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Fifty-first Session

5th plenary meeting
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Official Records

President: Mr. Razali Ismail (Malaysia)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Address by Mr. Ernesto Samper Pizano, President of the Republic of Colombia

The President: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Colombia.

Mr. Ernesto Samper Pizano, President of the Republic of Colombia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Ernesto Samper Pizano, President of the Republic of Colombia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Samper Pizano (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your election as President of the current session of the General Assembly. I salute you in my capacity as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, which has found in your background a close identity with the defence of the interests of the developing countries. The same is true of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who honoured us with his attendance at the last Non-Aligned Movement summit, held at Cartagena de Indias.

Over the past several years in Colombia, we have been waging a difficult war against drug trafficking. In that battle, judges, police officers, journalists and innocent civilians have lost their lives: more than 20,000 people in

the last 10 years. In fact, last week in the southern part of the country more than 50 soldiers of the Colombia army who were destroying illicit crops and cocaine processing laboratories in the jungle region were massacred by guerrillas engaged in the defence of drug trafficking interests. The mother of one of those murdered young men — a 17-year-old soldier — asked me the following day with tears in her eyes: “Why”?

Allow me today to try to answer that mother and all those who have been victims of this war, not only in Colombia, but around the world. Values, democracy and national security are threatened. We are waging this war to preserve and protect those values; to protect and preserve our youth and our democratic form of government; but above all to protect our national security. No country in the world must ignore the battle against drugs. This war is occurring today in every country, owing to the broad power of powerful international criminal and terrorist organizations which have extended their tentacles over the entire planet.

Now that the cold war has ended, the United Nations and the world must design and develop a strategy to put an immediate end to the greatest threat to the world's security and stability today: the threat of drugs. It is an epidemic that, more than any other war, can undermine the value structure which supports the governability of democratic systems.

As we prepare for the twenty-first century, I invite all world leaders present or represented here today, to a collective and above all sincere reflection on this

proposal, which Colombia presents with the moral authority it has been granted, having been the nation which has suffered most, which has invested most, and which has paid the highest social and economic costs in this struggle against drug trafficking.

In recent years, Colombia has spent 14 times more resources fighting drug trafficking than what is invested annually by the international community through the United Nations system for the same purpose. Thanks to this determined effort, Colombia has been able to avoid the annual distribution throughout the world of more than 6 billion doses intended for drug users.

I, too, have been a victim of drug trafficking. Several years ago I was the target of an assassination attempt that almost cost me my life. I received 11 bullet wounds, and still carry four bullets in my body. More recently I fell victim to another assassination attempt, this time of a moral nature. I was accused of having allowed money from a cartel to infiltrate my campaign. Despite that, from the very first day of my Administration we have worked successfully to arrest the criminals and completely destroy the powerful Cali cartel.

I thank God that I survived that assault too. The Congress of the Republic of Colombia, which, under our Constitution is the judge of the President, completely exonerated me of all charges after a long trial that I personally requested be held in public. Barely 48 hours ago, before coming to the Assembly, I was the victim of yet another attempt. Heroin was smuggled onto my aeroplane in order to shame Colombia and its democratic Government. This new attempt proved that the criminal organizations have the power and the capability to penetrate almost every institution in our society, anywhere in the world. However, I stand here today, before this world Assembly of democracy, with complete dignity because nobody will stop me from presenting to the world Colombia's proposals to deal with the drug organizations.

I am speaking to the Assembly today bearing the painful scars of those encounters. Similar scars are borne by all Colombians who have been physically injured by drug terrorism or morally wounded by international misunderstanding. I am not here to complain; I am here to propose a solution to this modern-day epidemic. I am convinced that the world is losing the war against drugs. The solution will have to be as global as the problem itself. It will have to be as swift and irreversible as the damage that drugs and crime are causing to the minds of the young drug users of the world.

The achievements of Colombia and other countries do not imply that the problem of drug trafficking has been eradicated throughout the world. The drug problem will be resolved only when all countries, without exception and without hypocrisy, shoulder their own responsibilities, which cannot be delegated to others.

To achieve this, we must set out the parameters for a great anti-drug alliance, which include immediate and decisive action. If we do not accomplish this, drug trafficking, the most sinister transnational enterprise in the world, whose resources equal \$500 billion per year — more than those of the world-wide petroleum industry — will continue to corrupt and contaminate our peoples.

The statistics on international action to date are not very encouraging. Drug use continues to increase under the tolerant attitudes of some Governments, and the level of drug seizures and confiscation barely exceeds 10 per cent of the total of such drugs circulating in the world. In the face of this demoralizing reality we have only two alternatives: mutual recrimination, or cooperation. Either we continue to criticize each other, or we work together. Multilateral focus on the problem is the only alternative; interventionism is not the way. The only end that unilateral or interventionist measures achieve, as we have seen recently, is to break mutual trust, weaken the ability of Governments to take action, and open the way for the consolidation of criminal organizations.

Colombia proposes an agenda of global action against drugs, based on the principles of shared responsibility, equality and an integrated approach: shared responsibility, because we are all responsible for the problem of ethical, political, social and economic contamination produced by drug trafficking throughout the world; equality, because no country should assume the right to judge the conduct of another on a subject that involves the responsibility of all on standards of behaviour that are worldwide and collective; and integration, because every phase of the process — from agricultural production, to industrial processing, transport, distribution, consumption, and money laundering — must be addressed simultaneously, and with the same energy.

Colombia wants to be part of the solution. We do not want to continue to be demonized by the world when, in fact, we are victims, as all peoples are. The issues for the global agenda against drugs are as follows: first, with regard to the establishment of a social machinery for the eradication of illegal crops, it is not enough to eradicate

such crops if we are not capable of offering alternative solutions for small peasant farmers.

Colombia endorses the innovative proposal of French President Jacques Chirac to create a mechanism to enable the purchase of produce grown as alternatives for illegal crops at prices that closely approximate those paid for coca, opium poppies and marijuana. The establishment of this mechanism should be accompanied by a commitment to aerial and manual eradication over five years, which would lead to the elimination of these illicit crops throughout the world.

Secondly, we need controls on the trafficking of chemical precursors and weapons, which are speeding drug trafficking and the violence that it generates. The United Nations system must define, within the framework of the Vienna Convention, specific guidelines to regulate the pre-shipment certification of chemical precursors to drug-producing countries, and contribute to producing effective systems to control arms sales to those same destinations.

As regards a mandate to combat money laundering, only decisive action against the profits generated by the drug business can stop the recycling of these resources into production and distribution centres. Eighty per cent of drug trafficking money circulates through the economic and financial channels of the industrialized nations. We need much stricter controls on the banking system and on industries whose smuggling of goods and services are being used to launder this drug money.

We propose that the mandate of the European agreement governing money laundering, investigation, seizure and forfeiture of assets derived from drug trafficking be extended to the global level. Concurrently, we should expand globally those decisions reached at the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime held at Naples in 1994.

As regards a worldwide intelligence centre for cooperation in operations against cartels and drug trafficking networks, we believe that in dealing with international crime which starts in one place, continues in another and ends at the point of consumption, the combined action of all countries is required to develop the necessary intelligence and police operations to seize shipments, dismantle networks and pursue domestic drug dealers and distributors. Colombia proposes such an organization of a worldwide intelligence centre against drugs. This centre would coordinate the collection of evidence from every

police force in the world to fight the unified multinational drug traffickers with an equally unified response.

As regards programmes which effectively curb demand, statistics worryingly show that consumption is growing, not declining, and that it is doing so in the most vulnerable sectors of our society: among young people and ethnic minorities. Unless we curb demand, the task of fighting supply will be ineffective in achieving a definitive solution to the problem.

One cannot place the entire burden of drug fighting on drug-producing countries, which are the weakest link. We are speaking of a market that must be controlled from both sides. Starting with an agreement on the goals for the reduction of consumption, we propose the adoption of an integrated plan that includes prevention campaigns, action by non-governmental organizations and public health initiatives accompanied by stricter laws against the distribution and consumption of illegal drugs.

Finally, we propose a world treaty of judicial cooperation in the war against drugs and terrorism which must have no frontiers. Recognizing the sovereign right of every nation to apply justice in its own territory for crimes committed within its boundaries, no nation should agree to be used as a refuge or sanctuary for organized crime. Judicial reciprocity and assistance in the exchange of evidence, the criminalization and judicial seizure of assets derived from drug trafficking and terrorism, extradition and the creation of high-security prisons with standards subject to international monitoring must be an integral part of this strategy.

Without undermining bilateral or regional agreements, these judicial cooperation agreements would establish the basis for the eventual formation of an international tribunal against organized crime. Signatory countries would submit international criminals such as arms dealers, drug traffickers, money launderers and terrorists to the jurisdiction of this tribunal according to the terms of their participation agreements.

