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Thursday, 19 October 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/55/345/Add.9)

The President: In the letter contained in document A/55/345/Add.9, the Secretary-General informs me that, since the issuance of his communications contained in documents A/55/345 and addenda 1 to 8, Haiti has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in this document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 11 (*continued***)**

Report of the Security Council (A/55/2)

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia, for his lucid and concise introduction of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. This debate cannot be regarded as a ritual, as it provides a useful opportunity for Member States to assess how the Security Council has fulfilled its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We all agree that the character of the Security Council's work has changed dramatically since the end of the cold war and with the increase in intrastate conflicts, which have implications for international peace and security. This has broadened the scope of the issues before the Council and has challenged it to find ways to be more responsive to situations as they arise.

Over the past year, the Security Council has sought to become more responsive to the wider membership of the United Nations. It has focused attention on conflicts in Africa and is currently fully engaged in peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia and Eritrea. Earlier this year, the Council met with the heads of State and Government of the countries of the Great Lakes region of Africa and with Foreign Ministers of the Committee of Six of the Economic Community of West African States. The Council has also addressed issues such as the prevention of armed conflict, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants, children and armed conflict, and the protection of civilians and humanitarian workers affected by armed conflict. All of these issues pose challenges to international peace and security. The debates on conflict prevention, held in November 1999 and again in July of this year, demonstrated the commitment of the Council to addressing this very important issue, in keeping with the Secretary-General's call for the United Nations in the twenty-first

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century to increasingly focus on preventive action. My delegation therefore looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General on conflict prevention, which is due in May 2001, and we believe that it will provide a basis for future action by the Council.

The consideration of these broad areas is an attempt by the Council to address relevant and cross-cutting issues that are outside the mandates of specific peacekeeping missions. At the same time, the Council's missions to East Timor, Kosovo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as the recently concluded mission to West Africa, have provided opportunities to the international community to gain a better understanding of these complex undertakings and to respond in a timely manner to these situations.

We have seen in recent years an effort by the Security Council to respond to the call of Member States to raise the standard of its reporting to the General Assembly and to be more analytic and informative. In the past year, some progress has been recorded. We have seen some improvement in the transparency of the work of the Security Council. There has been a conscious effort to widen participation by Member States in its discussions. The Council has engaged, in a decidedly more meaningful way, in communication with affected Member States and, during this reporting period, has devised some new and made use of previously underutilized meeting formats to discuss sensitive issues with affected parties to disputes.

Jamaica subscribes to the view that, as much as is possible, the Council's work should be conducted in public. Nevertheless, the utilization of the private meetings format does allow participants to have frank exchanges of views. This format was put to good use, for example, in meetings with the facilitators former President Mandela and Sir Ketumile Masire. Arria-formula meetings have, in our view, also continued to provide an opportunity for members of the Council to interact with representatives of non-governmental organizations and other groups, which are often intimately involved with issues of primary concern to the Council. In addition, the monthly assessments by former Presidents of the work of the Council, taken together, have provided a useful overview of the Council's work. This is not to say that my delegation entertains any misperception of our having arrived at a satisfactory level of reform. There remains much to be done.

Jamaica is currently an elected member of the Security Council and we are honoured to serve the international community in this capacity. Our temporary presence on the Security Council does not, and indeed will not, obscure our vision of the need for profound changes as to how the Council is constituted and how it should operate. Indeed, Prime Minister P. J. Patterson, at the Security Council Summit on 7 September, stated that the Council must have a truly representative membership and that, by failing to take note of changes in the relative standing of States in the past half-century and the expansion of United Nations membership, the Security Council has allowed its representative character to be diminished and its democratic legitimacy to suffer.

One issue of continuing concern to my delegation is the use of sanctions. We are therefore pleased that the Security Council has decided to create a Working Group on Sanctions. We look forward to the provision of practical recommendations for streamlining sanctions regimes and for providing guidelines for the imposition and lifting of sanctions. We wish, in particular, to commend the trailblazing work done by the committees on sanctions relating to the situations in Angola and in Sierra Leone. This work has sharpened the focus on the link between armed conflict and illegal exploitation of natural resources, particularly diamonds.

In recent weeks, Member States have been paying much attention to the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305), chaired by Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi. The Brahimi report has identified significant weaknesses in the way the United Nations carries out its responsibilities in the area of peace operations and has made recommendations for our consideration on conflict prevention, peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peace-building. The Security Council has now established a Working Group tasked with undertaking a full examination of the recommendations relating to the Security Council that are contained in the Brahimi report. Council members have approached this undertaking with an open mind, but most importantly with a clear undertaking to improve the work of the Security Council in carrying out its responsibilities.

The Working Group, among other things, has undertaken to examine its decision-making process, ways in which to establish closer collaboration and meaningful consultations with troop-contributing

countries, ways to ensure consistency of peacekeeping operations with international human rights regimes, how to establish clear and well-defined mandates reflecting the needs and conditions of the situations on the ground and how to involve the Security Council in conflict prevention, including closer cooperation with other United Nations organs and agencies. The Working Group has been placed on a fast track by the Security Council, a clear recognition of the Council's willingness to reform peacekeeping operations.

My delegation wishes to underscore the need for a strengthened Security Council which will effectively ensure the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We will work towards this goal.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to extend our sincere congratulations to the newly elected members: Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore. We look forward to working with them in the Council when they take their seats next year.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): Allow me to express my appreciation to Ambassador Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia and President of the Security Council, for introducing the report of the Council to the General Assembly. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Singapore, Colombia, Ireland, Norway and Mauritius on their election to the Security Council. I trust that the new non-permanent members will help enhance the openness, transparency and representativeness of the Council to the full extent permissible under the current structure of that main body of the United Nations.

Article 24 of the Charter confers on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of the full membership of the United Nations, and at the same time it stipulates that the Council should submit an annual report and, when necessary, a special report to the General Assembly for its consideration. In other words, the General Assembly expects the Council to be accountable for its work to the membership from which it receives its powers, and the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly is the constitutional link which establishes accountability between the two main bodies of the United Nations.

Therefore, we attach great importance to the agenda item under consideration. However, we believe that the report still continues to be mainly a compilation of documents, remembrance of activities and restatement of facts with regard to those activities. Unfortunately, and similar to the previous reports to the General Assembly, the current 552-page report, contained in document A/55/2, covering the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000, describes only what the Security Council has done and remains largely silent about the reasons and circumstances leading to the decisions adopted. While the extensive and frequent consultations of the whole continued to be the main pillar of decision-making in the Council over the reporting period, almost no information is provided in the report on those consultations.

The General Assembly, at its fifty-first session, adopted resolution 51/193 in an effort to reform the reporting procedure of the Security Council. In this resolution, the Council is encouraged to provide a substantive and analytical account of its work and, inter alia, to include information on the consultations of the whole undertaken prior to actions by the Council on the issues within its mandate. Unfortunately, the Council continues to fall short of the wishes of the General Assembly.

As to the working methods of the Council, we welcome and encourage a number of initiatives adopted by the Council over the past few years with a view to making its working methods more transparent and democratic and its report analytical and informative. We believe that the consultations conducted in the course of the last seven years in the Open-ended Working Group on the reform of the Security Council have affected positively some aspects of the working methods of the Council, resulting in some limited progress in this field, in particular regarding transparency and the holding of public meetings.

While we believe that the working methods of the Council should be considered as integral parts of a common package, we are of the view that this should not prevent the Council from implementing the provisional agreements so far recorded in the Working Group, thus improving the Council’s working methods. Therefore, we are of the view that more interaction between the Security Council and the Open-ended Working Group could result in more progress in reforming the work of the Council.

Undoubtedly, the restoration of peace and tranquillity in Tajikistan and the completion of the peace process and the achievement of national reconciliation in that country, which resulted in the successful termination of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) in May 2000, should be inscribed on the list of those issues successfully handled by the Security Council and the United Nations system as a whole. The positive outcome of the peace process in that country is attributable, among other things, to the United Nations involvement from the very beginning of the hostilities in that country. The United Nations was instrumental in assisting the negotiation process, which was conducted under its aegis. The Security Council gave a clear mandate to UNMOT, based on the General Agreement between the parties, and supported the Mission and responded positively to its needs whenever necessary.

