeace fleet, elements of French military forces had been deliberately introduced into New Zealand, under orders from their Government, without the permission of the Government of New Zealand and in derogation of our sovereignty.

Small States must place reliance on international law and we must rely on the protection which the international community, through the United Nations, can give us in circumstances of this serious nature.

Enquiries into the "Rainbow Warrior" incident are still being pursued, and the Government of New Zealand is concerned that a traditionally good and highly valued relationship with the Government of France should continue. I am bound to note that the New Zealand Government addressed on 6 September 1985 a formal communication to the Government of France.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

In that message New Zealand has reserved its legal position and its rights of action under international law, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, with respect to matters arising from this unfortunate incident. That is a clear enunciation of our position in relation to an issue which is shown to implicate the responsibility of the French Government.

It is certainly my Government's hope that the most recent statement by the French Prime Minister will provide a basis for resolving outstanding questions between the two Governments arising out of the affair. And I am very pleased to report to the Assembly today that only last evening I met with the French Minister for Foreign Relations, Mr. Dumas, at the New Zealand Mission to the United Nations. We began to discuss possible ways to find solutions to problems arising from the Rainbow Warrior incident, and we have agreed to have another meeting within the next few days.

By virtue of their vulnerability, smaller States have often felt that they must take additional steps to preserve their Charter rights. In the years following the Second World War, a number of countries, including New Zealand, moved, consistently with the Charter, into defensive treaty alliances. This has not meant, however, that countries such as New Zealand have forsaken their right to think for themselves or have abandoned significant sovereign rights. That was not intended.

New Zealand, for example, as a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, has forgone the possession of nuclear weapons. We have also declared unambiguously that we do not want any country to defend New Zealand with nuclear weapons. In short, my Government does not seek to be part of any calculation that involves the accumulation of nuclear weapons. We will not have any nuclear weapons on our territory. We will not allow any to be brought in. And ships that are nuclear armed will not come into New Zealand ports.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

As will be clear from what I have already said in relation to the South Pacific nuclear-free-zone Treaty, we have taken our own stand on principle, because in the South Pacific there is no need for a build-up of nuclear armaments - indeed, the reverse is true.

The stand we have taken is fully consistent with New Zealand's active membership of the Western community. We see our participation in that community, our partnership with our friends and neighbours in the South Pacific and our support for this world Organization as cumulatively strengthening the fabric of peace in our part of the world.

In practical terms, the effect of the re-evaluation of our interests that we have undertaken will be a new concentration of New Zealand's efforts on our immediate neighbourhood. This will involve an expansion of New Zealand's political, economic and defence activities in the South Pacific region and the assertion of an increasingly active role there. This new and strengthened regional approach should provide the basis for a continued, sound and stable relationship with Australia and the United States based on a clear definition of New Zealand's interests and a policy of self-reliance.

Events of recent years lead one to ponder whether the reiteration of the ideals of our Charter over the past 40 years has not bred a measure of easy familiarity, even of complacency, against which we should be very much on our guard in the period ahead. Even those States which themselves generated the great national revolutions - revolutions which inspired the League of Nations and our Charter - have only imperfectly acknowledged in practice the full implications of the existence of newly independent States and the democratic rights those States are perfectly entitled to see maintained and protected.

I hope that our ocean region will not be vulnerable in that respect. It

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certainly need not be, and it is already organized in regional ways to assert its own distinctive voice internationally.

Here, the United Nations can take its due credit in helping a tide of decolonization which has changed the political map of the Pacific dramatically. In 1945 no island country was independent; in 1985 12 are. United Nations stewardship has often been instrumental in the peaceful achievement of self-determination. The Charter, as well as the 1960 Declaration on decolonization, provided the guiding beacons for the navigators who plotted the course towards independence, and the Special Committee of 24 has monitored progress. It still continues to do so, and New Zealand will be happy to receive next year a Visiting Mission from the Committee to the last remaining overseas responsibility which New Zealand has - the island community of Tokelau.

Decolonization in the South Pacific is not yet complete. In Micronesia to the north, lengthy negotiations over many years with the United States have produced Compacts of Free Association which have the support of the relevant peoples of the Trust Territory. We do not believe that unilateral changes should be made now to the agreed definition of the future relationship between the United States and the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. We will, however, look for and support an early termination of the Trusteeship Agreement in respect of those parts of the Trust Territory, in accordance with the expressed wishes of the peoples. We look forward to welcoming the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau into membership of the South Pacific Forum before too long.

Further south, the region watches anxiously the difficulties faced by the people of New Caledonia in building a consensus for independence in that country. The rights and aspirations of the indigenous Kanak people must be met in the

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

context of New Caledonia's multiracial society. We regret the violence and loss of life which have occurred over the past year. New Zealand supports the present plan for the establishment of regional councils and a congress, leading to a referendum on self-determination before the end of 1987. We welcome the recognition by the administering Power, France, that independence is the logical outcome of this process. It will be important to ensure that the steps outlined are adhered to. The Kanaks have been disappointed too often in the past. Only by following a predictable and short pathway to independence can further disruption and violence be avoided.