Colombia proposes to this Assembly the formation of a group of experts who would be charged with developing a timetable and action plan for this proposed global agenda for the war against drugs. An initial review of the group's progress could be made at the 1998 special session of the General Assembly which has been proposed by the Government of Mexico. The group of experts should be formed in four months' time, and Colombia will be pleased to host its first meeting. I call

on world leaders to communicate to Colombia their recommendations on how best to organize the work of this group of experts.

The globalization of problems in today's world is taking place much faster than the globalization of solutions. Terrorism, and drugs and arms trafficking do not respect either national boundaries or barriers. Developing countries have fewer opportunities and more limited resources to confront the invasive power of these threats, in the face of which there are neither weak nor strong, only victims.

I invoke the memory of those killed by these wars which will also exist in the next century. I invoke our children's future, threatened by bombs, illegal drugs and guns. I invoke the plain cause of the coexistence of the world in order to commit ourselves to this formidable task of blocking the path of organized crime which today challenges our right to govern the world in peace. Finally, I invoke the tears of all the mothers and youths of the world who have been sacrificed in the fight against drugs or through their use. May God illuminate our path that we may continue this battle.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Colombia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Ernesto Samper Pizano, President of Colombia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 (continued)

General Debate

Address by His Excellency The Right Honourable Sir Julius Chan, KBE, GCMG, MP, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

Sir Julius Chan, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Sir Julius Chan, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Sir Julius Chan (Papua New Guinea): On behalf of the people and the Government of Papua New Guinea, I congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to preside

over the General Assembly at its fifty-first session. The warm relations that have developed between our two nations make it a particular pleasure to welcome you to your high office and to wish you well in carrying out your duties. I would also like to record our sincere appreciation for the wise leadership with which your predecessor guided our deliberations during the historic fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

The rapid approach of the year 2000 raises the question whether — and how — we are going to try to make the turn of the century a turning point for the United Nations. Despite the many thought-provoking speeches made for the fiftieth anniversary, I regret to say that signs of fundamental and far-reaching changes required remain elusive. Yet we live at a time when the only constant factor is change. The preamble to its Charter makes it quite clear that the United Nations itself was — and is — intended to be an agent of change. If our Organization is to remain relevant to the challenges ahead, then it, and we the Members, must adapt and keep on adapting, as the world continues to change.

Invented to raise humanity's sights beyond the horizon of destruction caused by world war, the United Nations must be continuously reinvented in order to play an effective role in a rapidly changing world. The United Nations has in fact been successful at one kind of change: adding to our agenda responsibilities and activities in areas such as peacekeeping, peacemaking, human rights and sustainable development. It has, however, been very much less successful in rationalizing its operations and administrative support.

Humanity needs a much more focused, trim and vital United Nations. Without internal reform, the risk of overload is only too real — and, arguably, overload is already here. Even more importantly, we, the Members of the United Nations, have to do more, much more, to adapt key institutions to the changed and still-changing circumstances of a post-colonial, post-cold-war world.

Almost everyone agrees what the main issues and options are. Yet as far as its permanent membership goes, the Security Council in particular remains, much as it has always been, the product of decisions made before most Member States became independent. Some of the strongest critics of the cost and alleged inefficiencies of the United Nations come from States that are among the slowest in paying their membership dues. While they criticize weaknesses in the Organization's performance, they are often among the most eager

advocates of giving it new assignments. Their actions — and inaction — suggest that they confuse cutbacks in the resources available to the United Nations with real reform.

Like other members of the Non-Aligned Movement, Papua New Guinea is firmly committed to reforming the Security Council. While we recognize that those whom existing arrangements most favour are well placed to delay or block change, we firmly believe that the Council's composition should be altered. It must take better account of the geographical distribution and sovereign equality of Member States. Concerned that it seems to be taking longer to reform than it originally took to form the United Nations, Papua New Guinea's voice and vote are emphatically for change. We believe that the time for action is now.

Papua New Guinea has embarked on an ambitious programme of domestic reforms, including both constitutional and economic-policy changes. Having legislated a new system of provincial and local-level governments in order to improve the delivery of services to our people, we are actively engaged in implementation. Twenty-one years after giving ourselves a "home-grown" Constitution, we are now engaged in a comprehensive process of reform that is equally "home-grown".

My Government is just as determined to bring about comprehensive structural adjustment. Following decisions to devalue and float our national currency, the kina, we are now reducing the size of the public sector. We are making the official interface with the private sector more business-friendly and encouraging commercial enterprise. While international agencies and foreign aid donors provide valuable support, the impulse, direction and pace of reform are emphatically Papua New Guinea's own. Being a member of the Government that led Papua New Guinea to its independence, I cannot allow our national sovereignty — or our Government's ability to respond to our people's needs — to be compromised now.

Experience of the difficulties of reform at home has reinforced my Government's commitment to reforming the United Nations. The principles remain the same. We strongly support efforts to ensure that the world has a truly effective, flexible and responsive Organization through which to cooperate in meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The United Nations is founded on the idea that security involves much more than military defence against threats of armed attack. Conscious of the threats and

limitations on self-defence that we face together with other small island developing countries, Papua New Guinea has always regarded collective security as an important key to national security. Diplomacy is the means by which we seek to cooperate with all other States committed to peace.

As the current Chairman of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), I am pleased to report that we welcomed Fiji as a new member at our Summit in June. We also adopted a document — "Melanesia Beyond 2000" — which outlines our objectives and strategy for the MSG's second decade.

We have emphasized our commitment to cooperation on a wide basis and have also agreed to a proposal on weapons control. The South Pacific Forum is developing the idea on a region-wide basis. Following the extreme outrage that the South Pacific felt when France resumed its testing programme in French Polynesia last year, I can now report that the programme has ceased. The remaining nuclear Powers with interests in our region — France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America — have signed the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga). France has been readmitted as a post-Forum dialogue partner.

As much as we welcome the developments during the past 12 months, Papua New Guinea believes that more is required before our region can be described as genuinely nuclear-free. Outstanding needs include a broader treaty, systematic monitoring of former test-sites, cleaning up, compensation and the provision of alternative sources of income for the people of French Polynesia.

The Treaty of Rarotonga is complemented by the MSG's Lakatoro Declaration on Denuclearization in Oceania. Subregional and regional efforts are again complemented by similar arrangements negotiated during the past year in South-East Asia and Africa, as well as by the much older arrangements that apply to Antarctica and Latin America. Papua New Guinea welcomes the Brazilian proposal to link these arrangements into a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-free zone covering the entire southern hemisphere. Having supported the recent passage of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, we would now like to see it extended to outlawing simulations, limiting the development and acquisition of new nuclear weapons and, ultimately, bringing about complete disarmament.

The South Pacific Forum has expressed support for the early conclusion of negotiations over a legal regime covering civil liability for nuclear damage.

Committed to furthering cooperation against threats to our region, the South Pacific Forum is working on an arrangement through which member States can respond to legitimate requests for assistance from one another's disciplined services, including police. The same arrangement could also be used for consultations intended to help prevent, manage and settle disputes. We continue to broaden, deepen and diversify other areas of security cooperation, including law enforcement.

Consistent with agreements reached at the regional level, Papua New Guinea has adopted a comprehensive code of logging practice designed to promote the sustainable use and in-country processing of a rich renewable natural resource.

We are gravely concerned at the threat that climate change poses to the very survival of low-lying atolls. Entire countries in our region face the risk of extinction. Papua New Guinea joins with other developing countries in calling on the advanced industrialized countries to look beyond their immediate self-interest and adopt specific targets for reducing greenhouse emissions, an issue which generates considerable emotion among us.

Together with other coastal States in the region, we look to distant-water fishing nations for cooperation in giving effect to the United Nations Agreement on straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks so that it does not weaken existing regional arrangements.

In the wider Asia-Pacific region, Papua New Guinea calls for a reduction of avoidable sources of stress, uncertainty and risk on the Korean Peninsula, both for the sake of the countries directly involved and because of their potentially adverse effects on other countries.

Concerned about events earlier in the year, I repeat last year's call for the United Nations to do its best to ease the tensions between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Important regional organizations in the Asia-Pacific have found ways of following the principle within the region. The European Parliament has adopted a resolution recommending that the United Nations identify options for Taiwan to take part in the activities of bodies answerable to the General Assembly. The United Nations has an obligation to assist in maintaining a secure environment in which economic growth and other forms of development

can continue for the benefit of the peoples of the region as well as their partners around the world. It is therefore time to address the question of Taiwanese participation in institutions and processes set up to further the universal objectives of the United Nations Charter.

Respect for the national sovereignty of Member States is basic to the United Nations Charter. Small island developing countries tend to be especially vulnerable to a wide range of possible threats. Their development, and even their very survival, often depend on international cooperation and law.