The United Nations involvement and the sustained political support of the Security Council proved extremely useful in dealing with the inter-Tajik conflicts. They are exactly what have been lacking with regard to the crisis in the Middle East. It is very unfortunate that, even in the face of the provocations and excessive use of force by the Israeli forces against the defenceless Palestinian civilians, which clearly jeopardized peace and security in the Middle East, a big effort was made to hold the Council back from looking into the issue. Despite the request made by several regional groups, it took a very long time to overcome the opposition to the holding of a public meeting on the Palestinian question.

It was equally unfortunate that the right of non-members to participate in the debate in the public meeting on the issue was questioned and disputed. We regret that some tried hard to prevent the general membership of the United Nations simply expressing their opinions, expectations, frustrations and even anger when the world community is incapable of protecting civilians from the cruelty of a well-armed army of occupation. While there is general agreement that the current working methods of the Council are inappropriate, and some significant provisional agreements have been reached in the Working Group in an effort to make the Council more transparent, democratic and accessible to non-members, it is distressing to witness such attempts to further restrict the holding of public meetings and preclude non-members from speaking in the Council.

More broadly speaking, the way in which the Security Council has dealt with the situation in the Middle East over the past several decades is a manifestation of the inadequacy and inappropriateness of its working methods, especially those allowing the exercise of the veto. Many times in the past the Security Council has been called upon to shoulder its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security by putting an end to the inhuman, aggressive acts of the Israeli regime. But, regrettably, the exercise, or threat of the exercise, of the veto has frequently paralysed the Council and prevented it from discharging its constitutional responsibility on such a crucial issue.

The mere existence of the right of veto prevented the Council from dealing effectively with, among others, the crises in Kosovo and the Palestinian occupied territories last year and this year. The position of my delegation on the issue of the veto has been spelled out in the position of the Non-Aligned Movement, and we hope that the Working Group on Security Council Reform will finally reach agreement on curtailing the right of veto, with a view to its final elimination.

Exacerbation of the situation in Afghanistan, due to a combination of various factors — namely, preparation for war and periodic offensives launched by the Taliban, a severe and fast-spreading drought and harsh restrictions and inhuman treatment in the areas controlled by the Taliban — continues to warrant close attention by the Security Council. Regrettably, the Taliban continues to defy the repeated demands of the international community, reflected in numerous United Nations resolutions, to cease insisting on a military solution of the conflict and to seriously engage in negotiations aimed at settling it peacefully. We believe that the Council should continue to send warning signals to the belligerent party and follow up on the decision it has already made. Sustained political involvement of the Council and determination in implementing its resolutions on Afghanistan is absolutely necessary for inducing the Taliban to accept a negotiated settlement.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to consider the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly covering the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000. We express our appreciation to this month's President of the Security

Council, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia, for his excellent introduction of the report.

The report clearly shows the scope and intensity of the Council's activities in the maintenance of international peace and security. Norway welcomes the fact that the world community increasingly turns to the United Nations for solutions to conflicts, whether in South-East Europe, Western Africa or East Timor. Collective international security rests on the Member States' commitment to multilateral cooperation.

The Norwegian delegation is grateful for the confidence shown by the United Nations membership in electing Norway as a non-permanent Council member for the next two years. We look forward to working with other members of the Council and the General Assembly to further strengthen the primary role of the Council in matters of world peace.

The General Assembly has a legitimate interest in being fully informed of the activities of the Council. Norway will therefore work to make the report even more informative and useful to the membership at large.

While nothing must be done that might reduce the Council's ability to efficiently carry out its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, it is clear that questions of peace and security are closely interconnected with issues that are the responsibility of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other development bodies. Norway will work to strengthen the interlinkages between the United Nations peace and development efforts. Cooperation between the Security Council and the various United Nations bodies responsible for vital areas such as poverty reduction, development assistance, human rights and the environment is crucial in order to tackle the root causes of conflict.

Norway therefore stresses the need for a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and peace-building. This entails close cooperation between the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other relevant United Nations bodies. It also entails improved coordination within the Secretariat. We fully support the analysis and recommendations made in the Brahimi report (A/55/305) in this regard.

The Norwegian delegation has consistently underlined the importance of improving transparency and openness in the work of the Security Council. We will continue to work towards this end also from within the Council. Progress has indeed been achieved over the past few years. We welcome the fact that both regular and informal practices for sharing information with non-members have been established and further improved.

We appreciate the practice of holding open meetings on important security issues on the Council's agenda. Such meetings should ensure that the views of the United Nations membership at large are taken into account in the Council's own deliberations.

At the same time, open meetings should be clearly focused on the relevant issues and conflicts concerned, in order to ensure the highest possible efficiency in the conflict resolution activities of the Security Council.

We welcome the fact that Council meetings such as briefings by the Secretariat or Special Representatives are increasingly held in an open format rather than in consultations of the whole.

Norway would like to stress the importance of making full use of the mechanisms that have been established to facilitate consultations between Council members and troop-contributors to peacekeeping operations. All troop-contributing nations, including those participating with civilian personnel in multifunctional operations, have a legitimate interest and need to be consulted when such operations are discussed, in a way that makes their contribution to the Council's decision-making process a reality, not a formality.

Regional and subregional organizations have in recent years become ever more important instruments in the United Nations efforts to promote international peace and security. This is not least the case in Africa. Norway is proud to be working closely with such organizations, as well as with national Governments in Africa, in order to promote conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. It is crucial that the Council remain fully focused on the complex challenges facing Africa.

The Security Council remains at the centre of the international community's search for lasting peace and security for the world community. This is how it should be. It is of vital importance to all Members of the United Nations that the authority of the Council remain

strong and undiminished in the twenty-first century. The United Nations membership can, of course, rely on Norway's full commitment and support.

Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to express my appreciation to Ambassador Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia, for his presentation to the Assembly of the report of the Security Council (A/55/2). The submission of this report is pursuant to Article 15 and Article 24 of the Charter and is an affirmation of the principle that we all uphold concerning the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, permitting the latter to exercise its inherent responsibility, in accordance with the Charter, to maintain international peace and security. This enables the Assembly to pursue appropriately its work relating to the follow-up of the work of the Council, discussion of its actions and adoption of the appropriate recommendations on them.

I join many previous speakers in referring in particular to the persistence of a number of shortcomings and pitfalls in the work and current working methods of the Council. First, the Council, while having increased the number of public and open meetings this year, continues, in performing its tasks, to insist on diversifying the format of its meetings and establishing artificial criteria on attendance or participation in such sessions. This makes the Security Council a selective organ whose leadership has a limited number of voices that seek to impose themselves and their will on others, including the general membership of the Organization, which we believe has the right, in accordance with the Charter, to be fully informed of the proceedings of that important body.

Secondly, the Council continues to follow a closed and non-transparent approach that cannot be redressed through the efforts of any single party to consider situations affecting international peace and security. Yet we find it engaged for days considering requests submitted by a number of States — not just one State — to convene a formal meeting intended to address an issue that the entire world — but perhaps not the Security Council — recognizes as having a direct impact on international security. I am referring to the situation in the Palestinian territories. The Council met for hours in many meetings trying to agree on a question involving a guaranteed right of all Member States under the Charter. It finally emerged with a formula that allows some of its members to control the final format of its meeting in a very politicized manner, for which we see no place under the rules and rights enshrined in the Constitution of all Member States: the Charter.

Thirdly, regarding a related matter, we find that the Council continues its isolationist trend when it insists on exclusively designing a specific mandate for a peacekeeping operation based either on scant or incomplete information or partial or perhaps inaccurate recommendations or discussions among its members, from which those who have the practical, technical and military expertise are absent.

