



General Assembly

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ENGLISH

Fortieth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 25 September 1985, at 3 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. DE PINIÉS	(Spain)
later:	Mr. AL-ASHTAL (Vice-President)	(Democratic Yemen)
later:	Mr. DE PINIÉS (President)	(Spain)
later:	Mr. MORENO-SALCEDO (Vice-President)	(Philippines)

- Address by Mr. Samora Moises Machel, President of the People's Republic of Mozambique

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This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

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- General debate [9] (continued)

- Statements were made by:

Mr. Clark (Canada)

Sir Geoffrey Howe (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Mr. Malmierca Peoli (Cuba)

Mr. Van Den Broek (Netherlands)

Mr. Gutierrez (Costa Rica)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

ADDRESS BY Mr. SAMORA MOISES MACHEL, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the People's Republic of Mozambique,

Mr. Samora Moises Machel, President of the People's Republic of Mozambique,
was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the People's Republic of Mozambique, His Excellency Mr. Samora Moises Machel, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President MACHEL (spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation): The People's Republic of Mozambique is deeply distressed by the loss of life, the number of afflicted persons and the enormous destruction wrought by the earthquakes which, on 19 and 20 September 1985, struck various regions of Mexico, especially its capital. At this time of sorrow and mourning, we would like to express our heartfelt solidarity and support to the Government and people of Mexico.

I am addressing this Assembly on a date of profound and joyous significance for the Mozambican people. Just 21 years ago, on 25 September 1964, the Mozambique Liberation Front proclaimed general armed insurrection against colonialism. On that day the weapons of the freedom fighters opened the road that was to lead to our independence 11 years later. We recall this historic date for our people so that we may also praise the role played by the United Nations in support of the just liberation struggle of oppressed peoples.

With the achievement of our hard-won independence the Mozambican nation could also realize another of its deepest aspirations - that of joining the community of

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sovereign nations of the world and participating in the search for understanding, co-operation and harmonious relations between peoples and States.

Ten years have passed since our independence. We are justifiably proud to say that during this period the People's Republic of Mozambique has been able to establish and consolidate relations with almost all countries and increase its active participation in the United Nations system. In greeting the delegations attending this fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, we hail the spirit that guides the international community's most universal forum: the common effort to solve the problems that humanity still faces.

On behalf of the People's Republic of Mozambique, I congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the presidency of the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. To preside over the supreme body of our Organization in a period characterized by heightened tension and conflicts in various parts of the world is a heavy responsibility. We are confident that with your long diplomatic experience and guided by the principles of our Organization you will successfully preside over the deliberations of this historic session.

We salute your predecessor, Ambassador Paul Lusaka, for the role he played in wisely guiding the work of the thirty-ninth session. During his mandate he faithfully interpreted the peoples' aspirations to freedom, independence, peace and progress.

We should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the United Nations Secretary-General, on his determination and dedication in the implementation of the principles and aims of our Charter.

Forty years ago mankind was emerging, deeply wounded, from the most widespread and brutal conflagration in its history.

(President Machel)

The United Nations was born out of the realization shared by all mankind that it was imperative to prevent war fever from dominating our planet, a fever that could claim millions of lives, destroy human achievements, and drown in blood the dreams of our children and the hopes of our youth. This was and remains the central task of the United Nations. Peace, however, is not merely the absence of war. It is primarily the absence of the causes of war. In this respect our Organization has played a fundamental role throughout its 40 years of life.

Forty years ago, when the United Nations Charter was signed in San Francisco, the Organization comprised a mere 51 countries. Today the United Nations family has grown, admitting more Members and its functions becoming more varied and complex. Today the United Nations is of a universal character. This universality reflects the correctness of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, and the universal values it contains. Our Organization has thus been turned into a favourite instrument of all peoples for achieving their deepest aspirations to freedom, independence, peace and progress. It has been transformed into a basic weapon against oppression, humiliation and exploitation and for the establishment of more just and equitable relations among nations. The United Nations has spread the ideals of brotherhood, equality and solidarity among peoples and nations.

The adoption of resolution 1514 (XV) on 14 December 1960, recognizing the right of peoples and countries under colonial domination to self-determination and independence, was a landmark in the life of our Organization. It was the culmination of the international community's awareness that as long as exploitation and domination of countries and peoples persisted, war would continue to devastate our planet. From then on United Nations activities in favour of decolonization and emancipation of peoples experienced an exponential growth.

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Despite humankind's efforts, despite the fact that peace constitutes a fundamental aspiration for people the world over, the scourge of war has not yet disappeared. Its causes are still there. Colonialism has not yet been completely eradicated from the face of the earth. There are still situations where peoples are deprived of their country, sovereignty and freedom. Underdevelopment, wretchedness and hunger still ravage a great part of our planet. The economic domination of nations has not been eliminated. The gap separating developed and underdeveloped countries has continued to widen.

International peace and security, peaceful settlement of disputes, rejection of the use of force in international relations and good neighbourliness are fundamental principles, the very cornerstones of our Organization. Nevertheless we are today witnessing a serious worsening of international relations. Frequent violations of the principles and objectives of our Charter are today manifest. We are witnessing an increasing recourse to the threat or use of force and to intervention or interference in the internal affairs of other States. Conflicts between States have worsened and are taking on increasingly dangerous dimensions. The human and material losses incurred since the Second World War are countless. Currently, not a day passes without war claiming more lives.

In direct contradiction of the requirements of our Charter, forces are emerging in opposition to the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination and independence, and thus blocking their emancipation. There are numerous glaring examples of violation of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the legitimate right to develop. Destabilization, direct aggression, economic blockade and the use of mercenaries, armed bandits and terrorism have become common occurrences. The spirit of understanding and co-operation among nations which a decade ago was the main trend in international relations, has been replaced by the language of confrontation and cold war.

(President Machel)

As a result, international issues are not seen in the framework of the Charter, in the spirit of San Francisco, but rather through the prism of East-West conflict, thus distorting their true nature. Fascist and dictatorial régimes, régimes which make discrimination and racism the foundation and philosophy of their policy, survive on our planet, violating with impunity the rights of human beings and of peoples.

We cannot forget that the Nazi fascist and racist ideology was responsible for the conflagration of the Second World War. It committed massacres and cold bloodedly organized genocide. We cannot ignore the fact that there are heirs to the Nazi creed who pursue racist policies and who do not hesitate to carry out massacres in their own countries and launch aggression and wage war against other countries.

To free the planet of régimes whose policies and practices are directly inspired by Nazi ideology is a basic necessity of the struggle for peace, and a task that should bring together all the efforts of our Organization.

In the past 25 years the political face of southern Africa has changed radically. Our peoples have carried out a vast process of national liberation and social change that has eliminated foreign domination from most parts of the region and brought down the rebel minority régime of Southern Rhodesia. In little more than two decades, our people, conscious of their role as the principal factor in the historical process of social transformation, and with the support of peace and freedom-loving forces, have wrenched the initiative from the colonial Powers and moved to a qualitatively new phase that has brought independence and regional co-operation.

(President Machel)

It is this process that is now reaching its logical conclusion in the struggle of the Namibian people against South African colonialism in Namibia, and in the struggle of the South African people against apartheid. It is the elimination of these two phenomena, causes of war and instability in our region, that will at last usher in throughout southern Africa an era of peace, tranquillity and prosperity for all of its inhabitants.

(President Machel)

Apartheid in South Africa and the illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa constitute the main focus of regional tension. Apartheid is a serious threat to world peace and security. That is why we say that apartheid is not only a crime against the South African and Namibian people but also a crime against the peoples of the region and against humankind at large.

In South Africa, 24 million blacks, Coloureds and Indians suffer oppression, repression and discrimination under a system that allows political rights and privileges only to a white minority. The 24 million suffer the supreme humiliation of being treated as aliens in their own country, the humiliation of being denied citizenship.

Some 15 million blacks are confined to cheap labour reserves and compelled to till barren lands. In South Africa, the struggle for democracy, equality, peace and social justice is considered a crime.

The Pretoria régime, in order to defend and safeguard the privileges of the white minority, has launched unbridled repression against individuals, nationalists and religious bodies, trade unionists, students, teachers and even small children.

Police and army bullets are daily taking the lives of innocent and defenceless people who, throughout the country, are demonstrating peacefully against apartheid, against forced removals to the bantustans, against the pass laws, against arbitrary arrests. The people are not even allowed peacefully to bury their dead.

South Africa has turned into a land of massacre, a society of terror. Today's massacres, coming 25 years after Sharpeville, have demolished the theories of those who tried to see in apartheid a system susceptible of reform, a system with a self-correcting mechanism.

This is one facet of the current South African scenario. But there is another facet that brings a message of hope. We say hope, because the principal initiative

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for social change is already in the hands of the South African people, the African National Congress (ANC), and other democratic forces.

We say hope, because in the daily struggle against the apartheid system the South African people are already building the new South African nation. South Africans of all colours and races, of all ethnic origins and religious beliefs are engaged in this struggle.

Even within the white community, there are those who strongly believe that only an end to the system of apartheid can bring peace and progress. Today, thousands of young whites are rejecting the racist ideology of their parents.

It is an intensive struggle that takes on new dimensions day after day. It is a struggle in which an entire people show that they have no fear of the régime's repressive machinery. The heroic South African people are facing with their bare hands the army and the police armed with the deadliest of weapons. Over the past year the South African people have thus brought about a new situation: the apartheid régime has lost the little initiative that it may have had in the past and is resorting to increased repression of its opponents.

Ruthless repression is today the sole initiative of the South African Government. The so-called reforms by the régime are no more than a belated attempt to wrest from the people the initiative for political and social change in the country.

Each massacre strengthens the people's hatred of apartheid, each new pledge of relaxation of the racist laws which do not address the most fundamental issue - the dismantling of the apartheid system - is nothing but a ploy to gain time to divide its adversaries and maintain the structures of apartheid as they are.

The only solution to the serious situation in South Africa is therefore the beginning of a process of negotiations between the Government and the legitimate

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representatives of the South African people, taking as a starting point the release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners with a view to abolishing apartheid. Any attempt to stage a dialogue with individuals who are not representative of the people will merely prolong South Africa's present agony.

It is therefore the duty of the entire international community to work with determination, on the basis of these conditions, in order to put an end to apartheid.

We appeal in particular to the Western countries to use all their influence and to bring pressure to bear on the South African Government to accept this process of negotiation without any delay or equivocation.

This year, when we are commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, we cannot fail to mention the plight of Namibia.

Namibia is the last vestige of colonialism in southern Africa. Namibia was a German colony at the beginning of this century. If we look at the map of Africa today, we find that all the other German colonies have won their political emancipation. The independent countries they gave birth to are represented in this hall.

The Namibian people, however, continue to be subject to colonial domination, illegal foreign occupation and ruthless exploitation of their wealth and natural resources.

South Africa is the cause of this situation. South Africa has been frustrating the efforts of the international community to bring about Namibia's independence. In the long process of negotiations to liberate this Territory under United Nations mandate, we have repeatedly been faced with South African intransigence. Pretoria persists in defying and flouting the purposes and

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principles of our Charter and the relevant resolutions and decisions of the Security Council and the United Nations General Assembly.

This challenge attained its maximum expression with the introduction of so-called linkage. This deplorable concept is as baseless as it is offensive to the right of the Namibian people to self-determination and independence. Long before Cuban troops arrived in Angola, the United Nations General Assembly had taken the decision, in October 1966, to end the South African mandate over the Territory.

Cuban forces are in Angola by the sovereign decision of that Member State of the United Nations, under Article 51 of the Charter, in contrast with the manifest illegality of the South African occupation of the international Territory of Namibia.

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It should be recalled that when resolution 435 (1978) was adopted by the United Nations Security Council, Cuban troops were already in Angola. They did not constitute then - nor do they now - a threat to the security of any State in southern Africa. On the contrary, it is South Africa's troops that attack, invade and occupy countries of southern Africa. Cuban troops are in Angola because South Africa invaded Angola even before its independence.

For those reasons, it is both absurd and irrelevant to invoke "linkage" to delay the decolonization of Namibia. "Linkage" must be rejected. It is nothing but a thinly veiled disguise intended to protect the political, economic and strategic interests of South Africa and some Western countries, to the detriment of a sacred right we all prize and defend.

It is our duty to give firm support to the struggle of the Namibian people, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), their sole and legitimate representative. We must provide SWAPO with all the means necessary for it to emerge victorious in its struggle for a free, independent and united Namibia. This Assembly must categorically reject and condemn the delaying tactics aimed at perpetuating South Africa's illegal occupation and domination of Namibia. Our Organization must repudiate and condemn the so-called interim government set up in Namibia.

Apartheid, like nazism, is not limited to internal oppression and discrimination. It also seeks to export its conflicts abroad through destabilization and aggression. Every country in southern Africa suffers the effects of Pretoria's belligerency and hegemonic ambitions. All of them suffer the effects of interference, war and subversion, orchestrated by the Pretoria régime to impose its own interests. The Pretoria régime has used armed banditry as its operational weapon to massacre defenceless civilians, to destroy economic and

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social infrastructures in our countries and to stifle the process of national reconstruction and development. Our efforts for regional economic development and co-operation, as expressed in the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference, have met an implacable enemy in the Pretoria régime. Pretoria has resorted to systematic and constant sabotage of our regional organization with the aim of imposing its own designs, as reflected in the so-called theory of the constellation of States. The Pretoria régime is acting against our political and economic independence. The Pretoria régime wages constant war against the example of the free and just societies that we represent. That is the reason why even today we encounter war situations that are tearing the southern region of Africa apart.

In the case of Mozambique it is a war waged against us through armed bandits. The targets for the armed bandits are the people, their homes, their possessions, the fruit of their labour. Armed banditry indiscriminately tortures, mutilates, kidnaps men and women, old and young. Armed banditry destroys schools, hospitals, health posts, nurseries, churches, community centres and shops. It attacks public and private transport and slaughters innocent passengers. It destroys economic and transport infrastructures with the aim of disorganizing and paralysing our economy, preventing development and keeping our country in backwardness. Its actions have as their sole aim the sowing of terror, instability and insecurity. It is the most barbaric and inhuman kind of terrorism.

In Mozambique, despite the non-aggression accord signed in March 1984, irrefutable evidence of grave and systematic violations of the accord by South Africa and of its continued involvement in recruiting, training, organizing, financing and equipping, and in providing leadership and logistic support to, the armed bandits, has recently been brought to light, following the destruction of the terrorist camps by Mozambican armed forces. Confronted with such evidence, the

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South African Government has publicly admitted its continued involvement in the destabilization of our country. It has thus become more than clear that South Africa is not fulfilling the Nkomati Accord.

The behaviour of South Africa with regard to Angola is not different from its behaviour in other parts of southern Africa. Indeed, at the very moment when we are addressing this Assembly, the sister Republic of Angola is the victim of barbaric and criminal invasion. Occurring 18 months after the Lusaka Understanding, this invasion, as well as the failed sabotage attempt at the Malongo oil installations, unveil the criminal and aggressive policy of the apartheid régime.

The People's Republic of Mozambique salutes the people of Angola for the firm and solid manner with which it has been able to frustrate the South African attacks and defend its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

The international community must condemn the acts of war that South Africa constantly commits against the States of southern Africa. In southern Africa, children, women and men of all ages are dying every day as a result of Pretoria's aggression. It is essential to end this state of affairs. That will be possible only if we all pool our strength for the total and definitive elimination of the apartheid system. Apartheid is the seed of instability and violence in our region. The régime has already shown itself to be an enemy of peace within and beyond its frontiers. All possible material and financial assistance should therefore be given to the countries of the region to strengthen their defensive capabilities and to carry out their economic development projects.

It is incumbent upon this Organization to reject the attempt by South Africa and its allies to portray the armed bandits as a political opposition in our countries. To accept these manoeuvres means, in the final analysis, to connive

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with the destabilization policy of the racist régime and to give it moral support in its acts of aggression against our countries and peoples.

The role of the United Nations on behalf of the total liberation of peoples is not limited to the political sphere; it extends also to the economic sphere. We have been following with appreciation our Organization's positive role in the economic and social development of each of our countries, through the specialized agencies, bodies and institutions that make up the United Nations family. In this context we congratulate our Organization and its Secretary-General on their commitment to the pursuit of solutions to the critical economic difficulties Africa is going through.