Having achieved national independence under United Nations supervision, Papua New Guinea is firmly committed to the United Nations Special Committee on the Situation With Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Despite criticism from certain quarters, we were therefore pleased to welcome and host the Special Committee's regional seminar held in Port Moresby in June. Together with all other members of the Melanesian Spearhead Group and the South Pacific Forum, we remain firmly committed to the orderly decolonization of New Caledonia, with special safeguards for the indigenous Kanaks. We will not accept illegitimate attempts to delay or derail complete implementation of the Matignon Agreements. Having reviewed the French Government's record elsewhere in the region, we ask ourselves whether French Polynesia, as well as Wallis and Futuna, should be included in the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The international community has a duty to see that France meets its responsibilities to the people of our region and a prime responsibility must be the right of self-determination.

On Bougainville, my Government is firmly committed to doing all that we can to resolve the crisis that has racked the Bougainville Province in my country since 1989. I therefore negotiated a cease-fire, arranged a regional peacekeeping force and agreed to peace talks in October 1994, only to find that the militant leaders would not honour the agreements reached. Even so, my Government has been prepared to talk to those who will talk to us. We have established the Bougainville Transitional Government and continue to provide protection for people forced to flee from their homes by the criminal actions of an armed and militant minority. We continue to restore services and to encourage reconciliation, but the mounting toll of destruction, injury and loss of life caused by the militants gave the National

Government no alternative but to lift the ceasefire on 21 March this year.

Even now, rival gangs of armed criminals continue to threaten the lives of innocent people, trying to destroy what the people, provincial leaders and the national Government are doing and reconstructing. They undermine all efforts to maintain the rule of law. In a particularly barbaric attack on 8 September this year, 12 members of our security forces were killed at the Kangu Care Centre in South Bougainville.

Despite the worst efforts of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army and its sympathizers abroad, my Government is standing firm. We will not give them the satisfaction of departing from our basic objective of restoring peace and rebuilding all they have destroyed.

We appreciate the understanding displayed by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights when it considered the Bougainville situation earlier this year. It has always been a complex domestic issue. In keeping with the mutual respect for national sovereignty that is basic to international law, Papua New Guinea calls on all other States to refrain from statements and actions that send misleading signals to those who violate our laws; to cooperate in preventing smuggling and other illegal violations of our borders; and generally to prevent outsiders from interfering illegally in Papua New Guinea's internal affairs. In so doing, we add the reminder that it is not the foreign meddlers who will suffer most from the effects of the crisis — it will be the people of Papua New Guinea, including the overwhelming majority of Bougainvilleans, who consider themselves to be part of our nation and entitled to the same rights as all other Papua New Guineans.

Conscious of the violations that have occurred on all sides and of the need to avoid any repetition, my Government is in the process of trying to strengthen existing arrangements by establishing a national commission on human rights.

My Government has embarked on an ambitious programme of structural adjustment, because we — and not some outside body — think that we should in order to ensure that development can be sustained for future generations. While we accept external advice and appreciate external assistance, we have not yielded to, and will not give in to, external pressure. It is crucial that the official conduct of such bodies not raise basic questions about

relations between these institutions and the sovereignty of the member States that they are supposed to serve.

National and collective self-reliance are both means of achieving and integral to the objective of sustainable development. They are critical to maintaining and strengthening the security and sovereignty of States. National self-reliance is among Papua New Guinea's constitutional goals and directive principles. Collective self-reliance through South Pacific cooperation is among the commitments contained in my Government's Pacific Plan and implemented through our current national budget.

My Government's proposal that Papua New Guinea should enter into a form of permanent association with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is intended to further the process by which we cooperate with neighbouring countries to promote collective self-reliance. We appreciate the positive interest that ASEAN members have expressed in the idea and we strongly support closer cooperation between ASEAN and the South Pacific Forum.

As the only Pacific island country directly involved in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC), but by no means the only such country likely to be affected by the process, Papua New Guinea has proposed that APEC set up a scheme to help build capacity among the 13 small island developing countries in the region so that they are not left or pushed behind.

The proposal that we are now developing in greater detail is emphatically not intended to be yet another open-ended aid programme under a different name. Rather, it is intended to help small island countries manage their way through the transition to the achievement of APEC's vision of open-ended regional free trade by the year 2020.

As an active participant in institutions established under the Lomé Convention, Papua New Guinea would like to encourage other member States to give early consideration to the kinds of changes that would facilitate development processes and objectives consistent with World Trade Organization rules.

Conscious of the aid fatigue now spreading through many advanced industrial countries, we urge Governments and people of goodwill to recognize the time and effort that development requires. With a few very honourable exceptions, donor countries have not reached — and in

many cases have fallen far behind — aid targets to which they agreed a generation ago.

Thus, not only has aid been reduced, but recipients are even more locked and tied to donors' own preferences. The effect that the failure to honour commitments can have on national forward planning can be very severe. It underlines the need for a reduced reliance on aid and for the development of a greater degree of self-reliance.

In view of the vital role that the business sector can play in mobilizing capital for investment and trade, we welcome schemes designed to assist in the development of the private sector. We especially welcome the contributions made to such schemes by the advanced industrial countries.

We cannot achieve all our reforms without the support of world institutions. That is accepted. However, those institutions themselves need to operate with greater flexibility and to be more sensitive to the particular needs of Governments to preserve democracy, the environment and their people's national identity and culture.

My Government takes a global view of Papua New Guinea's foreign relations and of issues on the United Nations agenda. We encourage official agencies, business and non-governmental organizations both to "Look North" and to "Work the Pacific" for mutual benefit with close neighbours. Conscious that we must not overlook longstanding friends, we give high priority to reinforcing core relationships. Our overall objective is to continue reform at home in order to meet the challenges of global change.

We will continue to support wider efforts at reform, including those directed at and through the United Nations, in order to meet the challenges of global change and embrace the imperatives of reform in readiness for the twenty-first century.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea for the statement he has just made.

Sir Julius Chan, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway.

The President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway.

Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, and inviting her to address the General Assembly.

Ms. Brundtland (Norway): Tomorrow, I am going to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on behalf of Norway. We join with almost all countries in celebrating our new freedom — freedom from fear of nuclear contamination and proliferation. By our joint resolve, the terror of competitive madness fell victim to the sheer force of reason.

Thanks to the United Nations, the norm of non-testing has been galvanized. It is today part and parcel of international law. In the future, no country, whether it has signed that treaty or not, will be able to break that norm. That can no longer be done with impunity. It will go down in the annals of history that nuclear testing was carried out over a period of 40 years in the twentieth century, and then never again.

The decades of negotiations seemed endless, and without the perseverance of this Organization, it would not have worked. Where else could we carve out a global test ban? Where else can we cast norms of global applicability? Where else can we extend an international society based on law and contract?

That is what the United Nations does best. It is easy to ridicule years of meticulous negotiations. It is easy to deride the process as bloated bureaucracy and inefficiency. It is easy because that also happens every day, here by the East River. And we must never become used to that.

But some processes take time because they are difficult and because they have profound effects on the whole world. Every country, every man, woman and child depend on what we can achieve right here, and every country represented here has a stake in our success or our failure.

For more than 50 years, the United Nations has — for better, but also for worse — reflected its Members, global political trends, contrasts, conflicts and confrontations. It has been judged, unjustly, more by its failures than by its successes.

The integration of scores of new Member States, peace-keeping operations, the promotion and protection of human rights, and field activities in developing countries bringing relief and consolation to millions of destitute people all bear witness to how the United Nations has harnessed the best of humanity and civilization. Today, the threats to peace come not so much from contention between great States. Today's killing fields are within States. Out of around 40 cases of armed conflict in the world today, hardly any occur between States. These conflicts are deeply embedded in the history of regions and peoples, where disruption within societies date far back, some being centuries old.

The price of intra-State conflict is being paid by civilians. Ninety per cent of casualties in armed conflict are civilians. They literally walk the minefields where millions of anti-personnel mines are strewn. Not only is the death-toll numbing; let us also count the many missed years of economic production, the livestock lost, the schools ravaged, the clinics destroyed.

Millions pay the terrible human price. But we all pay a price if the gap deepens between the fundamental norms of civilization and the daily suffering in too many countries in too many parts of the world. Reversing that trend is our moral obligation; preventing deadly conflict is our common challenge.

True, the United Nations is increasingly involved in internal crises. We still do not possess the necessary means, mandates and mission capacity to suppress devastating conflict. All too often, intervention comes when the conflict has erupted, when the battles have been fought and the dividing lines have been cemented. When the peacemakers are ready to go, it may be late — often too late.

We lack efficient procedures for dealing with emerging conflicts. To individual countries, emerging intra-State conflict may not be deemed vital. But to the United Nations, any armed conflict or threat of conflict must be vital. We need more preventive action and more preventive diplomacy. Here at the United Nations, we need to develop the institutional, legal and managerial capacity to act, which would provide a model for regional action. Preventing conflict and human suffering must not be

hampered by the traditional norm of what is essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States. Killing people cannot be protected by the Charter.

A situation which is not visibly dangerous and which does not offer spectacular pictures for the evening news, is all too often silenced and out of the news picture. And since those who suffer have no vote in any of the countries which command the resources to help, it may be all too convenient to look the other way.