I have already noted that political emancipation and the assertion of a say in their own destiny have led the South Pacific countries to early recognition of the desirability of co-operation with each other. Political independence in the Pacific, as elsewhere, is not automatically accompanied by economic self-determination, but acting together has strengthened the voice of the region in international forums. And it can assist in tackling some of the intractable problems arising from smallness, isolation and a scarcity of resources. The island States depend heavily on external assistance. The international price of copra and sugar has a profound affect on people's daily lives. Some significant regional efforts have been made under the auspices of the South Pacific Forum to improve trade access, shipping, telecommunications and the knowledge and control of marine mineral and fishing resources.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

Distant water fishing nations have been less respectful of the region's main resource in the past. This situation is improving, largely as a result of the cohesiveness of the Pacific Forum nations, and important multilateral negotiations with the Government of the United States on a treaty regulating fishing are currently under way. A successful conclusion will make possible control of purse seiner activity within the 200-mile economic zones of Pacific signatories, and eliminate an area of serious friction. New Zealand looks to the United Nations and other international bodies to continue to help in overcoming the problems of economic security for the very small island States, in support of the region's own efforts to do so.

One issue on which the countries of the South Pacific are united is that of racial discrimination. We all have multiracial societies; we are all committed to making racial harmony the foundation for our nation-building. It follows that we are all totally opposed to the systematic racial discrimination that is practised in South Africa under the name of apartheid. Since my Government came to office last year we have demonstrated our commitment to that cause: the South Africans have closed their consulate in Wellington, and a proposed rugby tour of South Africa has been cancelled. All New Zealanders are appalled by the rising tide of violence that is threatening to engulf South Africa. The South African Government must be persuaded to institute the necessary reforms before it is too late. It must be brought to realize that it cannot maintain apartheid by force. It must talk unconditionally to the leaders of the black majority. It must accept that racial partnership offers the only hope for the future of that tormented country. All of us must do whatever we can in a concerted way to produce this result. New Zealand's contacts with South Africa, whether economic or otherwise, are now minimal. I need hardly say that we shall readily comply with any additional sanctions imposed by the international community.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

I have focused on practical issues of importance to our Pacific neighbourhood - because it is in workable solutions to those issues that the elements lie for continued stable and peaceful development in the South Pacific. We are aware of the larger dimensions to all these problems, and notably of the tensions that impede the prospect of achieving genuine disarmament in our time.

Implicit in what I said earlier is that my part of the world is by no means impressed either with the speed of the global disarmament process or with the failure of the nuclear Powers to reach agreement on limiting their nuclear arsenals.

In the General Assembly last year my Government gave expression to the conviction amongst New Zealanders, as amongst peoples everywhere, that nuclear weapons expose to annihilation those whom they purport to protect; that each new development in nuclear weaponry opens up a more alarming and a potentially more destabilizing prospect than the last. There are already more than enough nuclear weapons to destroy us all many times over. Yet the number goes on increasing. The dilemma is recognized universally. To control the spread of nuclear weapons and eventually to eliminate them completely are goals of the greatest importance. Where those who have them and those who do not seem to differ is in the sense of urgency. And it is to the United Nations that smaller countries such as my own must look to express that agonizing conviction, which has so recently been voiced by the vast majority of countries assembled at the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference just concluded in Geneva.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

A year ago the Soviet Union agreed to take up the offer of the United States to resume bilateral arms control negotiations, with the goal of leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons everywhere. My Government greatly welcomed that move. The issues are complex. We know only too well that there will be no easy or necessarily quick solutions. But solutions are not beyond the skills of negotiation if the political will is there. New Zealand calls on the negotiating parties to pursue their task with good faith and the utmost urgency. The time is past for picking around the edges of the agenda or for diversionary proposals - time-bound and shrouded in propaganda.

We would view with the deepest concern any prospect of competition between the major Powers extending into yet another environment - outer space. But we do not accept that there can be no progress in the talks on strategic weapons and intermediate-range nuclear forces as long as there is no agreement on outer space. The talks must not be held hostage in this way.

Much hangs on the meeting that will take place shortly between President Reagan and General-Secretary Gorbachev. We most earnestly hope for a successful outcome. We do not for a moment underestimate the complexities of the issues the two leaders must deal with. But we urge them to set a framework for a new co-operation from which the negotiations in Geneva may derive the momentum they need to reach agreements to stop the arms race.

At the same time, the efforts of the international community towards meaningful international arms control agreements must continue. The Conference on Disarmament addresses many important issues. No task is more difficult than to forge reliable instruments of international law. But progress in the Conference on Disarmament is, at best, haltingly slow. We urge it to get on with its tasks with commitment and determination.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

This Assembly considers many disarmament and arms control proposals in the course of its deliberations. Many of these recommend what is practical and achievable. Some are symptomatic only of an ideological divide.

One of the most serious proposals before the Assembly will again be the draft resolution, jointly sponsored by New Zealand and Australia, urging the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban. A comprehensive test ban, banning all testing in all environments permanently, is regarded by virtually all States as the most immediate and practical step that can be taken to halt and then reverse the arms race. Balanced, practical, verifiable, it will be a major restraint on the spread of nuclear weapons. It will straitjacket the development of new types of weapons without undermining existing strategic balances. It will inhibit compulsive competitiveness among the nuclear Powers.

On two occasions, in the early sixties and in the late seventies, agreement was almost achieved on a comprehensive test ban. We have been disappointed by the setbacks which have prevented such a prohibition from being put in place. My delegation will again seek the means to encourage and speed up this work.

