



President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

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

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. NDONG (Equatorial Guinea) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me first of all to express, on behalf of the delegation, Government and people of Equatorial Guinea, our most sincere congratulations on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Your undeniable personal prestige and your recognized adherence to the ideals that inspire our Organization will ensure the success of our work. Your country, Guyana, is a faithful contributor to and participant in the United Nations, and offers us today your great experience and diplomatic skill; these ensure the success of any decisions that may be taken at this session. Through you, we should like to extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau in the conviction that their collaboration will be decisive.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the outgoing President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, and his Bureau for the contributions and guidance they provided to the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

I should also like to convey to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the profound appreciation and gratitude of His Excellency Obiang Nguema Mbasogo and

the Government and the people of Equatorial Guinea for his dedication and the efforts he has exerted in discharging the great responsibilities with which he has been entrusted in a manner that is a source of pride not only for Egypt but for all Africa. In carrying out his mission to promote the peaceful emergence of a new world order and the maintenance of peace, I assure the Secretary-General that he will be able to continue to rely on our full cooperation and support.

To the new States that have joined our Organization we extend a very warm welcome. Their presence here strengthens the United Nations vocation towards universality, and should contribute to the efforts of the international community to maintain peace and promote progress and justice for all nations.

My presence in this world forum should be interpreted as a clear demonstration of the importance that we attach to the United Nations, its principles and its noble task of constantly strengthening the safeguards over the maintenance of peace and social and economic progress for all peoples. This task is of singular importance to Equatorial Guinea, which is engaged in overcoming underdevelopment and achieving dignified standards of living for its people.

The common denominator of the many statements that have been made has been the vast changes that have taken place in the world since the mid-1980s, a trend towards transformation the pace of which, far from decreasing, has accelerated considerably.

With the disappearance of the East-West bipolar structure, which has been replaced by dialogue and cooperation, we find ourselves - and this is no exaggeration - faced with a new configuration in international relations

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characterized by a certain degree of progress in disarmament, at the global and regional levels, and an easing of some regional conflicts.

Equatorial Guinea firmly supports the intensification of the work of the United Nations through preventive diplomacy. Measures such as the sending of missions of inquiry, the use of early-warning systems and the strengthening of the role of regional and subregional organizations can be effective in avoiding conflicts which, once they break out, could require subsequent, much more costly intervention for peace to be restored.

Peace-keeping operations have also undergone qualitative change and now cover increasingly varied activities transcending the traditional sphere. In this respect I should like to underscore the efforts of the United Nations in many parts of the world in the humanitarian field, in providing aid to refugees and in monitoring elections.

Progress and efforts at the subregional level are commendable. Hence we support General Assembly resolution 46/37 B, establishing the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which is working for peace and confidence-building among the States of our subregion. As a popular saying goes: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." With that Committee we are trying to prevent the emergence of conflicts in the subregion by developing measures to alleviate situations of conflict.

None the less, despite these positive steps and endeavours, at the global level we look to the future with a certain degree of concern because we still see certain positions that prevent equitable economic relations and impede developing countries from exercising international free trade. The sound of the machine-gun and the cannon is still dashing the hopes of many innocent peoples to live in peace and tranquillity. The present international situation, we might say, fluctuates between uneasiness and hope. We hope that the global changes and the end of the cold war will bring renewed life to countries of the third world.

The industrialized countries must understand the need to resolve, on mutually agreed terms, the external debt problem of underdeveloped countries. The weight of that debt is another serious difficulty standing in the way of their achieving a better standard of living.

My country hopes that the new world scene will be conducive to the implementation of procedures for sincere international cooperation for those nations that most need

such cooperation, countries that are now struggling not just for a standard of living but for their very survival. Poverty, the sad fate of many States in our world, requires that united action be taken by the other States in order to remedy the situation. The gap between rich and poor is widening at an alarming pace; that disparity can not leave the international community indifferent. Hence it is necessary to strengthen the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in order to meet the new realities.

The problem of preserving the environment and the struggle against illicit drug-trafficking are questions that require our reflection. With the 1992 Stockholm Declaration we laid the foundations of certain universal principles to preserve the global environment and made efforts to stem pollution, desertification and deforestation. But the situation required new initiatives, and these culminated in the Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro.

We hope that these results will have positive effects overall and that it will be possible to ensure sustainable development and the future well-being of mankind.

None the less, I wish to emphasize the obligation of the developed countries, which bear the greatest responsibility for the deterioration of the global ecosystem, towards those other countries that are today being asked to make enormous sacrifices by limiting their legitimate right to use the assets given them by nature. There is a need to seek the necessary compensation for this situation, in particular by the financing of alternative projects and through technological cooperation.

Within its modest economic means my Government has always been, and remains, prepared to take action in order to improve its national environment as a contribution to the task of preserving the global environment.

We condemn the illicit traffic in drugs and are prepared to support any international initiative aimed at its suppression.

The Government of Equatorial Guinea is unflagging in its struggle against the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) pandemic, and it will spare no effort for its effective control, thanks to the deep awareness of our people and the assistance we receive in this connection from international organizations.

To reflect the noble ideals of peace and justice of the people of Equatorial Guinea, my Government has embarked

on a progressive democratic process that guarantees to every citizen of the country the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms.

The firm democratic process begun in the country has been well-received by the people of Equatorial Guinea and by those countries that set aside mere rhetoric and concealed political interests, love Equatorial Guinea and hope that it will progress. The aspiration of the people and the Government of Equatorial Guinea is that our process will be carried through in a climate of national concord without upheaval, without disturbances that could threaten the peace and stability prevailing in the country.

That is why, following the massive adoption of the new fundamental law which enshrined our multiparty system, in the context of Law No. 3 1992 on political parties, the following political organizations have been made legal.

First, the Popular Union submitted its application on 24 April 1992 and was recognized on 17 October 1992.

Second, the Liberal Democratic Convention submitted its application on 1 April 1992 and was recognized on 17 October 1992.

Third, the Social Democrat Party submitted its application on 8 June 1992 and was recognized on 17 October 1992.

Fourth, the Progressive Democratic Alliance submitted its application on 9 July 1992 and was recognized on 4 September 1992.

Fifth, the Social Democratic Union submitted its application on 8 June 1992 and was recognized on 17 October 1992.

Sixth, the Progress Party submitted its application on 18 May 1992 and was recognized on 17 October 1992.

Seventh, the Social Democratic and Popular Convergence submitted its application on 18 May 1992 and was recognized on 5 February 1993.