Therefore, we find at the end of this endeavour a set of tasks and operations that the Security Council assumes and believes that troops from a number of States, the majority of which are from developing countries, will hasten to implement and undertake. A clear example of this was manifest in the peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in which Egypt decided not to participate after thorough consideration of the issue, despite many Egyptian commitments to bring about peace in Africa.

If we are to reaffirm two positive and encouraging points of Security Council resolutions of the past year, they would be the time frame for the sanctions imposed on Ethiopia and Eritrea and the embargo on illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone. These are certainly encouraging examples and fully confirm what the Egyptian delegation and many other delegations had previously called for regarding the need for the Council to cease imposing open-ended and far-reaching sanctions, which it has resorted to increasingly since the early 1990s.

In this context, I wish to refer to Egypt's consistent position on this issue: that sanctions imposed by the Council should in no way have a negative impact on people and that the humanitarian aspect should be taken into account before considering their implementation, given their adverse and sometimes devastating repercussions on the infrastructure of societies, particularly since most sanctions have been imposed on developing countries.

I also wish to reaffirm the need not to allow narrow political or internal considerations of the members of the Council, in particular the permanent members, to prevail over the collective considerations of the Council or the general United Nations

membership, since any practice of this kind would make the Security Council a tool for implementing the foreign policy objectives of its members, which is unacceptable by all standards.

The issue of reforming the working methods of the Council and of increasing transparency in its work is only one of the important aspects in bringing about a comprehensive reform of the work and composition of the Security Council. The Egyptian delegation is actively participating in discussions on this issue through the Open-ended Working Group on the reform and expansion of the Security Council. We look forward to its resumption of work as soon as possible.

There is one final point we must address. It concerns situations in which the Security Council faces a problem that threatens peace and security internationally or domestically. Despite that threat, the Council fails to address the situation by failing to express its opinion or taking measures or actions due to the threat by some of its permanent members to preclude or prevent the expected action or measure or the expression of opinion.

In such a case the issue should not be left up to political or military Powers or alliances to decide or act upon without a legitimate or legal United Nations framework. On the other hand, we should all be aware of the fact that in cases of such failures by the Council, the General Assembly remains the principal legislative body of the Organization that brings together all Member States and that can always express its opinion.

The General Assembly represents the international community. The resolution known as "Uniting for peace", which has been invoked on more than one occasion in the past, can be applied any time the Council fails to assume its responsibilities. Doing so precludes the possibility of leaving the door open to acts of intervention and actions and measures that do not always enjoy full international legitimacy.

Ms. Abbas (Indonesia): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia and President of the Security Council for the month of October, for his cogent introduction of the Council's annual report covering the period from 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000.

We are gratified to note that the consideration of the report by the General Assembly this year once again provides an opportunity to engage in the necessary interaction and substantive dialogue between these two principal organs of the United Nations, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The fulfilment of such a fundamental requirement has become even more important, given the Declaration by the Millennium Summit, in our efforts to strengthen the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security in the twenty-first century.

Needless to say, such processes are bound to support and strengthen the roles of both the General Assembly and the Security Council in discharging their respective mandates. More importantly, in my delegation's considered view, the holding of this annual exercise highlights the accountability of the Council to the Assembly and also serves to achieve a better balance between the role of the Council and those of the other principal organs of the United Nations.

It is in that context that my delegation considers this year's report, which is now before us. We readily acknowledge that some of the legitimate demands made on the Council have been responded to by its members and have been reflected in its present report. Most notably, that includes increased recourse to open meetings, thereby allowing for wider participation by non-members to provide their invaluable insights into the issues under consideration. In our opinion, this is a step in the right direction that provides for more balanced and impartial decisions, particularly when those decisions have a direct bearing on the parties concerned and with regard to the effective implementation of those decisions.

Notwithstanding these steady and positive improvements, it cannot be denied that the report, regrettably, remains basically a compilation of the numerous communications addressed to the Security Council and of the decisions adopted by it. Hence, my delegation would like to reiterate its call that the annual reports of the Council should no longer be a mere description of activities and a reproduction of resolutions already known. Rather, it should contain assessments of the decisions taken on the various issues, in order to meet the need for greater clarity and understanding of the Council's reasoning and motives in adopting them.

We have also seen the procedures of the sanctions committees become more transparent and a greater flow of information become available to non-members, particularly through the briefings offered by the presidencies. Some of those were substantive and detailed.

On the other hand, while we recognize the legitimacy of sanctions as an instrument for enforcement provided for in the Charter, sanctions should have clear and specific time-frames and appropriate review mechanisms. Most importantly, they should be lifted when their objectives have been achieved. Otherwise, as we have seen, sanctions cause enormous sufferings not only for the targeted country, but also to neighbouring States and beyond.

Indonesia shares the growing distrust and scepticism about the rationale and usefulness of sanctions. We are also aware of the fact that the Security Council has imposed sanctions 12 times during the past decade and only twice prior to that period. That increase alone and its attendant humanitarian consequences call for an agonizing reappraisal of sanctions, which we believe is currently underway in the Council.

United Nations peacekeeping activities also warrant a major review to determine the causes of failures and to prevent such setbacks in the future. Past experiences have all yielded new insights that can be most useful, as the Organization will be called upon to deal with similar situations in the future. Confronted by extraordinarily rapid developments in the field, peacekeeping operations have become immensely complex, with new types of tasks being entrusted to them. Those tasks have, in turn, drawn our attention in particular to the maintenance of law and order, the recruitment of professionals, the improvement of logistics, the need for better trained and equipped troops from developing countries and for appropriate Security Council mandates, and the availability of adequate resources.

With regard to transparency in peacekeeping operations, the holding of direct consultations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries has now become an established practice, particularly when significant extensions are due. All of these are clear manifestations of the positive trends towards greater transparency in the work of the Council, which my delegation fully supports and which must be encouraged.

These issues are of immense interest and concern to Indonesia as a troop-contributing country, especially at this juncture when peacekeeping operations face new challenges and complexities and when the nature and conditions of international security are undergoing fundamental changes. The credibility of the United Nations in the new millennium may depend upon the effective implementation of its peacekeeping responsibilities, among other things. For these reasons, and to make its modest contribution in the future, my Government has recently decided to establish a national training centre for peacekeeping, in order to facilitate its continued and active participation in these operations.

The accountability of the Council will ultimately have to be judged on its record of objectivity and impartiality, fairness and just decisions. Recent events, however, tend to demonstrate selectivity and the use of different yardsticks and criteria in dealing with similar situations, which in turn could affect the credibility of the Security Council.

The Council remains our only hope for peace in a world fraught with tension and conflicts. This is reflected in its report, which describes how it continually endeavours to take appropriate action in response to threats to peace and security, to adopt various measures aimed at controlling and resolving conflicts and to muster regional and international support for those measures.

We hope that the Council will take into account the views of the general membership in its decision-making, so that its moral authority can be sustained. In that context, it is also the opinion of my delegation that the views expressed during the present debate would be of more benefit to the general membership if the Council were to give them a more in-depth assessment with a view to adopting implementable follow-up measures.

Let me conclude by expressing our congratulations to the delegations of Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore upon their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council. We wish them success in the discharge of their responsibilities. I would like also to pay tribute to the outgoing members of the Council for their

important contribution to the promotion of international peace and security.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I begin with warm congratulations to the President of the Security Council for the month of October, His Excellency Ambassador Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia. We thank him for the very informative statement he made yesterday in introducing the report of the Security Council for the period 16 June 1999 to 15 June 2000 (A/55/2). His statement provided a full picture of the Council's work. The statistics speak for themselves: as the President of the Council recalled, and as the report indicates, the Council held 144 formal meetings and 194 consultations of the whole, and considered more than 85 reports of the Secretary-General and received 1,165 other documents and communications from States and regional and other intergovernmental organizations. The Council adopted 57 resolutions and issued 38 statements by its Presidents. Through the dispatch of Security Council missions, the Council established a presence in a number of conflict areas. As its President informed us, the Council's work is taking place in an atmosphere of increasing transparency. We welcome that trend, and we encourage the Council to continue it.