We are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. Time has not produced universal contentment with this Organization. Some of the criticisms which have been made arise from exaggerated and unrealistic expectations. As the Secretary-General reminds us in his latest annual report, the United Nations is not a super-State. It cannot do more than its Members will allow it to do. The policies of Member States have so far prevented the Organization from exercising some of the powers given it by the Charter. They have also prevented it from achieving some of its fundamental purposes. Those are facts.

(Mr. Palmer, New Zealand)

It is also a fact that the Charter remains the only universally accepted basis of international order. The principles it enshrines are generally recognized today, as they were 40 years ago, to be essential for world peace; and those principles are the foundations of the international régime under which we all live - a régime which, with all its failings, gives individual countries and peoples more freedom than they have ever had before. The United Nations is today the beacon of hope for all small nations. It is their democratic voice by which they can express their fears and their aspirations.

The essential function of this Organization is to uphold the principles of the Charter. First in importance is the principle that "all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force". Living, as we do, under the threat of nuclear annihilation, we have as strong a common interest as ever in supporting the United Nations and helping to achieve this, its most elusive, but its most vital, objective.

Mr. PAPOULIAS (Greece) (spoke in Greek; English text furnished by the delegation): Let me at the very outset extend to Ambassador de Piniés of Spain my warmest congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly. The Greek Government is particularly happy with his election, seeing in him the representative of a country with which Greece maintains traditional bonds of friendship, both countries being Mediterranean neighbours. Moreover, we welcome the election of a person with long years of experience in the United Nations and with great diplomatic skills and innate tact. These qualities ensure the success of his mission.

I also wish to congratulate the outgoing President, Ambassador Lusaka, on the successful way in which he carried out his difficult task.

(Mr. Papoulias, Greece)

It would be remiss of me not to refer at this point to the complex and demanding work of the Secretary-General. Devoted to his mission, in spite of the obstacles he encounters, he spares no effort to serve the cause of peace and to secure the best possible functioning of our Organization.

Our thoughts turn at this time to the people of Mexico, who have been grievously tried by the earthquake that struck that country. In a hopeful sign of international solidarity, the world community has declared itself ready to assist the Government and people of Mexico at this moment of hardship. My country will offer assistance within its possibilities.

The United Nations - that is to say, all of us - is celebrating the fortieth anniversary of our Organization. The Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Papandreou, will be presenting to the General Assembly, in a few weeks, Greece's views on the future of the Organization. At this time, however, I should like to point out that the United Nations constitutes a highly important international forum. This is so not only because of the wide spectrum of participation in it or of the Organization's prestige but mostly because it provides mechanisms that can be of help in the cause of peace, on condition that the political will of States concurs. We should not, however, underestimate the importance of our Organization as a venue where it is possible to meet and to exchange views and ideas.

For all these reasons, Greece has consistently supported the principle of the universality of the Organization. We hope that the obstacles still hindering the accession to membership of a very small number of States may be removed so that universality can be fully implemented.

It is still, however, a sad fact that, 40 years after the foundation of the United Nations, some of its basic principles remain in many cases dead letters. The United Nations has often confined itself to the role of passive observer of

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violations of its Charter. Interventions to resolve armed conflicts, when undertaken, have come late and focused rather on the external symptoms than on the real causes. We have, therefore, to find ways that will enable the Security Council to deal with conflicts from the very outset and establish procedures that will secure the implementation of the Council's resolutions.

Nevertheless, the United Nations should not be blamed exclusively for not having succeeded, during its 40 years of existence, in preventing crises, wars and bloodshed. This is because the Organization is based essentially upon the political will of its Members and its effectiveness depends primarily on the orientation of their policies, especially those of the great Powers. That is why Greece, along with all other countries, particularly the smaller ones, is looking forward to the forthcoming meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev and expresses the hope that positive results will be achieved - because, to be quite frank about it, the policies of the two super-Powers, as well as the relationships between them, have a decisive impact upon the issues of international security. We sincerely hope that a sense of high international responsibility will prevail at that meeting, since a number of important issues depend on its outcome.

The Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, Mr. Poos, President of the Council of Ministers of the European Community, of which Greece is a member, has presented the views of the Community on various international problems. I should like, however, to refer to certain points on the agenda, stressing Greece's position on them.

Unfortunately, this year's agenda still focuses on items such as international security and the closely related question of disarmament, the huge chapter of human rights, the issue of international economic disparities and violations of fundamental provisions of the Charter in the form of infringement upon the sovereignty of various States. That provides a sad and most alarming picture of world affairs. Will it be possible to achieve some progress, however modest,

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on these questions during this year's session of the General Assembly? As I have said, the answer will depend on the will of the Members of our Organization.

As regards the main items on the agenda of the General Assembly, I should like to start by outlining the basic positions of the Greek Government concerning the issues of security and the arms race.

Greece is deeply attached to the fundamental principles and ideals of the United Nations Charter and advocates the peaceful settlement of disputes, being convinced that security cannot be maintained in a climate characterized by recourse to force, military interventions, acts of aggression or occupation of territory by foreign troops.

Security and disarmament are closely linked to each other. Therefore, strengthening international security cannot be achieved through increased armaments.

Only the creation of a climate of mutual confidence in relations between States can lead to the solution of international security problems.

We consider it necessary to reinforce the mechanisms of disarmament as well as all the efforts of the United Nations aimed at safeguarding peace and at eliminating the risks of a nuclear disaster.