Eighth, the Social Democratic Coalition Party of Equatorial Guinea submitted its application on 4 November 1992 and was recognized on 5 February 1993.

Ninth, Convergence for Social Democracy submitted its application on 7 November 1992 and was recognized on 5 February 1993.

Tenth, the Equatorial Guinea Popular Action submitted its application on 28 December 1992 and was recognized on 5 February 1993.

Eleventh, the National Democratic Union submitted its application on 29 March 1993 and was recognized on 10 May 1993.

Twelfth, the Socialist Party of Equatorial Guinea submitted its application on 23 March 1993 and was recognized on 10 May 1993.

Thirteenth, the Liberal Party submitted its application on 23 March 1993 and was recognized on 12 July 1993.

In addition to other provisions, such as the law guaranteeing freedom of association and freedom to demonstrate, and the law on the right to protest and to petition, the determination of the Government to establish democracy peacefully in the country has taken concrete shape in the signing of a document - called the National Pact - between the Government and the opposition, which reflects the combined aspirations of all the political forces and is a channel for ensuring the success of the democratization process.

Out of our constant desire to give greater political transparency to the process, we have postponed until 21 November 1993 the legislative elections originally planned for 12 September 1993. We have done so in order to take into account and meet the wishes of certain political groups.

The political spectrum for the forthcoming general legislative elections now looks like this: there are political parties that have decided to participate in the legislative elections, political parties that intend to participate in the legislative elections, and political parties that have not yet decided whether to participate in the legislative elections.

The political parties that have decided to participate in the legislative elections are: the Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea, the Liberal Democratic Convention, the Social Democratic Union, the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party. This very morning, my Government informed me that the Party of the Convergence for Social and People's Democracy has also decided to participate in the legislative elections.

The political parties that have expressed their intention to participate in the legislative elections are: the Progress Party, Tomás Boi Cheky Division; and the Social Democrat Coalition Party, Massoko Division.

With regard to the political parties that have not decided whether to participate in the legislative elections, the Government of Equatorial Guinea has received no official notification of a decision to participate in the legislative elections of 21 November from the following political parties: the Progress Party, Severo Moto Division; the Social Democratic Convergence; the Progressive Democratic Alliance; the Social Democrat Coalition Party, Buenaventura Monsuy Division; People's Action of Equatorial Guinea; the National Democratic Union; and the Socialist Party of Equatorial Guinea.

In connection with the revision of the electoral law proposed by the opposition political parties, on 19 October and 13 and 18 November the Government extended an invitation to these parties to participate in some meetings, but they did not come to the meetings or give any reason for not doing so.

In view of the opposition parties' inexplicable refusal to participate, and in order to avoid any stagnation in the political democratization process, the Government used its legislative initiative, under our Basic Law, to adopt a draft law, which was sent to the House of Representatives and approved with amendments by that legislative body. The text of the law was approved and promulgated by our Head of State in January 1993.

It should be pointed out that the electoral law now in force is based on comparative law - mainly the electoral legislation of Spain, France and Gabon. For that reason, the Government is firmly convinced that the rejection of the electoral law by the opposition political parties that have not expressed their intention to participate in the legislative elections of 21 November 1993 is nothing but a pretext for delaying or blocking the process that has been set in motion. There is no doubt that the implementation of the democratic process in Equatorial Guinea has been made possible by the selflessness and determination of His Excellency Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who, after freedom had triumphed on 3 August 1979, overthrew the dictatorship and began the real march of the country towards democracy in a climate of peace and harmony, which the advocates of violence wish to destroy with their provocations and their contemptible plots.

We in Equatorial Guinea totally reject the views of the apologists violence and their attempts to undermine national

peace and stability. We reject those who do nothing but defame our country and our Government, denigrating the actions that have been undertaken thus far in the country.

A democracy imposed by foreign interests becomes corrupt and falls apart. A democracy that denies the genuine, traditional and sacred values of a people not only hurts the feelings, the pride and the honour of that people but is also doomed to failure. "Man is what circumstances dictate", affirmed the great Spanish philosopher Balmes. That is why only a democracy that can respond to the sacred interests of the people of Equatorial Guinea will be viable in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. In documents A/48/307 of 12 August 1993, A/48/330 of 19 August 1993, and A/48/357 of 31 August 1993, our Government presented information on the interference of certain foreign interests in my country's internal affairs. From this rostrum, we are holding the countries responsible for that interference responsible for the consequences.

We reaffirm that only in an atmosphere of peace is it possible to achieve the progress and well-being to which all peoples aspire. To the governmental and non-governmental organizations and friendly countries that, with their support, have contributed to the efforts of our Government, we express our deepest appreciation, and we urge them to continue to lend their support and cooperation at this decisive stage in our democratic process.

Intelligent action in this new global society must be based on the exercise of the firmest solidarity. If that is done, we shall be able to say with pride, "We the peoples, for a better world."

Mr. MATTHEWS (Liberia): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. We are sure that your vast experience, personal qualifications, and intimate knowledge of the manifold problems confronting the international community will serve you well in the performance of your duties. Please be assured of the fullest cooperation and support of the Liberian delegation.

We extend a deserving tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, for the efficient and able manner in which he handled the affairs of the Assembly during the past year. His decisiveness and fairness paid off greatly in producing the many results which are a positive outgrowth of the debate of the previous session.

Our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, also deserves special commendation for his persistent and tireless

efforts in trying to secure a world that is both peaceful and just and sustained by an equitable economic order. Indeed, his devotion and singular commitment to the principles and purposes of the Organization have brought renewed confidence on the prospects of achieving mankind's dream of a stable international environment.

We seize this opportunity to welcome the newly-admitted Members of the United Nations. It is our fervent hope that they will make a meaningful contribution to our common search for global peace and security.

Over the past three years Liberia's external relations, in response to domestic imperatives, have focused on the achievement of four primary objectives: first, to ensure that international opinion is sensitized to the serious effects of the civil war in Liberia and the need for international support to end the conflict; secondly, to effect the mobilization of humanitarian and emergency relief assistance for the war-ravaged population; thirdly, to help sustain the consensus on the situation in Liberia within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and to secure broader international acceptance of the ECOWAS peace plan as the best possible formula for resolving the Liberian civil strife; and, fourthly, to enhance the peace process itself by neutralizing attempts to resolve the Liberian conflict through the military victory of a faction, while encouraging a negotiated political settlement of this seemingly intractable conflict.