That commitment has been complemented by the individual and joint action of African countries, which are doing all they can to find the right and appropriate programmes to resolve the difficulties affecting them.

The world is in a serious economic situation. The continent of Africa, however, is facing a particularly acute crisis, as the United Nations has rightly noted.

The serious economic situation faced by many countries of our continent has multiple causes, and we must deal primarily with them, over and above the emergency programmes needed to save lives threatened by the scourge of famine. Our economies are weak, despite the fact that our continent has much potential. The colonial legacy, manifested in illiteracy, weak development of productive forces and lack of economic infrastructures, denying us the full benefit of existing resources, continues to be deeply felt.

In recent years the economic situation of our continent has become particularly critical as a result of persistent drought and other natural disasters, such as cyclones and floods. Famine has already taken the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and threatens millions of Africans.

External factors are the principal causes of that situation. Among them, one must stress the worsening of the terms of trade, and the consequent fall in export earnings. The unprecedented rise in real interest rates and the dramatic increase in external debt combine with other factors to drain the meagre foreign exchange reserves of the African continent.

At the same time, we are affected by the profound international economic recession and are burdened with the effects of an international economic system that is neither just nor equitable.

Our country, besides suffering the impact of the problems I have just mentioned, is further faced with the effects of the economic aggression, destabilization and undeclared war waged against us by the South African régime.

Our economy has been disrupted and in some areas paralysed. The economic infrastructure, factories, bridges, roads, railways, power lines and vehicles carrying passengers, medicines, milk and other basic necessities have been destroyed, sabotaged and pillaged. The efforts that our State and the international community are making to save hundreds of thousands of Mozambicans affected by drought are criminally sabotaged.

The twenty-first summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), convened mainly to deal with economic matters, established a priority programme for the next five years aimed at creating conditions for national and collective self-sufficiency and for the economic development of our continent. The African countries showed once again their determination to overcome hunger, poverty, illiteracy and disease - in short, backwardness and underdevelopment. Our countries need above all an immediate solution to the problems that the colonial past, external debt and natural disasters have imposed.

We believe that the international community needs to take urgent and effective measures in order to face the critical situation in Africa. The external debt of African countries has been growing at an alarming rate. Exceptional measures are needed to reduce the enormous burden of debt and to promote the growth of the African economies.

Although we recognise our obligations in respect of the external debt, we think that creditor and debtor countries alike can only gain through the adoption of courageous measures to revive our economies. Taking into account the diversity of the financial capacities of debtor countries, ways and means should be found to reschedule, on more favourable terms, part of the debt and convert the rest into grants.

It was in that light that the twenty-first summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU called on the international community to find an

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urgent solution to the problem of increasing African indebtedness. It also called on the industrialized countries to make a substantial increase in the transfer of financial resources on favourable terms, particularly as donations.

In that context, high priority should be given to the launching of global negotiations on reforming the international monetary and financial system so as to ensure the establishment of a new international economic order to the benefit of all countries and peoples.

It is likewise essential for the international community to act firmly and with determination against the destabilization policy pursued by South Africa, to eradicate armed banditry and to provide support for the southern African countries that suffer the consequences of direct and indirect aggression carried out by the Pretoria régime.

We express our profound gratitude to the countries, the United Nations specialized agencies, and the solidarity organizations throughout the world that have contributed to the fight against hunger and disease in our country and our continent. International solidarity unites men and women of all continents and strengthens our determination to overcome under-development and poverty.

We note with concern the increase in focal points of tension and war in various regions of the world, including the African continent, which is being troubled by conflicts and war. Apart from the tragedy of southern Africa, our continent is witnessing situations causing the death and suffering of thousands of human beings.

In Western Sahara there still rages the conflict that has been a cause of concern to the OAU and the world. We are in favour of negotiations between the Kingdom of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front, in the framework of the relevant decisions of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations. It is our

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fervent hope that Morocco will take a constructive position so that the people of the Sahracui Arab Democratic Republic may find peace, and in peace build their future.

We support the struggle of the Palestinian people to achieve its legitimate and inalienable rights, including in particular the establishment of a free and sovereign State.

We demand the withdrawal of Israel from occupied Arab territories and from Lebanon, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the latter.

In the history of conflict between nations, of the domination of one people by another, the case of East Timor stands out as a dramatic and unhappy example. The voice of the Timorese people remains silenced by the weapons of Indonesian troops. In East Timor, the people's right to self-determination and independence is being sacrificed to political, economic and strategic interests. We believe that it is imperative for our voice to be raised on behalf of justice and the legitimate aspirations of the Timorese people.

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We demand the total and complete withdrawal of Indonesian troops from East Timor so as to allow the Timorese people, under the leadership of FRETILIN, their legitimate representative, to achieve freedom, self-determination, independence, peace and progress. We appreciate the Secretary-General's role in seeking a negotiated settlement of the problem together with the other parties involved, including Portugal, the administering Power of the Territory of East Timor.

In Korea we support efforts for the peaceful reunification of that country.

In Latin America we view with apprehension the destabilization of Nicaragua. We appeal for strict respect for Nicaraguan sovereignty and territorial integrity and for an end to acts of aggression against that country. In the search for a negotiated settlement of the conflict we support the efforts of the Contadora group.

The struggle for peace and the removal of the spectre of nuclear confrontation is a high priority for all humankind. Peace is the basis for the economic and social development of our countries; it also offers hope for a prosperous and radiant future for peoples.

The transformation of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, free from nuclear weapons, through the dismantling of all military bases and the speedy implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, is an intrinsic part of this struggle. However, to the detriment of the littoral countries and the international community in general, the task of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean has been complicated owing to the stand of certain countries which consistently put obstacles in the way of holding a conference on this issue. In this context, we reaffirm our support for the holding of a United Nations conference on the Indian Ocean in order to take concrete steps towards implementing United Nations General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI).

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The struggle for peace signifies serious and constructive commitment by all countries and peoples to the struggle for general and complete disarmament, an end to the arms race and a freeze as a step towards subsequent reduction and destruction of nuclear weapons, and a freeze in military spending.

The struggle for disarmament is a struggle for peace and development. Without disarmament there can be no peace, and without peace there can be no development.

We welcome the beginning of the Geneva talks between the two great Powers with the aim of reaching mutual understanding and finding solutions for ending the arms race, to the benefit of the interests of all countries.

We are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations in the year proclaimed by our Organization as International Youth Year. Youth is the sap of our nations and as such the sap of our Organization. Allowing young people to play an active part in shaping the destiny of our countries is to ensure a better morrow for our peoples. It is the young who have the dynamism to develop and change the world. It is the young who nurture the bright dream of a calm tomorrow - a tomorrow without wars, a tomorrow with peace and prosperity. We therefore support our Organization's decision to proclaim 1985 as International Youth Year.

In the People's Republic of Mozambique we continue to invest massively in our young people as the guarantee of our future. In the same context, we think that the individual and collective efforts of our countries are of vital importance in assuring the well-being of our children. The bulk of our human, financial and material resources should be channelled to this end.

Our Government gives full support to the current efforts of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to achieve universal immunization of children by the

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year 1990. We believe that that programme will have positive results for our developing countries since it will reduce the child death-rate. In the People's Republic of Mozambique this programme is being given high priority, as have past programmes aimed at physical and mental health and the normal and balanced development of our children.

The celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations is an occasion to reflect deeply on the role of our Organization, on its universal significance, and on the need to improve its effectiveness. The United Nations has affirmed itself as an indispensable Organization in the pursuit of peace, disarmament, development, and harmony among nations.

Forty years after the founding of the United Nations and more than ever before, our primary efforts are aimed at saving our planet from the scourge of war. We are confident that, inspired by these 40 years and by the new decade that appears on the horizon, we shall be able to rededicate our energies and commitment to achieving the principles and purposes of the San Francisco Charter. In this respect the celebration of the International Year of Peace in 1986 will be a positive step in the overall process of humankind's struggle for a better world.

The People's Republic of Mozambique reaffirms its readiness to co-operate with all the peoples and countries of the world, irrespective of their political, economic and social systems, in the realization of world peace and the strengthening of international security.

A luta continua!

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

Mr. Samora Moises Machel, President of the People's Republic of Mozambique,
was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. CLARK (Canada): On behalf of Canada, I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of this milestone session of the General Assembly. Your long career of devotion to the principles of the United Nations is recognized by this election, as is the vitality of the democratic institutions of the Government you represent.

On behalf of Canada, I join other spokesmen in expressing grief at the suffering caused by the massive earthquakes in Mexico. In connection with this tragedy we have seen arising spontaneously across national boundaries a rallying of forces to complement the Mexican Government's own extraordinary rescue operations. In times of such natural disasters the world truly becomes a neighbourhood, and our people extend both their prayers and their practical help. We were pleased to join yesterday in the consensus on the resolution adopted in this Assembly expressing our common solidarity with the Mexican people.

It would be remiss of me as a Canadian if I did not sadly recall that last week Canada and the United Nations lost one of our greatest soldiers and statesmen, the late General E.L.M. Burns. Canada is particularly proud that he was the first commander of the United Nations Emergency Force and that he was a practical architect of peace-keeping. General Burns was also one of Canada's most thoughtful proponents of disarmament. His contributions truly embodied the best ideals of the Charter. We mourn his passing, but in reflecting on his dedication to the high principles and purposes of the United Nations we find an example that is inspiring for the years ahead.*

*Mr. Al-Ashtal (Democratic Yemen), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

At the age of 40 some people have what is termed a mid-life crisis, but this description certainly does not apply to the United Nations. There may be multiple crises in the world system today, but at the age of 40 the United Nations is a long way from mid-life. In fact, viewed in the long range of history the United Nations is still very much in its early years.

This perspective helps us to establish a more balanced and fair assessment of the United Nations in this important anniversary year. Optimists would like to see the United Nations as the flowering of a world that has come together. Pessimists decry it for not having brought peace. Realists recognize that the United Nations has persisted successfully in its global strategies for human security despite the divisions among nations.

In its first 40 years the United Nations has made an inestimable contribution to building a framework for a global system that responds to the technological interdependence and vulnerability of modern society. Technology has revealed the common qualities of the entire human family. Everyone wants to avoid the scourge of war. Everyone wants the opportunity for economic development. Everyone wants the guarantee of full human rights. The tackling of these common demands is the daily work of the United Nations.

If there are frailties in the United Nations, and there are, if there is some ineptitude, and there is, let us this year celebrate the United Nations endurance and accomplishments while resolving to improve its procedures.

In conflicts prevented, in disputes mediated, in the eradication of diseases, in world-wide development progress, in the saving of countless human lives, the United Nations has enriched human existence. It has done all this on a budget that is less than \$1 per year for every inhabitant of the planet. The United Nations should not need to be defended, but it does, and I emphasize that Canada not only

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defends the United Nations but will work to strengthen it and work to strengthen other parts of the multilateral system. This is the way towards the peace and the growth, the freedom and the justice, which the world needs.

The challenges facing the multilateral system reach beyond this institution. Questions are being raised about whether the States of the world will work together or whether nations will draw back to their individual devices. Whether the issue is debt or trade or culture, whether the nations are rich or poor, large or small, there is a renewal of doubt about the international system. Developing countries again this week in this Hall threatened to abandon an international monetary system which they believe has abandoned them. Trade protectionist pressures are rampant, and dates are delayed for a new round of multilateral trade negotiations.

Expenditures on arms increase; so does terrorism; so have regional conflicts.

If that continues we will all be the victims. Certainly a country like Canada is imperilled if nations cannot agree on the rules of trade or the relief of debt or the control of arms. Twenty-four years ago only 12 per cent of our gross national product was based on exports; today this figure has more than doubled. When the United Nations began Canada was relatively unaffected by violent sectarian disputes in other countries; today we, like the world, are targets of terrorists. Forty years ago drugs or technology or the economic policies of other countries had relatively little direct impact on Canada; today they can intrude directly on the life of every Canadian community. So it is with all communities, in all countries. In so small a modern world, we are exposed, inescapably, to common problems which none of us can solve alone. Instead of retreating inward, the world must reach out - not only to celebrate an anniversary but to cope with the inescapable reality of modern times.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

(spoke in French)

Today, I renew the commitment made by successive Canadian Governments to the United Nations ever since its birth in the ashes of the Second World War. Prime Minister Mulroney has already personally reaffirmed to the Secretary-General during the latter's much appreciated official visit to Canada earlier this year, Canada's aspirations with regard to the United Nations. Next month, the Canadian Prime Minister will be meeting here with numerous other world leaders to proclaim yet again the importance of the United Nations.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

This session of the General Assembly will thus provide us with an opportunity to recall the achievements of the last four decades: the virtually complete elimination of colonialism; the recognition of human rights at the international level; a commitment to general and complete disarmament; a programme to strengthen the world's financial and commercial systems; a Convention on the Law of the Sea; treaties on a whole range of questions; important progress in the fight against illiteracy; and the promotion of the status of women.

We particularly welcome the consensus that emerged from the Nairobi Conference, which marked the end of the Decade for Women. The nations of the world came to an agreement on a plan of action for the promotion of women, to be implemented over the next 15 years. Canadians are proud of the role played by our delegation in helping bring about a consensus, and our Government intends to define specific ways of carrying out the Nairobi strategies. It goes without saying that in the implementation of its programmes and in its recruitment policies at senior levels the Organization must fully respect the objectives enunciated in the Forward-looking Strategies. At the present time women fill less than 6 per cent of senior professional posts, and it is beyond dispute that the United Nations still has much progress to make in the movement towards equity.

(continued in English)

This session will be a time to pursue serious reform of the procedures of the United Nations. In the harsh Canadian winter houses that slip into disrepair are eventually abandoned precisely because they offer none of the protection they were designed to provide. The house of the United Nations must not be allowed to slip into disrepair, and we must note that disrepair is showing. Divisive political issues intrude too often into specialized agencies. The agenda of the Assembly and its Committees is overloaded regularly with ritual debates. Some rich countries refuse to pay their dues, while others threaten to reduce their share. The Secretary-General has courageously and repeatedly identified these weaknesses.

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Changes and reforms are central to the existence of the United Nations. We must restore to this Assembly the authority given to it by the Charter. We must accordingly review our efforts and in a systematic fashion lay out for ourselves realizable goals and objectives.

We have sent Canadians to Cyprus, the Golan and other trouble-spots because we want the world system to work. What Canadians have helped secure in crisis we intend to preserve now. Delegations will be aware that Canada, with others, has been working in past months to devise and carry through a pragmatic and feasible set of measures with this purpose in mind. We will continue our co-operative efforts with all interested delegations in this search, which is made doubly urgent by the critical substantive issues before us, to which I now turn.

Surveying the landscape of world affairs on this fortieth anniversary, we find that no field is bleaker than that of arms control and disarmament. We must face the fact that not a single substantive agreement has come out of the multilateral arms-control process during the first half of the Second Disarmament Decade - not at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, not at the mutual and balanced force reduction talks in Vienna, not at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

But I have come here not to lament but rather to offer the encouragement and support of Canada in building the climate of confidence necessary for disarmament agreements. No matter what the frustration, we must never give up in our determination to construct a world security system that depends on fewer arms, not more. If more political will is necessary, then let us assert that political will, particularly as we move into 1986, which has been designated the International Year of Peace.

In the complex process of arms control and disarmament, priorities must be set straight.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

First, Canada believes that deep and verifiable reductions in the existing arsenals of nuclear weapons is the highest priority. Moving to lower levels of arms while preserving the stability of the balance at each successive stage of reduction is the only practical way to make progress. Thus we give our full support to the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union now taking place in Geneva. The summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev in 55 days' time provides an opportunity to chart a new course for the future leading to practical steps to unblock the disarmament impasse.

Secondly, for Canada the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty continues to be a fundamental and abiding objective. Our aim is to stop all nuclear testing.

Thirdly, the early conclusion of a chemical weapons treaty is now within reach in the Conference on Disarmament.

Fourthly, the prevention of an arms race in outer space is now on the world agenda.

Thus we know where we are going in arms-control and disarmament measures. The Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, in 1978, should continue to be our guide. The remarkable consensus achieved by the world community on that occasion must again be renewed as we look towards the third special session on disarmament.

(spoke in French)

The success of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which completed its business last Saturday in Geneva, represents an important step forward. States participating in the Conference reaffirmed, on the basis of a consensus, the viability and the vitality of that Treaty, to which has been endorsed by 130 nations have acceded and which prevents the spread of nuclear weapons while at the same time bringing to the whole

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international community the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The spirit of international co-operation that characterized the review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty showed that the multilateral process can and does contribute effectively to the strengthening of world security.