Greece is in favour of a mutual and gradual reduction of nuclear armaments by both the East and the West to the lowest possible level and supports all necessary efforts to that end, such as the adoption of effective means of verification.

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We are firmly opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Their introduction into outer space could lead to great tensions with grave consequences for mankind.

Greece also attaches particular importance to the limitation of conventional armaments, not only because their accumulation has considerable economic repercussions on the peoples of the world but also because the existence of huge conventional arsenals could lead to local conflicts and possibly even to nuclear confrontation.

We are deeply concerned about the proliferation and use of chemical weapons in violation of international commitments. For this reason we are convinced that the total ban on the production and use of these weapons as well as the complete destruction of existing stockpiles is one of the most important issues we face.

I should not fail to mention, at this point, how significant disarmament is for economic growth, especially that of the less developed countries.

Being a small country firmly attached to the cause of peace, not only out of necessity but also because of its long cultural tradition, Greece has no illusions as to its power to influence international developments in a decisive manner. Nevertheless, the Greek Government believes that the cause of peace is of critical importance for the whole of the international community and therefore even smaller countries can contribute to it, both through their bilateral relations and through their overall policies.

In this spirit of collective responsibility for world peace, Greece makes every possible effort to contribute towards détente at a local or wider level. Within this framework, the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Andreas Papandreou, together with the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Mexico, the United Republic of Tanzania, India and Sweden, has joined in an appeal, the "Initiative of

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the Six", which calls for a freeze on the testing, production and development of nuclear weapons and for the adoption of similar measures in the field of space weapons.

In the same spirit, the Greek Government, while promoting bilateral relations, attaches particular importance to the situation in the Balkans, an area regarded only a few decades ago as the powder-keg of Europe. To this end, we are promoting the proposal to transform the Balkans into a nuclear-free zone. These efforts have not as yet yielded concrete results; nevertheless, positive steps have been taken in the direction of multilateral co-operation on security matters. In the bilateral field, Greece has also reached an enviable level of co-operation with most of its neighbours.

Within this context Greece closely follows developments in the Mediterranean, a sea not only of the Balkan peninsula and of the rest of Southern Europe but also one that links three continents. The Mediterranean, therefore, receives directly repercussions from the various crisis points in the area. For these reasons, my Government fully supports every effort which could lead to the consolidation of peace, the expansion of co-operation and the unhindered development of all the Mediterranean peoples, so that the Mediterranean may one day become a sea of peace and not an area of military confrontation.

Consistent with its overall policy in favour of peace and détente, my country has always supported the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process as a means of maintaining a dialogue between East and West. We should like to reiterate our hope that existing differences will be finally overcome so that the Stockholm Conference may achieve its objectives in due course.

I should like to refer, within the overall context of international peace and security, to another phenomenon which in recent years has repeatedly shocked the

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international community, that is to say, various cases of terrorist activity. The Greek Government categorically and unreservedly condemns these acts.

Another question that deeply preoccupies my Government is the protection of human rights, namely, the well-established civil and political liberties and the social, economic and cultural rights. We see with great satisfaction that the United Nations continues its efforts in this field, without being discouraged by the many obstacles it encounters and the many flagrant violations of human rights that frequently occur all over the world. The last session of the General Assembly approved, by consensus, the international Convention against torture. We hope that this Convention will be universally respected.

By enacting recently a special law categorizing torture as a criminal act, Greece has become a pioneer in the field of attempting to eradicate torture. Greece has also submitted recently to the Council of Europe a proposal aiming at the adoption of similar legislation on torture by the member States of this organization.

The Nairobi World Conference of 1985, marking the end of the United Nations Decade for Women, identified the obstacles as well as the achievements of the goals of the Decade. It adopted new strategies for the rest of the century which are designed to improve the status of women and to integrate them into all aspects of development.

The Greek Government believes that, although the Decade has contributed substantially to a world-wide awareness of women's problems as well as to a greater understanding of their needs, the challenge remains. We still face the question as to how to intensify our efforts for the adoption of concrete measures for the total eradication of discrimination based on sex, at the national, regional and international levels.

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We therefore hope that the spirit of compromise which prevailed at Nairobi will be maintained at the General Assembly for the adoption of the Forward-looking Strategies by consensus, as well as for the adoption of concrete measures for the implementation of the achievements of the Conference.

The Greek Government is seriously concerned about the problem of international economic disparities. For third-world countries their excessive external debt is a major negative factor in their efforts to achieve development. A great part of their financial resources, which would otherwise be directed towards development targets, is spent in order to service their external debt. We consider that the adoption of long-term approaches would be the most appropriate method of coping with this problem. The stagnation regarding the North-South dialogue is also particularly disturbing. We believe that no effort should be spared to overcome existing difficulties. Greece has consistently supported efforts to reinforce international solidarity aiming at a more balanced development of the international economy.

The unprecedented drought and the subsequent famine which, particularly during the last year, have hit almost the entire African continent have aggravated the severe economic crisis as well as the tragic problem of the continent's nearly 5 million refugees. Despite this year's relative improvement in some areas, the rapid desertification of wide areas is still spreading and famine still exists. It was gratifying to see the international community take vigorous measures with a view to averting greater disasters.*

* Mr. Gauci (Malta), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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Unfortunately, all these efforts are but half-measures. Such disasters have occurred in the past and are bound to occur again. The only solution is through long-term structural reforms to support the fragile structures of the economies of the African countries, and also to enhance the effectiveness of the system designed to deal with the famine crisis and natural disasters. The fact that during our era of waste and affluence there are still people being deprived of the primary human right - the right to life - is a disgrace to our civilization. The Greek Government has taken action, within its capabilities, to assist in the relief of the distressed peoples of Africa, and will continue to do so for as long as the need is there.