In pursuit of these objectives, the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) has participated in 25 peace talks and a great number of other consultations with the Liberian factions, the leaders of subregional, regional and international organizations, and foreign Governments to enhance the prospects for peace in Liberia.

It is now my pleasing duty to inform the Assembly that the Interim Government of National Unity, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO) signed a peace accord in Cotonou, the Republic of Benin, on 25 July 1993. The Cotonou Agreement is a significant breakthrough in the quest for durable peace in Liberia.

By agreeing on a process beginning with a cease-fire and leading to disarmament, demobilization and then free and fair elections, we Liberians have all finally decided on how power will be acquired in our country. The Agreement is therefore a great victory for the people of Liberia in their efforts to secure a democratic future.

As my delegation stated on 10 August 1993 during the Security Council's consideration of the report (S/26200) of the Secretary-General on Liberia, the Cotonou Agreement is also a victory for the leaders and peoples of the member States of the Economic Community of West African States, who took a bold and courageous initiative to resolve a security question in their subregion, with the active support and cooperation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

On that occasion, we went on to state, and we here repeat, that the United Nations must also share in this victory. In this vein we wish to register our appreciation to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his consuming interest in the crisis in Liberia. We thank him immensely for his thorough and incisive reports on Liberia, which enhanced the decisiveness of the Security Council with respect to resolutions 788 (1992), 813 (1993) and 866 (1993).

We also commend the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Liberia, Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers; the OAU Eminent Person for Liberia, former Zimbabwean President the Rev. Dr. Canaan Banana; and the former Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Dr. Abbas Bundu; whose relentless collaborative efforts helped to make the Cotonou Agreement a reality.

The people of Liberia will for ever remain grateful to the gallant men and women of the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). Enduring thanks go to the West African States which have made troop contributions to the peace-keeping effort: Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Mali and Senegal.

During the process of negotiating the Cotonou Agreement, the Interim Government, largely a coalition of various political parties and interest groups representing the vast majority of our citizenry who do not bear arms, demanded the disarmament of all combatants as a *sine qua non* for the restoration of peace. The armed factions conceded to this demand on condition that a new, transitional authority, to include the Interim Government, be organized within a framework acceptable to them. This concession, hardly an unreasonably high price to pay for disarmament and peace, was made. The Cotonou Agreement, then, divided into a military and a political component, encompasses provisions attending a trade-off.

The political demands are far-reaching, in that they require more than a simple reconfiguration of the Interim Government within the context of power-sharing. The

Liberian National Transitional Government, being a new creation, requires the divestiture of power from the current interim authorities. On the other hand, the warring factions, divested of their arms and demobilized, will equally cease to exist as fighting forces.

To strengthen the Agreement, or otherwise reinforce the confidence of the parties, it was agreed that the installing of the Transitional Government, and the beginning of the disarmament process, each being a precondition for the other, would ensue simultaneously. However, this demand for concurrent processes harbours the prospective danger that an achievement lag in either component, military or political, may tend to undermine confidence in the entire peace process and thereby threaten the understanding.

What, then, does each phase require, and how much and in what area has progress been made?

The implementation of the political phase of the Accords has largely been completed, and on schedule. The Interim Government has complied with all the concessions required for disarmament so that Liberians may live free from fear and have a chance of being at peace with each other.

A five-member Council of State has been formed to constitute the executive authority of the Transitional Government. The legislature, the judiciary, and the Elections Commission are being reorganized or otherwise made to reflect the inclusive intent of the transitional period. The Liberian National Transitional Government is waiting to be installed once the disarmament process begins. Pacta sunt servanda. What, then, is the requirement for the disarmament process to begin? The following paragraph from the report of the Secretary-General on Liberia, of 4 August 1993, correctly reflects the specific provisions of the agreement and the factor motivating them. The Secretary-General states:

"Given the level of mistrust existing between ECOMOG and the NPFL, special measures were devised to make ECOMOG acceptable to all parties in overseeing encampment, disarmament and demobilization. It was agreed that ECOMOG would be expanded to include new troops from countries not already participating in ECOMOG. These troops would be drawn from other ECOWAS countries, as well as from OAU countries outside of the West African subregion. In addition, it was proposed that United Nations military observers would monitor and verify the cease-fire as well as the implementation of the

encampment, disarmament and demobilization provisions of the Agreement." (*S/26200, para. 7*)

A month later, in September 1993, the Secretary-General, recognizing that these preparations for disarmament would not keep pace with the political arrangements, advanced a most constructive proposal in his report of 9 September 1993 as follows:

"... The Agreement forecasts that the transitional government would be established approximately one month after the signing of the agreement, concomitant with the commencement of the disarmament process. While this process is already somewhat behind schedule, the establishment of the transitional government is crucial to reinforcing national reconciliation. I therefore urge ECOMOG to move quickly in commencing the disarmament process, with monitoring provided by the advance team of UNOMIL, even before full deployment of the expanded ECOMOG and UNOMIL. In this regard, it is encouraging to note that NPFL expressed to the planning mission its readiness to accept troops from among the present ECOMOG contingent to be deployed in NPFL areas. With the expected full deployment of the advanced team of United Nations military observers in the coming days, the disarmament process could possibly begin immediately thereafter." (*S/26422, para. 40*)

Last week in Monrovia, Dr. Amos Sawyer, the President of the Interim Government of National Unity, publicly assured the Liberian people that if the armed factions accept the Secretary-General's proposal and allow the disarmament process to commence, he would immediately transfer power to the transitional authorities. However, the unwillingness of any of the armed factions to avail itself of the proposal need not necessarily be viewed as reflective of a lack of will or suggestive of bad faith. Scrupulous adherence to the actual terms of the Agreement may ultimately enhance the prospects for genuine peace, however slow and exacting the process may prove to be. Meanwhile, efforts continue to get the full complement of additional ECOMOG forces and United Nations observers. The Government of Liberia wishes to thank the United States Government for its contribution to the Trust Fund of the Economic Community of West African States to facilitate the expansion of ECOMOG and assist the forces currently in place. We renew our request to other friendly Governments to respond to the Secretary-General's appeal for contributions to the Trust Fund as a means of advancing the peace process in Liberia.

We are convinced that the enabling conditions for disarmament will be expeditiously created and that the Transitional Government will be installed shortly. The fact that the cease-fire continues to hold and that the parties are largely cooperating with each other is a basis for continuing confidence in the commitment of the parties.