But reacting in time need not be costly. On the contrary, there is so much to gain, there is so much to save. Much could be achieved if the United Nations were better able to send experienced diplomats and support missions to conflict-ridden areas in timely endeavours to deescalate conflict and reconstruct civil society. We know that the hands of the Secretary-General are often tied in such cases, when it comes to redirecting resources. That is another challenge. United Nations expertise — our expertise — may not show up in a situation because there are insufficient funds to pay for air tickets.

Norway is ready to make an extra contribution. We offer to establish a fund for preventive action here at the United Nations. We pledge to fill it with approximately 1 million dollars on an annual basis, and we invite other Governments to join us. The fund would facilitate immediate deployment of first-class expertise for proactive diplomacy.

Any organization that fails to change is bound to lose its effectiveness. So we must press on with reform. But we cannot accept intimidation. Withholding legally assessed contributions amounts to just that. Today, some countries in fact pay more than their fair share. Other countries voluntarily pay more than their fair share. Many countries pay too little, or hardly anything at all. We now need to settle on a long-term solution based on a more equitable scale of contributions and scrupulous respect by Member States for their financial obligations and the payment of arrears.

We must press on with reform of the Security Council. We are not served by protracted denials of the world as it is. The Security Council must reflect this world, and the issue of a regionally-balanced enlargement must now be addressed. Asia, Africa and Latin America should be represented on a permanent basis. Japan and Germany should each have a permanent seat. And as we enlarge the Council we must see to it that the efficiency

of decision-making is retained and that the Council's implementing ability is greatly enhanced.

If we had sat down at the drawing board to create the United Nations today, we would have grouped the most closely interlinked challenges together and designated a limited number of agencies to deal with them. Today, in the social and economic field, responsibility for sustainable development, poverty, population and education is divided. There is too much fragmentation and too many turf battles.

We need a leaner — and thereby, I believe, stronger — structure to deal with what we decided in Rio, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing. Now we must do what we said there.

The Nordic countries, in their ongoing project for United Nations reform, have focused on the other end of the spectrum — the country level. Today, there are several United Nations representatives in one country, often overlapping each other and often contributing to more fragmentation. But political issues, humanitarian issues and long-term development are interlinked. Our organizational set-up should be the same. Let us coordinate our humanitarian assistance activities better, thus allowing us to react more quickly and more effectively. And let us speak out more openly about human rights.

Human rights are violated all over the world. But only in a few countries is the human rights situation deteriorating. We may be impatient; we may find that progress is too slow in important countries; and there may be temporary set-backs.

But in a world of global communication, facts can no longer be hidden. We cannot build fences around ideas in the age of the Internet. It will become increasingly impossible to derive the benefits of the global economy without exposing political power structures to the scrutiny of democracy.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty established a global norm. This is what the United Nations does best and what it must continue to do. The first Chapter of the Charter calls for effective collective measures for the removal of threats to the peace. Our challenge is to grasp the complexity of today's threats. No single country is powerful enough to deal alone with the threats that transcend our frontiers — terrorism, nuclear proliferation, drugs, crime, disease and damage to the environment. They all require common action. They all belong on our common agenda.

Five years ago in Rio we reached consensus on Agenda 21. That was a call for action. Together we sowed the first seeds of a global norm for sustainable development. Now we must struggle on towards its implementation.

Later this year we will start the final work on a climate protocol. No challenge is more global than climate change. We owe it to present and future generations to come up with a binding agreement that is cost-effective, equitable and verifiable. That process will require a combined political and scientific craftsmanship which will need to draw upon every experience we have had in multilateral diplomacy so far.

There can be no civilized world unless we unite to strengthen multilateralism by establishing global norms, by building and raising the minimum standards of inter- and intra-State behaviour, and by building new norms of international accountability.

The war crimes tribunal in The Hague is a building-block in that edifice. The preventive aspect would be served if the Karadžićs and Mladićs of this world were brought to justice to answer for their crimes.

But again, conflicts should not be allowed to go that far. We must be able to address the root causes of conflict in time. That is what prevention is all about. That is the win-win game we should all be playing. We cannot afford not to do so.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway for the statement she has just made.

Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted from the rostrum.

Agenda item 9 (continued)

General debate

The President: I now call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mr. Seyoum Mesfin.

Mr. Mesfin (Ethiopia): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly. I wish to assure you the full cooperation of my delegation in the discharge of this heavy responsibility entrusted to you. I

should like also to take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Freitas do Amaral, for the able manner in which he fulfilled his responsibilities.

Last year we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and reiterated our dedication to the purposes and principles of the Organization, for the promotion of which it was established. That occasion also afforded us the opportunity to take stock of United Nations achievements and of its yet-unfinished business, as well as of the continuing challenges faced by both the Organization and the international community at large.

That stock-taking exercise could not have led us to underestimate, let alone belittle, what has been achieved by the United Nations. In any case, in so far as the United Nations is our universal Organization, its failings can only be our failings, as its successes are also ours. None the less, last year's stock-taking of the performance of the 50-year-old United Nations must have underlined more than anything else how complex and daunting the challenges faced by the Organization and by the international community are becoming. There are probably no greater challenges before the international community in this regard than those of development and of peace and stability — two concerns that define the very essence of the United Nations and that constitute the core purposes and objectives of the Organization.

It is not yet a distant memory that we all rejoiced at the end of the cold war, believing that it would open up new vistas of opportunity for addressing the vital issues of international concern that had been overshadowed for decades by the arms race, East-West rivalry and other manifestations of the cold-war era. That positive development — the end of the cold war — also encouraged many in the developing world, especially those of us in Africa, to undertake far-reaching political and economic reform measures, with a view to laying the foundation for democratic transformation and meaningful economic growth and development.

Despite all these manifested hopes and courageous moves towards economic reform and democracy, the situation on the African continent remains a source of great concern. At present, Africa is the only continent where the level of poverty is increasing dramatically. Needless to say, this trend could lead to unimaginable consequences unless it is arrested and reversed as speedily as possible.

Mr. de Moura (Angola), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Thus, Africa's genuine fear is that the opportunity created by the end of the cold war will disappear and that a historic chance will be squandered forever.

It is by no means accidental that, of all the regions of the world, Africa is the most affected by conflicts and lack of stability. Conflicts in our continent have not only been greater in number, but have also proved to be more intractable and, more often than not, more deadly and more destructive, in terms of both human lives and property.

It may not always be plausible to suggest that all conflicts in Africa have their roots in economic difficulties only. But, whatever the constellation of factors immediately responsible for specific conflict situations in Africa, the fact remains that in most instances civil strife and conflicts in the continent have emerged within the context of deteriorating economic situations. In this context, the only durable solution for the political crisis in Africa can be found in the economic regeneration and development of the continent. Development is therefore the only reliable preventive means to ensure and maintain peace and stability in Africa.

The development of Africa will continue to be a distant dream unless the known obstacles are removed, among which the debt burden continues to be the major impediment. In this context, we are encouraged by the recent Lyon summit of the Group of Seven, which we were hopeful would go beyond the Naples terms in easing the debt overhang for countries such as Ethiopia. We also hope that some progress will be made during the upcoming annual meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in connection with multilateral debt. For countries like my own, this is very crucial indeed.

While durable solutions to conflicts and to the lack of peace and stability in Africa or anywhere else can hardly be achieved within the context of economic dislocation and economic decline, it is also equally true that development requires peace and stability. This is the vicious circle we find ourselves in, which makes it difficult to find speedy resolution of the very many conflict situations that have led to unspeakable human suffering, and on some occasions to genocide, in Africa.

In Somalia, where peace and national reconciliation have eluded the people for close to six years, we are still far from making any headway in reversing the situation. Efforts are, however, still continuing to help bring about

national reconciliation in Somalia, and my own Prime Minister has continued to attach the highest importance to this endeavour. In all these efforts, the role of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has been vital; whether it is in Liberia, Burundi, Somalia or other conflict situations in Africa, the important contribution that the OAU Secretary-General has been making is a source of great satisfaction to us. The Organization of African Unity has indeed upgraded its capacity for conflict resolution in our continent since the establishment in 1993 of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. I wish to seize this opportunity to express appreciation to all those who have continued to help ensure that the OAU's role in this area is strengthened and enhanced.

Conflict situations, whether in Africa or elsewhere, have negative consequences not only for the countries directly affected but also for their neighbours and their regions. The situation in Somalia has not been an exception to this. The absence of central authority for an extended period of time in that country has been seen to provide opportunity for extra-regional elements bent on exporting terror and on experimenting with plans designed to create instability and chaos in our region. It is therefore in my country's direct national interest that peace be established and national reconciliation achieved in Somalia as speedily as possible.