We have had no indication during the past year that solutions to the various problems which confront the United Nations are forthcoming. In fact, some of them - the situation in South Africa in particular - have deteriorated.

During the past few months the international community has been shocked by developments in South Africa. The serious deterioration in terms of bloody clashes in South Africa, especially during the past year, which culminated in the proclamation of a partial state of emergency, urgently calls for immediate, practical and substantial measures on the part of the South African Government. It is now absolutely imperative that a real dialogue be established between the South African Government and the authentic representatives of the non-white population of the country, directed towards the peaceful abolition of the inadmissible system of apartheid. The insistence by the Government of Pretoria on maintaining the inhuman system of apartheid has brought about, as expected, universal revulsion. Greece has repeatedly and in the strongest possible terms condemned this repugnant system. We reject any attempt by the South African Government to split the

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non-white majority, either by selectively granting nominal rights to parts of the population or through the continuation of its homelands policy.

Last year we expressed the hope that the agreements concluded between South Africa and neighbouring States could contribute to the normalization of the situation in the region. Unfortunately, the expectation that those agreements could contribute to a climate of dialogue, peace and détente in the area has not materialized. During the past year South Africa has continued its destabilization policy against neighbouring States, particularly Angola and Mozambique - a policy which has been condemned by the Security Council and the entire international community. The front-line States should be given full international assistance so that they may safeguard their sovereignty and territorial integrity, and promote their economic and social development, which is now in jeopardy.

The persistent refusal by South Africa to grant effective independence to Namibia constitutes an unacceptable offence against the will of the international community. It is the Greek Government's firm conviction that the question of Namibia can be solved only through the full, immediate and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

The Middle East problem dates from the very first years of our Organization. It may present itself occasionally under different aspects, but the substance of the problem remains always the same - how to find a way in which the Arab countries and Israel may coexist in peace.

My Government's position on this problem is clear and has been repeatedly stated. We believe that the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied since 1967 is a sine qua non in order to achieve a just and lasting solution, which

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will be beneficial not only to one side but to both parties to the conflict. We believe that the Palestinians, no less than all the other peoples on earth, are entitled to exercise fully the right to self-determination, including the right to create their own State. We believe that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, has an essential role to play in the efforts to reach a solution to the problem - efforts in which all interested parties should participate.

It goes without saying that my Government, as well as supporting the rights of the Palestinian people, supports the right of Israel to exist within secure and internationally recognized borders.

Greece attaches particular importance to the security of the inhabitants of the occupied territories, who have repeatedly had their rights violated during the past years. In the Middle East conflict, as in the Cyprus question, we condemn without reservation all efforts to impose faits accomplis. We condemn any form of violence against inhabitants of the occupied territories.

During the past months we have observed increased activity on the Middle East problem. It may still be too early to tell whether those efforts will bear fruit. The Greek Government is watching those efforts closely and with great interest, and supports any initiative which would lead to a just, comprehensive and lasting solution.

The situation in Lebanon causes us grave concern. We appeal to all the parties involved to cease this fratricidal struggle and devote themselves to the difficult task of reconciliation and the rebuilding of their country. We also call upon all those who exert influence in Lebanon to make every effort to ensure that the confrontation ends so that Lebanon may deal with the problems of reconstruction

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as a unified, independent and sovereign State, with its territorial integrity unimpaired and its central authority extended over the whole territory of the Republic.

The Greek Government strongly regrets the prolongation of the war between Iran and Iraq. Despite a certain decrease in military operations, the perpetuation of the war causes, among other things, heavy human and material losses, and is a constant threat to world peace. Greece, which maintains friendly relations with both parties, believes that only early negotiations can restore peace in the region. Greece is prepared to offer its good offices to help bring the war to an end.

The Greek Government is also concerned with two cases of continuing foreign intervention in Asia: I am referring here to Afghanistan and Kampuchea. I should like to stress unequivocally that foreign troops in those countries should be withdrawn as soon as possible, in accordance with United Nations resolutions, so that those countries may regain their independence and non-aligned status. I should like, in this context, to praise the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat in general. I also express my appreciation for the efforts made by the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in order to promote a solution to the problem of Kampuchea.

In Central America the situation remains fluid and gives cause for concern. We continue to believe firmly that a solution to the region's problems can be obtained only through peaceful means with significant steps in the social and economic fields.

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In its desire to contribute to the solution of those problems, my country, as is known, participates with the other member States of the European Community in the common effort to help promote dialogue with the countries of Central America, which started last year in San Jose. We look forward with particular interest to the continuation of the dialogue with those countries, to be resumed at ministerial level in Luxembourg on 11 and 12 November. We support the efforts of the Contadora group, and we hope that the interested parties will show the necessary political will so that those efforts may lead, as soon as possible, to the signing of the Revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America.