Our hearts are touched by the great outpouring of empathy and good will from countries that have contributed to the well-being of the people of Liberia since the beginning of our conflict. Through the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, as well as many private volunteer and non-governmental organizations, they have enabled many Liberians to find life worth living because of the genuine concern that has been demonstrated. Our thanks go to all those who continue to make a difference in the lives of our people.

The Transitional Government, when installed with authority spanning the entire country, will stand in need of extensive relief assistance to respond effectively to the monumental human suffering existing in some parts of Liberia. Our delegation envisages an upsurge in the demand for humanitarian assistance, with food and medical supplies being the obvious priorities. We appeal to the international community to stand ready to assist the people of Liberia for a reasonable period, as it will take time before the advantages of peace are translated into real improvements in the lives of the people.

A successful disarmament exercise will be the long-awaited signal for our people in refugee camps to return home. Indeed, the Transitional Government will need the cooperation and assistance of men of good will everywhere in order to succeed in the awesome tasks of repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation. The gruesome civil war devastated the economy of the country, paralysed vital social services and destroyed basic infrastructure. It is significant that the political division of the country has prevented a coordinated needs survey to fully assess the reconstruction demand.

It is important, also, that the Transitional Government has the task of helping to prepare the country for free and fair elections, to be held under international supervision and monitoring within six to seven months. This is hardly ideal timing, but it proved to be the best that a negotiated settlement could produce. Clearly, the international community has a moral obligation to help the people of Liberia succeed in this endeavour, since the very thought of failure attending these exercises is, in itself, a nightmare.

The Interim Government has striven, even in the throes of a civil war, to maintain law and order and operate with a Constitution which affirms civil liberties and respect for fundamental human rights. We, as men of conscience, condemn and stand in total opposition against those who, in the midst of the war, trained their weapons on helpless civilians. We therefore thank the Secretary-General for responding with dispatch to the Interim Government's request for the establishment of a commission of inquiry to investigate the atrocities committed since the commencement of the civil war. We believe that the Wako Commission Report has contributed to amassing the evidence required in order for justice to be done to the perpetrators of the Harbel area massacre and other massacres.

Liberia's tragic circumstances, coupled with the efforts to resolve the conflict, provide useful lessons that could be most instructive for the international community. The Liberian peace process has shown that, even in the face of scarce resources, member States of the Economic Community of West African States have contained a security threat in their subregion by marshalling the requisite political will to do so. The dispatch and maintenance of a peace-keeping force in Liberia by the leaders of ECOWAS represent the finest hour for Africa in its efforts to maintain peace and security on the continent.

The Liberian experience has also demonstrated that peace initiatives that are conceived and implemented within a subregional context, while supported and assisted by regional and international organizations, are a practical approach which stands the best chance of success in conflict resolution. The States closest to the conflict are likely to have a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, the interplay of forces within the milieu. It is against this background that the Government of Liberia gave its fullest support for, and endorsement of, the establishment of a mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution within the Organization of African Unity.

We welcome the establishment of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations in the Secretariat for the planning and coordination of all United Nations peace-keeping activities, confident that it will countenance greater regional involvement in conflict management, buttressed by support from the United Nations.

On the question of Somalia, the Government of Liberia welcomes the bold and courageous efforts by the United Nations to resolve the tragic situation there and bring peace to that country. We deplore the killing of United Nations peace-keepers in Mogadishu, and we support the

efforts by this world body to bring to justice those responsible for such acts. The implementation of the Addis Ababa Accords, signed on 27 March 1993, at the national reconciliation conference, offers the best hope for a peaceful transition to a pacified and democratic State of Somalia. We therefore urge the Somali factions to respect and implement that agreement.

Regarding South Africa, we welcome the current multi-party negotiations in that country as the most inclusive forum so far convened to end the apartheid system and create a non-racial, democratic society. We are pleased that, as a result of these negotiations, a democratic Government is scheduled to be elected in April 1994.

With regard to Angola, the Government of Liberia wishes to call on UNITA to abandon its military agenda and seek to resolve the crisis through peaceful means in conformity with the Bicesse Accords. In this light, we also make a special appeal to UNITA to conform to the wishes of the people of Angola by accepting the results of the September 1992 elections. We call on it to sign the protocol of agreement negotiated in Abidjan in a spirit of national unity and reconciliation of all Angolans.

Last month the world welcomed the historic and dramatic developments affecting peace in the Middle East, when the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) recognized each other. The signing of an agreement on Palestinian autonomy means that the first real step has indeed been taken towards Palestinian self-rule. It is our sincerest hope that this agreement will soon be complemented by peace accords between Israel and all of its Arab neighbours.

Perhaps no problem, apart from the spectre of a nuclear holocaust, has elicited more global concern than that of the environment, given its intrinsic linkage to man's survival and his economic well-being. In a world characterized by issues of common concern and ever-increasing interdependence of States, a collective approach is indispensable in meeting the challenges posed by environmental problems and the international economic situation. The environmental crisis is now posing a serious threat to the life-support system of our planet. This is why my delegation believes it is most important that Member States maintain the momentum gained at the historic 1992 Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, by effective follow-up at the national and international levels. We welcome the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development whose

responsibility it is to review and monitor implementation of Agenda 21.

With respect to the world economic situation, it remains our firm belief that, in order to achieve progress in global economic recovery, issues of long-term significance, such as the excruciating debt burden of developing countries, low commodity prices, protectionism and dwindling resource flow into developing countries, should all form the real agenda for the setting of priorities to include a permanent increase in global economic growth. The current gloomy situation of the international economy, worse now than in the previous decade, is further accentuated by new risks to the world economy caused by conflicts, the problem of refugees and the plight of the world's children. These problems pose a real threat to growth and development in many regions of the world.

In view of what I have said, there is an urgent need, as a part of the continuing effort to forge a new and fairer international economic order, for the peace dividends derived from the easing of bipolar tension to be deployed to meet the development needs of the world's most economically disadvantaged regions. They should not be reserved for the exclusive use of the already wealthy nations, and they should not be directed only towards the political and economic liberalization of a particular region of the world. All must take into account the fact that economic opportunity and social justice are essential preconditions for peace and security in our global village.

The post-cold-war era has offered the United Nations new opportunities and challenges, particularly in the fulfilment of its unique responsibility as the conscience of mankind. In recent years, the United Nations has taken bold decisions in peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building, humanitarian intervention and the protection of human rights. These assertive approaches have made the United Nations appear more relevant to the peoples of the world.