Canada will continue to play an active role in all multilateral bodies and will contribute further to the building of confidence. In this respect Canada has drawn up a programme of action for the second part of the current Disarmament Decade. By means of this programme we shall intensify our work in the sphere of the improvement of the verification procedures necessary to ensure compliance with agreements entered into.

In order to advance the work on verification of compliance with a complete ban on nuclear tests we shall strengthen our capacity for analysis in seismic research. We shall improve our seismic research facilities in northern Canada and enhance our capacity to distinguish minor earthquakes from underground nuclear tests.

Within the framework of this programme of action we shall be conducting practical studies on the use of chemical weapons. We shall submit these studies to the United Nations and also make Canadian experts available to the Organization for inquiries into allegations of the use of chemical weapons.

Moreover we shall work towards the conclusion of a multilateral agreement prohibiting the possession and use of radiological weapons. I appeal to the United States and the Soviet Union to conclude an effective, verifiable treaty prohibiting radiological weapons. Canada is prepared to sign such a treaty immediately.

The Canadian delegation will be reporting to the First Committee on the day-to-day efforts made by Canada to lay a foundation for lasting treaties.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

The relationship between disarmament and development must also be considered constructively and in greater depth. The current level of military expenditures, now in the region of a trillion dollars, at a time when many parts of the world are experiencing destitution, poverty and famine is unacceptable. The Canadian people, which enjoys a wide representation in an increasingly broad network of non-governmental organizations, is particularly sensitive to this imbalance. It aspires to the establishment of genuine human security, characterized by increasing food stocks and a decline in military arsenals.

(continued in English)

Another important lesson of our 40 years' experience concerns economic growth. We now know that the well-being of everyone depends on the financial, trade and other linkages among our economies. We understand better the challenges of the global market place. And we appreciate better the critical role that developing countries play in the expansion of the world economy.

The partnership between developed and developing countries - a partnership of shared responsibilities and commitments - must be enhanced. Canada is very pleased that consensus agreement was reached yesterday, in the Committee to Review and Appraise the International Development Strategy, on a statement of agreed conclusions. This is a significant step. It reflects the serious effort made by all concerned to express the current economic realities in common language. We believe it augurs well for future co-operation.

When we look at the problems of the developing world, no case is more poignant than the suffering of sub-Saharan Africa. The global humanitarian response to the crisis in Africa has succeeded in saving thousands, and perhaps millions, of lives, but the experience of this crisis has also identified longer-term challenges.

Relief is not enough. Action for permanent development - in partnership with African nations - is essential. African Governments must resolve to give

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priority to the agricultural sector and to unleash the productive forces in their own societies. But this effort must be matched by a real and sustained commitment by developed nations and indeed by the entire international community. The African crisis will not end until the valiant efforts to relieve the tragedy of today are buttressed by a sustained commitment to building the Africa of tomorrow.

The heavy external debt, which afflicts so many countries, is another crippling burden in the developing world. Some progress has been achieved in dealing with the debt situation, thanks to co-operation among creditor Governments, debtor countries, commercial banks, and international institutions. The strategy of adjustment, financing, and rescheduling has demonstrated an impressive flexibility in helping debtors. But, obviously, more adaptation is needed to meet the special needs of debtor nations.

Deliberations in the United Nations help in fostering a better understanding of these economic problems and further the activities of various international institutions dealing with them. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have played a key role in this regard. We should ensure that they can and will continue to do so, taking due account of the particular problems facing individual States. The strains facing the multilateral economic system and facing its leading institutions must be dealt with. Bilateral relations between countries on the one hand, and the multilateral system on the other, ought to be mutually complementary and reinforcing.

Similarly, protectionism, which threatens the prosperity of developed and developing countries alike, must be resisted. The industrialized countries must keep their markets open to third-world products if the developing countries are to maintain the export earnings necessary to service their external debt and to improve living standards. All of us will lose if our borders close. All therefore have an important stake in ensuring that the multilateral trading system remains

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open and healthy. That is why Canada has been at the forefront in calling for a new round of multilateral trade negotiations, and why we have been working to liberalize trade and resist protectionism in many other ways.

By joining in the preparations for a new trade round now, the developing countries can be joint architects of a revitalized General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) system. Canada is anxious to work with developing countries to identify areas of common interest which could be pursued in the next round.

Economic development is critical, but its benefits will be fully realized and enjoyed only if the Member States of the United Nations co-operate together in a concerted plan to tackle the pre-eminent social and human rights issues of our day.

Illicit trafficking and abuse of narcotics and other drugs is a major social challenge on every continent.

I am pleased that the United Nations has set out a plan of action in this vital field. Last year, Canada joined others in co-sponsoring a resolution which set in motion the drafting of a new convention to combat the illicit drug trade. It constitutes a key element in current international efforts to deal with this social problem. The convention must aim at strengthening enforcement measures against illicit drug trafficking.

We welcome the Secretary-General's proposal for the convening of a drug conference in 1987 at the ministerial level. We commend the link it makes between initiatives needed to cut down on the supply of illicit drugs and the steps required to reduce demand. We will be working actively with other interested countries to develop a resolution to carry this idea further forward at this session.

Forty years ago, the Charter made the rights and freedoms of all persons a matter of legitimate concern to the whole international community. The Universal

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Declaration of Human Rights itself is nearly four decades old. Yet our work has only just begun. As the Secretary-General notes in his current report:

"Massive violations of human rights continue to take place, often of tragic proportions." (A/40/1, p. 14)

We must, therefore, expand the frontiers of United Nations activities in the human rights field. This will entail completing the work on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensuring that the new Convention against torture is properly implemented, extending the Commission's programme of advisory services, encouraging other countries to offer technical assistance in the human rights field, assisting the Working Group on the Disappeared. Moreover, the United Nations must continue to focus attention on the fate of prisoners of conscience, ensure that the disabled are not deprived of their basic rights, protect the special interests of indigenous populations around the world, and take steps to protect the rights of those who themselves promote human rights.

I cannot fail to take note of the wide range of political confrontation and open warfare that so lamentably haunts this planet from Asia, to Central America to the Middle East. We will have ample opportunity to approach these issues as this session of the Assembly goes about its business. In my view, however, and in the view of my Government, South Africa presents a situation which challenges the world community like no other. It is the most striking example today of what can happen to a country when human rights are systematically violated and abused. It is not the only country where discrimination takes place on the basis of race; much less is it the only country to deny the great majority of citizens access to the political process.

But South Africa is the only country where racial discrimination is a first principle of State policy. Human rights violations are written into the Constitution, and the majority are denied their political rights because of the

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colour of their skin. We are all cast down by the lives lost and the people injured, by the repressive measures undertaken by the authorities and by the harsh and callous pressure applied to those who campaign against apartheid.

The pity and the shame is that this rich country of enormous human and natural potential could contribute so much to the continent of which it is a part. Instead, its unconscionable violation of fundamental human rights does not stop at its borders.

But the South Africa monolith has been shaken. Demonstrations, strikes and acts of resistance against the régime are widespread. Economics have proved to be an engine of change. A wave of disinvestment has taken place and the exchange rate on the rand has dropped significantly.

The message in all of this is clear: 40 years after the United Nations Charter came into existence and 35 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was promulgated, change must come to South Africa, apartheid must be dismantled. Measures to make all South Africans equal within their State must be pursued to the end.*

*The President returned to the Chair.

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Nor can we ignore Namibia. Not only does South Africa hold that Territory in gross violation of United Nations wishes and international law and use it as a springboard for attack on its neighbours but it perpetuates its oppressive practices in that emergent land. Such contempt and continued denial of justice cannot be tolerated by the international community. The community of nations must continue to pressure South Africa to change its offensive policies.

Canada has acted steadily and deliberately to add to the pressure for change. We hope that the response of South Africa will allow economic and diplomatic relations between our two countries to continue, but that will require real progress against apartheid. We are consulting and co-operating with our friends in the Commonwealth, in the front-line States and elsewhere to find the most effective means to end a system which is repugnant to Canadians.

Yet another growing violation of civilized conduct, terrorism, must be dealt with in more detail by the United Nations. As we Canadians have learned in the past year, terrorism is a menace to which no nation is immune. At this Assembly we shall actively seek new ways, through new international instruments if necessary, to deal effectively with this scourge. Canada, already a party to all the international air security conventions, will ratify the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages. We were heartened that the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders supported the efforts of the International Civil Aviation Organization to promote universal acceptance of and strict compliance with international air security conventions. The international community has shown that it has the political will to act.

Finally, the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations must be remembered as a time of a united call for the peace that will come from effective disarmament and economic development for all.

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An organization that embodies the cry to peace of "We, the peoples of the United Nations" cannot be irrelevant now or 40 years from now. The gravity of the threat to global survival must be matched by the intensity of our efforts to build the conditions for lasting peace. The peoples of the United Nations have the right to expect to find their hopes fulfilled by the actions of every Government that comes to this rostrum.

We know that the challenges are huge; we will not be daunted by them. We know that the problems are infinite; we will not be intimidated by their complexity. We know that international relationships are frayed; we will not be deterred in our efforts for their repair.

To put it simply, Canada, along with all other sovereign countries of good faith, will use the United Nations to pursue indomitably the quest for peace, security and social justice.

Sir Geoffrey HOWE (United Kingdom): Let me first join those who have congratulated Mr. de Piniés on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. Our affairs could not be in better or more experienced hands. It is a source of pleasure and pride to my country that we should have as President at this fortieth session the representative of a country shortly to become a full member of the European Community.

It is in the same spirit that I express our thanks to the outgoing President, Paul Lusaka, the distinguished representative of a Commonwealth country, for the impartial and skilful way in which he conducted the Assembly's affairs over the past 12 months.

I should like also to renew my tribute to our Secretary-General. I salute his dedication and persistence in seeking solutions to the world's problems. His latest report, like its predecessors, is another eloquent and persuasive testimony

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to the importance of this Organization. We shall continue to lend his efforts our fullest support.

In a few weeks we shall mark the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. In doing so we shall reaffirm the insight defined by the then British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, at the first session of the General Assembly, in London, as follows:

"the realization by all nations that without co-operation for peace there can be no security for any nation".

That thought is just as valid today as when he spoke to a world then riven asunder by the second global conflict in 30 years, a world in which war had brought the international trading system almost to a halt, a world in which many of the greatest cities lay in ruins, a world in which some of today's greatest nations had yet to be born.

In the years since then the membership of this Organization has grown dramatically. Together we can take credit for much of the progress that has been achieved. We have moved away from the sharpness and the savagery of world conflict and undertaken a massive task of reconstruction. We have managed a period of unprecedented economic growth alongside an enormous population explosion. We have welcomed and fostered the emergence of over 100 new sovereign nations. We have fashioned and developed a range of effective institutions for international co-operation.

Britain is proud, too, to belong to two very different groupings which each in its own way demonstrates the growing pattern of interdependence. This year in the Bahamas, Commonwealth Heads of Government representing 49 nations from all continents and outlooks will be meeting together. By the end of this year, too, the membership of the European Community will have expanded to 12 with the

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accession of Spain and Portugal. It is now substantially the world's largest trading bloc, and its role on the world stage is becoming steadily more significant. In his statement yesterday the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg gave eloquent expression to the shared values and common approach of all the members of the European Community.

Tomorrow the commemorative meeting of the Security Council will give us a chance to take stock of all that has been achieved over the past 40 years. We should at the same time acknowledge the scale and complexity of the tasks that still challenge us. We must not underestimate the efforts the international community still has to make if our actions are to achieve the goals set by the founding fathers.

We still live in a world wracked by continuing violence and conflicts, by economic and social hardships and by famine and disease. Last week's massive natural disaster which has brought such tragic suffering to the Mexican people is a grievous reminder of man's vulnerability to his environment. We all pay a tribute to the courage with which the Mexican Government and people have responded to this catastrophe.

In the Secretary-General's own words,

"We face today a world of almost infinite promise which is also a world of potentially terminal danger." (A/40/1, p.2).

As he so rightly argues, the solution lies in our own hands, in our will and determination to decide the kind of world we wish to see in the years ahead and to take the steps necessary to achieve it. So this special anniversary is an occasion on which we should not just reflect on our past but, much more important, look ahead to the questions that will face us in the future and start shaping our policies now.

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United Kingdom)

The need for such foresight applies with particular force to our economic agenda. The appalling famine in sub-Saharan Africa has shown how a series of problems - some natural, some man-made - can come together to bring unimaginable suffering: long-run degradation of the environment, progressive failure of agricultural production and prolonged drought. This disaster has evoked a dramatic response from many countries. The West has led the way. The United Kingdom alone last year contributed a quarter of a billion dollars. Almost half of that came from private donations, the gifts of individual men and women. Moreover, we have not stopped providing funds. We have made sure through the provision of aircraft of the Royal Air Force that our supplies reach those most in need as quickly as local conditions will permit.

But spontaneous generosity even on this scale offers no long-term solution because we live in a world of paradoxes. Some areas of the world still face acute hunger and are unable to feed themselves. Other parts - astonishingly more and more - face mounting problems of over-production. The pattern of this development is itself remarkable. The vast populations of China and India, despite all the prophecies of doom, are now more than self-sufficient in food. Increasing reliance on the enterprise of individuals and on the incentives of the market place has in many cases provided the spur to growing efficiency. By contrast, other countries, some of them better endowed with natural resources, still face the need to import food. And in some regions natural resources are being threatened or destroyed by over-exploitation while nearby, sometimes even in the same country, they are underdeveloped and under-used.

If we are to resolve these contradictions, ensure a more balanced development of the world economy and secure a rising standard of living for all our citizens, we must create a wider understanding of the reasons for success and failure.

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United Kingdom)

We must identify ways to exploit and yet preserve our resources more effectively. We must train our people more imaginatively, deploy our common technological knowledge more skilfully. We must shape our institutions and societies so that the natural forces of economic change and growth are encouraged and not stifled. As has been shown in Ethiopia, the United Nations can play a vital role in matching resources to needs.

Sustainable economic growth is essential if we are to secure a reduction in the present crippling burden of debt in many countries. Last year the world economy grew by 4.3 per cent, the fastest rate for six years. Many countries have acted courageously in meeting the economic and social pressures of adjustment. We have heard in this debate why it is necessary for this difficult match of problems to be handled sensitively. That is why there is a duty on us all, as we respond through the international institutions on a case-by-case basis, to take account of the very real problems faced by debtor countries. We must try to create the stable framework that will enable them to pursue their policies of adjustment. That is the importance of the continuing need to reduce deficits in some of the industrialized countries.

Almost three years ago I had the privilege of presiding as Chairman of the Interim Committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over a substantial increase in IMF quotas. Last year, at the Economic Summit in London, we were able to encourage the introduction of multiyear rescheduling agreements where appropriate. We need now to address ourselves to the level of resources available to the World Bank. Britain would like to see early agreement in principle to a general capital increase for the World Bank and stands ready to play its part.

An urgent and continuing need is for us to support and strengthen the open trading system. This is essential if we are to resist protectionism and ensure that

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United Kingdom)

Our trade contributes to the prosperity of all countries, particularly those in the developing world. We welcome the forthcoming meeting of the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to discuss a new round of negotiations. Without such a new round the forces of protectionism will gain in strength. Time is running out.

We need not simply preserve the open trading system but also see that it works more openly and more widely. Open trading needs to be broadened to include the service industries and the expanding economies of those countries that are increasing their industrial base. Greater stability in world currency markets is essential. In particular, we need stability at rates that will promote the expansion of world trade rather than increase protectionist pressures. That is the importance of the agreement reached in this city only three days ago at the meeting of Finance Ministers and central bankers of the major industrialized countries.

But the need to look ahead is not confined to economic issues. We need the same approach in tackling the complex political and security issues that face us. The Secretary-General has reminded us of the extent to which the fundamental architecture of this Organization has been flawed by what he refers to as "the lack of that unanimity of the permanent members which was to have been its main driving force". Nowhere is this more evident than in the division between East and West. Perhaps the most important question facing this Organization during its fifth decade is whether we shall be able to record positive steps that will narrow this crucial gap.