We cannot but express our deep satisfaction over the recent developments in certain countries in South America. The transition of many South American countries from an authoritarian to a democratic régime of elected Governments constitutes a fact of great importance, which we all welcome. At the same time we express the wish that that process of democratization will extend to those South American countries which still do not enjoy a free democratic life, whose peoples are obliged to struggle for the conquest of democracy.

I have left for the very end the issue which is of primary importance to my Government and also for Hellenism in general. I am referring to the Cyprus question. I shall be brief, both because it is for my colleague, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Cyprus, to refer to the details of the problem and because the facts are more or less well known to all.

Eleven years have passed since the Turkish army invaded Cyprus, and Turkey proceeded to the de facto dismemberment of the Republic by militarily occupying roughly 37 per cent of its territory and through the subsequent forced movement of the population. Ever since, the Turkish side has tried to impose an exceedingly complex and unyielding constitutional system in order not only to legalize partition but also to obtain effective control over the whole of the Republic.

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Turkey, furthermore, is trying to perpetuate the presence of its troops through the pretext of Turkish guarantees.

To put it bluntly, Ankara wants in practice to make of the Republic of Cyprus a Turkish protectorate. If it were only a question of the security of the Turkish-Cypriot community, as Turkey claims, that could easily have been achieved through reinforced effective guarantees by the international community, as has repeatedly been proposed by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, supported by my Government.

For more than a year the Secretary-General has given the Cyprus question his particular and active attention. My Government has from the beginning supported, and it continues to support, the Secretary-General in his mission of good offices. The Government of the Republic of Cyprus has shown good will and great flexibility, and has made concessions which may have gone beyond safe limits. Turkey, however, pursues in Cyprus its own geopolitical goals and therefore remains intransigent, raising completely unacceptable claims. It is against those goals that all efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem have foundered.

The Greek Government has repeatedly stated that it supports a just and viable solution of the problem, to the benefit of all Cypriots, both Greek and Turkish. Furthermore, it has clearly stated that it would be inconceivable to contemplate any solution which did not entail the complete withdrawal of Turkish occupation troops from the territory of the Republic of Cyprus at the time of the agreement.

We sincerely hope that the Secretary-General's efforts will succeed, so that at last there may be reached a solution guaranteeing the territorial integrity and the unity of the Cypriot State, in order that the whole Cypriot population may live according to established democratic principles, under conditions of freedom, justice and security.

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When States take an independent position vis-à-vis existing blocs, that is an invaluable contribution to the cause of peace, since it creates a balancing factor between opposing views. For that reason I should like to express once more the profound esteem of the Greek Government for the non-aligned countries and to express the hope that they will continue to affect positively the international situation, with cohesion and with a high sense of international responsibility.

Greece continues to trust in the United Nations, in spite of its inevitable weaknesses. If Member States apply in practice the principles we unanimously adopted 40 years ago, we can hope for a better future. Our ultimate goal should remain world peace in freedom and justice.

Mr. HALLGRIMSSON (Iceland): Allow me to join my colleagues who have congratulated the President upon his election. I am convinced that his skills and wisdom, based not least on his long experience as an active participant in the work of the Organization, will greatly help him in his high office.

I also wish to associate myself with those who have expressed their condolences to the Government and the people of Mexico on their great loss in the great disaster that has befallen their country. Iceland welcomes Brazil's proposal, and its acceptance, of an international relief effort through the United Nations system.

The fortieth session is indeed a proper forum to take stock and to review past achievements as well as failures and shortcomings. We know that there are many who have been, and are, ready to criticize the Organization. The criticism has sometimes been unfair and unfounded, but unfortunately it has too often been justified. Constructive and positive criticism is always in order, and, indeed, necessary, because only with such criticism will improvements be made.

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In my statement at the thirty-ninth session I criticized, as have many others, the organization of work of the General Assembly, its working methods and its perpetual repetition of resolutions, some for decades, instead of earnestly seeking the solution of the problems they address. I therefore read with great attention the conclusions of 11 former Presidents of the Assembly, reflecting their views and proposals, as a result of their deliberation last June on the crisis of multilateralism as it affects the United Nations and improvement of the General Assembly.

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In my view our Organization could not have been given a more significant and useful anniversary present than the wise recommendations they have advanced. It only remains for us to adopt the improvements they have recommended to us.

I am not one of those who maintain the view that the Charter of the United Nations is basically at fault and requires drastic revision and amendments. I consider the Charter a remarkable document - in fact, a milestone in the history of human progress.

The problem is not the imperfections of the Charter but the lack of political will to implement its provisions fully.

It is believed that history is apt to repeat itself. The role of the United Nations - our role - is to prevent undesirable things from repeating themselves in relations between States in so far as this is humanly possible. The success of our efforts will in large degree depend on the approach we adopt: whether we approach the unsolved problems with some flexibility in a spirit of conciliation or whether we enter on or continue along a dead-end course.

All our peoples have at one point or another been faced with crises or critical situations. Trying to master them is of course most important, but almost equally important is to grasp the lessons that such ordeals can teach those who are ready to learn. We can no doubt learn much from each other's experience.