This is also in the interest of our region in general. Our region, which has had a prolonged period of instability and which has also recently experienced State-sponsored terrorism, cannot afford and should not be expected to tolerate the proliferation and the establishment of centres of international terrorism by multinational elements in our midst. The spread of terrorism is not a danger merely to our region, but to the international community as a whole. Ethiopia's conscience is clear in this regard because it has done its level best to fulfil its responsibilities in the fight against terrorism, and it will always remain committed to combating this evil.

At present, the most worrying conflict, with the potential for a level of human slaughter which we all dread to see, is the one in Burundi. The parties to the conflict in Burundi have the responsibility to save their society from decimation through accommodation based on principles that suit the specific conditions of their country. Others with a much more complex societal mix have managed to put in place democratic mechanisms to reconcile the right of the majority to govern with sufficient guarantees for the security and dignity of the minority. This is what

ex-President Mwalimu Nyerere has been striving to assist the Burundi parties to achieve through the Mwanza peace process, a process which enjoys the full support of the United Nations and of the international community. I wish to take this opportunity to express appreciation for the resolve and unity that the countries of the region have demonstrated in an effort to see to it that disaster is averted in Burundi and that the country achieves national reconciliation. I wish also to express appreciation to all those who have continued to support the Mwanza process and the initiative that was taken by the countries of the region on 31 July 1996.

My country, which emerged from a very difficult period of conflicts and severe economic hardships only five years ago, has made major strides on all fronts during this brief period of time. We draw immense satisfaction from the fact that our people have finally achieved durable peace and stability. Moreover, our economic reform programmes have started to bear fruit; we are encouraged by the results achieved, particularly in agricultural production, over the past few years. That Ethiopia now has the capacity not only to feed itself, but also to be an exporter of food grains, is increasingly becoming a reality.

Ethiopia is striving to enhance its capacity to become a useful and effective partner in international economic cooperation. We intend to make our country an attractive place for investment; all the necessary foundations have already been laid by my Government to this end. We are determined to make trade and investment the major pillars of our economic cooperation with others.

Ethiopia has also endeavoured to contribute its share to regional and international peace and stability over the past few years. That is a policy that we intend to expand further with a view to fulfilling our regional and international commitments, no matter how small our contribution might be.

Ethiopia welcomes the recent adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. We believe that it represents an important step towards the attainment of the larger objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

As a founding Member of the United Nations, Ethiopia attaches the highest importance to the work of the United Nations and wishes to see the Organization revitalized and strengthened. In this context, Ethiopia, like

many other countries, is convinced that the future of the United Nations lies in its democratization and in the creation of conditions under which all Member States, big or small, will feel that the Organization belongs equally to all of them.

With respect to developments in Africa, in the area of conflict prevention and in other areas, my Government is keen to see more effective cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. No doubt, much work needs to be done in this area, and we are confident that the mechanism for consultation already in place between the two organizations will be utilized more effectively and with a far greater sense of purpose and consistency.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my Government's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his very useful and timely initiative on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. The Special Initiative is complementary to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, and, through the reallocation of existing resources and the mobilization of additional ones, will contribute to the development of Africa. We hope that the Special Initiative will be implemented as planned and that it will not, like previous initiatives, remain unfulfilled and be another source of frustration and an empty promise.

We believe that the United Nations can do more to promote effectively the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter and to galvanize international cooperation to achieve peace and development. Our world cannot afford to see the international community divided in two, with one half remaining poor and becoming even poorer. The imperatives of interdependence dictate that this trend be reversed, especially when all that those who are lagging behind demand is the removal of the obstacles to development and an opportunity to address their economic problems on the basis of their own efforts.

Ethiopia is confident that the United Nations will play an increasingly dynamic role, so that all the nations and peoples of the world will have an equal stake in the preservation of global civilization and in enriching human society.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru, His Excellency Mr. Francisco Tudela Van Breughel Douglas.

Mr. Tudela Van Breughel Douglas (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): At the outset, allow me, Sir, to convey to you and to this Assembly the greetings and congratulations of the Peruvian people, as well as their best wishes and hopes for the future.

Peru is a country that has successfully dealt with its domestic contradictions, and which is looking with vision and determination towards the broad new horizons of international activity. A careful review of what has been achieved to date reveals that much remains to be done; but it also shows that we are following the right course in addressing the demands of our times.

However, it would be superficial to use this Assembly, whose central theme is the reform of the United Nations, to recapitulate the events of the past year. We must wake up to the outcome of a long historical process that has accelerated markedly over the last quarter of a century and established around the world a network of international organizations that today exceed the number of States. We must also wake up to a fortunate new development: the individual human being has acquired a position of cardinal importance in the international system.

The organizations established by States to satisfy international, human and regional needs, have acquired a permanent character and have created new systems of international relations. When we speak today of reforming the United Nations, no one fails to acknowledge that new mechanisms are required to promote greater development and economic and social stability in the world, and to face current and future conflicts between and within States.

There is discussion of the possibility of creating a new economic council and a new social council, as well as expanding and strengthening the Security Council. At the same time, the need has emerged to transform and rationalize the United Nations system, together with the imperative of resolving the Organization's financial crisis. But in order to carry out those reforms, we need to have a clear-sighted appreciation of the international scene and to adapt the Organization to that reality, so that we can achieve a fruitful and forward-looking perspective. It is necessary for States, in the framework of the United Nations system, to overcome their traditional activities and jointly engage in tasks to deal with those new realities so as to achieve broader representation and functionality, with the possibility of future growth.

When the United Nations was founded in 1945, at the end of the Second World War, international relations were different from today. The end of the cold war and the realities of regional integration have made necessary a new vision of the relationship between State sovereignty and the supra-national realities of the international system. Huge social and economic challenges make it necessary for us to persevere in pursuing the purposes and principles of the Charter, to strengthen diplomatic action, and not to succumb to arbitrary interpretations of international legality, which undermine the indispensable primacy of international law.

Today the inadequacy of the nation State is more evident than ever, and the appreciation of supranational structures is more widespread than in the past. We discard the simplistic visions of pure internationalism, but we uphold the validity, of the entities that are active today alongside or above State sovereignty. The vitality of the Andean Common Market, the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the European Union shows us a future of common and vigorous legal international arrangements. We are facing the definitive crisis of nationalism, if not of full legal competence of the nation State. International law today appears as the only framework of standards with which to face the new realities.

There can be no doubt that the nuclear reality was one of the factors that transformed the traditional concept of the nation State. The ability to foresee its results has made the decision to accept war more exceptional, and non-atomic armies have adhered to broader, supranational military organizations. Atomic weapons have abolished the impermeability of the nation State.

We are likewise faced with a crisis of the very concept of borders. Traditionally, empires thought of themselves only in terms of being an extension of their borders. Today borders are not an obstacle to integration. However, this does not imply that we are building a universal State, a global "cosmocracy". There are natural limits to the territorial applicability of laws, and it is true that the concentration of power has unbreachable limits, beyond which it cannot go. Accordingly, history has so far not led us to a universal State, but rather to a freer structure, a complex political pluralism with a common general foundation of representative democracy, individual liberties and economic freedom. We are facing new, functionally limited supra-statal powers, with different arrangements that differ in scope and intensity and that are superimposed upon the system of State borders.

The modern theory of the State forged by Machiavelli and Bodin, the concept of the State as an absolute power that excludes any other power, is today fading. For more than 20 years States have recognized forces superior to themselves. The idea of the unlimited sovereign State has broken down; the linchpin of the whole theory of the modern State has broken down. Today sovereignty continues to exist, but not as unlimited political power, but rather as full constitutional legal competence. That seventeenth-century concept that inspired the Peace of Westphalia, *cuius regio eius religio* — that each State should have a religion — has been left behind. This is more apparent than ever at the end of the cold war, when the secular beliefs that confronted the world have been discarded. Today the cohesion of human societies is governed by universal concepts.

The new reality leads us to assert that State sovereignty has already been made subject to international law — and, it can be said, to natural law — thus negating the theoretical legitimacy of the State that was born with the modern age. This in no way means that there is no longer a need for patriotism, the concept of fatherland or national histories. It means, instead, that the myth of the nationalist State has collapsed.

In a truly human breakthrough and not a purely technological one, all moral values today are reduced to their personal roots. Today, neither Governments nor the governed can shirk the ethical imperatives that rule equally over their public and private conduct. This is due both to the process just outlined and to a wholly new and far-reaching technological revolution in mass communications.

The law of nations was at first a principle of commercial intercourse. It later came to apply to only one kind of actor: the nation State. Today, an open functional regionalism is bringing about far-reaching changes that are swiftly altering the existing order, and the United Nations would be ill-advised to disregard that new reality in strengthening the Security Council and reforming its institutions.

This is the cornerstone upon which the United Nations should be re-founded, now that the circumstances of power which governed its life at the close of the Second World War and during the cold war have been overcome. We should not lose sight of the fact that, although the act of consent that forged this new, open, functional regionalism was the work of the nation State, today that regionalism is already a supranational reality

that has taken on a life of its own and is spreading around the world. Inter-statal balances of power are giving way to regional balances of power that are not concentrated in a single focal point of power and that are more decentralized and more rational.