I believe we can. The last two years have seen a considerable increase in contacts between East and West. I welcome that. Since becoming Foreign Secretary I have made a point of visiting every one of the countries in Eastern Europe and getting to know their leaders. In the same spirit we welcomed Mr. Gorbachev's

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important visit to Britain at the end of last year. The first meeting between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev will take place this November. That will be an important opportunity for searching and substantive discussions which can lay the foundation for greater mutual confidence between East and West. It should demonstrate that the leaders of the world's largest Powers are serious in their desire to overcome the difficulties between them.

But contact alone is not enough. The true foundations of understanding cannot be laid in an atmosphere of mistrust. Mr. Gorbachev has said "there is no fatal inevitability of conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States". In that he echoes President Reagan's belief that "the Soviet leaders have much to gain from joining the West in mutual arms reductions and expanding co-operation". The Soviet Union and its leaders need have no doubt about the sincerity of the Western commitment. The people of Britain would like nothing better than a reduction in tension and an increase in co-operation. The task for statesmanship must be to transform common aspirations into the substance of agreement.

The world needs this most urgently in the field of arms control. We warmly welcomed the resumption of the Geneva negotiation on nuclear and space arms between the United States and the Soviet Union. We support their aim of preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth.

Our overriding objective must be to obtain security at the lowest level of armaments. We do not believe that either side should strive for superiority. The aim must be mutual balance, taking account of current developments. The outcome of the process should enhance and not undermine deterrence. The negotiations must be on the basis of compliance with existing obligations.

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These talks present a forum for hope, a chance for constructive negotiations, and a potential for real and verifiable progress. It is only at Geneva that public declarations can be transformed into agreements that are seriously intended. Megaphone diplomacy leads only to a dialogue of the deaf. But a genuine wish to serve the cause of peace will meet a swift response from our side.

Recently Mr. Gorbachev told the world that his country trusts the United States no more than the latter trusts the Soviet Union. Mrs. Thatcher made much the same point when she said that neither side looks at each other through rose-tinted spectacles. Verification provides one of the essential elements in any arms control agreement. In itself, it breeds the confidence essential to the preservation of a régime of arms control. Equally, verification requires a measure of confidence on both sides in the good faith of the other.

If that objective is to be achieved it is vital that countries comply with the treaties and commitments which they have undertaken. Particularly important are those treaties between the United States and the Soviet Union which govern strategic relationships: the strategic arms limitation agreements and the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile System. These agreements form the foundation for the present structure of mutual security.

Concern for international stability was of course a prime motivating force behind the Non-Proliferation Treaty. For that reason, we were particularly pleased with the successful outcome of the recent Review Conference and the substantive final document agreed by consensus. We share fully the Conference's conviction that the Treaty is essential to international peace and security. We support unreservedly their determination to enhance its implementation and further strengthen its authority.

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There is no doubt that this result reflects the renewed commitment of the international community to use the Non-Proliferation Treaty to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. We call upon those who remain outside the Treaty - especially those with significant unsafeguarded nuclear facilities - to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible and so help to protect the world against the potential horrors of nuclear war.

But equally we must not overlook the importance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in promoting the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, particularly in the developing world. We have announced our intention to double, between now and 1990, the funds we contribute to developing countries party to the Treaty through the technical assistance projects administered by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). By these actions we shall continue to demonstrate our commitment to check uncontrolled nuclear proliferation.

It is right that we should concentrate our attention on the global issues that threaten all nations' security. But in this world of close interdependence, more specific regional issues also affect our interests. I think in particular of southern Africa, where the growing crisis in South Africa and the continuing threats to her neighbours cause us grave concern.

We strongly condemn the incursion into Angolan sovereign territory by South African defence forces. We have joined with the rest of the Security Council in giving force to this condemnation. Such acts can only undermine the stability of the region and damage efforts to achieve Namibian independence. South Africa should be in no doubt of our determination that Namibia must be brought quickly to independence in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978); this resolution remains the only internationally accepted basis for a Namibian settlement.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe, United Kingdom)

Southern Africa has seen major changes in recent years with the coming to independence of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe. It is essential that all the countries of the region should be freed from the present tensions and allowed to concentrate on building a peaceful and prosperous future in harmony with their neighbours.

In South Africa itself we deeply deplore the failure of the South African authorities to lift the state of emergency, the continuing repression of peaceful protest, and the detention of citizens without trial. More fundamentally, we reject the system of apartheid - which is so contrary to the values of the United Nations Charter and which undermines much of real value in South Africa. We call upon the South African Government urgently to move beyond mere words to actions which are long overdue: to end apartheid, and to establish a system of government acceptable to the people of South Africa as a whole.

Britain is united with other countries in its determination to see fundamental changes made. We have consistently brought pressure to bear on the South African Government to achieve this. We comply fully with the United Nations arms embargoes. We do not collaborate with the South Africans in the development of their nuclear programme, civil or military. Our guidelines for the disposal of North Sea oil exclude sales to South Africa. We operate controls on a wide range of sensitive exports to South Africa. We fulfil our obligations to discourage sporting contacts. We have fully applied the European code of conduct to British companies operating in South Africa to ensure that they contribute as effectively as possible to the crucial changes we wish to promote.

Where we differ from some is not in our willingness to apply pressure but in our judgement of the likely effectiveness of mandatory economic and trade boycotts. I understand the passions that prompt calls for such measures. But we

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are not persuaded that measures of this kind would achieve the aims of those who call for them. They would diminish rather than increase effective pressures on the South African Government to introduce fundamental changes, and would bear most heavily on the weaker sections of the population and neighbouring countries. We believe that all those with longstanding political, economic and diplomatic contacts with South Africa have a responsibility to use such links to promote fundamental change.

In keeping with this approach, we have reached agreement with our European partners on a number of measures which we believe will strengthen the forces for change in South Africa. I have today announced our adoption of all the measures agreed at Luxembourg on 10 September. These measures build on the recent visit of my three Community colleagues which clearly demonstrated European concern. In recent weeks there have been signs of movement by the South African Government. These must now be translated into firm decisions to dismantle apartheid. To this end there is now an urgent need for dialogue with genuine representatives of the African majority.

In the Middle East tension has too often flared into violent conflict. It is a sad reflection that in no single year since the United Nations was founded has this area been at peace. Nowhere are negotiated settlements more urgently needed.

In Lebanon there can be no peace until the communities there themselves work together to rebuild their country free from outside interference. Israel must withdraw all its forces from Lebanese territory as soon as possible. And the Lebanese themselves must put an end to the appalling cycle of violence in that country. We condemn without reservation the kidnapping of innocent hostages, including the British United Nations official, Mr. Alec Collett. His kidnappers should release him without delay.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe, United Kingdom)

In the Gulf, we are all appalled by the tragic and wasteful conflict between Iran and Iraq which has now lasted almost as long as the Second World War. We deplore the use of chemical weapons. And we entreat both sides to refrain from attacks on civilian targets - particularly those on merchant shipping in international waters. An early initiative to end the war is desperately needed. The Secretary-General's eight-point proposals offer the best way forward. We will continue to give him our full support.

A solution of the Arab/Israel dispute has been a major goal of this Organization almost from its foundation. That in itself testifies to the exceptional difficulties in securing a balanced settlement. But I believe that this year there are signs of readiness to seek peaceful solutions to the dispute. I think in particular of the constructive moves by King Hussein of Jordan, for which Mrs. Thatcher has recently reaffirmed our active support. The world community must give firm backing to all those who eschew violence in favour of patient diplomacy. That is the way towards a just and lasting peace based on the principles long espoused by the United Nations.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe, United Kingdom)

Only the parties directly concerned can negotiate such a peace. But if they are to have the confidence to enter what are bound to be difficult and delicate negotiations, they will need strong encouragement and support from the entire international community so fully represented here in the United Nations. This Organization is based on confidence in the power of diplomacy, negotiation and dialogue. My Government shares that faith. The vital necessity is for the process of dialogue to get urgently under way in this area where for so long minds have failed to meet.

I am conscious that it is only too easy for speakers addressing this Assembly to call on other countries to put their house in order. I should therefore like to turn to two issues where Britain is making a direct and positive contribution.

The tragic divide in Cyprus continues. The Secretary-General has shown skill and determination in seeking to bring the two parties together after the failure of talks in January. We wish his current initiative every success, and hope that President Kyprianou and Mr. Denktash will agree to meet as soon as possible. The British Government continues to do everything it can to assist the Secretary-General. An agreement has been tantalisingly close before. All the parties have a responsibility to see that it does not evade us again.

Over the past year we have kept up our active search for ways to restore more normal relations with Argentina. Since the conflict, we have removed financial restrictions, and offered talks on a series of practical issues. On several occasions we have pressed for the reciprocal lifting of restrictions on trade. In the absence of an Argentine response we took yet another unilateral step last July - to improve trading relations by lifting our ban on Argentine imports. Argentina has failed to reciprocate.

We shall continue to look for ways of improving relations with Argentina. At the same time we shall maintain our firm commitments to the people of the Falkland Islands.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe, United Kingdom)

By insisting that Britain must first commit itself to negotiations on sovereignty before there can be discussion of any aspect of our bilateral relations, Argentina has blocked progress. Ours is the more realistic approach to the re-establishment of confidence between the peoples of the United Kingdom and Argentina and the reduction of tension in the South Atlantic.

There are many areas where mutually beneficial co-operation is possible, for example, in the increasingly urgent task of conserving the South Atlantic fisheries. Informal discussions in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have shown that an international effort will be required to deal with this. We are ready to give our support to the FAO's constructive initiative and hope that the Argentines will be equally prepared to work with the FAO.

This international approach to the conservation of fish stocks has been seen to be effective in other contexts. We were encouraged, for example, by the progress made at the recent meeting in Hobart of the Commission set up under the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources.

Fisheries are only one aspect of the complex task of managing the resources of the continent of Antarctica. This has been successfully achieved under the Antarctic Treaty for a quarter of a century. The Treaty has preserved the continent as a zone of peace, free from nuclear explosions and dumping, militarization, or active territorial disputes. We firmly believe that an attempt to apply a common heritage régime would upset this proven system, risk destabilizing the region and jeopardize the present close international scientific collaboration in Antarctica. We shall maintain our support for the Antarctic Treaty system.

In Central America there is widespread agreement on a number of objectives: the need for greater stability, for economic progress and for the reinforcement of

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democracy. These objectives are clearly set forth in the Contadora documents. The Contadora process has our firm support. The path to peace must lie through the strengthening of democracy and the limitation of arms; above all through the ending of cross-border subversion and interference. The present tense situation calls for the greatest possible restraint on all sides. The planned meeting in Luxembourg later this autumn between the Foreign Ministers of the Ten, plus Spain and Portugal, the Central American States and the Contadora countries will be a further demonstration of our support for peace efforts.

In recent months, there have been a number of direct contacts between North and South Korea, contacts which are continuing and broadening. It is my profound hope that these may lead to a peaceful and lasting solution to the Korean problem, and that the people of Korea may shortly be represented at this forum.

Viet Nam's illegal occupation of Cambodia is a continuing affront to international law. It jeopardizes regional stability. It flies in the face of international opinion. We give our firm support to the efforts of the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to persuade the Vietnamese Government to reach a political solution based unequivocally on the principles approved by the United Nations.

The sixth year of Soviet occupation of Afghanistan has witnessed intensified Soviet efforts to subdue the Afghan people and to put pressure on Pakistan, where some 3 million Afghan exiles have found refuge. We hear much from the Soviet Government about its support for the oppressed peoples of the world. Yet in Afghanistan they are the oppressors. Why do they not honour their principles and signal their support for the admirable effort of the Secretary-General to achieve a solution, by agreeing to withdraw their troops? Only this concrete action will satisfy the demands of the world community and bring peace to Afghanistan.

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It is clear that in founding the United Nations our predecessors were as much concerned to promote the interests of individuals as to further those of their Governments. It is therefore particularly deplorable that 40 years later the rights, liberties and well-being of so many individuals should be at risk: not just from poverty, hunger and disease, but also from the policies and actions of Governments.

We must all do everything we can to give force to our fine words about human rights. I said in Helsinki last July that while the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) had lit a beacon, the future strength of its light would depend entirely on the performance of the signatory States.

That holds good in the United Nations context as well. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights and other United Nations organizations have a major role to play in making the existing human rights instruments more effective. But to achieve their targets they must have the full co-operation of the Member States.

The United Nations finds itself today deeply involved in threats to our societies undreamed of by the founding fathers. The modern problem of drug abuse continues to take on new and more horrifying forms. This is a vice that particularly threatens our young people - and hence our future societies. Britain is increasing the resources devoted to the war against drugs and introducing new measures designed to strip those involved in drug trafficking of their ill-gotten rewards. Every Member State needs to take firm national action. But national efforts are only a part of the solution. Effective international co-operation to eradicate production, trafficking and the illegal harbouring of offenders is urgently required. The Venezuelan initiative for a possible United Nations convention is a useful start. But we must all make a sustained and united attack on this vicious problem.

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Equally effective co-operation is required if we are to halt the spread of terrorism. Every attack on an innocent individual, every hijacking and every bomb is an attack on us all. Britain has taken steps to tighten control of unacceptable activities by members of diplomatic missions. In order to reduce the scope for aircraft hijackings Britain has also put forward specific proposals for extra international action to take more stringent security measures at airports and in civil aviation operations. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, many of the necessary international agreements are in place. They need to be enforced. We must all make it clear that we will not submit to blackmail, that we will not tolerate terrorist acts and that we will not harbour terrorists.

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The agenda of international problems is long and complicated. But if we are to take the right measures, we need to have the right mechanisms. On the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, we should undoubtedly look again at the way in which this Organization works: to learn from its failures and to build on its successes.

There are many ways in which this Organization can be improved. We must get better value for money throughout the United Nations system. We must look for more effective co-ordination. We must prevent politicization of the technical bodies. We must try to streamline and make more relevant the work of the political organs. Many sensible and practical suggestions have been made. I think in particular of the recent proposals put forward by past Presidents of the Assembly on how this body can be more effective. But we must act on them.

I have today concentrated on the challenges that still remain after the efforts of 40 years and on the dangers of complacency and inaction. But I am heartened by the evidence I see of a more practical and pragmatic approach to co-operation between our peoples. The General Assembly played a part with its economic declaration of last year. This year's human suffering in Ethiopia has prompted encouraging examples of international co-operation: British and Soviet aircraft worked side by side; United Nations and voluntary agencies pooled their efforts.

Most striking of all was the moving response of our young people. The Live Aid concerts touched the hearts of millions of young men and women around the world.

Their reaction showed that idealism and energy can rise above the barriers that divide us. It showed, too, the vigour of free societies, where individual initiative can still set a standard for Governments to match and can remind us of the real brotherhood of man.

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We who hold the responsibility of political leadership have to show that we are capable of rising to that challenge.

Mr. MALMIERCA PEOLI (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Forty years ago, on the ruins of Nazi fascism and of the infamous and ignominious "New Order" that Hitler's hordes tried to impose on mankind, the peoples of the United Nations founded this Organization "determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", to reaffirm their faith in the undying values of man and mankind and in the equal rights of nations large and small, to establish conditions under which justice and equity could be maintained and "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

Now, four decades after that great victory, as we gather once again to take stock, the signs are cloudy in regard to the international situation.

With deep concern, we note the continued worsening of the world political and economic situation owing to the persistence of serious crises and tensions in international relations, to the obstacles set up against the peoples' legitimate aspirations to emancipation and independent development without foreign interference or intervention, to the spiralling growth of the arms race resulting from the insane imperialist policy of seeking an impossible military supremacy so as to decide the fate of the world from positions of strength, and to the attempts at extending this race to outer space.

Today more than ever before, the threat of nuclear extermination weighs on mankind. The policies of imperialism are characterized by the use or threat of use of force, intervention, destabilization, aggression, economic and political coercion, hegemony and oppression, while the crisis of the world capitalist system, which is growing ever deeper, brutally affects the developing countries and endangers their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, making economic development virtually impossible for them.

(Mr. Malmierca Peoli, Cuba)

The overwhelming foreign debt of the so-called third-world countries - an explosive phenomenon with an unquestionable political dimension - is a tragic note in the sombre panorama of the current international situation.

The economic crisis is becoming evident in the unceasingly widening gap between the developed and the developing countries, many of which cannot even meet their people's basic needs or essential development requirements.