Almost a thousand years ago a civil war was about to break out in my country during a parliamentary session between those who wanted the nation to keep its faith in the old heathen gods and those who advocated Christianity. This was certainly one of the most critical moments in the entire history of my people. The matter was referred for arbitration to one of the wisest of the chieftains. After due reflection he delivered his verdict in what is the earliest parliamentary speech on record in my country. This speech of a thousand years ago is brief, and

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its brevity could serve as an example to us who address this Assembly. For the lasting wisdom it contains, however, allow me to share with the Assembly the account of this memorable speech:

"[He] said that he thought the state of the nation to have come to a sorry pass if people did not all keep one law in this land... and that it would lead to such discord, surely to be expected, that fighting would take place amongst the people such as would destroy the land ... But now I think it wise that we should not let those rule who most want to contend, but should mediate so between them that each keeps something of his cause, and we should all keep one law and one faith. It will prove true that as we sunder the law, so shall we sunder the peace."

He, who was himself a heathen, then declared that all men should be Christians. Those who had adhered to the old faith were permitted to continue certain religious practices but only on the condition that they did so in complete privacy, with no witnesses present - thus spelling the gradual dying out of the heathen faith.

The speech speaks for itself and requires no comment or explanation on my part.

Let me only stress that, while urging the States Members of the United Nations to refrain from the use of armed force and to seek a solution of their internal as well as external differences through conciliation and compromise, it is imperative that we do not lose sight of any of the basic principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

There are many burning world issues to be dealt with at this Assembly, some of which, hopefully, will be brought closer to being resolved.

The Preamble to our Charter states that the United Nations was founded "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

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However, according to the most recent statistics published by the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, 20 million people have been killed in some 150 wars during the 40 years of the existence of the United Nations - 3 million more lives lost than in the Second World War.

It is worth considering that, throughout this period, Western Europe and North America have enjoyed peace, and the thought is prevalent to credit this to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which was established in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

Has not the time come for us to do something effective to halt and prevent all armed conflicts, which are so costly in human lives and cause such infinite misery?

Has not the time come to take full advantage of the provisions of the Charter and thus make the Security Council the true and effective guardian of international peace, as the founding fathers intended?

Has not the time come for us to strengthen the Secretary-General's role in this field and help him develop early-warning procedures to tackle world crises before they unfold?

It is indeed timely. And in this connection permit me once again to draw members' attention to the proposals of the five Nordic Foreign Ministers dealing with exactly this subject which were introduced in the Security Council and the General Assembly two years ago.

Respect for international law and order can be strengthened and parties to disputes made to abide by resolutions of the Security Council only if the Member States stand united behind the Secretary-General and the Organization in their efforts to bring this about.

Article 26 of the Charter gives the Security Council a leading role in the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments. The Council has been unable to achieve this goal. However, arms limitations and disarmament have been

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among the main topics of the General Assembly. The arms race began in the early years of the United Nations. Many sensible resolutions have been adopted by the Assembly during all these years but, contrary to our earnest hopes, the pace of the arms race has increased in equal proportion to the growing number of resolutions on disarmament and arms limitation adopted each year by the General Assembly. I think we should take the advice of the 11 former Presidents of the General Assembly to reduce the number and length of these resolutions and concentrate our efforts on finding a consensus for their implementation.

World military expenditures doubled between 1960 and 1983 to reach \$800 billion that year and are estimated to exceed \$1,000 billion this year. In 14 years, from 1968 to 1982, the international arms trade and transfers increased threefold. This illustrates the situation and the pace of the arms race.

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The arms race and the nuclear threat is of increasing concern to my people and the Althing, our Parliament, unanimously resolved at its last session that it was of the utmost urgency that the nations of the world, not least the nuclear Powers, conclude agreements on reciprocal and comprehensive disarmament, compliance with which would be subject to international control and verification.

The two super-Powers have by far the greatest possibility of changing the present situation for the better. They have been at odds and unable to conclude a comprehensive agreement on the reduction of armaments, including nuclear arms. The whole world realizes that a nuclear war may mean total destruction, and the so-called conventional weapons have assumed a destructive power which makes agreements on their control almost equally important.

We have asked ourselves time and again: why then have the leading Powers been unable to come to any decisive agreement as it seems to be of such great benefit and advantage for both of them and, indeed, for the whole of mankind?

Whenever there have been some breakthroughs, however limited, in this field, high hopes have been raised in the international community. They were regarded as a conciliation between the super-Powers and the first steps towards general and complete disarmament. Unfortunately that has not been the case.

But why have the efforts to establish arms control and disarmament been so fruitless? Why were the agreements obtained so imperfect and limited? In my opinion, it is mainly due to the fact that the Soviet Union has not agreed to an effective and mutual verification system.

Verification is a focal point in debates here in this Assembly on disarmament measures. It is generally recognized by experts in this field that there is little if any hope for progress in disarmament negotiations, if an effective system of verification is not an integral part of any agreement the parties are trying to

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reach. I believe that United Nations experts in disarmament affairs and our Secretary-General share this opinion.

In a speech which the Secretary-General delivered at Harvard University on 9 January this year he said, inter alia, that the achievement of future disarmament agreements might be made easier if cognizance is taken of the largely unexploited capacity of the United Nations to serve as an objective monitor of compliance. And in this speech he says further:

"Suggestions have been made for a United Nations Satellite Agency, for seismic stations and for a system of air observations to verify compliance with disarmament undertakings. Given the vital importance of verification to disarmament, the capacity of the United Nations to provide this service, if only in limited circumstances, could constitute a most valuable asset in future disarmament negotiations."

In view of these most pertinent remarks of the Secretary-General, I hope that the Assembly will, as a mark of increasing realism, in dealing with these vital questions, take good care that resolutions adopted do not lack adequate provisions calling for effective verification.