The future will be one in which an international system with freer and more flexible structures will be based on the freedom of man as an individual, as a person. This obliges States, within the framework of the United Nations system, to go beyond their traditional activities and jointly engage in management activities in the Organization based on the new cultural, economic and geographical reality made up of broad functional regional areas. I say once again: this is the keystone of the foundation of the new edifice of the United Nations.

I have come here to reiterate the commitment of Peru and of the Peruvian people to the United Nations, but also to warn that the new realities that must not be ignored. Those realities have guided the policy of President Alberto Fujimori and are the inspiration for his Government's far-reaching and successful reform. Peru, in its continental relations, today bases its foreign policy upon the principles of open functional regionalism and strives to link the Pacific with the Atlantic through supranational arrangements.

Rooted in its rich Latin-American heritage, my country sees its future in continental terms, drawing upon Latin America's important contribution in the area of integration, international law and mechanisms for peace and security. Accordingly, we are convinced that organizational changes in the United Nations should be based on those same principles.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Abdellatif Filali, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Mr. Abdellatif Filali, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the

Kingdom of Morocco, Mr. Abdellatif Filali, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Filali (Morocco) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset I would like, on behalf of my country, to congratulate the President sincerely, and the friendly country of Malaysia, on his election to preside over the General Assembly at its fifty-first session. His competence and profound knowledge of international affairs will clearly contribute to the achievement of the expected results of the session. I should like to take this opportunity to assure him that the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco will provide its full support and assistance in order to achieve those results.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral for the wisdom with which he guided the proceedings of the fiftieth session and for his commendable efforts in connection with the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Although the cold war ended a few years ago, and despite the hopes of the peoples of the world that a new international era would dawn in which they could reap the benefits and dividends of peace and take part on an equal footing in the guidance and management of international affairs in order to preserve their ideals, values and interests, we note that the current world situation is characterized by instability and confusion and is far from reflecting the order we so hoped to achieve. Indeed, far from bringing peace, security and justice, the end of the cold war spawned a situation in which local crises have brought suffering to millions of people in several regions of the world, severely stirring our global conscience. These crises have also highlighted the inability of the international community to devise effective mechanisms to resolve such conflicts in an equitable way and to put an end to the tragedies they engender.

Morocco believes that the Secretary-General's initiative for restructuring the United Nations and strengthening its role falls precisely within this perspective and can prepare the Organization to deal with the effects of these conflicts through preventive diplomacy, the development and reform of United Nations bodies, and coordination between the United Nations and other international and regional organizations. We are, moreover, convinced that the re-election of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali to a second term as Secretary-General would be the best guarantee for the continuation of those reforms. The Secretary-General's experience, competence,

courage and spirit of initiative in settling international conflicts and reactivating international cooperation in various fields, make him the best choice to guide the affairs of the Organization during a second mandate. Morocco also hopes that any controversy on the subject will be avoided in order to forestall adverse repercussions on the work of this session and on the future of the Organization.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization provided an opportunity for the numerous Heads of State who attended the celebration to express concerns and apprehensions regarding the challenges confronting us. They issued a Declaration that contained their proposals and recommendations for meeting those challenges and devising effective mechanisms to promote closer relations among countries. In our view, this session provides us an opportunity to reflect on those recommendations and proposals and to find answers to the questions raised by the Heads of State regarding the fundamental and structural reforms of the United Nations.

With regard to the Security Council and its prerogatives in discharging its mandate to maintain international peace and security, we believe that any initiative aimed at expanding the membership of the Security Council and improving its modes of action would require much thought and circumspection. It must take into account current realities if any final decision in this regard is to lead to the desired reform and thereby guarantee equitable representation of all continents. The aim here is to ensure the Council's efficiency and credibility and to enhance its ability to cope with any violation of international law without impinging on the prerogatives and role of the General Assembly.

However, any reform that does not take into account the current financial difficulties of the Organization clearly cannot produce the expected results. It will be extremely difficult for the United Nations to fulfil its mission without a stable financial base. Hence the need for all Member States to pay their contributions, settle their arrears and thereby give concrete substance to their collective and continued support for the efforts of the Organization.

In the field of disarmament, many important steps have been taken in the control of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Following the establishment of nuclear-free zones in Latin America and the South Pacific and the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the African countries signed a Treaty making Africa a nuclear-free continent. In addition to these achievements, we hope to see

the Middle East also become a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and of nuclear weapons in particular.

Moreover, following the success of the efforts to produce the final version, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty will be open for signature tomorrow. Morocco, which made an important contribution to the drafting of the Treaty, is convinced that this document will open the way for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, strengthen international cooperation and promote the exchange of knowledge about the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, so that developing countries can achieve their economic and technical goals.

Morocco's interest in this subject is predicated on its acute awareness of the risks involved and that arms control is the cornerstone of any initiative aimed at firmly establishing the basis for international peace and security throughout the world. Humanity can be sheltered from the tragedy of massively destructive wars only through the full and complete elimination of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons under effective international control.

Last year, I told this Assembly that the efforts of the Kingdom of Morocco to achieve territorial integrity had gone through a series of phases unique in the history of the independence of nations. The time has come for Morocco to recover all its territories.

Being fully committed to peace and to the settlement of problems through dialogue, and having continually defended this principle in international forums as a means for resolving problems between nations, Morocco is convinced that the return of the cities of Ceuta and Melilla and of the neighbouring islands still under Spanish occupation can only occur through those same means. This is particularly true given the common interests and the well-established and good-neighbourly relations existing between Morocco and Spain. This is, moreover, precisely what His Majesty King Hassan II took the initiative to underscore when he called for the establishment of a Moroccan-Spanish think tank definitively to resolve this question.

Accordingly, the final, complete solution we are advocating is one which preserves Moroccan sovereignty on the territories it holds, while guaranteeing Spanish interests. This would further consolidate the dynamics of the diverse and close cooperation between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. We are also convinced that our age-old relations with neighbouring

Spain will be instrumental in finding a permanent solution to this question.

The developments in the Middle East over the past few years opened prospects of tolerance and coexistence for the peoples of the region, instead of dissension and fighting. We view the progress that has been made as an auspicious sign in that regard, starting with the Madrid Conference and the Oslo agreements and progressing to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and the Jordanian-Israeli agreement.

Morocco has contributed to giving life to the concept of peace in the region, and has made tireless efforts to establish a comprehensive, just and lasting peace that would guarantee the return of all occupied Arab territories, including Al-Quds al-Sharif, the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and southern Lebanon in keeping with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of land for peace. We therefore regret the interruption of the peace process, which threatens to destroy all the efforts we have made to establish security and stability in the region.

We have the right to wonder whether the principles and commitments agreed upon at the Madrid Conference, which provided the groundwork for the process towards establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region, have become outdated, not to say null and void. Has the new Israeli Government, which seeks to cast doubt on those principles and commitments, realized the disastrous consequences of such a course of action, which could take the region and its peoples back to a situation we thought was behind us thanks to an irreversible commitment and a new perception of the region's future?

We believe in peace and are dedicated to its defence and maintenance as an irreversible option and goal. My country has contributed to this mission of its own free will and in good faith. Similarly, we have on many occasions pointed out that genuine security for all the countries of the region can be achieved only through the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace which guarantees the rights of all parties in the region.

In this respect, we call for scrupulous and unequivocal commitment, with no delays, to all that has been agreed upon, in order to implement the agreements reached according to the scheduled phases of the peace process. We also call for removing the obstacles impeding the bilateral Arab-Israeli negotiations so that we may keep abreast of the

substantial progress made in the multilateral peace process in order to achieve the desired final solution.

The blockade imposed on the Palestinian territories, which hinders even the delivery of international assistance to the Palestinian people, makes it particularly difficult for the Palestinian Authority to discharge its obligations to its people, who are living in extremely difficult conditions. In addition, the colonization policy applied by Israel and the changes it is introducing in the old part of the city of Al-Quds and neighbouring areas constitute a violation of the United Nations resolutions, principles and commitments to which I referred earlier.

In this respect, we call for a lifting of this blockade and for providing full material support and assistance to the Palestinian Authority, in accordance with the decisions taken by the international community, so that the Authority can discharge its mission in the best possible conditions and launch the process of the economic development of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in order to enable the Palestinian people to establish their independent State, with Al-Quds as its capital, and to contribute, on equal footing, to the progress, cooperation and prosperity of the region.

The Gulf crisis has long cast a dark shadow on the region and created crisis conditions. We have repeatedly called for transcending these conditions through the implementation of internationally binding resolutions within the framework of ensuring the security and stability of the region and preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries of the region. We are convinced that this situation cannot continue indefinitely.