Far from improving the terms of trade and overcoming the unjust structures of an obsolete international economic order, inequality is increasing, highlighting the asymmetry in relations between the two groups of countries - an asymmetry which leads to the ever greater enrichment of the capitalist countries at the expense of the decapitalization and impoverishment of third-world nations.

The seriousness of the present situation and the consequences that would result from a nuclear conflagration show - if proof is needed - that there is no viable option for the survival of the human race other than the policy of peaceful coexistence between States with different economic, social and political systems, international détente and the settlement of conflicts through exclusively peaceful means.

On addressing the difficult problems facing the international community today, I should like, Sir, to express the satisfaction of the Cuban delegation over your election as President of the General Assembly on this significant and delicate occasion. I am sure that your recognized qualities as an experienced diplomat and your long-standing ties with this Organization will enable you to guide our labours with wisdom towards the lofty goals we all seek to achieve. We assure you of our delegation's support in carrying out your important tasks.

Set on imposing their domination, the United States imperialists will stop at nothing to attain a military superiority that will allow them to negotiate from

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positions of strength and nuclear blackmail. In its eagerness to militarize outer space, the United States Government recently announced the beginning of anti-satellite weapons tests as part of a programme that will require expenditures of up to \$95 billion by the year 2000.

United States imperialism is promoting this new escalation in the arms race, which includes nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction, even though this practice increases the risks of nuclear war and thus endangers the very survival of mankind.

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During the past 40 years, one United States Administration after another has led the world from the so-called cold war and the policy of brinkmanship to the policy of local wars waged against third-world countries, the provocative installation of new weapons and missile systems aimed against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and the so-called star wars - if not to State terrorism directed against revolutionary countries and peoples. They have even advanced the absurd theory that it is possible to survive a nuclear strike, and have hinted that a surprise attack could be successfully launched against the Soviet Union. Their arrogant language is filled with expressions such as "surgical strikes" - to be used against small countries like Nicaragua - "covert operations" and "clean-up operations," expressions that reveal the predatory, zoological nature of their foreign policy.

Cuba condemns all attempts to militarize outer space - especially the United States Government's so-called strategic defence initiative - and expresses its support for the Soviet Union's proposal concerning international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space in the context of the non-militarization of outer space.

We welcome the holding of talks at the highest level between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America. The determination and readiness of Soviet leaders to make whatever efforts are necessary to prevent a new world conflagration, to avoid a nuclear holocaust, to put an end to the arms race and to prevent it from spreading to outer space are quite evident. We know of their firm determination to struggle for international détente, and we place our full trust in their Leninist peace policy, which embraces the hopes and aspirations of all the peoples of the world.

"But", as President Fidel Castro said in this very Hall in 1979 "for our countries, peace is indivisible" (A/34/PV.31, p. 3-5). Thus, the search for peace

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is a cardinal objective of our peoples and ranks among our most important concerns during this session of the General Assembly.

Just as the avoidance of nuclear war is an irrenounceable historical imperative, so too is the prevention of the use of an agreement banning the possibility of nuclear war as an excuse for the proliferation of imperialist wars against those Asian, African or Latin-American countries seeking to exercise their rights to self-determination and independence and attempting to build a new life based on economic and political pluralism, on a non-capitalist option of development or on socialism.

As Comrade Fidel pointed out,

"The time has therefore come for all of us to join in the task of drawing entire peoples - hundreds of millions of human beings - out of the backwardness, poverty, malnutrition, disease and illiteracy that keep them from enjoying full human dignity and pride". (A/34/PV.31, p. 53-55)

Therefore, when we invoke the need to settle conflicts by peaceful means, to avoid a terrible and final war that would end human life as we know it, to promote dialogue and understanding among all States, regardless of their social and economic systems, and when we demand an end to the philosophy of plunder, so that there may be an end to the philosophy of war, we should also demand that all vestiges of colonialism be wiped off the face of the earth.

The situation of the third-world countries has dramatically worsened since the beginning of this decade. Their foreign debt has multiplied, the terms of trade between the developed capitalist countries and the developing countries continue to be totally unjust and to constitute an abuse; credits are granted in unfair conditions; markets have contracted owing to protectionist measures applied by developed capitalist countries against our industrial products and raw materials; and the influx of capital, both official and private, into underdeveloped countries

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has been reduced - all of which contributes to the progressive deterioration of their fragile economies.

The foreign debt of developing countries has already reached the impressive figure of more than \$900 billion. Latin America alone now owes \$360 billion, more than the total debt of all the third-world countries only six years ago. The total debt of the African countries, which is over \$160 billion, has a greater per capita impact than Latin America's if, in addition to the lesser relative development of those countries, we consider the serious damage caused by drought and hunger to a large number of them.

The economic crisis has overtaken and, in a way, has been thrust on the economies of the less-developed countries. We can say that we are dealing with a process that had been in the offing for some time and the consequences of which are more or less serious, depending on each country's economic resources and also on the greater or lesser efficiency with which it has been able to defend itself against the crisis or to try to overcome it.

The group of non-aligned countries, which convened in Luanda a few weeks ago for the eighth ministerial meeting of the Movement, owe Western countries a total of almost \$590 billion. This means that we must pay over \$60 billion for debt-servicing this year alone. What could our peoples not do with such a sum of money if it were used to stimulate industry and agricultural production, to increase food production, health development and education?

The insurmountable problems generated by the existence of this swollen debt do not lie only in the difficulties which our countries face in paying the interest. While it is true that receiving credits to cover the servicing of the debt raises the level of their indebtedness in a way that calls into question any possibility of development, and therefore of eventually repaying the debt, the attempts that some countries have made to honour their commitments - in unfair conditions, as we

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have already seen, in which the dollar has been overvalued several times and high interest rates prevail - have failed, owing to the serious deterioration in the terms of trade and the resultant reduction in their export earnings for this period.

If we consider that the allocation of 20 per cent of export earnings to pay the foreign debt, far from solving the debt, will increase it and is practically untenable, what will happen when our countries must devote - as many are already doing - 57, 52, 45 or 36 per cent of their export earnings to this purpose? How can the sharp drop in the standard of living of the majority sectors of the population be curbed? Have the deflationary measures prescribed by the International Monetary Fund managed to halt the desperation of the working classes, the impoverishment of the middle classes, unemployment, the increase in consumer prices, and the reduction of exports and domestic production in the developing countries?

The daily papers in any Latin-American country bear witness to the contrary - as has also been evident for some time now in the statistical yearbooks of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

What is true is that the capitalist countries' protectionist measures; dumping; the overvaluation of the dollar; the persistence of unequal terms of trade; high interest rates; and the current international monetary, financial and economic trade system as a whole - all work to the detriment of the developing countries, have promoted a reverse transfer of capital to the developed capitalist countries, and reinforce the dependence, underdevelopment and stagnation of the countries of the so-called third world.*

*Mr. Moreno-Salcedo (Philippines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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Cuba insists that it is necessary to do away with the abysmal inequality that separates our countries from the developed countries. We must therefore struggle to eradicate the poverty, hunger, sickness and illiteracy from which hundreds of millions of human beings still suffer. We aspire to a new world order, based on justice, equity and peace, to replace the unjust, unequal system which now prevails, in which, as was proclaimed in the Havana Declaration of 1979 by the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries,

"wealth is still concentrated in the hands of a few powers whose wasteful economies are maintained by the exploitation of the labour as well as the transfer and plunder of the natural and other resources of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and other regions of the world." (A/34/542, Annex, Political Declaration, para. 7)

In proclaiming the unpayable and uncollectable nature of the developing countries' foreign debt, we do not indulge in hyperbole, nor do we brandish propagandistic slogans, as some capitalist leaders and certain elements of their press claim. We base our opinion on rigorous, scientific analysis that can be clearly demonstrated with irrefutable facts - for example, in 1984 the flight of Latin American capital to the developed capitalist countries, mainly the United States; the deterioration in the terms of trade, provoked by an increase in the prices of the industrial goods and intermediate goods that we import and a drop in the purchasing power of our export products; the artificial, arbitrary maintenance of high interest rates; and the real increase in the debt and the interest on it, due to the overvaluation of the dollar.

All of that led to the illegal plunder of more than \$45 billion from our America, as Fidel Castro pointed out in his well-known interview granted to the Mexican daily newspaper Excelsior: \$20 billion owing to the deterioration in the terms of exchange, \$10 billion owing to excessive interest, \$10 billion owing to

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the flight of currency and - at a conservative estimate - \$5 billion owing to the overvaluation of the dollar. He also affirmed:

"Adding it all up, including what can be considered normal interest on the debt, in just one year the Latin American countries have turned over to the rich, developed world around \$70 billion, of which \$50 billion was in cash.

"That is why we feel that it is indispensable, decisive and urgent to solve the problem of the debt. The crisis is advancing and will continue to do so. It is illusory to think it can be solved through palliatives, debt rescheduling and traditional formulas. We must get to the bottom of the problems created by under-development, which hinder our countries' development and continue to widen the gap between the industrialized and the third world countries. In addition to solving the problem of the debt, we must establish the new international economic order once and for all."

That that is feasible is shown by the capitalist countries' experience, as was pointed out on 12 September by The Wall Street Journal, which cannot be suspected of having the slightest leftist proclivities. It said:

"To realize the folly of this course imposed by the IMF it is only necessary to consider Western Europe in the aftermath of World War II. Suppose that the Marshall Plan had been organized by the commandantes now installed in the IMF. Those weary and indebted nations would have been pressed to further sacrifices. Instead of the aid that revived their economies, benefited the U.S. and helped stimulate the great post-war boom, IMF measures of the sort urged today would have meant a continuation of the horrors of war by other means."

The article added:

"Yet in contrast to that post-war boldness the approach espoused by the IMF has led, since 1982, to a net capital inflow from the third to the first

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world. The only sector to which this can possibly be of advantage is the banks, which will do anything rather than write off their uncollectable loans, since this would mean confessing to their shareholders that a large amount of their assets are worthless."

The Wall Street Journal concluded:

"The only answer is to write off the debt and begin again with productive loans that are not merely roll-over servicing for debt, but that will underwrite that desirable state of affairs: the net outflow of the surplus from the developed to the developing world."

In other words, as in the bank crisis of 1928, the Governments of the capitalist States should assume the third world countries' debts to private banks and stimulate a new flow of resources for development, which could very well come from a low percentage of their military expenditures. Ten per cent or, if the interest remains high, 12 per cent of their military expenditure would suffice, and those expenditures would still be fabulously high and give cause for concern.

We hope that the United Nations, as an irreplaceable forum for examining and helping to solve the main economic and political problems of our time, will make a positive contribution to the solution of the thorny problems of the foreign debt, together with the efforts that are already being made to convene an international conference on monetary and financial resources for development.

In mentioning the dramatic situation presently faced by the underdeveloped countries as a result of the capitalist economic crisis surrounding them and of the unequal exchange holding them back, we cannot forget the tragedy nature has just inflicted on one of them, a respected member of the United Nations community and a Latin American sister nation, Mexico. Mexico's grief is shared by all the people of Cuba, who are linked to Mexico not only by geographical proximity and the fact

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that they belong to Latin America and the Caribbean, but also by unbreakable bonds of history and affection. We reiterate our sympathy for and solidarity with Mexico at this unfortunate time for its people.

In conveying Cuba's condolences to the Government and people of Mexico, and our readiness to assist, President Fidel Castro urged Mexico's creditor countries to suspend servicing of the foreign debt so that Mexico might - with the integrity it has already shown - face up to the effects of the disaster now afflicting the country. That would be a way of alleviating its terrible situation. Mexico needs real and effective solidarity, not crumbs from the International Monetary Fund.

Today the unity of Latin America and the Caribbean - above and beyond ideologies and ideas that might be opposed on certain issues - is more urgent and necessary than ever before, in order to tackle the huge problems overwhelming them. It is regrettable that at such a time we heard from this rostrum in Latin American words a repetition of the vile slanders and rotten arguments developed in Washington, in an attempt to obscure the irrefutable signs and the only possible solutions, put forward by those who have for a quarter of a century, with unique firmness and heroism, resisted blockade, military aggression, economic siege and attempts to isolate them politically, and who have practised genuine internationalism everywhere in the world.

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It is regrettable because we know those infamous suggestions are a product of consultations and capitulations in the belief that the empire would forgive them for their timid and compromised rebellion. It is regrettable because what is being stridently presented as a drastic solution and a realistic way out will be converted into tithing that will perpetuate dependence and bar the path to the only worthy, moral, profound and true solution.

We will not allow ourselves to be drawn into dissension. We reaffirm the commitment by President Fidel Castro that those who are attacked or harassed for defending the rights of their peoples to reject - through whichever formula they may choose - the misery that would be wrought upon them by demanding that they repay their foreign debt will have Cuba's support. But we doubt that those who pick their arguments from the arsenal of imperialism, those who repeat Yankee slanders, will be able to make good their promises and hoist with firm hands the colours they seek to uphold before world public opinion. Latin America's history is replete with such outdated, prevaricating redeemers.

As the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries stated in the Luanda Declaration a few weeks ago, Latin America and the Caribbean are one of the areas of the world which have suffered most directly from acts of aggression by colonial and imperialist Powers. The Ministers noted with deep concern that the situation in Central America now constituted one of the main focal points of tension in the international arena and that, notwithstanding repeated appeals by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the rest of the international community, as well as efforts by the Contadora Group to find a negotiated solution, the situation in that area was continuing to deteriorate as a result of the implementation of imperialist policies of interference and intervention. This, together with the poverty and oppression to which the region has been subjected throughout its history, constitutes a real threat to international peace and security. In this regard,

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they observed that the danger of direct United States intervention in Nicaragua, Cuba and other countries of the region had increased alarmingly.

The non-aligned countries were not mistaken when they described the situation in our part of the world in such severe terms. Age-old hunger, lack of land, jobs, schools, hospitals and political rights, continued humiliation, and other abuses of all kinds have filled the people with a hatred of tyrants and a longing for a freedom that they do not yet enjoy. Those are the true roots of the social revolution that the imperialists are trying to crush by establishing an enormous military apparatus in the territories adjoining Nicaragua.

Bands of counter-revolutionaries continue to penetrate Nicaraguan territory from Costa Rica and Honduras. They are trained, armed and financed and receive logistical support from the United States Government; they commit abominable crimes against farmers and other inhabitants of small settlements. During this period the number of attacks, military actions and other measures against the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, stability and self-determination of Nicaragua has increased.

Its air space and territorial waters are still being violated, and joint military manoeuvres of a purely intimidatory nature by United States, together with those of other States in the region, are still going on, emphasizing the threats of surgical operations or selective bombardments against Sandino's homeland.

Since the creation of the Contadora Group in 1983, Cuba has expressed its support for that Group's goals of searching for a peaceful, negotiated solution for the Central American conflict. Nicaragua has expressed its willingness to sign the Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, of 7 September 1984, which was the result of long and arduous discussions by the parties concerned. However, the United States Government - which until then had been making hypocritical statements in support of the efforts of the Latin American countries - mobilized its allies in

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the area to prevent the adoption of any formula that would proscribe military interference in an area which it considers its backyard.

The situation is no less critical in El Salvador, where increased United States military aid to the genocidal Government has resulted in a worsening of the conflict and taken a toll of thousands of victims among the civilian population in the territories controlled by the Salvadorian patriots. The revolutionary forces, grouped in the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and the Revolutionary Democratic Front, have given convincing proof not only of their willingness but also of their capacity to undertake a serious dialogue with the Government, without any strings attached, in order to find a peaceful, negotiated solution in accord with the aspirations of the Salvadorian people and the overwhelming majority of the international community. That dialogue, which was unilaterally broken off by the Government, should be resumed as soon as possible.

Cuba supports the Cantadora Group's genuine Latin-American initiative and hails the backing it has received from the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay. It calls on all interested States to speed up negotiations aimed at achieving an Act acceptable to all the Central American States and demands that the United States Government end all its military, economic and political acts of aggression against the legitimate Government of Nicaragua.

No examination of the situation in Latin America and the Caribbean would be complete without mention of the criminal United States invasion of the tiny island of Grenada which so brutally destroyed that sister country's aspirations to national sovereignty and freedom, once more reducing it to the sad condition of a semi-colony under the Yankee imperial boot, in defiance of decisions of this Assembly. We express our deep aversion to the presence in this hall of those who claiming to represent Grenada are thus staining the immortal principles of those

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who, together with the unforgettable Maurice Bishop, once proclaimed the genuine independence of that country.