I am unable to explain why the Soviet Union has not up to now been able to agree to effective verification procedures, but I certainly hope that in the negotiations now taking place in Geneva they will recognize the necessity for verification. And indeed I hope that when the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union meet in Geneva in November they will succeed in reaching a mutual understanding on this vital point and thereby make significant progress concerning the limitation of nuclear armaments.

The Icelandic people - an island nation - depend for their existence almost exclusively on the living resources of the sea. We are therefore obviously deeply concerned over the increase in the build-up of naval arms. It was with this in

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mind that we co-sponsored General Assembly resolutions for the purpose of carrying out a comprehensive study on naval forces and naval arms systems.

A group of governmental experts under the able Chairmanship of Ambassador Alatas of Indonesia has now adopted by consensus and submitted an interesting study on these complex issues. The study underlines vividly the difficult task of making the necessary arrangements to increase mutual trust in order to halt and reverse the naval arms race. The main aim of these efforts is to facilitate the identification of possible areas for disarmament and confidence building measures in the naval field. The different needs of nations for naval forces to ensure their security in accordance with the United Nations Charter must, of course, be taken into account, as well as the implications for international security. Equal and undiminished security for all states at the lowest practical level of armaments is what we are striving for.

Another issue now in the foreground is the odious racial policy of apartheid so brutally pursued by the Government of South Africa.

On this issue, the policy of my Government, indeed of all the Nordic countries, is well known to this Assembly. The five Nordic countries have since 1978 followed a joint programme of action against the inhuman, cruel and archaic policy of apartheid. Such action programmes have also been adopted by other countries and will add to the growing pressure which we hope that sooner rather than later will lead the Government of South Africa to abandon the system of apartheid.

When directing our efforts towards South Africa, let us not, however, forget the gross injustices in many other countries of the world. Improvements must certainly also take place wherever else injustice now reigns.

I want to pledge the support of my Government and the Icelandic people to the work and the efforts constantly being made within the framework of the United

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Nations to further and enhance human rights everywhere in the world. Human rights, democracy and freedom are closely linked and are the prerequisite for a lasting world peace.

Through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Covenants it has become possible to internationalize action to promote human rights. Violations of human rights are no longer a purely national internal affair as they were considered to be. A vast majority of States is now committed to respecting the human rights conventions.

People in some countries where their fellow citizens are still, for political reasons, being killed, imprisoned or taken to lunatic asylums, denied the freedom of travel, dispossessed or deprived of basic human rights, may feel that these conventions are just a piece of paper and nothing more. We certainly understand their despair. The international community, having the right to observe national situations and to react to violations of human rights, should indeed do so wherever these occur.

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It is among the fundamental principles of our Charter that both individual human beings and States have the right to self-determination. All States, in particular those still in the moulding process, need the right to choose independently their form of government. And they must have the right to decide for themselves who they want as partners in co-operation, and should never be forced by more powerful States into collaboration they do not want. Cases in point are the brutal military invasions of foreign Powers in Afghanistan and Kampuchea.

The success of the North-South dialogue in terms of a sensible solution is indeed vital to human rights and welfare. Free trade is in my view a requisite of such a solution.

With regard to the critical economic situation in Africa, I welcome the fact that a consensus was reached in the Economic and Social Council this summer on a resolution on this subject. Although concessional flows are important, relaxation of trade restrictions and improved trading terms, including better prices for goods from the developing countries, as well as a shift in agricultural policies, are of no less importance in redressing the situation.

Coming from a country heavily dependent on foreign trade, I am deeply concerned over the increasing protectionist pressures apparent in many countries. We must resist the temptation to give way to these pressures, for experience has taught us that in the end everyone will lose. The maintenance and expansion of free trade within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade is especially important now, in view of the delicate situation of the world economy, and in my opinion a new round of multilateral trade negotiations should be undertaken as soon as possible.

Iceland has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and we are among those who believe that this is one of the most important international

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conventions ever concluded, and a constructive proof of a great United Nations accomplishment in the interest of all mankind.

In this important field we must all have one law and therefore we strongly urge all United Nations Member States who have not already done so to ratify or accede to this Convention at their earliest convenience.

The United Nations initiated the Decade for Women which is now nearing its end. In Iceland the Decade began with wide publicity surrounding a work stoppage on United Nations Day, 24 October, in 1975, the International Women's Year - when Icelandic women took a day off from paid and unpaid work in order to let their contribution to society be clearly felt, realized and appreciated.

This important United Nations initiative has had specific legal results in Iceland and has encouraged the development of a greater role for Icelandic women in their society. The successful outcome of the Nairobi Conference was an important achievement in international co-operation, when nearly 160 nations agreed on matters concerning women's welfare in general, and their right to a better life. It is our firm hope and belief that the results of the United Nations Decade for Women will continue to lead to irreversible improvements in the lot of women in all parts of the world.

The United Nations has dedicated this year to the youth of the world. Youth is the future. Let us hope that the preamble of our Charter will become a reality for those who are young now and that they will inherit from us a better international situation and a closer and more dynamic co-operation among the peoples of the Earth than we have ever enjoyed.

Let us pledge that we will do our utmost to make the dream come true, that the young generation in the world today will enjoy a happier and more fulfilling life than any generation before, breaking neither the law nor the peace.