It is hoped that, in its honourable pursuits, the United Nations will continue to be led by men of vision who can ensure the realization of the noble ideals enshrined in its Charter - fostering world peace and promoting development and cooperation amongst all the peoples of our one world.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate.

I am informed that the representative of Azerbaijan has requested to exercise the right of reply. May I remind him that statements in exercise of the right of reply are

limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now call on the representative of Azerbaijan to speak in the exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. ALIYEV (Azerbaijan): I have asked to speak in exercise of my right of reply, under rule 73 of the rules of procedure, in order to refer to a statement made earlier by the representative of the Republic of Armenia.

The statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia contains many colourful epithets regarding his country. He appeals for the sympathy of representatives by declaring that he is the Foreign Minister of a small country under a total blockade and under constant provocation by Azerbaijan to be drawn into the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

I do not like to use the high rostrum of this Assembly to take up once again a discussion on this conflict. The facts are widely known, but they have been misrepresented by the Minister.

How is it possible to speak of Armenia being drawn into the Nagorny Karabakh conflict when it was that country's Parliament which adopted, back in 1989, the decision to annex the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan? This decision was taken even though the international community, the United Nations and the Security Council explicitly and unequivocally agreed that Nagorny Karabakh is and must be an integral part of Azerbaijan.

It is no secret that, under the guise of the high principle of self-determination and with the aim of expanding its territory, Armenia initiated, and for over six years has been waging, an undeclared war against Azerbaijan. The results of this war are well known. The Minister himself mentioned in his statement that the conflict had claimed the lives of more than 10,000 persons and had caused more than a million innocent people to become refugees and displaced persons. The Minister failed to mention, however, that Azerbaijan is the home of the million displaced persons. He also omitted the fact that the war is taking place exclusively on Azerbaijani territory. One fifth of its land has been occupied by the Armenian military forces, that is, four times more than the territory of the Nagorny Karabakh region itself, which is the object of territorial claims by Armenia in Azerbaijan.

Taking into consideration the fact that Armenia is practically waging an undeclared war against Azerbaijan in the latter's territory, the question of a so-called blockade allegedly imposed by Azerbaijan on Armenia seems illogical. It is evident that the breaking off of communications and transport connections is the inevitable result of any military conflict between two countries. Armenia borders not only on Azerbaijan, but on three other countries, and it is not in a state of conflict with them. It is therefore able to use their transportation lines in order to receive all necessary goods. However, as a result of the war that was imposed by Armenia on Azerbaijan, the entire Nakhichevan region of Azerbaijan is now totally cut off from the rest of the country.

With regard to Armenia's interpretation of the concept of self-determination, which was colourfully described in the statement, I would like to point out that Armenia became outspoken in this policy only after expelling the remaining 215,000 Azerbaijanis from the country that had been their home for centuries. As a result of this, Armenia had become a unique monoethnic State, where practically no ethnic or religious minorities exist. No minorities - no problems.

Consequently, a country such as Armenia cannot be justified in proclaiming itself the advocate of the right of self-determination in another country, especially when it is pursuing unfounded territorial claims in that country - claims which have been endorsed *de jure* by a decision of the Armenian Parliament.

Incidentally, thousands of Azerbaijanis had been living in Armenia without any form of autonomy. The Armenian community of the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, on the other hand, enjoyed autonomy in the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of their lives. There are over a hundred different peoples and ethnic groups in Azerbaijan, and all of them have equal rights.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that Armenia's declaration that it is the only democracy in the region is offensive to neighbouring countries. Presidential elections were recently held in Azerbaijan that were monitored by various international observers, such as representatives of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Labor Organisation, members of parliament, and representatives of human rights organizations from a number of countries, and of the diplomatic corps, and all agreed that the process was fully democratic. It is ironic for Armenia to declare itself "an island of stability in a sea of political chaos and turmoil"

(*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 24th meeting, p. 24 of provisional*) after it has annexed part of another country's territory and uprooted a million innocent people.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: At the conclusion of a most interesting debate, I am prompted to make a brief observation on its general thrust so that we may be adequately oriented in the future work of the Assembly.

In comparison with recent debates, this year's has been remarkable - at least in my view - for its vision and sense of purpose in addressing the global agenda for the rest of this century and beyond. I would wish to thank all delegations which participated for the thoughtful insights provided through our collective review of the international political, economic and social situation. More particularly, I would like to acknowledge with profound gratitude the warm tributes paid to my region, my country and myself. Representatives may be assured that I will do my utmost to satisfy their expectations of the presidency.

It has been truly encouraging to perceive, notwithstanding the grave uncertainties now prevailing in international relations, that there exists a widespread optimism about the Organization's capacity to satisfy the expectations and needs of its membership. There seems to be a renewed commitment, by all States, to the purposes and principles of the Charter and a ready acknowledgement of the concept of interdependence, which must now be translated into actual cooperation. We must seek to infuse this unity of spirit into our deliberations as we come to address the many issues on our agenda.

Indeed, the end of the cold war revealed and released ethnic and nationalist tensions which had been repressed, and brought back behaviour which we thought had receded far into history. There is now stronger support - stronger than ever - for United Nations preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping, reflecting the bold plans set out in the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace". During the coming weeks we shall have the opportunity to explore further the several proposals which have been made on how to strengthen further our capacity in this area.

I am especially pleased, however, to see a universal disposition to complement the "Agenda for Peace" with one for development in order to address the urgent economic and social problems which confront the majority of our peoples. Statements have invariably stressed the need for

maximum international economic cooperation to improve the global economy and, more particularly, the disadvantaged situation of the developing countries.

Many positive ideas, encompassing the issues of debt, development assistance, trade and the preservation of the environment, have emerged from this comprehensive analysis. These should provide substantial input to the Second Committee's consideration of the agenda item on an agenda for development, which should in turn provide a basis for the furtherance and completion of the Secretary-General's report on this important subject.

Equally noteworthy has been the eagerness with which delegations seem prepared to advance our work to reform and restructure the United Nations to make it more adapted and adaptable to the times in which we now live. There is a distinct perception in the House that many, if not all, of the organs, as presently conceived and constituted, are ill-suited to prevailing circumstances and the satisfaction of our many needs. Considerable focus has been placed on the Security Council, which, in the eyes of many, requires enlargement and more transparent operations so as better to represent the membership in dealing with the complex questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. Great interest has also been evinced in strengthening the ability of the economic and social bodies, including their governing councils, to address their respective agendas. Finally, it has been made clear that the Assembly would wish me to pursue the effort of my predecessors to revitalize the Assembly's role under the Charter.