Also in the Caribbean, the people of Betances, Hostos, Albizu Campos and Corretjer are still seeking recognition of their right to self-determination and independence, as was seen in the United Nations Special Committee on decolonization some months ago. In reaffirming the full applicability of resolution 1514 (XV) to Puerto Rico, the Committee expressed the international community's hope that the Puerto Rican people would be able freely to exercise their rights without outside interference and that they would be able to determine their political status in keeping with their Latin American and Caribbean identity. From this rostrum, we once again reiterate our lasting solidarity with the Puerto Rican people and its ideals of freedom.

Together with the other Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries who met in Luanda, we reiterate the need to do away with colonialism in all its forms and manifestations in Latin America and the Caribbean and express our concern at the fact that colonial Powers are using territories in the region as bases or ports of call for ships carrying nuclear weapons or for storing such weaponry.

In this regard, we denounce the existence of imperialist military bases in Puerto Rico, at Guantanamo, in the Malvinas Islands and in other parts of Latin America, because they constitute a threat to our countries' security and peace in the region.

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We express our support for the legitimate expectations of the Panamanian people and Government that the agreements on the Panama Canal and on the neutrality of that interoceanic waterway be strictly observed.

We also firmly support the right of the Argentine Republic to reestablish its sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands through negotiations with the Government of the United Kingdom, with the participation and good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and we endorse Bolivia's legitimate and just claim to have restored to it a direct, useful outlet to the Pacific Ocean, with full sovereignty over such an area.

We trust that the establishment of democratic Governments in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay will represent a new stage in Latin America and deal a powerful blow to the imperialists' hegemonistic pretensions in the region. The broad avenues of freedom foreseen by President Salvador Allende will open up sooner, rather than later, for his still unredeemed people, who are struggling courageously against Pinochet's cruel tyranny. The people's steadfast determination to exercise their sovereignty without restrictions of any kind will be shared in Latin America.

Our Government places particular importance on the situation prevailing in southern Africa where the racist régime in Pretoria, a strategic ally of United States imperialism, illegally continues to occupy the Territory of Namibia in flagrant violation of resolutions of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Movement and other international forums.

Thanks to President Reagan's "constructive engagement" with Mr. Botha's fascists, South Africa is persisting in its policy of bantustanization and the exportation of apartheid, attempting to impose a puppet government on Namibia, facilitating the plundering of that Territory by Yankee and other imperialist transnational corporations and ruthlessly repressing the Namibian

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patriots. Cuba hails the heroic Namibian combatants and reiterates its support for that people's legitimate struggle, led by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), their sole legitimate representative.

The duplicity of the United States Government and its racist associates has become obvious, for, on the pretext of holding talks with the People's Republic of Angola with a view to finding a solution for Namibia's independence and for the situation in southern Africa, they have been playing for time in order to shore up the apartheid régime in South Africa, to expand and strengthen their control in Namibia, to weaken and divide the front-line States and to intimidate other independent neighbouring States.

This manoeuvre was revealed when, in spite of the steps taken by the Government of the People's Republic of Angola in compliance with the Lusaka Agreements and with the talks held at Cape Verde and Luanda that were announced by President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the racist South Africa troops continued to occupy a part of Angolan territory. Both the United States and South Africa continued fully to support the counterrevolutionaries who are trying to destabilize Angola, and a commando team of the racist special forces went into Cabinda to sabotage the oil installations there, to paralyze the country's economy, attributing the action to the counterrevolutionary forces. This was done in order to intimidate the heroic Angolan people, to prevent the holding of the Ministerial Meeting of the non-aligned countries in the region and to make the world believe that the revolutionary Government was approaching its end.

The facts are that the Angolan armed forces quickly and efficiently defeated the South African aggressors and prevented them from carrying out their criminal plans in Cabinda, plans that would have taken hundreds of lives, including those of the United States technicians working there for Gulf Oil. The bands of

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counterrevolutionaries are being dealt heavy losses; the so-called victories of the UNITA traitors occur only in the Lisbon newspapers and the non-aligned Ministerial Meeting was held in Luanda in absolute peace and quiet with the warm hospitality of that courageous people.

The South African racists have once again shown their arrogance and contempt for world public opinion.

More than 120 countries sent delegations to the Ministerial Meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in Luanda, Angola, and over half of those delegations were headed by Ministers. That constituted a powerful expression of the Movement's solidarity with the Angolan people in their struggle in defence of their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. In the course of the ten years that have passed since Angola achieved its independence it has repulsed continual acts of aggression by the racist Pretoria régime.

The first decision adopted at the Ministerial Meeting at Luanda was to send a warm message of solidarity to Nelson Mandela in his apartheid prison. South Africa responded in its customary style, with a new attack on Angola. On 16 September South African troops invaded Angolan territory and the South African air forces penetrated deep into Angola's air space in order to attack the units of the Angolan armed forces that were pursuing fleeing UNITAR bands in Mavinga in Cuando-Cubango Province.

The Pretoria racists place no limits on their actions and do not hesitate to violate even the most elementary norms of international law in their vain attempts to save their servants in the UNITA counterrevolutionary bands from inexorable defeat. The Security Council must denounce South Africa for this flagrant new evidence of its attitude, which violates the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

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It is therefore imperative for us to continue to support the struggle of the Namibian people by all possible means until final victory is won. In this regard Cuba supports the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on the question of Namibia in 1986 and the holding of an international consultative conference on this question in Western Europe during the course of that same year. It also supports the imposition of mandatory comprehensive sanctions against South Africa in conformity with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations if Pretoria refuses to comply with Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and other Security Council resolutions on Namibia.

Because of its policies and practices the racist Pretoria régime is the main cause of the violence and instability in southern Africa. Its brutal acts of oppression, repression and discrimination against the black population have recently been stepped up with the arbitrary detention, arrest and imprisonment of opponents of the apartheid régime and the imposition of a state of emergency, all of which reached alarming proportions with a brutal massacre of the defenceless population, including children.

There is no doubt that this hideous system of discrimination and exploitation practiced by the fascist white minority against the overwhelming majority of the South African people is possible only because of the unlimited support given it by the United States Government and the aid given it by other Western countries and Israel.

The growing movement against apartheid in Western Europe, North America, Australasia and other parts of the world reveals the worldwide opposition to this monstrous system, which the United Nations has described as a crime against mankind, and there is a growing demand that economic, financial, military, political and diplomatic support for the Pretoria régime be ended.

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In concert with all progressive men and women we call for the immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela, Zephania, Mothopeng and all the other patriots and political prisoners who are confined in South African prisons; we also call for respect for the prisoner-of-war status of all freedom fighters who have been captured, in conformity with the 1949 Geneva Convention and of Article 44 of Protocol I annexed to that Convention. The application of mandatory comprehensive sanctions against the racist Pretoria régime will help to speed the downfall of the iniquitous system of oppression, exploitation and discrimination that, to the shame of their leaders, the racists and their imperialist allies maintain in the southern cone of Africa.

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It is necessary that the Security Council adopt them as soon as possible. Cuba reiterates its militant support for the South African combatants in the heroic Umkhonto We Sizwe, the armed branch of the African National Congress, the sole legitimate representative of the South African people.

We support the Sahraoui people's legitimate cause and their right to self-determination and independence in conformity with the resolutions of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

In the year of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV), the Magna Carta of decolonization, we insist on the restitution of Madagascar's sovereignty over the islands of Europa, Juan de Nova, Glorieuses and Bassas da India. We affirm our solidarity with the Comorians in their aspiration to recover the island of Mayotte and with Mauritius in its struggle to recover Diego Garcia. We support the cause of the abolition of colonialism in Africa, Asia and Latin America before the end of this century in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Charter of the United Nations. And we call on all Member States of the United Nations to redouble their efforts to fulfil this sacred mandate of the peoples as soon as possible.

The situation in the Middle East continues to deteriorate as a result of Israel's aggressive and expansionist policies in the region, in which it has the support and complicity of the imperialist United States Government.

As has been said countless times, the question of Palestine lies at the heart of the crisis in the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since they are inextricably linked, no partial or isolated solution can lead to just, comprehensive, lasting peace in the region. Such peace can be based only on the

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total, unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem and on recognition of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, including the right to return to their homeland and their homes, the right to self-determination without outside interference and the right to establish their own independent, sovereign State in Palestine.

Cuba reiterates its solidarity with the Palestinian people's cause and calls for the prompt holding of an international conference on peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of that people which has suffered for so long.

We call for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon and the re-establishment of the Lebanese people's national sovereignty over their territory up to its internationally recognized borders.

We condemn United States imperialism's strategic alliance with expansionist, exclusivist Zionism against the Arab and African countries, in connivance with South Africa's racist régime, and especially the nuclear collaboration between South Africa and Israel, which endangers international peace and security.

The situation in the Republic of Cyprus continues to be a cause of concern to the international community. We deplore the Turkish Cypriot leadership's unilateral declaration of independence of 15 November 1983. We consider it to be legally null and void. We believe that serious negotiations between the two communities and the good offices of the Secretary-General are necessary to arrive at a just and viable solution of the Cypriot question that ensures for the Cypriot people independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status.

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As in the past, we are in favour of increasing the efforts of the United Nations and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to put an end to the fratricidal war between Iran and Iraq, which has already taken a heavy toll in human lives and property.

In South-East Asia, threats and acts of aggression continue against the Indo-Chinese countries, for which we reaffirm our support. We endorse the successes of the People's Republic of Kampuchea in its struggle to do away with the remnants of Pol Pot's savagery and to build a new life. We wish to make known our disagreement with the presence in the United Nations of the executioners of the Kampuchean people, who are basely linked to the Yankee imperialists, who put Lon Nol in power and attacked the Kampuchean people. They are usurping the seat of the People's Republic.

With regard to South-West Asia, we favour seeking a solution on the basis of the consultations being promoted by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, with full respect for the political, economic and social options of each of the peoples of the region and for their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status.

We hail the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to achieve the peaceful reunification of Korea, free of all foreign interference, by means of dialogue and consultations between the north and the south in accordance with the principles of independence, peaceful reunification and national unity, as expressed in the Joint Declaration of 4 June 1972. The peaceful reunification of Korea must inevitably be supplemented by the withdrawal of the United States troops occupying the southern part of the peninsula.

In advocating the continuance of such efforts we feel compelled to express our concern at the fact that the forthcoming Olympic Games have been scheduled to be held in only one part of Korea, the south. This reflects a deplorable political

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decision on the part of those who direct the Olympic movement and is contrary to the spirit of the Olympic Games and the aspirations to brotherhood and friendship among peoples and mutual understanding embodied in the Olympic ideal. We are in favour of the Olympic Games being held throughout the Korean peninsula, both north and south, so as to safeguard the Olympic movement and to make a positive contribution to the peaceful reunification of and mutual understanding between the two parts of the country.

Ever since its founding on 24 October 1945, the United Nations has played a vital role in international relations. The aims and objectives expressed in its Charter are as relevant, powerful and significant today as they ever were. The world we wish to build, a world in which weapons have been turned into ploughshares and the use of force has been abolished except in the service of common interests, is far from a reality.

During those 40 years, however, old colonial empires have disappeared; peoples in Asia and Africa that used to be oppressed have won their national liberation struggles and attained independence; the socialist camp has been established and over two thirds of mankind have been freed from the exploitation of man by man. Furthermore, at the initiative of the Soviet Union and with the support of the third world, the international community adopted in 1960 the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Since then, dozens of third-world peoples and territories, some of them in Latin America and the Caribbean, have freed themselves from the colonial yoke.

The task is not yet completed of course, as the cases of South Africa, the Malvinas Islands, the colonial situation of Namibia, the islands in the South Pacific, Puerto Rico and other Caribbean territories bear witness. It is for this Organization, together with the struggling peoples of those territories, to speed the hour of their final liberation.

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Throughout these four decades the United Nations system has been strengthened and extended. Its specialized agencies have been responsible for important achievements in several fields of international relations and especially in the process of decolonization. Such agencies as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the World Food Council and the United Nations Environment Programme have made valuable contributions to our countries' development and to understanding among the peoples.

The United Nations has been and still is the ideal forum in which to discuss the problems of economic development and international economic relations. If there have not been greater achievements, that is due not to any fault on the part of the Organization but to the lack of political will on the part of some Western countries. The Declaration and Programme of Action on the establishment of a new international economic order are historic documents whose implementation would radically modify international relations.

In spite of its limitations, the Security Council is a useful instrument for watching over the preservation of international peace and security. Those limitations, it must be admitted, stem from the correlation of forces throughout the world and from the existence of a small number of imperialist States which refuse to give up their privileges, spheres of influence and hegemonist ambitions.

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The abuse of the rule of unanimity - the veto - has prevented the imposition of sanctions against Israel and South Africa for their acts of aggression against independent Arab and African countries, respectively, and for South Africa's refusal to abide by the United Nations resolutions on Namibia and the policies and practice of apartheid.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the United Nations has managed to prevent the outbreak of another world war, and this, in itself, has been a major contribution to the cause of peace.

In expressing its full support for all efforts to strengthen and extend the United Nations system and to reinforce its role in solving the main problems with which mankind is faced in the fields of economics, health, education, science, culture, information and communications, and in preserving international peace and security, Cuba denounces the policies of pressure and blackmail that have been applied against the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other specialized agencies; these constitute an attack on multilateralism and on the United Nations system itself.

The campaigns which have been waged against our Organization in the United States and in other Western countries are not aimed at making healthy or even necessary criticism in order to increase the efficiency and the results or productivity of the system; rather, they seek to undermine and destroy it because it is a forum in which contemporary problems can be taken up and solved. We are and always will be opposed to any attempt to reduce, weigh down or prevent the important work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in their different fields.

We feel that one of the most outstanding achievements of the last few years has been the adoption of the Convention on the Law of the Sea, signed by 159 countries and ratified by 21 to date. In this regard, the position of the United

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States Government - which refused to sign it - and its decision to grant licenses to private corporations to engage in prospecting activities in parts of the Zone, in violation of General Assembly resolution 2749 (XXV) and of article 137 of the Convention, should be vigorously condemned by the international community.

We are in favour of the establishment of the new international information and communications order as an invaluable contribution to the cause of decolonization in this vital area of relations among peoples; we are also in favour of scientific education and the free and thorough education of the human person. The peoples' basic rights include the right to self-determination, development, work and an independent life.

Sports are also a right of the people, and it is high time for them to be practised by all, on an equal footing, without hierarchies or small groups deciding on where sports events shall be held and who will participate in them, without consulting the people. We believe that the United Nations is the appropriate Organization for promoting sports, since its universal nature makes it the depository par excellence of the high ideals of the Olympic Games.

The Cuban people, which has been constructing socialism 90 miles from the strongest imperialist Power for the last 26 years and has managed to withstand every blow with firmness and heroism and victoriously to defend its independence and national sovereignty, is still ready to set aside its tools and take up weapons with which to defend itself and to defeat whoever attempts to conquer its territory.

On reiterating our support for the United Nations on the fortieth anniversary of its founding, we also reiterate our faith in justice, freedom, independence, development and equality for all peoples. As Jose Marti said, "Man is more than race, more than white or black." The Cuban Revolution is for this universal man; for mankind without exploited or exploiters; and for peace for all States, both large and small.

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Today, to this august assembly, we reiterate our firm commitment to struggle tirelessly, alongside the United Nations, for the construction of a better world.

Mr. van den BROEK (Netherlands): A few days ago a Member State was plunged in sorrow by a major natural disaster. As the citizens of Mexico are mourning their dead our thoughts are with the bereaved families. Allow me to extend on behalf of the people of the Netherlands to the people of Mexico my deep sympathy at this tragic event.

The fortieth anniversary of this Organization, which we are to celebrate in a month's time, promises to be very busy and difficult for those responsible for the proper and orderly conduct of business. We are therefore particularly happy that a distinguished diplomat and an old hand at United Nations affairs will preside over our meetings. And he has represented in New York until recently a country which will shortly join us in our endeavours to build a new Europe.

At an anniversary session like this, one is tempted to draw up a balance-sheet of past successes and failures of our Organization. In this connection I was reminded of a conversation not too long ago between a French intellectual and a Chinese philosopher. The Frenchman asked what he thought of the French revolution. The philosopher replied that he was not certain whether sufficient time had passed since then and that he therefore preferred not to jump to conclusions. To most of us this may seem excessively cautious. We can, however, draw some hope from this observation. When we look back on 40 years of the United Nations, we see a picture of both successes and failures, of progress and lost opportunities.