Our appreciation goes also to those members of the Council whose statements in the present debate fleshed out what might seem to some a rather dry or merely factual report, thereby enriching our understanding of the functioning of the Council and of how it shoulders its responsibilities with respect to the maintenance of peace. I am thinking in particular of the statement by the Permanent Representative of France, Ambassador Jean-David Levitte.

My warmest congratulations go also to the Permanent Representatives of Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore, whose countries, our friends, have just been elected to non-permanent membership of the Security Council.

The subject of my statement today will be Africa and the Security Council. But I wish first to make a few general comments and to pose a few questions arising out of our current consideration of the report of the Security Council. Let us recall that the report was submitted to the General Assembly under paragraph 3 of Article 24 and paragraph 1 of Article 15 of the Charter. The latter reads as follows:

> "The General Assembly shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council; these reports shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security."

Thus, the Assembly considers the Council's activities after the fact. What is the true purpose of this after-the-fact consideration? Does the Assembly have the right to guide the Council's proceedings, or does it merely have the right to receive information? Those are the kinds of issues we ought at some point to debate.

Paragraph 3 of Article 24 states that

> "The Security Council shall submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration."

Does the explicit provision that the Council should submit reports to the General Assembly "for its consideration" exclude the right of the Assembly to approve or reject such reports? That is another question worth asking.

Turning to the actual substance of the report, should the Council be required to justify the content of the reports it submits? If we merge the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 15 and its logical extension, paragraph 3 of Article 24, we find ourselves facing the very core of the problem of overlapping jurisdictions of the General Assembly and the Security Council with respect to the maintenance of peace.

At some stage, we should debate these issues with a view at least to beginning to respond to some of the questions I have raised, and to add focus to our consideration and debate on the reports of the Security Council. But in the meantime, the interest in the activities of the Security Council makes me wonder whether future discussion of the reports of the Council could give rise to an interactive dialogue. Until such an interactive dialogue comes about, would it not be possible for the Council to devote a meeting to analysing comments, criticisms and proposals relating to the report? In that respect, we welcome the Council President's invitation to the General Assembly to engage in in-depth analysis of the report and his assurance that members of the Council would take our comments and observations into consideration. His invitation and his assurances would in that way be meaningful.

These few remarks and preliminary comments lead me to the substance of my statement, which concerns Africa in the Security Council.

During the period under review, Africa has continued to occupy a prominent place on the Council's agenda. Africa's problems have continued to be discussed in the Council, sometimes at the very highest level. The results, it has to be said, have not always been commensurate with the great hopes engendered in our peoples by the news that these discussions and meetings would take place.

Africa has also given the Council the opportunity to deepen its holistic view of peace. For instance, the Council held a meeting on AIDS and its impact on peace and security.

But most importantly, over the course of this year, the Council has developed a new vision of its relationship with Africa. For instance, on 15 December 1999, it convened a public meeting devoted to the partnership between the United Nations and Africa. Reading with African eyes the report of the Security Council we have before us brings me back to this essential partnership.

Although Africa is the region of our planet that is most ravaged by armed conflict, it can and must have a better future — a future of peace and prosperity. Its partnership with the United Nations and therefore with the Security Council is therefore not only a possibility but a vital necessity.

African problems have always had an impact on international peace and security. The enormous resources of our continent have tempted many. Africa is indeed a heavyweight in every sense. Thus the partnership I am talking about should have as its first priority the field of peacekeeping and security. Peacekeeping involves conflict prevention and conflict settlement through, among other things, the deployment of peacekeeping and peace-building operations. Action in this area — that is to say, peacekeeping — is the responsibility, according to the Charter, of the Security Council. But to be effective, such action must involve Africa, be carried out with its consent and be undertaken with its full cooperation.

I said earlier that Africa rejected the idea of fate and of resignation. In fact, each of the major subregions of our continent has developed a specific structure for conflict prevention, settlement and management. In Central Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States set up the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, assisted by a Central African multinational force responsible for peacekeeping operations.

In West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has set up a Mediation and Security Council and a Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). In southern Africa, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has an ad hoc arrangement responsible for peace and security which, on a case-by-case basis, decides on the deployment of subregional forces. In East Africa, we have the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD).

Along with these subregional agencies, we have a specific Organization of African Unity (OAU) body responsible for conflict prevention and settlement.

All of this demonstrates that Africa possesses structures whose capabilities must be strengthened by the Security Council if the latter truly wishes to maintain international peace and security in Africa.

Our continent is a partner that is capable, institutionally speaking, of meeting the requirements of Articles 52 and 53 of Chapter VIII of the Charter. What is required is to improve and consolidate regional measures in the areas of conflict prevention, early warning and peacekeeping. Such a strengthening of Africa's capacities should also involve financial support for peace agreements. This is self-evident.

Let us recall that in other regions of the world the signing of such agreements always goes hand in hand with a financial arrangement to address in particular the social problems that may arise. Any peace agreement that does not provide for such a financial arrangement has the seeds of insecurity embedded in it. What future could there be for a peace agreement if, for example, no provision were made for the reintegration of ex-combatants? What future would a peace agreement have with no provision made for child soldiers?

I wish to conclude by inviting the Security Council to reflect upon the idea of appointing someone whom we might describe as an Africa coordinator to work with the Secretary-General. That person's task would be to secure full implementation of the requirements of Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, for that Article requires that the Security

Council shall at all times be kept fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security. Such a coordinator's job would also be to act as an interface between the Secretary-General and African leaders. Lastly, the Africa coordinator would be responsible for assisting the Security Council and the General Assembly in implementing the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in his report on the conditions for lasting peace and sustainable development in Africa.

Today we have before us the report of the Security Council, the organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Africa is the region of the world that is hardest hit by these conflicts. That situation, as I said earlier, is not determined by fate. Africa rejects the idea of fate.

Allow me to recall the Secretary-General's statement to the Security Council of 29 September 1999:

> "However imperfectly, Africans have provided many important signs of their own yearning for peace, stability and development and their willingness to work for it. The right kind of support now, carefully directed to those best able to use it, could help Africans turn a corner and set the stage for a brighter future. Let us seize this moment." *(S/PV.4049, p. 5)*

At a time when the Assembly is about to take action on the report of the Security Council, let us act in such a way as to ensure that the Security Council helps Africa to be its partner for and in the maintenance of peace and security.

Mr. Lacanilao (Philippines): First of all, the Philippine delegation would like to thank Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia for his lucid presentation of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly at this session. The Philippine delegation also extends its congratulations to the delegations of Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore for their recent election to the five non-permanent Council seats that will be vacated at the end of this year. The Philippine delegation is convinced that these incoming members will make a positive contribution to the future work of the Council.

The General Assembly considers the annual report of the Security Council every year during its regular session, when Member States engage in their annual ritual of delivering statements, making observations and more or less providing sophisticated analyses of the manner in which the Council conducted its business in the previous year.

This yearly exercise has its function and purpose, which is to allow States not members of the Security Council to air their views on the work done by the Council over the past year. But it also typifies the growing chasm between the Security Council and the General Assembly. There has been palpable discontent in what has been said from this podium on how the Council seems to conduct its business on a daily basis, almost oblivious to the general sentiments of other Member States.

While this proposition could be a topic for intense debate, it is a fact that the only chance for States not members of the Council to express their views on the Council's work amounts to a grand total of one or two meeting days in the Assembly's regular session. It is therefore not difficult to imagine that the two bodies — the General Assembly and the Security Council — would seem out of step with each other on important issues. If the United Nations wants to face the challenges of the future more effectively, the divide that grows ever wider between the Security Council and the general membership of this Organization must be bridged. This could be achieved in various ways.