I have already begun consultations, through the chairmen of all regional groups and other interested parties, with a view to creating - or, in some cases, reviving - as quickly as possible machinery which would allow necessary and urgent follow-up in these several areas of interest. All working groups thus established would be open-ended and transparent in their operations, while tasked at the same time to complete their mandates expeditiously. I hope within a few days to be in a position to make a further announcement in this connection.

It would be a pity, I believe, if, as has been the case over the years, the high level of political will demonstrated in the general debate were to be allowed to evaporate without infusing more detailed consideration of issues at the level of the various subject Committees. The Committees and working groups should bear in mind the main ideas and recommendations which we have been privileged to hear during this debate and should seek to implement them wherever feasible.

I would be less than candid here were I not to confess to some disappointment that, despite my occasional reminders to the Assembly of the need to respect its own decision to refrain from expressing congratulations to speakers in the Hall and thus to make the most efficient use of its time, my pleas went largely unheeded. Also less than satisfactory was the punctuality record. Admittedly, because of protocol requirements dictated by the attendance of many Heads of State and Government and other high-level representatives, I was myself, on occasion, failing in this regard. However, now that the debate is over and the plenary Assembly is about to address substantive issues on the Assembly's agenda, I intend to insist on the full observance of our accepted rules of procedure. May I therefore urge the membership, at this time when our Organization's resources are scarce, to demonstrate a heightened sense of responsibility in the conduct of our deliberations.

Over the past two and a half weeks we have heard addresses from 28 Heads of State, 13 Prime Ministers, 2 Crown Princes and 122 Foreign Ministers, among others. Despite this record number of statements - a total of 175, I am told - our debate ended on the day scheduled. With representatives' cooperation, we can also complete the programme ahead within the time allotted.

Finally, may I express the hope - indeed, my expectation - that deliberations in Committees and statements in plenary meetings to come will, like the general debate, rise to the level of events and of our aspirations to peace and development.

I wish to thank everyone in the Secretariat, including our conference services and the interpreters - for the very ready and unstinting cooperation we have received.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 9?

It was so decided.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to remind representatives that the debate on the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization is scheduled for tomorrow morning, and there are now 13 names inscribed on the list of speakers. I wish to point out that that number of speakers will not quite fill a three-hour meeting, that is to say, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A full meeting has been allocated to this debate because of members' concern, as

expressed in resolution 47/233 of 17 August 1993, that the reports of principal organs should be discussed in depth by the Assembly. However, the whole purpose of such a decision would be defeated if only a few representatives spoke. This is especially true in the case of the debate on the report of the International Court of Justice, for which, up to now, only two speakers have inscribed their names on the list.

We cannot decide on one way and act another. Allow me therefore to remind Member States that the list of speakers for those items is open. I invite them to follow up our resolutions with appropriate action in the debates in the plenary Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 150

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: DRAFT RESOLUTION A/48/L.1

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Pakistan to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.1, concerning agenda item 150.

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): I have the honour, on behalf of the sponsors - Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan - to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.1, on the granting of Observer status for the Economic Cooperation Organization in the General Assembly. I should like to state that this draft resolution has been sponsored also by Senegal.

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is an intergovernmental organization which was established in 1985 when its predecessor organization, the Regional Cooperation for Development, was restructured and revitalized. Its founding members are the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Turkey. The membership of this organization has since expanded to include seven other members of the region and it now stands at 10. The new members of the organization are the Islamic State of Afghanistan, the Azerbaijani Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Economic Cooperation Organization has the following objectives: (a) to expand trade among member States by providing free access to each other's markets; (b) to promote in each member State conditions for sustained economic growth in order to achieve continuous

improvement in the standard of living of the people; (c) to consolidate cultural affinities and spiritual and fraternal ties that bind the people of the member States through social and cultural channels of thought and action; and (d) to contribute to the growth of world trade and to strive to remove any iniquitous trading policies resulting in adverse terms of trade for the developing countries, by evolving a common approach in international forums.

The activities of the Economic Cooperation Organization are conducted through eight technical committees, which consider and evolve projects and programmes of mutual benefit in the fields of economic and commercial cooperation, transport and communications, agriculture, engineering, infrastructure and public works, narcotics-abuse control, educational, scientific and cultural matters.

A protocol of preferential tariff arrangements involving a 10 per cent reduction has already been signed as a first step towards the eventual elimination of trade barriers in the region.

The member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization are convinced that, as a regional organization representing 10 members, ECO will benefit greatly by having Observer status with the United Nations and that it will also make a positive collective contribution to the activities of the United Nations.

I have the honour to request that the Economic Cooperation Organization be granted Observer status to the General Assembly of the United Nations, on terms similar to those that have been prescribed in respect of other regional associations of States. The members of the Economic Cooperation Organization would greatly appreciate the support of the members of the General Assembly.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.1. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution by consensus?

Draft resolution A/48/L.1 was adopted (resolution 48/2).

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the resolution just adopted I now call on the Secretary-General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Mr. Shamshad Ahmad.

Mr. AHMAD (Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)): I deem it a great privilege and an honour to represent the Economic Cooperation Organization at the forty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

May I at the outset extend to you, Sir, my sincere felicitations on your assumption of the presidency of the Assembly at this session. We are confident that under your stewardship this session is assured of a successful and positive outcome, which will no doubt reinforce the role of the United Nations and its resolve in facing the persistent and emerging challenges in the world.

I should like to extend special thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dedicated efforts and tireless endeavours to promote the aims and objectives of the United Nations. His report "An Agenda for Peace" is especially commendable for it constitutes an important initiative towards global stability, which will no doubt be conducive to efforts to promote the economic progress and well-being of all nations and regions.

This session is taking place in the wake of profound changes on the international and regional scenes. While the confrontations of the past are receding, many new economic and political imperatives have arisen which demand new approaches in the outlooks of States and organizations. Today we are witnessing a renewed focus on multilateral cooperation for addressing both political and economic issues.

My presence at this session is motivated by the need for us to forge closer cooperation between our two organizations, which share common interests and ideals. As representatives are aware, ECO is purely an economic organization seeking to promote multifaceted regional cooperation as a solid base for sustained socio-economic growth of its member States.

Its recent expansion from 3 to 10 full members makes ECO a major regional grouping and an important international entity with vast combined potential in terms of material and human resources.