The prospects for an easing of the crisis are beginning to emerge, based on the progress made in the implementation of Security Council resolutions, and the understanding reached by Iraq and the United Nations on the implementation of resolution 986 (1995), known as the oil-for-food resolution. We regret the latest developments in the Gulf region, which are likely to once again plunge that area into a spiral of instability and postpone the implementation of that resolution. As we call for restraint and calm in order to avoid any escalation, we reaffirm the need to respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and to implement Security Council resolution 986 (1995), in order to alleviate the hardships of the Iraqi people, who are still suffering from the embargo which has been imposed on them for the last six years.

The problem of the United Arab Emirate islands of the Greater and the Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa has not yet been resolved. Given the relationship of kinship and brotherhood between us and the United Arab Emirates, and given our historic and brotherly relations with Iran, we call upon the two neighbouring countries to find a definitive solution to this crisis on the basis of respect for the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over its islands and respect for its territorial integrity, in keeping with the relations of neighbourliness and the traditional ties existing between the two countries. These ties should be exploited to the benefit of the peoples of the Emirates and Iran and to achieve stability in the region.

Morocco attaches special importance to the conflict between Libya and certain Western countries because of its repercussions on international and regional relations. In this connection, we regretfully note the implications of the measures imposed on Libya and their extensive damaging effects on the Libyan people and on the economies of neighbouring countries. The continuation of this situation has been a source of concern.

Morocco, which is interested in seeing this problem settled amicably, calls for a favourable response to the initiatives and efforts made by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Arab League, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to find a solution to this crisis.

The world has followed with very keen interest the international efforts aimed at restoring peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These efforts have rekindled hope and provided an opportunity to put an end to the conflict in the region and to the crimes against humanity that have claimed tens of thousands of Bosnian lives. Morocco fully supports the Bosnian people and their just cause, including the preservation of their sovereignty, territorial integrity and identity, and has never hesitated, in its current capacity as Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to shoulder its responsibilities to help the Bosnian people overcome their ordeal. Thus, we worked to set up a coordination mechanism between the Islamic Contact Group and the International Contact Group, which contributed to bringing about the official signing, at the Paris Conference, of the Dayton Agreement, which aims at putting an end to the bloodshed in the region, finding a comprehensive, just and lasting solution, instilling respect for international legality, and contributing to stability in the region. My country has also met its international obligations through its participation in the Implementation Force, thereby

contributing to the establishment of security and stability in that region.

We are gratified to note the substantial progress made in the implementation of the military aspects of the Dayton Agreement and the launching of the construction of political institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We hope that the legislative elections held recently will constitute yet another constructive step towards preserving the territorial integrity and political unity of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and achieving harmony and concord among the country's various constituents in order to secure its stability and development.

The current world economic situation clearly reveals the wide gap between developed and developing countries, as well as the increasing marginalization of the latter in the international economic arena. This unbalanced situation threatens to lead to conflicts among countries arising out of economic and development considerations and could thus adversely affect world stability.

Given the staggering increase in external debt and its negative repercussions on the economies of the developing countries, there is an urgent need today to find adequate solutions to this situation, which is mortgaging the future of the developing countries. Such solutions can be achieved only through the creation of conditions more conducive to increasing equal opportunities among the countries of the world and a genuine partnership that can pave the way towards the achievement of balanced and lasting development.

In this context, we once again welcome the initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General in the "Agenda for Development". We hope that it will lead to positive results, redress the imbalance and help to achieve the economic development sought by the developing countries.

The changes affecting the international economic scene following the crystallization of the concept of economic globalization and the liberalization of trade-mandate corrective measures require that the existing disproportion be corrected, particularly since the behaviour of certain developed countries in trade liberalization is still marked by a selective approach. Moreover, protectionist measures and the institution of covert barriers in the guise of various environmental and other considerations are inconsistent with the desirable policy of liberalization of international trade.

We hope that the task of redressing these imbalances will feature prominently among the concerns of the World Trade Organization in the near future and that a balance may be struck between freedom of trade and development requirements.

If a solution is to be found, the role of international financial institutions must be extensively reassessed in view of the deep changes affecting the international scene. Accordingly, we call for the implementation of the provisions of World Trade Organization agreements and for careful thought to be given to defining the concepts of globalization that now determine the very future of nations, peoples and, indeed, entire continents. This could be done by means of financial and economic transactions designed to close the gap between countries and to overcome the marginalization from which many of them suffer, particularly in Africa.

We keenly hope that the meeting of the World Trade Organization at Singapore in December will provide an opportunity to assess the situation and to enter into a more careful consideration of the consistency of economic, financial and monetary policies, for which Morocco has been calling for some time.

The deterioration in the situation on the African continent is most certainly at the forefront of issues demanding a joint effort on the part of the international community. Effective and practical solutions must be found for the serious economic, social and humanitarian problems facing African States, which have been compounded by tragedies such as civil war, the spread of epidemics and deadly diseases, desertification, refugee problems and all they entail.

Morocco, as a country on the African continent that enjoys deep-rooted historical and other ties with other African States, takes a keen interest in the continent's problems. Bearing in mind those ancient ties and our special political relations, my country has contributed, within the means available to it, to the development of Africa through the establishment of bilateral cultural and technical cooperation with the States of the continent.

Morocco will therefore spare no effort to develop and consolidate bilateral cooperation with African States to help the African continent overcome its problems and emerge from marginalization.

During the Marrakesh Ministerial Meeting of the Uruguay Round in 1994, His Majesty King Hassan II was

the first to call for the introduction of a "Marshall Plan" for Africa and to stress the need for greater international efforts to help African States develop their economies and become integrated into the world economy.

In this framework, we welcome the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. In our opinion, we should do our utmost to help this Initiative succeed by ensuring that both the United Nations and the international community provide the necessary financial and technical support.

With regard to what is known as the question of Western Sahara, I would like to affirm, as I have done many times before, Morocco's commitment and unswerving willingness to implement the United Nations Settlement Plan which guarantees the right of all people from the Sahara to express their will through a referendum.

It has now become clear to everyone that since the end of last year, the United Nations Plan has reached a deadlock. We hope that this stalemate will end as soon as possible so that the Settlement Plan can be carried out on the basis of a referendum.

As the twenty-first century comes into view, the world hopes that tomorrow will bring a brighter future characterized by peace, cooperation and brotherhood among peoples. As we stand on the threshold of a new century, we need to strengthen the United Nations and consolidate its capabilities so that it can keep up with the changes taking place and respond to people's desire for security, justice and development.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*):
I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, His Excellency Mr. Ernesto Leal.

Mr. Leal (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*):
Allow me to begin by congratulating the President on his election to preside over the Assembly this session. We are convinced that he will guide our work successfully. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral for his work.

In 1990, when Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro became President of Nicaragua, the country was in a state of war. Negotiating the demobilization of more than 20,000 people who had taken up arms and reducing an army of over 90,000 soldiers were key tasks in ending a civil war that had lasted almost 10 years. This

complicated pacification process was just the beginning of a process of peace, reconciliation, democracy and development in Nicaragua aimed at bringing the country into line with the new situation in the region and the globalization of international relations.

As part of this process, we began to modernize the State, curbed hyper-inflation, liberalized the pricing system and did away with the State monopoly in the areas of foreign trade and finance, where we have managed to privatize almost all the companies that used to belong to the State.

As the State apparatus was reduced, we began to decentralize government and transfer responsibilities to municipal and community levels and to sectors in which the private sector could clearly be much more effective.

We have carried out the process of peace and reconciliation that was essential for democratic national consolidation. We have stabilized the economy and reduced the external debt, although, unfortunately, it is still a great burden.

One of the main concerns of the Government of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro has been to ensure that the human rights of the entire population of Nicaragua are respected. To this end, we have adopted legislative and administrative provisions that have rid Nicaraguan jails of murder, torture and impunity.

We have set up new institutions that encourage education, trade and banking. We have introduced a new, much more effective, social security system. We have allocated more of our budget to primary and technical education, and we can be proud of the unlimited freedom of the press in Nicaragua today. We have also managed to establish civilian control over the military, which will be another important bequest to the new Government.

Today our country enjoys the greatest degree of political freedom in its history. Considerable progress has been made in institutionalizing democracy, and the resources that in the past we Nicaraguans used for war are now once again being used for education, health and the building of housing and roads — in other words, for the comprehensive development of Nicaragua.

Democracy in Nicaragua was born in 1990, with the election of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro in the only truly free election ever enjoyed by the Nicaraguan population in its history. At that difficult time, we

Nicaraguans accepted the challenge of sowing the seeds of a new culture of peace. The United Nations played a very important role in this process of achieving democracy and opening up a new era for Nicaragua. In the same spirit, the United Nations is now cooperating with us and providing guidance for the elections later this year.

Since 1990 major changes have occurred at the world level. Many countries have rid themselves of oppression and dictatorship. The Iron Curtain has been torn down, as have the walls of ideological intolerance. The foundations of apartheid have crumbled, and in the Middle East a peace process is unfolding, filling us with hope, although it is not without problems. Major sacrifices have been made by peoples under totalitarian regimes so as to win the right to live in peace and freedom in a more secure world — a fairer, more peaceful, tolerant and democratic one.