Regular consultations must be conducted between the General Assembly and the Security Council, particularly on the exercise of the Council's extraordinary enforcement powers under Chapter VII of the Charter. The imposition of sanctions and the finalization of peacekeeping mandates are important issues on which consultations would be both beneficial and necessary. Experience has shown that sanctions have had some harmful effects on the civilian population and third States. Some sanctions regimes have been on the books for several years but have little to show in terms of achieving the political objective for which they were intended — to change the conduct of erring Governments and regimes. In the meantime, sanctions have imposed a heavy toll on civilian populations and third States.

To be effective and just, the imposition of sanctions must have the broad support of the Member

States of the United Nations. While unanimity of view would not be a realistic goal, the Security Council must obtain the support of a critical mass of the United Nations Members if any sanctions regime is to be established. This is a practical consideration if the integrity and the fairness of the sanctions regime are to be upheld.

The maintenance of international peace and security is a core function of the United Nations. Peacekeeping is an integral cog in the mechanism. It is in peacekeeping where the partnership of countries for the cause of peace finds tangible expression. Where personnel resources for peacekeeping become critically short, as has tended to happen in recent years, the contribution of even small countries becomes indispensable. In the last few years, we have seen peacekeeping, from Dili town to Freetown, become transformed permanently. Peacekeeping has evolved in such a way that it cannot be sustained unless it receives a fair amount of support from the broad membership of the United Nations. Not one country, no matter how powerful, could be the world's policeman. Alas and alack, global peace and stability can be realized only through the sincere partnership of all.

It is in this context that consultations between the General Assembly and the Security Council find political significance. More transparency on the part of the Council would enhance the trust and confidence of Member States with regard to it and its work on matters of importance to the international community. Such openness would provide more political support to the Council, which would augur well for the achievement of global peace.

The Philippine delegation commends the Security Council on its initiative during the past year to become more transparent and open in its work. Many of us have had the chance to participate in a number of open Council meetings and briefings on various issues of significance to the United Nations. Regular briefings have also been given by the President of the Council on the results of the Council's informal consultations. The Council has also conducted dialogue with troop-contributing countries on many occasions, which has helped a great deal in communicating needs and resolving difficulties in specific mission areas. This practice is a step in the right direction towards making the process of deploying United Nations peace missions fully participatory and consultative.

While this trend is heartening, the path to full partnership between the Security Council and the General Assembly remains steep and arduous. Much would need to be done to overcome the general feeling of resentment that the Security Council has become a private club that conducts private meetings to the exclusion of the general membership of the United Nations. A genuine mechanism of interaction and consultation between the Security Council and the General Assembly must be established. The work for peace is not a zero-sum game, where one body must work to the exclusion of all others. There must be room for everyone's contribution if the United Nations is to attain its cherished goal of peace and progress for all.

Although the General Assembly will debate this issue about a month from now, the question of Security Council reform inevitably comes to the fore when its work is under consideration by the General Assembly. At this stage, when the United Nations has 189 sovereign States in its roster of Members, it would appear pertinent to question whether the present number and structure of Security Council membership still fully and fairly represent the interests of the general membership of the United Nations. With only five of its members having a permanent tenure in the Council, while the other 184 Members have to wait their turn to fill up the 10 non-permanent seats for a two-year term, the United Nations has continued to be a crudely lopsided Organization. One wonders how this internal balance could be sustained for long without permanently damaging the ability of the United Nations to fulfil its mandate.

The present arrangement and set-up of the Security Council were concocted 55 years ago, when many who are present in this Hall today were not yet born. More significantly, it was a time when the world and the United Nations were confronted with different challenges and realities from what they face today. It is time to seriously review and then change the present paradigm.

The reform of the Security Council has been on the table of the Open-ended Working Group for the last seven long years. We need to rekindle the fire, to move the Working Group along at a quicker pace. We cannot wait another 55 years for the Working Group to provide answers to the question of Security Council reform. World events will not have the patience to tolerate our hesitation and endless posturing on this issue.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): Allow me first to express my delegation's sincere thanks to Ambassador Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia, for his lucid introduction of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. The long report reflects both the range and the complexity of work the Security Council had to undertake during the period under review. The Security Council deserves our appreciation for painstakingly compiling the report and presenting it to the general membership, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

The fact that two of the four missions launched during this period — in Kosovo and East Timor — were in the realm of nation-building confirms the multiplicity of challenges the United Nations faces in keeping the peace. Over the years, there has been a consistent demand by the general membership to make the Security Council more transparent and democratic in its functions and more representative in its structure. Judging from the present state of affairs, we have barely scratched the surface, and much remains to be done to achieve those fundamental goals.

Nepal duly appreciates that some progress has been made in the procedural reform of the Security Council. Under the Charter, Member States have conferred on the Council the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, the responsibility the Council undertakes on behalf of the general membership. It is therefore the obligation of the Council to take the non-Council members into confidence by consulting them and keeping them informed every step of the way. Our powerful friends who are represented on the Security Council without facing elections have, in fact, a moral obligation to pay particular attention to making the process more democratic.

In this context, the open briefings for non-Council members and private meetings with the troop-contributing countries, though certainly welcome developments, are far from sufficient, for they do not provide an opportunity for non-Council members to contribute their views and perspectives in order to make peacekeeping and peacemaking more effective.

The open debates, on the other hand, seldom have much bearing on real decisions of the Council in real situations. Undoubtedly, they make abundant sense as an academic exercise with lofty philosophical flourishes. What non-Council members are asking for is not theoretical discourses, but rather the opportunity to share their perspectives, contribute their input and offer their advice in a process in which they have a great stake. It might not be possible to hold prior consultation with non-Council members in emergency situations, but it would only be just and fair for Member States to be consulted before they are asked to put the lives of their personnel on the line and to commit their resources. After all, the democratic principle, which we all tout, warrants that Member States are given voice and information before they are asked to make their commitments to take risks. The formal meetings, used only to formalize the decisions arrived at in informal meetings held behind closed doors, have remained mere formalities of no substantive significance.

It is imperative that the Council apply objective criteria when deciding to mount an operation. It is worrying, however, that there are ample examples where the Security Council has not been even-handed in addressing peace and security issues. Often, the national interests of certain Members have outweighed the larger interests of regional and global peace. This is especially agonizing for small States, whose security depends for the most part on the Security Council. The Rwanda report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities indicates that clearly.

One major issue that greatly concerns us is that of sanctions. While they are a useful Charter-mandated tool, wide-ranging impacts require that they be applied carefully and sparingly. Frequently sanctions cripple innocent people in countries on which they are imposed, and not those whom they are meant to affect. At the same time, sanctions frequently hurt third countries and make them innocent victims as well. If they are to be imposed at all, sanctions should be tailor-made to hit the target, not the surroundings. Furthermore, if sanctions hurt innocent third countries, there must be a provision to compensate them for any undue suffering and loss that they incur.

We commend the courage of the Brahimi Panel, which has boldly pointed out where the blame lies. It also points to the ambiguous and unrealistic mandates that were responsible for the failure of a number of missions. In addition, the Panel's report (A/55/305) offers a number of useful recommendations to revamp the management of peace and to minimize failures in the future.

Our leaders reaffirmed at the recent historic Millennium Summit the need to maintain peace and security more effectively. They resolved to strengthen respect for the rule of law in international affairs and to make the United Nations more effective by giving it the resources and tools it needs to do its tasks.

If we are to realize the vision of the Millennium Declaration, we need comprehensive reform of the Security Council. Nepal is open to an expansion of the Security Council based on a ratifiable consensus. We believe, though, that there is a crying need for the general membership to feel confident that the reformed Council will be more democratic, more transparent, more representative and more accountable. Member States must be able to see these qualities in the approach and deeds of the Security Council while the reform proposals are under consideration.

Humanitarian intervention has been one of the contentious subjects. We have spoken at length on this issue before, and we remain firm in our position.

It is time to ask ourselves: how long can we afford to go without effectively addressing the root causes of conflicts? Most conflicts, as we know, have their genesis in poverty and social exclusion.