Encompassing a huge land mass of over 7 million square kilometres, inhabited by nearly 300 million people, ECO assumes a special role, not only in the revival of old cultural and emotional links between the proud inheritors of a common historical legacy, but also for addressing the imperatives of the future.

To best accomplish its objectives as stipulated in its charter, the Treaty of Izmir, the Economic Cooperation Organization is seeking to establish cooperative linkages with various international organizations. Our quest begins, naturally, with the best-established and most prestigious, the United Nations. I am pleased to announce in this forum that the ECO attaches the utmost importance to developing a cooperative relationship with the United Nations and is keen to benefit from the experience of its relevant bodies, especially in the economic field.

We are happy and gratified at the adoption of the resolution giving ECO observer status with the United Nations. On behalf of the members of our organization, I wish to thank the Members of the United Nations for unanimously endorsing the resolution. We are confident that the grant of observer status to ECO in the General Assembly will facilitate the development of a productive working relationship between the two organizations, focusing on the socioeconomic welfare of our region.

ECO has recently launched two important action plans, namely the Quetta plan of action and the Istanbul declaration on ECO's long-term prospects. These documents envisage several specific projects in vital areas of development activities such as transport and communications, trade and energy. In the implementation of these projects, ECO's efforts would in fact complement the economic development programmes of the United Nations and those of its subsidiary bodies in the ECO region.

We have already been in contact with various United Nations agencies and have established cooperative relationships with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, which have active programmes in the ECO region. We are also in contact with the United Nations Children's Fund on establishing a similar relationship. We should be happy to enter into similar cooperative linkages with other United Nations agencies in order to benefit from their programmes. These cooperative linkages with United Nations bodies would beyond a doubt pave the way for exploiting the countless opportunities and the combined potential offered by our region's vast material and human resources.

In conclusion, I wish you, Mr. President, every success for the deliberations of this session.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 150?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 153

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: DRAFT RESOLUTION A/48/L.4

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.4.

Mr. BIEGMAN (Netherlands): The Permanent Court of Arbitration is the oldest intergovernmental institution in existence that is dedicated to the task of resolving disputes between States. It was established in 1899 by the first Hague Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. Since it has its seat in The Hague, in the Peace Palace, the honour of introducing the draft resolution contained in document A/48/L.4 rests with the Netherlands delegation. I am doing so now also on behalf of the almost 50 countries that had already decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution, and of the other 10 that have since decided to join, namely, Albania, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Kyrgyzstan, Senegal, Suriname and Ukraine.

Mr. Musuka (Zambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The draft resolution is a short one. It contains only two operative paragraphs: after having noted the desire of the Permanent Court of Arbitration to intensify its cooperation with the United Nations, the General Assembly would decide to invite the Permanent Court of Arbitration to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of Observer and would request the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the resolution.

As stated in the explanatory memorandum annexed to the request to include the present item in our agenda, the creation of a permanent institutional relationship between the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the United Nations will enable both organizations to strengthen existing ties. This would have several positive effects, one being that it would facilitate the active participation of the International Bureau of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in meetings of the

United Nations that are engaged in the discussion of systems for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, as well as in the development and implementation of the programme of the Decade of International Law.

The Court's activities regarding the Decade of International Law arise, *inter alia*, from the fact that the conference of members of the Permanent Court of Arbitration invited the Administrative Council of the Court to authorize its Secretary-General, in preparation for the commemoration of the centenary of the First International Peace Conference, in 1999, to appoint a broadly based Steering Committee. The Committee will analyse the historical development and practical application of methods of dispute settlement, and will also make recommendations as to whether to revise the Hague Conventions and whether to improve the dispute-settlement procedures under the auspices of the Court. Experts from States in different geographical areas, at different levels of economic development and with different legal systems will sit on the Committee.

More generally speaking, observer status would, of course, enhance the ability of the Permanent Court of Arbitration to intensify its cooperation with the United Nations in all appropriate fields.

The Netherlands firmly hopes that the decision to grant observer status to the Permanent Court of Arbitration will be part of a continuing effort to strengthen the international system of peaceful settlement of disputes, and that those countries not yet participating in the activities of the Court will join it by adhering to the 1907 Hague Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.4. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/48/L.4 was adopted (resolution 48/3).

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Belgium, representing the European Community and its members, for an explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. DEREYMAEKER (Belgium) (interpretation from French): First, Sir, permit me to express to the

Permanent Court of Arbitration, on behalf of the European Community and its member States, our warm congratulations on its having been granted observer status in the General Assembly. Its admission makes official, and consolidates, the long-standing relationship between the United Nations - and even its predecessor, the League of Nations - and the oldest inter-governmental organization with competence in the realm of the peaceful settlement of disputes between States.

For the European Community and its member States, the peaceful settlement of disputes is a fundamental aspect of their understanding of international relations. One of the major objectives of the United Nations Decade of International Law is to promote ways and means of peacefully settling disputes between States. The contribution of the Permanent Court of Arbitration to the Decade's work could therefore prove useful.

When it unanimously adopted last year the programme for the activities for the second term (1993-1994) of the Decade, the General Assembly invited the Sixth Committee to consider wider use of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. It is undoubtedly in order to facilitate such recourse to the Court that its Administrative Council last year adopted a series of new optional rules of procedure relating to the arbitration of disputes between States.

The European Community and its member States are pleased at the prospect of seeing the Court take an active and structured part in the work of the General Assembly. The Sixth Committee has already benefited from the experience the Court has acquired during nearly a century of existence. Indeed, at its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions the Committee decided to invite the Secretary-General of the Court to speak on the theme of the United Nations Decade of International Law, the end of which, in 1999, will coincide with the centenary of the Court's creation. We listened with a great deal of interest to the statements of the Secretary-General of the Court, and were able to learn of its activities and plans for the future.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 153?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 157

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN PARLIAMENT IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: DRAFT RESOLUTION A/48/L.3

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution (A/48/L.3). I call on the representative of Panama to introduce the draft resolution.

Mr. AROSEMENA (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is an honour for me to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.3, by which the General Assembly would grant observer status to the Latin American Parliament.

The Latin American Parliament was established on 10 December 1964 in Lima, Peru, by the representatives of a number of Parliaments of Latin America. The States which at that time comprised the Parliament agreed to institutionalize it by a Treaty, also signed in Lima on 16 November 1987. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela signed the Treaty on that date. The Treaty is now in force, having been ratified by eleven Latin American countries.

The Latin American Parliament has also been granted observer status in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, at the invitation of that body.