However, we see that new crises and armed conflicts have arisen in other regions of the world. Because of its international character, the United Nations is duty-bound to face up to the challenges of security required by the current situation; our Organization's global agenda allows it to operate more dynamically. The United Nations must confront issues such as the eradication of poverty, environmental degradation, terrorism, the use and trafficking of drugs, violence suffered by women and the promotion of democratic values and progress in social development. Nicaragua is convinced that peace and democracy are closely related to development, and that without economic development it is extremely difficult to achieve sustainable democracy.

In the Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace" we have a summary of the important changes that have occurred in recent years. He sets forth the difficult conditions of hunger and poverty among other things, still existing in developing countries. He also recognizes that the burden of debt and barriers to international trade are still a danger to world stability. All this makes the development of the new concept of international security more difficult — as discussed right here in the United Nations. The Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace" is a mechanism to help us bring about true, comprehensive peace.

Let us recall, as was stated today by the Prime Minister of Norway, that peace is no longer only something that States must seek from one another. We must seek peace within each State as well.

The sensitive mission of the United Nations at this new stage of its development can be illustrated by its dynamic role in Central America, a region that in 1992 was declared by this very General Assembly to be an area of peace, freedom, democracy and development.

No one doubts that the United Nations has begun a major process of profound transformation and renewal, taking place precisely 50 years after its establishment and reflecting the current international situation. With this renewal we hope for greater democratization of our world Organization, particularly in the Security Council. We also hope for the admission of new Members to the Organization, such as the Republic of China on Taiwan, which meets the requirements set forth in the Charter to be a Member State, but whose right to be a Member is still denied it. Likewise, we are expecting the United Nations to contribute to developing countries, particularly through programmes of technical cooperation and cooperation for development.

During these last few years of transition, while we have been establishing and consolidating peace and democracy in Nicaragua, world disarmament has accelerated. Budgets for armaments have been reduced in many countries, and we, the Governments of Central America, have adopted some serious initiatives as regards the production, use and transfer of anti-personnel mines. We have also declared Central America to be a region completely free of those devices.

Areas that were once battlegrounds, including Nicaragua, are now seeing demining operations with good prospects. At the same time, several nuclear-weapon States have initiated moratoriums on testing, thus greatly diminishing the possibility of a devastating nuclear war.

We have also seen an increase in the number of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The signing of the Pelindaba Treaty establishes a zone of this kind in Africa; and with the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in South-East Asia we will be strengthening the potential for a more secure world. It is important to recall that very recently we adopted by an overwhelming majority, right here at United Nations Headquarters, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

We are seriously concerned that much of the recent political progress achieved throughout the world is not necessarily in tune with progress in the economic sphere. Developing countries continue to face serious problems such as extreme poverty and unemployment. Access to new

international markets continues to be limited for our products. The burden of debt is unbearable, and the constant inequalities in international financial systems continue to affect our countries adversely. Therefore, we must urgently establish much fairer and more equitable international economic relations.

We are also concerned that during this same period of global, regional and national transition, new forms of intolerance, lack of understanding and violation of human rights have breached the peace in certain areas of the world. Such is the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia and Rwanda, where events have profoundly disturbed the human conscience.

In this same regard, Nicaragua is troubled by recent events in Burundi, where in spite of the efforts of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the international community, the situation remains delicate. On the other hand, the efforts made towards reaching peace in Chechnya hearten us.

We are concerned at the continuation of practices and their pernicious effects. We believe that their perpetrators should be brought to justice without exception. We condemn attacks such as that upon President Mubarak of Egypt and the recent one in Dharan, Saudi Arabia, in which hundreds of innocent people were wounded. We feel great solidarity with the victims and their families.

Nicaragua is concerned at the growth in the production, consumption and traffic in drugs, and in the growing relationship between terrorism and weapons trafficking, which, like drug trafficking, continues to pose a major threat to future generations.

For these reasons, I would like to state that Nicaragua was pleased to hear the proposal made by the President of Colombia regarding the need to develop a global agenda for drugs. We believe that the United Nations should think hard about that important initiative.

On the eve of the twenty-first century, the international community as a whole should seek out ways and means to overcome all of these situations. We should make our best efforts in that regard. Nicaragua is ready to support the international community in these initiatives.

In July 1994, the second International Conference of New and Restored Democracies was held in Managua, Nicaragua; its main objective was to study in a frank and

objective manner the weaknesses, prospects and challenges of new democracies. On this occasion, on behalf of my country and in our capacity of interim secretariat of the Conference, I would like to urge that the third conference of new democracies, which will be held next year in Bucharest, Romania, receive the international community's special attention.

In this ongoing quest for peace and for the strengthening of democracy, we in Central America are putting into practice a new model of regional security. The outstanding features of this new model have been embodied in the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, which is a national and regional strategy to foster a change in personal and social attitudes to ensure the establishment of a model of sustainable development in the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental fields.

We Central Americans have already ratified a framework treaty for democratic security which deals with respect for and the promotion and protection of human rights. Its provisions ensure the security of the Central American States and their inhabitants through the establishment of conditions which will allow them their personal, family and social development in peace, freedom and democracy. These are initiatives which could be studied in other regions with the aim of strengthening national processes within the context of new circumstances and with the objective of moving towards a new international order which will be more secure, to which we all aspire.

Only months away from the end of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro's term of office and less than one month from the elections in which her successor will be chosen, we are very satisfied with the work carried out during this period. World and regional events have had, and will continue to have, their impact within countries. In the case of Nicaragua, this impact has been highly positive. By the end of its term, our Government will have left Nicaragua completely different from the Nicaragua we found in 1990.

We are certain that whoever is elected President in the coming elections will have the necessary vision to establish, as it has done in the past, a Government of benefit to all Nicaraguans. Thus, we believe that extensive democratic consolidation should also continue in order to continue on the path of peace, harmony and progress.

On behalf of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, I would like to ask the international community and the

United Nations to continue supporting Nicaragua, for the good of democracy, for the good of our country, and, above all, for the good of the international community.

I take this opportunity on behalf of the people and Government of Nicaragua and on my own behalf to thank the States, the Governments, the international organizations and non-governmental organizations which, in one way or another, have lent our country their cooperation and solidarity. Without this solidarity we Nicaraguans would never have been able to achieve the democracy we have today, nor would we have been able to lay the foundation for economic development. To all of them and to all of you, members of the Assembly, thank you very much.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate for this meeting. I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of 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 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Gomersall (United Kingdom): On behalf of the United Kingdom, I would like to say a few words today in response to the remarks made by the Foreign Minister of Argentina concerning the Falkland Islands. We were glad that the Foreign Minister again referred to the increasing cooperation between the United Kingdom and Argentina, which characterizes our bilateral relationship. My Government sincerely hopes that the progress which has been achieved will be built on and further developed. But my Government does not accept the Foreign Minister's remarks about sovereignty. We have no doubt about Britain's sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and the other British territories in the South Atlantic.

In the Falkland Islands we must heed the wishes of the people. Many families trace their ancestry in the Falklands back for five or six generations. The elected representatives of the islanders, some of whom visited the United Nations for the debate in the Committee of 24 last July, have expressed their views clearly and on many occasions. They have stated their belief in their right to self-determination to live under a Government of their choice and, as a democratic voice of the Falkland Islands

people, they have reiterated their view that they do not want to be part of Argentina.

Despite our differences with Argentina on the subject of sovereignty, we are continuing a constructive dialogue with the Government of Argentina on, for example, hydrocarbons development and fisheries in the South Atlantic. A further round of talks at the official and ministerial level aimed at making further progress on these and other issues will take place in New York this week. We value these practical steps to develop United Kingdom-Argentine cooperation benefitting the islands. We hold these discussions while maintaining our position regarding the issue of sovereignty over the Falklands.

Mrs. Gazeau-Secret (*interpretation from French*): The French delegation must object to the statements made by the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea regarding the territories of French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna. The populations of these territories continue to indicate in the

most democratic possible way that they are part of the French Republic. Therefore, from the point of view of my delegation, the questions raised by the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea are pointless.

Mr. Westendorp (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Spanish delegation must intervene in the exercise the right of reply, and wishes to refer to the references to the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla and to other parts of Spanish territory, made this afternoon by the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Such statements do not reflect reality, as they refer to Spanish territories whose citizens are represented in the Spanish Parliament with the same rights and under the same conditions as the rest of their compatriots. Parallels cannot be made with other situations of a fundamentally different nature. Such references are out of step with the close overall relationship that today exists between the Kingdoms of Spain and Morocco, both bilaterally and in the region to which we, as neighbours, belong.

Ms. Ramírez (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Having listened to the statement made by the United Kingdom, Argentina would like to reaffirm the statement made this morning by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Guido Di Tella.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.