Investment in education, health and poverty reduction can produce dramatic results in promoting a durable peace. The Security Council should work in partnership with the Economic and Social Council, as well as with other relevant organs and agencies, to help address these issues. It must exercise restraint, resisting the temptation to go beyond the scope of its mandate, which stretches it thinly, vitiates its effectiveness and undermines the other competent bodies.

The obligation arising from the trust that the general membership places in the Security Council has to be fulfilled with the utmost care, so that the General Assembly is not neglected or sidelined.

Before I conclude, I heartily congratulate Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore on their well-deserved recent election to the Security Council. I am confident that the new members will work to make the Council more responsive to the expectations of the membership, whose trust they embody as its elected representatives.

Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda): I am grateful for this opportunity to participate in the debate on the work of the Security Council.

I start by warmly congratulating the newly elected members of the Security Council: Columbia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore. My delegation looks forward to collaborating with them and lending them our full support during their term of office. We encourage them to work with those they represent on the Council, rather than seeking to defend their national interests as many members have done in the past — whether wrongly or rightly is debatable, and I do not wish to engage in such a debate. “Transparency” and “objectivity” are the words that should guide them all, and, based on what we know about their distinguished work at the United Nations, we trust them to do even better than those who preceded them.

I take this opportunity to also congratulate the Council members on their visits on the ground to various conflict zones. We believe that in this way they can learn more and make their decisions wisely.

My delegation has read with care the report on the work of the Security Council, and we congratulate the Council’s Presidents on representing that body and on the work well done. However, much more remains to be done, and to be corrected, in the Council’s efforts to keep improving on its output. On the basis of the bad experiences of Rwanda, my delegation suggests that reports on the work of the Security Council include six important things: first, the duties assigned to the Council in the field of ensuring international peace and security; secondly, the means available for fulfilling the Council’s duties; thirdly, periodic assessments of the work done and difficulties encountered in the accomplishment of its tasks; fourthly, decisions and action taken, where, how and why; fifthly, lessons learned from given missions; and, sixthly, a plan of action for the future.

That would give a skeleton for the objective and realistic report that members of the Assembly would like to read, as opposed to the routine format, which does not reflect the realities, neither in the fields of operation nor at Secretariat Headquarters itself.

It is time for the Security Council to reform and reflect the membership of the General Assembly on behalf of which it is supposed to be taking on work and reporting back to. It is time for the Council’s members to do some introspection, put their hands on their hearts and ask themselves “Have we done what we

ought to do, and have we done it in the best, objective way?" and many more questions.

This set of questions is important to all when we remember that, in the case of Rwanda, the representative of the genocidal Government was busy misinforming the members about the situation on the ground and that he was listened to all along. In the future, the Council should candidly come out as one to suspend the attendance of a member of the Council when deliberating on issues in which that Council member is directly involved. On another level, it should be remembered that a flip of the pen from the Security Council could have saved lives in Rwanda simply by changing the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Rwanda and/or by reinforcing the troops and arming them through the same heavy carriers that landed in Kigali to evacuate those who were supposed to save lives.

The Carlsson report and the report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities issued by the Organization of African Unity have described in detail what went wrong and made recommendations that ought to be implemented.

The time has come for the Security Council to bypass the individual interests of some members that still have the ear of others which may fear breaking old alliances and the gentlemen's agreements that send some to one place or another and allow others to operate elsewhere. The victims of such sordid arrangements and transactions dictated by personal gain or so-called national interests have a lot to tell. However, not having to tell or to hear such tragic and otherwise avoidable stories would be a success for the Council and it can correct the trend now that the Brahimi report has touched the right chord.

My delegation has never believed that a soft landing is impossible for the military or for the Security Council in establishing peacekeeping operations wherever they are needed. The time has come for the Council to report on choices made in different cases — especially, in the case of Rwanda, in the area of sanctions and arms embargoes such as those imposed on the *génocidaires*, the Interahamwe and the members of the former Forces Armées Rwandaises, who nevertheless still enjoy support across borders — and to ensure objectivity and transparency throughout its work and decisions. This will bring us together as trusting members of the same family.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council, contained in document A/55/2?

It was so decided.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 11.

Agenda item 8 *(continued)*

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: letter from the Netherlands on agenda item 181 (A/55/495)

The President: Document A/55/495 contains a letter dated 18 October 2000 addressed to the President of the General Assembly from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands regarding agenda item 181, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons".

Members will recall that the General Assembly, at its 35th plenary meeting on 17 October 2000, decided to include this item on its agenda and to consider the item directly in plenary meeting. In this connection, the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands in his letter requests that the item be considered on Friday, 20 October 2000. He further states that, as was pointed out in his earlier letter and explanatory memorandum on the subject, contained in document A/55/234, this agenda item is of an urgent character, as the Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons was signed on 17 October 2000. It would be befitting for the General Assembly to react as soon as possible to the important event of the signing of that Agreement. He therefore requests a waiver of the seven-day period that must elapse after the additional item is placed on the agenda, as required by rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

I should now like to consult delegations with regard to scheduling the consideration of agenda item 181 for tomorrow, Friday, 20 October 2000.

I should like to draw members' attention to the relevant provision of rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which reads as follows:

> "No additional item may, unless the General Assembly decides otherwise by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, be considered until seven days have elapsed since it was placed on the agenda and until a committee has reported upon the question concerned."

In the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to schedule the consideration of agenda item 181 for tomorrow, Friday, 20 October 2000.

It was so decided.

The President: In his letter, the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands further states that it would be desirable for the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, who signed the Agreement, to participate in the debate. He therefore requests that the Director-General be given the opportunity to address the General Assembly.

In the absence of objection, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees to hear the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons under agenda item 181 on Friday, 20 October 2000?

It was so decided.

The President: Agenda item 181 will be considered in the morning of Friday, 20 October 2000, as the second item. The list of speakers for agenda item 181 is now open.

Agenda item 31

Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion

> **Report of the Secretary-General** (A/55/300 and Add.1 and Add.2)
>
> **Draft resolution** (A/55/L.9)

The President: I should like to inform members that, in a letter dated 21 September 2000 addressed to the President of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States for the month of September, requests that the General Assembly hear in plenary meeting a statement by the observer of the Holy See in the debate on agenda item 31.

Taking into account the importance attached to the issue under discussion, it is proposed that the General Assembly should take a decision on that request.

May I take it that there is no objection to the proposal to hear the observer of the Holy See in the debate on agenda item 31?

It was so decided.

Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): The item before the Assembly, submitted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, does not concern Libya alone, but the whole international community — all the Member States in the United Nations. This item deals essentially with contraventions and radical violations of the norms of international law, the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: one State decides through its legislative authorities to enact a law and proceeds to impose the implementation of that law outside its territorial jurisdiction. It imposes on all States of the world a law that only serves its own private interests. This State has made itself a god instead of God in the heavens.

Instead of Allah, the only God who should be worshipped, it made itself a new god on this planet and wants to enslave everyone as if they were a herd of animals. No people other than this State have any will, rights or interests; everything belongs to this State. This is madness, nothing more.

Libya is not the only State concerned by the activities dealt with in the draft resolution before you. For the past 30 years, Libya has not cooperated with the United States, nor has the United States cooperated with Libya. We have survived nevertheless — independent, free on our land, free to make our decisions and determine our positions. We do not accept directions from that country's leadership, ministers or its ambassadors. Thank God for that.

Libya lost half of its people, 750,000 individuals, as martyrs in order to achieve independence. We are not ready to give up the memory of these martyrs in order to praise America or any other power on earth. They punished us by attacking our airspace, our territorial waters and our cities, yet we were not

subjugated. They have imposed a unilateral embargo against us, yet we have not been subjugated. They have imposed an international embargo on us through the United Nations, in the name of international legitimacy, for an accusation that has still not been proven. Even in the Scottish court, which is being held in the Netherlands, they have not provided one piece of evidence or proof against the two Libyan suspects. They will not be able to do that simply because neither Libya nor the two Libyan suspects had any involvement in that incident.