When we embarked upon this enterprise 40 years ago the immediate past was almost too horrible to contemplate. Consequently there seemed much to look forward to. With the chaos and destruction of the Second World War behind us progress

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seemed somehow inevitable. The Charter of the United Nations bears witness to that mood. From now on nations would walk hand in hand. It was not to be.

Soon it became apparent that the Charter's system of collective security had become frequently paralysed, and it is sad to note that 40 years later this Organization has still to live up to its promise "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". The situation in Afghanistan is a case in point.

Moreover, we seem to get confused by the growing number of world-wide problems that stubbornly resist solution. As a result, international institutions are quietly but irresistibly eroded by a process of slow-motion disintegration. Our Secretary-General did not relent from expressing in his annual reports his anxiety at the present trends, at the erosion of the authority and status of world and regional institutions and at the crisis in the multilateral approach to international affairs.

As for this Organization, I continue to believe that it has the capacity and the resilience to do better than its predecessor, the League of Nations, which gradually receded to the background while history ran its disastrous course. This Organization is better equipped to solve many of the major problems besetting the world than the League of Nations ever was. Surely, the crisis in the multilateral approach to international relations is not so much one of method as of will, the will to resort to the methods at our disposal and to use them properly.

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I submit that I am not the only one who would wish the number of General Assembly resolutions to be radically reduced, if only because their currency is heavily devaluated by inflation. Secondly, there is a clear need for restoring the process of real negotiations before draft resolutions are put to a vote. What matters is obviously not to win a majority somehow, in many cases all too easily, but to gather the support of those Member States that in practice bear the responsibility in a certain situation or have the means to carry out General Assembly recommendations. Thirdly, and in the same vein, we should not seek short-term advantages for political expediency but, on the contrary, we should aim at long-term progress in creating a more humane and peaceful world. Finally, once a truly negotiated decision has been taken, we should not step aside as if the subject matter were settled by the adoption of a resolution; instead we should realize that words hold true only if translated into action.

A disturbing gap between oratory and practical results is to be found in the field of arms control and disarmament; for, whatever successes the United Nations may claim to have achieved in its 40 years of existence, it is a saddening truth that we, its Members, have failed so far to build a collective framework for the maintenance of international peace and security. If the present state of the world shows signs of incoherence and disintegration, this is certainly one of its root causes. The dream of peace is as vivid as when the United Nations was founded, but our peoples are at the same time anxiously aware that the level of armaments has reached a point higher than ever before.

Easy solutions are not at hand, but at least we should avoid developments running out of control and try to abide by the agreements reached so far. The

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Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is certainly not the end of the debate on nuclear disarmament but it is an essential instrument in the security interest of all of us. The objective of nuclear disarmament, already most difficult to achieve, would be rather beyond reach if the number of nuclear Powers were to increase. It was, therefore, encouraging that the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons demonstrated, at their recently concluded Review Conference in Geneva, their continuing support for the Treaty. By adopting a final declaration by consensus, despite a wide range of differing views on disarmament, they have strengthened that Treaty's credibility and vitality.

It goes without saying that the Soviet Union and the United States carry primary responsibility for curtailing the nuclear arms race. Equally it goes without saying that the peoples of the world look forward with expectation to the forthcoming meeting between the leaders of those two Powers. Our hope is that it may produce a new stimulus to the arms control negotiations at present under way in Geneva and that it will lead to an intensified dialogue on effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth, at limiting and reducing nuclear arms and at strengthening strategic stability.

Substantial reductions and preferably complete elimination of land-based intermediate-range missiles are of specific relevance to the Netherlands. On this matter my Government has taken a position of utmost restraint. In June 1984 we made a strong appeal to the Soviet Union to reverse the trend of the ever-increasing build-up of SS-20 missiles, in which case we would be prepared to forgo deployment of intermediate-range nuclear missiles on our territory. Unfortunately, our participation in deployment of intermediate-range nuclear missiles now seems to have become inevitable, since that appeal to the Soviet Union

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has remained unheeded. Nevertheless, for our part, together with our allies, we shall not cease to contribute to constructive and imaginative thinking on how an equitable, balanced and verifiable agreement can be attained in Geneva on this category of weapons.

For years now the prohibition of chemical weapons has headed the agenda of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. In an unprecedented gesture the Conference has decided to extend its informal consultations on the subject while this Assembly is in session. The urgency of a comprehensive agreement is all the more apparent in view of recent violations of the Geneva Protocol banning the use of such weapons and the prospect that a growing number of countries might consider acquisition of chemical means of warfare.

One of the most successful endeavours of the United Nations in the field of international peace and security are its peace-keeping operations and observer missions in a number of conflict areas. On the whole these operations have proved to be a useful instrument of de-escalation and conflict control. We have learned from experience that these peace-keeping forces can hope to play a useful role only if they can count on the co-operation of the parties to a particular conflict. That is both their strength and their weakness. It is not the objective of a peace-keeping force to solve the problems that lead to a conflict. What they can do, however, is create a favourable climate, without which diplomatic efforts to solve the underlying dispute cannot hope to achieve much. Without a framework of peace-making by political means a peace-keeping force can by itself do little or nothing to rectify the situation.

It is precisely with that in mind that I should like to draw this Assembly's attention to the situation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). It operates in a political vacuum created by the inability of the parties involved to reach agreement on security arrangements

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in the area and to come to an understanding of the role of the Force in southern Lebanon. Regrettably, the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanon has so far not led to a situation in which UNIFIL can fulfil a role more in keeping with its mandate. As a consequence both of the precarious situation prevailing in Lebanon and of Israel's insistence on the preservation of a security zone beyond its own border, UNIFIL's main concern now seems to be to protect its own personnel. However unsatisfactory as the present state of affairs may be, my Government continues to be grateful to the Secretary-General and his staff for their unrelenting efforts to redress the situation. Should success continue to elude them, however, it is to be feared that UNIFIL's position will become rapidly untenable.

The Secretary-General in his recent report has made the wise observation that the United Nations cannot - and was not intended to - solve all the problems of the international community but that it is the best place to avoid the worst and to strive for improvement. For this reason, I would like to add, this Organization deserves all the political support its Members can give. I have already mentioned its peace-keeping efforts.

Another field in which we should muster our forces relates to the plague of terrorism and hijacking. This form of anarchy can be combatted only in conditions of international solidarity and mutual co-operation.

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Whatever motives might lead to terrorist behaviour, it remains an offence against every norm of civilization to take hostage innocent persons, let alone to kill them almost wantonly. I would join the appeal to those countries not yet parties to the Conventions adopted under the auspices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on aviation security and to the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly, to do so speedily. Likewise, I urge all parties to these Conventions to implement them scrupulously under all circumstances.

International co-operation in the economic and social fields has been an essential task of the United Nations in pursuit of the purposes and principles of the Charter for a better world. Over the last four decades the United Nations, with its system of specialized agencies, has made an important contribution. For millions of people, particularly in developing countries, the United Nations has been synonymous with change and with hope for the future. In the areas of international co-operation for development, environment, population and, most recently, the status of women, this Organization, through a variety of activities, has earned its place in history. The Netherlands is proud to have been closely associated with these activities and will continue to be associated with them in the years ahead.

The world economy today is characterized by complex interrelationships of financial, monetary and trade issues which - as the Secretary-General has pointed out in his annual report - "are of such profound political and social importance that they can only be dealt with effectively as part of a wider political process" (A/40/1, p. 9). In this respect the United Nations offers a universal and unique forum for discussion and study that cuts across traditional sectoral boundaries. Co-ordinating efforts, such as the recent examples of addressing the emergencies on

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the African continent, have shown that, given the will of all concerned, the United Nations can make an important contribution.

The United Nations has been instrumental in formulating objectives and targets for development co-operation. These continue to play a vital role in our determination of priorities. Only last week the Netherlands Government reaffirmed its own effort, amounting to 1.5 per cent of our net national income for development co-operation purposes. I would like to join those who appeal to other industrialized countries to bring their development effort in line with the internationally agreed target of 1 per cent.

International solidarity is also the sole answer to the world-wide problem of refugees. We note with considerable concern the unprecedented increase in the number of refugees and other displaced persons over the past several years. In many regions the vicious circle of armed conflict, violations of human rights and social disintegration leads to a disruption of the fabric of society. As a consequence, people are uprooted and this in turn leads to more flows of refugees. At present the High Commissioner faces the challenge of finding durable solutions to an ever-growing refugee problem, a problem compounded by the emergency situation in Africa. Now, as at the time when this high office was created, my Government will continue to lend its active support to the promotion of international co-operation with a view to providing material assistance wherever such assistance is required. We will also continue to support the High Commissioner in his efforts to integrate assistance projects for refugees in United Nations development projects.

According to his mandate it is the High Commissioner's first duty to give international protection to refugees. Over the years it has become increasingly difficult to carry out this delicate task. The continued occurrence of threats and

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violations of the safety of those who seek asylum and refugees, including armed attack against refugee camps and settlements, is particularly disquieting.

The disorder and confusion we often see in relations between States we can find many times repeated on the level of relations between Governments and subjects and between individual people. As the Charter of the United Nations should provide the framework for orderly international relations, so the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Covenants and Conventions that grew out of it provide an international code for how the State must treat individuals.

We are all aware of the widely differing views on human rights which find expression in these halls. It is therefore all the more encouraging that at times we are able to add meaningful agreements to the already existing ones governing relations between Governments and individuals. We, for our part, shall continue to exploit whatever opportunity may present itself to further the cause of human rights.

This jubilee session of the General Assembly is a fitting occasion to add to the body of international human rights law. It is hoped that the Sixth Committee will draw inspiration from the speedy work of last year's session concerning the Convention on torture and finish its work on the draft body of principles for the protection of all persons under any form of detention or imprisonment. One of the functions of this instrument will be to provide further protection against the evil of torture.

In recent years we have seen once again how closely intertwined are the concept and practice of pluralistic democracy and respect for human rights. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of opinion and expression and other fundamental human rights are prerequisites for meaningful popular participation in all aspects of social life. A recent example is the return of

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several Latin American countries to pluralistic democracy, a development which went hand in hand with the restoration of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

However, the struggle for democracy remains a difficult one. In too many States totalitarian or authoritarian government continues to be the rule. To many leaders, the test of free and meaningful elections seems a thing too dangerous to contemplate. For how else could one explain the open and veiled threats, coercion, harassment, imprisonment and worse which befall those who have the courage to stand up for their rights? Yet these practices occur in many States which have solemnly committed themselves to respect those rights. Sad as this may be, we should insist on the full implementation of these commitments, as the signatories of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe did only two months ago in Helsinki at the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the signature of that document.

The denial of basic human rights to the majority of the population of South Africa, aggravated by a constitutional system of racial discrimination, has brought that country to the brink of disintegration and chaos. Its Government had to resort to the proclamation of a state of emergency in large parts of the country. Despite legitimate demands for change in the past both from within South Africa itself and from the international community, the South African Government has so far remained unwilling to initiate a national dialogue and to implement basic reforms aimed at the abolition of apartheid.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

In our view, the only hope for peaceful change in South Africa is such a broadly based national dialogue. In our view a set of confidence-building measures by the South African Government is essential to promote the possibilities for that national dialogue. We note that certain steps have been taken to dissolve some components of the apartheid system, but there can be no such thing as a good and a bad apartheid. The system should be abolished in its totality.

It is peaceful change in South Africa that we are striving for. We do not want to promote civil strife nor do we condone violence, from whatever quarter. A total isolation of South Africa, as often advocated, will in my view only strengthen the hand of the champions of apartheid and thus tend to be counterproductive. What we do need is a gradual build-up of pressure by selective measures, supported by as many countries as possible. For that reason my Government remains in favour of action by the Security Council. For their part the Ten members of the European Community, together with Spain and Portugal, have made significant progress in harmonizing their attitudes on a number of restrictive measures. While exerting pressure on the South African Government we need also to give all support to the forces in South Africa working for a non-racial and peaceful society. Even at this late hour we must not lose hope that at the end reason and humanity will prevail.

While this session is a kind of milestone on a road that started in 1945 it is fitting to remind ourselves of one of the concepts fundamental to this Organization, to wit its universality. We have a duty to admit into our ranks those countries that are willing to accept the Charter's obligations, like the Republic of Korea. We also have to respect the rules of the Charter if voices are raised to expel one of the present Members or to curtail its rights of membership. The very future of our Organization would be put in jeopardy if we, the Members of the United Nations, were to undermine the Charter. We all, nations large and

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

small, need the United Nations in our fight against the centrifugal forces that tend to disrupt world society. What we need is genuine international co-operation so as to make true this anniversary's motto, "United Nations for a better world".

Mr. GUTIERREZ (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): It is with particular pleasure that my delegation joins in the congratulations expressed to the Permanent Representative of Spain, Ambassador Don Jaime de Pinies - an outstanding diplomat and well-known within United Nations circles for his important contributions to the work of the United Nations - upon his election by acclamation as President of this session of the General Assembly, at which we are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Similarly, I wish to express my delegation's thanks to his illustrious predecessor, Mr. Paul Lusaka, the Permanent Representative of Zambia, for the successful way in which he led the work of the General Assembly during its thirty-ninth session.

The Government of Costa Rica wishes to express its warm appreciation for its election to the post of Vice-President of the General Assembly. This further commits my country to increase its efforts to co-operate in the arduous tasks before this Assembly.

Our people and Government are deeply moved by the tragedy which has befallen our brothers in Mexico. That is why we noted with great pleasure the speed and the sense of solidarity with which the Assembly considered the problem and instructed the Secretary-General to co-ordinate multilateral aid in consultation with the Mexican Government.

We stand on the threshold of the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. In a month the United Nations will have been active for four decades. This anniversary therefore, gives Member States a unique opportunity to

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

make a far-reaching and sincere self-appraisal. It is a fitting moment to look backwards, to examine the purposes announced at the foundation of the Organization and to see to what extent an effort has been made to make them a reality, to what extent the United Nations has lived up to the hopes placed in it when it began its work in that hopeful autumn of 1945. It is time to take stock, and to reflect on the Organization which its founders had in mind, that which we have now, and that which we wish to see in the future.

Forty years ago, Don Julio Acosta, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, signed the document which led to the birth of this Organization. Like the other founding nations, Costa Rica set great store by the United Nations as the keystone to a new international order in a world community which would be an effective guarantor of peace and co-existence among all the peoples of the world. We believed that the traumatic experience of the Second World War had been enough to make everybody aware that it was essential for the survival of mankind that there should be an international organization which would work effectively for peace, a brotherhood of States which would manage to overcome differences between peoples and which would not relapse into the painful ineffectiveness and frustrating irrelevance of the League of Nations.

Unfortunately, we are faced today with a harsh reality. It is true that it has been possible to avoid the bloody spectre of a world conflagration, but one may wonder whether this is due to a feeling of fraternity, or whether it is simply the balance of terror which has prevented this final holocaust from occurring. Whatever the answer to that question, we must acknowledge that it is not peace which has prevailed in the world over the last 40 years. How many conflicts, crises and disputes have afflicted mankind since 1945? How much blood has been shed? How many men and women have died as a result of violence? How many have suffered imprisonment, torture, exile and oppression?

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

What is perhaps most tragic about such self-appraisal is the discovery that to none of these questions can one yet give a final answer, since the figures continue to rise day by day.

A good example of this is to be found in the agenda of the Assembly. When an international problem becomes an agenda item it almost certainly will remain on that agenda year after year. Thousands of words will be uttered and it will become the subject of a mass of documents, but it is very unlikely to be satisfactorily disposed of. This is not because that is what the Organization wants or because no attempt has been made to solve those problems. The responsibility for this rests with the Member States which depart from the spirit of San Francisco whenever they feel it is in their interest to do so. It is this attitude that undermines the foundations of the United Nations and has on many occasions made the Charter a dead letter.

Nevertheless, it is only realistic to acknowledge that major progress has been made in some areas. There is no doubt that many of the specialized agencies have done an excellent job and have achieved unprecedented results which the States themselves, working alone, would not have been able to achieve. In this respect we believe that the co-operation provided by the United Nations has been of vital importance and constitutes a legitimate source of pride for this Organization.