The Treaty of Lima describes the Latin American Parliament as "a regional, permanent, unicameral organization ..." composed of "the national Congresses or Legislative Assemblies of democratically constituted States Parties ...", represented by all-party delegations chosen by their respective Parliaments.

In accordance with international law, the Treaty grants the Parliament a separate legal personality and the privileges and immunities which international law grants to international organizations.

The Latin American Parliament, which is financed by assessments paid by the States Parties, has been sitting since 1990 in São Paulo, Brazil.

The Parliament's objectives include the following: first, to promote the integrated economic and social development of the Latin American community and to endeavour to achieve, as quickly as possible, the full economic, political and cultural integration of its peoples; second, to defend the full enjoyment of freedom, social

justice, economic independence and the exercise of representative democracy, with strict adherence to the principles of non-intervention and the self-determination of peoples; third, to ensure strict respect for fundamental human rights and to see to it that they are not infringed in any Latin American State in any way that damages human dignity; fourth, to fight for the abolition of all forms of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and any other form of discrimination in Latin America; fifth, to oppose imperialist action in Latin America, recommending appropriate legal norms and standards that allow Latin American peoples full exercise of their permanent sovereignty over their natural resources and the better utilization and preservation of those resources; sixth, to promote international cooperation in order to orchestrate and foster the harmonious development of the Latin American community for the common good; seventh, to contribute to the strengthening of peace, security and the international legal order and to promote world disarmament, denouncing and combating the arms race and aggression by those who uphold a policy based on the use of force, which are incompatible with the economic, social, cultural and technological development to which the peoples of Latin America are entitled; eighth, to channel and support, on the international scene, the demands of the peoples of Latin America regarding just recognition of their rights in the struggle for the establishment of a new international economic order; and, ninth, to uphold in every way possible the strengthening of the Parliaments of Latin America in order to guarantee the constitutional and democratic life of the States and to promote, by all means available and without prejudice to the principle of non-intervention, the re-establishment of those Parliaments that have been dissolved.

The draft resolution being discussed today is sponsored by the following Latin American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela. It also enjoys the sponsorship of Portugal and Spain, from which our own nationalities originated and countries with which we maintain links of all kinds.

The Latin American Parliament is a regional organization ratified by 11 Latin American States that are also Members of the United Nations, and these States believe that the Parliament would benefit considerably from being granted observer status in the United Nations and that it could contribute to the Organization's activities in the fields and within the geographical area of its competence. Members are no doubt aware that our multilateral Organization could also benefit from this contact, since

Parliaments are the source of national legislation and approve the budgetary appropriations of our countries.

Hence, the countries I have the honour to represent ask that the Latin American Parliament be granted observer status in the General Assembly on terms similar to those that have been prescribed in respect of other intergovernmental organizations already enjoying that status.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/48/L.3.

Before calling on the representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. ALONSO (Uruguay)(*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Uruguay wishes to be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/48/L.3, under which observer status in the General Assembly of the United Nations would be granted to the Latin American Parliament.

The Latin American Parliament has played a very important role in consolidating democratic values in the fraternal countries that are part of the Latin American community. In my capacity as a member of the Parliament of my own country, as a member of the Latin American Parliament and as Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Commission of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) I should like to state from my own personal standpoint what a pleasure it is for me to be able to participate in this extremely important decision.

Through this status the Latin American Parliament, and through it the parliamentarians of all its member States, will strengthen their presence in all international forums that, like the United Nations, seek to strengthen democratic systems in the world.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.3.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt that draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/48/L.3 was adopted (resolution 48/4).

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 157?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 158

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: DRAFT RESOLUTION A/48/L.6

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.6.

Mr. OSVALD (Sweden): I have the honour, in my capacity as representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.6 on observer status for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in the General Assembly. San Marino and Tajikistan should be added to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

The decision to apply for Observer status for the CSCE is supported by all participating States of the CSCE, including Switzerland and the Holy See, which maintain permanent observer missions at the Headquarters of the United Nations.

At the Helsinki Summit in July 1992, the participating States of the CSCE declared their understanding that the CSCE is a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter, and that as such it provides an important link between European and global security. At the Stockholm meeting of the CSCE Council in December last year it was decided that the practical implications of this understanding should be examined. One of the conclusions reached in this examination was that the CSCE should apply for observer status in the General Assembly.

With a view to meeting the new challenges in the CSCE area, the CSCE is elaborating ways and means to strengthen its function to maintain and promote international peace and security within its area of competence. This includes instruments for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management, as well as preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping.

Various types of CSCE long-term missions, focusing on early warning and conflict prevention, have accordingly

been initiated in areas of the former Yugoslavia as well as in Estonia, Latvia, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan. The CSCE also directs special efforts related to the conflict in and around Nagorny-Karabakh. CSCE missions are supervising the implementation of United Nations sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities also has activities in various parts of the CSCE area.

The so-called human-dimension mechanisms and institutions of the CSCE are being used increasingly as a major basis for efforts in areas such as early warning and long-term conflict prevention.

In all these efforts, close consultation and interaction with the United Nations is of the utmost importance - importance that is reflected in letters exchanged, in May this year, between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs as Chairman of the CSCE Council. These letters concerned a framework for cooperation and coordination between the United Nations Secretariat and the CSCE.

Regional organizations and arrangements are playing an increasingly important role in the maintenance of international peace and security. I am therefore convinced that the General Assembly will unanimously endorse the request of the CSCE to be invited to participate, as an observer, in the work of the Assembly. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe will thus join other important regional organizations that have already been granted this status.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.6.

Draft resolution A/48/L.6 was adopted (resolution 48/5).

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Belgium for an explanation of vote.

May I remind representatives that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. DEREYMAEKER (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): I have great pleasure in conveying the congratulations of the European Community and its member States to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in

Europe (CSCE), on which we have just conferred Observer status in the United Nations General Assembly.

Heads of State and Government of the CSCE have declared that, in accordance with the terms of the Helsinki Summit of July 1992, they regard the CSCE as a regional arrangement within the meaning of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. This statement opens the way to increased cooperation between the United Nations and the CSCE, the framework for which was set out last May in letters exchanged between the Chairman in office of the CSCE - Mrs. af Ugglas, the Foreign Minister of Sweden - and the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The granting to the CSCE of Observer status in the United Nations General Assembly merely illustrates the desire for increased cooperation.

During the course of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, we shall have an opportunity to return to various aspects of the question of cooperation between the two organizations.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 158?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.