None of these acts succeeded in subjugating Libya. What did they do? They enacted laws, not to punish Libya only, but also to punish anybody who cooperates with free countries such as Libya, Korea, Iraq and Cuba — those States that have not surrendered. This act is not in fact directed against Libya or the countries that I have mentioned or those that I have not mentioned; it is directed against any corporation or country that cooperates with these countries.

A week ago I was in Cuba. I visited a tourist city considered one of the four most important tourist places in the world. It was financed by a Spanish investor. This Spanish investor, who established the tourist city, was threatened and asked not to implement this important project. Of course, he did not give up. They told him then that his investments in Florida would be halted. He said that he would give up his investments in Florida. They sanctioned a businessman, an investor from Europe, because he tried to invest in Cuba.

The United States is against Cuba, but Spain is not against Cuba. This investor is not an adversary of Cuba. Cuba is still there after 40 years of American embargo. This neighbouring country is still there. It survives as a free State and will continue as such forever.

This is unjust. This is an aggression against all international norms and agreements. Because Libya is a free State, it stands before you and sponsors such a draft resolution. Libya is not subject to anybody but God. Whatever will be will be, we will not be subjugated.

We are not against them, they are against us. We have not hurt their interests, they are hurting ours. We have not aggressed against them, they have aggressed against us. We have not severed diplomatic relations, they have severed diplomatic relations. We have not issued a single resolution imposing economic sanctions against them, they have done that. We are still living, free masters on our own land.

These unilateral legal acts, which are meant to be implemented extraterritorially against the country in question, are directed against developed countries, against industrialized countries, essentially against the countries of the European Union and Japan, countries that have made great advances in development and technology and that have great corporations in all areas of economic activity.

Mr. Pradhan (Bhutan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Libya is sponsoring this draft resolution on behalf of the General Assembly, and calls upon the General Assembly to vote for it, even if its format does not please everyone. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is very practical, realistic and flexible. We are open to any amendments that may be suggested and are ready to accept any ideas or viewpoints as long as they do not nullify the purpose of the draft resolution. If it is thought that we are referring to a specific measure, we reply that we are referring only to the unilateral decisions that target extra-territorial jurisdiction over any State, a matter that could be reflected in the title of the draft resolution or in its substance. We are prepared to discuss that, because we want the draft resolution to be adopted unanimously, since it deals with, and touches, all of us. What I said about the Spanish investor emphatically concerns all investors, corporations and countries. Furthermore, we should not allow a precedent whereby one single State directs the entire Assembly and we all become subjugated to it.

As I stated last year, some simple-minded and good-hearted people believed when the international balance of power shifted — and I do not mean the end of the cold war — that the world would witness a phase of peace, stability, reconstruction and so on, but the last decade, even if it did not witness a cold war, witnessed many hot wars, disputes and conflicts, in which missiles were used because of an internal problem. Battleships, aircraft and many other weapons were used in some of those conflicts and new weapons were tried out. This is not new for Libya. In our case, the new weapon was an economic embargo that has resulted in millions of victims, more than the victims of previous wars.

If the Assembly agrees, I propose that we delay the vote until the beginning of next week. As I have said, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is quite ready to accept any amendments presented by any delegation as long as such amendments do not change the essence or purpose of the draft resolution.

We should agree, because this matter does not relate exclusively to Libya. Libya has survived a unilateral economic embargo, and continues to do so. All our assets in the United States, whether liquid or mobile, have been frozen. They include the headquarters of our mission on 48th Street, the Ambassador's house in New Jersey and even our liquid cash. The account of the Libyan Mission to the United Nations has not been opened as of now, yet we survive. We are not wrong. This embargo and the legislation and laws actually affect the Assembly, not Libya.

Libya has no ambition to find reconciliation with the United States and will not ask or beg for it. The Americans, both verbally and in written documents, asked us to preserve the United States interests in Libyan oil companies when they discovered that European oil companies were coming to Libya after the suspension of the embargo. That is what the Americans want for their oil companies and those companies that have interests in natural gas. Libya is flexible, realistic and practical, and it is not against or opposed to any State. We have not committed aggression against any State, but we will not beg.

I call upon the States that wish to comment to do so openly, and we will wholeheartedly discuss any amendments after receiving permission from representatives who voted with us in the last two years, namely, members of the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Non-Aligned Movement and many other organizations, as well as countries that do not belong to these groups, including members of the Group of 77. We ask them to agree to our flexible request so that the draft resolution can be adopted unanimously. This draft resolution expresses the views of the international community vis-à-vis a country that wants to impose its internal legislation on the whole world.

Mr. Ling (Belarus) *(spoke in Russian):* The Millennium Summit Declaration, the discussions held by heads of State and Government of Member States as part of the Summit, and the general political debates of this session give eloquent proof of the significance of the problem we are discussing.

As we move from one century and one millennium to the next we are reaching an understanding of how essential it is that we institute radical changes to the way in which we approach the application of coercive measures. The fairness of the wording of the Charter in this respect can, and must, be adapted to the realities of the world today. The past year can be seen as a milestone in the process of establishing the United Nations conceptual approach to the use of sanctions as a means for economic compulsion. We have seen wide-ranging discussion in the Security Council on this issue and the successful study of the "Sanctions Decade" that took place with the active participation of the Government of Canada.

The Government of the Republic of Belarus is pleased to note that the Security Council has been able to adopt for the first time in its history a resolution establishing a specific period for the application of sanctions, whose effects, both political and economic, should be very closely analysed and assessed. Belarus also welcomes the establishment, under the Security Council, of an informal working group on sanctions, and we hope that its work will be closely studied and applied in a mandatory way, not only by the members of the Security Council, but by the Organization as a whole.

It is no accident that the international community is focusing now on the problem of sanctions. After the end of the Second World War sanctions were a very powerful way of applying pressure on States, in order to procure their full compliance with their duties under the United Nations Charter.

However, experience has shown that the wholesale application of a formula established then for those times has not always been crowned with success. A very clear example of this is the lamentable humanitarian situation that has arisen because of harsh coercive measures applied against Iraq. This has been confirmed by research done by respected international organizations like the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Health Organization and others.

One of the priority tasks facing the international community is to stop the suffering of the Iraqi people and the only way to do that is by lifting the sanctions.

One important aspect of this problem is research on the effects of coercive economic measures on third countries. For instance, work by economists of the Republic of Belarus has shown the losses experienced by our economy as a result of the trade relations we have had to forgo because of sanctions. We hope that close study of this problem at the United Nations will lead us to a solution that is acceptable to all Member States. In this respect, the initiative by the Czech Republic to set up a group to study the various aspects of the impact of sanctions could be an effective instrument for further action and proposals. Our experience in establishing a group to analyse United Nations peacekeeping operations suggests that we can hope for positive recommendations in this respect.

In conclusion I wish to note that the delegation of Belarus welcomes active consideration by the Security Council of the factors involved in lifting or interrupting the application of sanctions. We hope what has happened with regard to Libya and Sudan will be the subject of further discussions in the Council. A topic that is becoming increasingly urgent is the practical resolution of the issue of lifting sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. For its part, Belarus is ready for productive work and cooperation on all aspects of this problem as a part of the shared aims and goals of the Members of the United Nations.

Mr. Dáusa Céspedes (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba's position on unilateral coercive measures directed against developing countries has been and is widely known. Consistent with that position, my delegation voted in favour of resolution 53/10, adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, and will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us today.

Also known is the growing rejection of such coercive measures by the majority of the international community, which had been expressed in many General Assembly resolutions. Nevertheless we still see an international order in which the main economic and political Power, exploiting its position of hegemony, continues to apply coercive economic measures against developing countries unilaterally with the plain intention of imposing on them specific foreign policy objectives of its own.

Once again, my Government vigorously condemns the application of coercive measures that also involve outright violation of international law and seriously violate principles of sovereign equality, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

At the same time, the enactment of these measures reveals the genuine nature of the policies of those countries that profess to be the champions of free trade, but at the same time set up huge obstacles to free international trade, using it to try to unilaterally impose their national legislation on other countries, in blatant disrespect of the principles of the Charter and international law.