We have read with great interest the Secretary-General's annual report on the activities of the Organization. With his customary care, he has referred to the international situation, providing a realistic and forthright account of the grave problems besetting the international community and the measures that should be adopted to resolve them. My delegation pays a tribute to and thanks the Secretary-General for the concern he shows and for his dedication to the ideals of the United Nations.

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

In the light of all this, it is essential to return to our original source, the spirit of 1945. We must make a vigorous effort to give effect to the ideals which governed the birth of this Organization. Let there be no more mistrust, no more thirst for power, no more use of violence and economic and political pressure to protect nefarious interests. Let this Organization gradually cease to be a forum for talking about problems and become an effective instrument for negotiation and harmony between nations, a setting for vigorous co-operation and the exchange of knowledge, where the word "war" becomes a memory of the past.

If the purposes of the United Nations are to be fully achieved it must become truly universal. This is the most comprehensive organization ever created by human societies, but it must attain a further dimension. No people on earth should lack a voice in this chamber. There are no valid reasons for closing the doors of the United Nations on any State which is ready to accept its guiding principles. If the lessons of history show anything it is that ignoring the existence of a conflict is not the best way of resolving it. The case of the two Koreas is a good example of how today there are still outside this Organization nations whose presence is necessary if the United Nations is to represent or attempt to represent, all human activities. Universality is a necessity for this Organization, but it is still far from being achieved.

We note with enormous satisfaction the first agreements reached between the two Koreas, in which we should like to see signs of fuller understanding between the two parts of a single people.

The same ideal of universal membership should govern the efforts to find answers to the serious difficulties afflicting mankind. Political instability, economic ills and social unrest are all widespread diseases of the world today. Among all the painful problems mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, which

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

he refers to quite rightly as social and political poisons, I consider it necessary to refer to two which affect us in a special way and to which no State is immune.

There is an urgent need to make a radical attack on the problem of terrorism. This phenomenon, which clashes with the principles on which the United Nations is based, is becoming alarmingly widespread. All States, rich and poor, are today present or potential victims of this irrational scourge. The recent kidnapping of the daughter of the President of El Salvador, Mr. José Napoleon Duarte, constitutes another dramatic link in this bitter chain of barbarism.

We know that very frequently an attempt is made to justify the perpetration of acts of terrorism by reference to political and social considerations. To my country this attitude is evidence of backwardness and obscurantism. The use of terror as an instrument of political action cannot be justified and must give rise to feelings of contempt and condemnation.

Terrorism is an international phenomenon. It is a delusion to imagine that any country can escape its impact. It is also a mistake to think that its presence in a State is an internal problem which the international community can ignore. An act of terrorism is a crime against mankind which wounds all countries equally. Hence, Costa Rica considers it of fundamental importance to take strong measures to eliminate this ulcer, which has grown to alarming proportions. Furthermore, this concern increases when we note that, although all States verbally condemn this repulsive phenomenon, some of them not only fail to fulfil international conventions aimed at its elimination but use terror as an instrument.

The refugee problem is of even more devastating and awesome proportions. Its persistence and growth confirms the belief that in many parts of the world the words of the United Nations Charter are still only words. Once again we see that the principles of 1945 have not become a reality. We continue to see dramatic increases in the numbers of men, women and children compelled to flee from their

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

places of origin to escape the horrors of war, political persecution, poverty and oppression, and the dramatic impact this has on the host nations, which do not always have the economic and social capacity to absorb the displaced persons and offer them the prospect of the decent life to which they are entitled as human beings.

Millions of people form part of this problem of our sorely tried world. In recent years its shadow has extended to my own country and has compelled us to face up to a reality of which we had previously not had experience. The number of displaced persons and refugees currently sheltered by Costa Rica may well seem derisive when compared to world figures. There are 200,000 refugees in Costa Rica, the majority being of Nicaraguan origin. However, given the size of our country, this represents an overwhelming figure - approximately 10 per cent of the total population of our country - and Costa Rica is an underdeveloped country with very weak economic potential. The complications attendant upon their presence in Costa Rica represent a difficult burden for our country. We do not close our doors to them, we seek to assist them as much as we can, but we think it vital that the international community provide more effective assistance for the programmes developed by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. The commendable efforts it makes to assist refugee populations with their resettlement or possible return should be vigorously encouraged by the United Nations. The proposal to strengthen the activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should, we believe, be considered a matter of priority.

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

Some problems which geographically would be considered merely regional in nature are in fact so great in their impact that they join that terrible list of tragedies which faces the world today. Their scale transforms them into problems common to all mankind, and their solution must be achieved through a common effort by all mankind. They are problems whose existence is, to our regret, solid proof that the international community does not yet have effective means to eliminate hunger and poverty and to offer people a better future - problems which inevitably bring us face to face with the yawning gaps that still separate the developed and the developing world, with the shameful coexistence of abundance and malnutrition, of high technology and primitive ignorance, of the wealth enjoyed by the few and the dramatic scarcity and crushing financial burdens suffered by others.

I am specifically referring to the problem of hunger in Africa and the problem of Latin America's external debt. The critical food situation in Africa is a drama the terrible consequences of which affect millions of human beings today. It is a drama the scale of which is too great and too painful. It is a drama which is without precedent, and whose solution requires an unprecedented effort.

It is shameful that while we are talking in this Hall, so many human beings are dying of hunger. It is true that the international community has given its attention to this problem, but it is equally true that it is capable of showing more effective and energetic solidarity. It is of vital importance that more resources and greater efforts be devoted to resolving this problem and that steps be taken to ensure that such a phenomenon never occurs again.

Africa requires major international assistance to deal with serious problems of health, water supplies and housing and elementary agricultural requirements. It is painful to note that Africa's Governments must devote to the servicing of their external debt resources which are urgently needed for the development of their peoples.

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

Consideration of the problems of external debt lead us once again to wonder whether the new global order that the founders hoped for in 1945 has actually been achieved. This particularly applies in the case of Latin Americans, since at that time there was a general feeling that Latin America would be the region to progress most rapidly towards the attainment of economic and social progress.

Unfortunately, that expectation has not been fulfilled. Forty years later, Latin America is the region with the most serious economic problems. Latin America is beset with an unprecedented financial and economic crisis, the origin of which we are all familiar with. The contraction of international trade, protectionism in the industrialized countries and volatile high interest rates are magnifying this problem and turning into obstacles to the recovery process embarked on by the Latin American governments.

We therefore consider that responsibility for the problem of our indebtedness cannot be considered in simple terms, such as that it is solely our responsibility and it is up to us to resolve it. All of those here know full well that this crisis has various causes and the debtors are only partly responsible. We are debtors not because we wish to be so, but because an unjust international economic order has compelled us to become such. We have not denied our responsibility, but we wish to make it clear that the solution to such a major problem also lies with the industrialized countries, the lending banks and international financial institutions.

Costa Rica acknowledges its debt. It is attempting to meet it despite the harsh terms set, but it needs reasonable terms of payment, in consonance with its economic situation, so that it can consolidate its political, economic and social democracy.

Costa Rica devotes a high percentage of its resources to the improvement and development of its education and health systems and its physical infrastructure.

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

Its disarmament policy makes this possible. However, in recent years it has had to earmark some 50 per cent of its income, deriving from exports, to external debt servicing. We do not spend money on weapons, nor are we able to spend these funds on development.

Costa Rica considers that the scale of the problem of Latin American debt is such that it cannot be ignored by this Organization. We therefore call on the United Nations to give political and economic consideration to the search for comprehensive and practical solutions, as well as to finding new methods for negotiations which would involve all parties which in one way or another are responsible for this crisis.

Only thus can we find the right path towards solving this urgent matter.

The overwhelming external debt is not, however, the only problem filling the peoples of Latin America with dismay. Situations of injustice, aggression and violence continue to leave a scar on the lives of thousands of Latin Americans. At this time, the most cruel and visible face of this reality is the crisis which for years now has been besetting Central America, an area sorely tried by history and whose traditional problems, in themselves overwhelming, have now been compounded. Despite the wishes and interests of its inhabitants, Central America has become a further arena for East-West confrontation, an outlet for the conflict between extraregional Powers.

Since 1983, we in Central America have seen ourselves involved in an ambitious and innovative negotiating process under the commendable auspices of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela. The Contadora initiative, inspired by the fundamental goal of finding a peaceful solution to the crisis in Central America, has been directed at finding a solution to our problems. The Contadora process has given rise to great expectations and the reaction to it by the international community could hardly have been more encouraging.

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

It has become commonplace in international forums to issue very positive views of the Contadora initiative. To commend its spirit and to express repeated support for the Contadora mediation process is regarded as the right thing to do. This magnificent support for Contadora by the international community is a source of pleasure, because we also believe, as we have stated on many occasions, that it constitutes the most viable option for the peaceful and global solution to the problems of Central America.

Costa Rica continues to believe that this view is the correct one. But my country considers that the time has come for us to see the fruits of this process, to see real solutions rather than words. Otherwise, Contadora runs the risk of becoming an end in itself and an endless round of negotiations resolving nothing.

The loss of credibility of this Latin American initiative would have tragic and disastrous consequences. It would provide further arguments for those who believe that the sword and the rifle are the only means for resolving Central America's problems.

In this connection, we were highly satisfied and encouraged at the significant progress achieved in the last meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Central America and the Contadora countries which took place in Panama on 12 and 13 September. Today we have before us a new version of the draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. We have good reasons to believe that today we can state here that we find ourselves at a time of hope and that there are prospects of a practical solution in the relatively near future.

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

For the peace and prosperity of Central America, we very much hope that this is the case, and we therefore vehemently urge all the parties and all the countries that in one way or another are present, as it were, in the Central American crisis to demonstrate with facts their determination to provide a concrete solution to the problem in our region. Let real steps be taken to subscribe to and ratify this vital document; let there be the political will that is so indispensable if this major peace effort is to become a binding legal commitment.

Costa Rica hopes that through the machinery to be established pursuant to the Contadora Act, it will be possible to solve the sole problem that leads us to consider ourselves to be part of the Central American crisis: the border aggressions committed against us by the Government of Nicaragua. During recent years Costa Rica and its Government have been the victims of constant, permanent aggression, the manifestations of which have ranged from the open, evil attack, on 31 May last, by a patrol of civil guards carrying out surveillance activities on a part of the border to the veiled threats from high military and political authorities in Nicaragua.

If the Contadora Act is to become an instrument enabling the Central American peoples to fulfil their legitimate aspirations to peace, democracy, justice and development, vigorous and effective solidarity must be shown by the international community; this solidarity must reflect the countless expressions of support for the Contadora Group.

Real evidence of something which all countries state they desire and support would be an arms limitation. It is time that this condemnation of the arms race, expressed so many times in the General Assembly and many other international forums, took the form of concrete steps - and not only carefully worded speeches and impeccable resolutions. Too much has been said and very little has actually

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

been done. Suffice it to recall that at the very first session of the General Assembly, in January 1946, a resolution was adopted stating that the objective was the elimination of atomic weapons and all other major weapons of mass destruction. It is shameful to admit that every day we get farther and farther away from that objective, which might well be said to have seen the light of day in this Organization.

Everyone is aware of the importance to mankind of reaching substantial agreements on disarmament, and of the vital necessity for disarmament to become a reality. Costa Rica, a neutral country without an army, has constantly supported the initiatives taken by this Organization in the field of disarmament and it will continue to give its support to any steps taken along new lines on this delicate matter.

Over these 40 years we have noted with concern the relations between the two Super-Powers. They have moved from tension to confrontation, and from confrontation back to situations of tension. Nevertheless, today there are some elements which allow for optimism. Talks on disarmament are being held, and soon there will be a meeting between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States. The possibility of reducing tensions - something that is always desirable - seems today to enjoy better prospects than has been the case for some time.

On the initiative of Costa Rica, with the unanimous support of the Members of the General Assembly, 1986 will be declared the "International Year of Peace". This fact, which reflects the commitment to peace that is mankind's greatest desire, should become a moral and ethical force operating world-wide to direct the conscience of the leaders of the world, East and West, North and South, towards this transcendental goal, which sums up the very raison d'être of the United

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

Nations. In due course my delegation will circulate a draft resolution in this respect, which will be the text of the proclamation, on 24 October 1985, of the "International Year of Peace". We cordially call on all delegations to co-sponsor this draft resolution.

Lastly, we appeal to all the States Members of the Organization to ensure that the United Nations can play the leading role which it should play in solving the major problems afflicting mankind. If that is not done, all of us - to our great regret - will be directly responsible for the final holocaust.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker for this afternoon. Several representatives have requested to be allowed to exercise the right of reply. May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to ten minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. GUDA (Suriname): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Ambassador Jaime de Piniés on his election to the presidency. We are convinced that the General Assembly will discharge its duties efficiently and effectively under his experienced leadership, demonstrated throughout his brilliant diplomatic career.

My delegation wishes to make a few brief remarks in response to a statement made yesterday by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Community and its member States.

In his statement the representative of Luxembourg saw fit to mention my country as one of the exceptions to democratic and pluralistic régimes in Latin America, when he was discussing the political situation in our region. In view of the good relations that exist between my country and the European Community, we

(Mr. Guda, Suriname)

profoundly deplore the unfounded allegations made by that representative. This, at least in the opinion of my delegation, is a clear demonstration of either a false notion of the democratization process that has taken place in our country since the revolution of February 1980 or a downright denial of that process. That does not surprise us, since the source of this unfounded and vicious allegation is well known to us.

If the recent history of our country and the revolutionary process had been known, the representative of Luxembourg would have realized that no stone is left unturned to speed up this significant process, in which the whole Suriname population is participating - and this notwithstanding the economic and political coercion from certain Governments.

Time constraints prevent us from elaborating on this issue today, but we shall do so in due time in the appropriate forums and through the appropriate channels.

In conclusion, we once again categorically reject the allegations made against our Government and express the hope that these unfounded allegations will not lead to a disturbance of the excellent relations that my country currently maintains with many member States of the European Community.

Mr. WAGNER (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): One representative this afternoon referred with strident rhetoric to a certain person who, from a position opposed to all imperialism and legitimately expressing the popular will, condemned the unjust international order without sacrificing his independence to any form of hegemonism. It is regrettable that, in a vain attempt to defend a thesis that was rejected at the recent ministerial conference of the non-aligned countries, recourse is now being made to the warped expedient of implying that a clear, sovereign position with regard to the external debt, endorsed by more than a hundred countries in Luanda, is the product of consultations at which there was capitulation.

Tithing is simply paying up by surrendering one's sovereignty. "Stale" is not the right word to use about the path of democracy that Latin America has opted for; "limping" is the wrong word to use about the choice of freedom and social justice that our Latin American continent has made. All Latin Americans must help to redeem Latin America's unity and autonomy, if we really want to be anti-imperialist.

A government such as Peru's, which came to power through the clean process of the ballot box, with the overwhelming support of the people, after more than 60 years of struggle, involving persecution and exile, for the emancipation of Indo-America does not require - and will not accept - lessons in anti-imperialism from anyone.

Mr. CHAMORRO MORA (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to take this opportunity given by the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica to exercise my right of reply for the second time.

We fully share the concern of the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica over the grave situation prevailing in Central America and agree that we must move from words to effective solutions. In that connection, we fervently appeal to him that

(Mr. Chamorro Mora, Nicaragua)

we use not only the machinery for problem-solving provided by the Contadora Group but also those laid down in the United Nations Charter, particularly today, when we are commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations. More specifically, I refer to the instruments for the settlement of disputes that may become a threat to international peace and security.

We urgently appeal to the people and Government of Costa Rica, through the Costa Rican Foreign Minister, to give serious consideration to the proposal made by my Government in July to establish a neutralized safety zone under international supervision, which would make a significant contribution to the elimination of tensions and incidents which frequently occur on the common border. We urge them to respond to the call of the Contadora Ministers, who have publicly appealed to us to begin within 10 days conversations to make possible progress on the establishment of such a neutralized safety zone.

Peace is necessary for coexistence between civilized nations. However, its attainment depends on the will of the peoples and above all on the maturity and sense of responsibility of their rulers. Let us rid our peoples, Central America, Latin America and the international community of a war in Central America and engage in a dialogue befitting brother countries with historic bonds, countries that in our case are founder-members of the United Nations. We should thus make a significant contribution to the celebration of the fortieth anniversary.

I say to the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, to his people and Government "The ball is with you. We hope we are still in time to preserve peace. We assure you that our Government is firmly resolved not to constitute a threat or ever to attack our brothers in Costa Rica."

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.