The application of coercive economic measures as an instrument of political and economic compulsion affects the enjoyment of human rights by the peoples subjected to these unilateral policies. The World Conference on Human Rights and the Commission on Human Rights have repeatedly called on States to refrain from taking unilateral measures contrary to international law and the Charter, measures which create obstacles to trade relations among States and block full enjoyment of the rights articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in international human rights instruments, in particular the right of every individual to a decent standard of living for health and well-being, including nutrition, health care, housing and the necessary social services. The Conference on Human Rights also stated that food should not be used as a means of political pressure.

The international community has consistently rejected the use of this policy and has ruled it to be a flagrant violation of the principles, objectives and norms that govern international trade. Laws and provisions, such as the Torricelli, Helms-Burton and D'Amato-Kennedy Acts, are incompatible with the agreements of the World Trade Organization and undermine efforts to maintain a multilateral trading system that is equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable.

The D'Amato-Kennedy Act, also known as the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, which imposes sanctions on foreign investors in the oil sector of these two countries, regardless of the nationality of those investors or the jurisdictions of the companies under which they operate, is devoid of any moral and legal justification, in terms of its political motives and the means it uses to carry out the capricious will of the United States Congress.

The Government of the Republic of Cuba once again condemns all extraterritorial acts that violate the sovereignty of peoples and is confident in the role that the United Nations can play to ensure fulfilment of the will and the decisions of the international community.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The use or threat of use of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion is a flagrant violation of the principles embodied in the United Nations Charter and international law, particularly in Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Charter stipulating that the Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.

Such measures are likewise an outright violation of the principles established in a large number of relevant United Nations resolutions and international conventions. In particular, I would like to cite as an example the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted in 1974, which states that

> "No State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights." (*resolution 3281 (XXIX), article 32*)

As another example, I also wish to cite General Assembly resolutions 51/22, adopted on 27 November 1996, and 53/10, adopted on 26 October 1998. These two resolutions reaffirm the fact that every State has an inalienable right to economic and social development, as well as to the right to choose the economic, political and social system it deems best. Through these resolutions the Assembly expressed its concern over the grave consequences of coercive economic measures used unilaterally and called on all States to repeal such laws.

The use of coercive measures as a means of political and economic pressure, whether undertaken unilaterally or under the auspices of multilateral organizations, constitutes a genuine threat to international peace and security. It also deprives peoples of their fundamental rights. The hardships suffered by the Palestinian people after the embargo imposed on their towns and villages by the Zionist entity, the suffering of the Cuban people that has now gone on for over 40 years, the hardships suffered by the people of Yugoslavia, the suffering of the people of Libya in the last eight years and the suffering experienced by the Iraqi people for the last 10 years all illustrate clearly that such measures are a flagrant violation of fundamental human rights and the principles of international law and international humanitarian law.

The continuous embargo imposed on the Iraqi people by the United States in the name of the United Nations in order to force our country to change its policies and deprive it of its fundamental sovereign rights is a prime example of the use of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion. These sanctions are responsible for the deaths of 1.5 million Iraqi citizens, including 500,000 children. Every month 7,000 Iraqi children are killed by these sanctions, which also cause tremendous damage to the vital economic infrastructure of Iraq — and that does not even take into account the harm done to third countries.

The embargo imposed on Iraq has all the characteristics of genocide and constitutes a crime against humanity. Its continuation will only bring greater instability to the region and to the world. This embargo brings shame upon the United Nations, whose mechanisms have been used to serve the hostile designs of American foreign policy.

In its foreign relations, the United States resorts to political and economic coercive measures more than any other country. Presently, the United States is imposing economic sanctions unilaterally or multilaterally against over 70 countries around the world. This is a breach of international law. Again, it is also the United States that unilaterally resorts to the use of brute force, thereby undermining the sovereignty and independence of other States. I am referring here to the daily acts of aggression that the United States has committed since 1991 against Iraq in the guise of what it chooses to call no-flight zones. The United Kingdom also takes part in those daily acts of aggression, along with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey, which provide bases for flights and logistical support for this aggression.

Allowing the policies of economic, political and military hegemony to continue will ultimately undermine the fundamental legal pillars upon which the international community rests today. I refer in particular to the Charter of the United Nations and the rules and principles relating to human rights. The international community and its bodies should take firm and effective measures to end the policy of force

and stop the use of coercive economic and political measures. We therefore call urgently on all Member States to vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted under this agenda item, as it marks a step towards the restoration of the rule of law in international relations.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of South Africa, who will speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): At the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Durban, South Africa, the heads of State or Government declared,

> "We must take up the challenge to fundamentally transform international relations, so as to eradicate aggression, racism, the use of force, unilateral coercive measures and unfair economic practices, foreign occupation and xenophobia in order to achieve a world of peace, justice and dignity for all." (*A/53/667, annex I, Durban Declaration for the New Millennium*)

At that summit, the heads of State or Government condemned the persistence by certain States in intensifying unilateral coercive measures and the exercise of domestic legislation with extraterritorial effects against developing countries. I am referring to actions that include blockades, embargoes and the freezing of assets with the purpose of preventing those countries from exercising the right to fully determine their political, economic and social systems and to freely expand their international trade. We are convinced of the need to contribute more effectively to increasing the role of developing countries in the international economic system. Furthermore, the need for equal and non-discriminatory rights for all countries to join the international trading system and the necessity to keep the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its membership procedure non-political and economic-oriented cannot be overemphasized.

The Non-Aligned Movement firmly believes that increased recourse by the major trading countries to actions such as extraterritorial measures are incompatible and in conflict with international rules and regulations agreed upon in the WTO. The unjustified and excessive use of anti-dumping measures to the detriment of the trade of developing countries is a matter of great concern.

The Non-Aligned Movement also condemns the trend geared towards strengthening coercive economic measures on developing countries. In this respect, we reaffirm that no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State, including through the non-extension of most-favoured nation trading status. We also reject the expansion of such trends, and urge States applying unilateral coercive measures to put an immediate end to those measures.

The Non-Aligned Movement is concerned about the adverse effects of the use of coercive economic measures on the economies and development efforts of developing countries. We have no doubt that such measures have a broad negative impact on international economic cooperation and on worldwide efforts to move towards a non-discriminatory and open trading system.

Our aim is to create a rules-based system where small and big nations will be treated as equal sovereign States. We believe that such democratic reform is necessary for all international institutions, including the United Nations.

At the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held at Cartagena in April this year, the ministers called on all States not to recognize unilateral extraterritorial laws enacted by certain countries which impose sanctions on companies and individuals belonging to other countries. They were of the view that such measures and legislation threaten the sovereignty of States and adversely affect their social and economic development. Furthermore, they marginalize developing countries from the process of globalization and are contrary to international law, the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States and agreed principles of the multilateral trading system.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish at the outset to endorse the statement just made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on the item before us, "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion". Most of the measures we are discussing today are sanctions, so I shall begin by speaking of sanctions in general before turning to the inhumanity and illegality of measures of this kind.

Paragraphs 99 to 101 of this year's report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/55/1) show that the international community disapproves of the negative impact of sanctions on civilian populations, and indicate that it is peoples rather than Governments that normally pay the price. That accords with something we should all recognize: we ought to review the sanctions that the Security Council imposes.

If that is true of sanctions imposed by the United Nations, how much more so must it be of coercive sanctions imposed by countries unilaterally and arbitrarily for political reasons. Coercive economic measures are nothing other than a weapon used to discourage developing States from exercising freedom of choice about how they wish to develop in consonance with their own cultural traditions. Such coercive economic measures undermine international free trade and technology transfers, which are the common heritage of mankind: inventions may be conceived in one country but are very often developed in another. Such measures harm, first and foremost, the peoples and the economies of developing countries.

The international community as a whole, as represented in the General Assembly, has repeatedly rejected any coercive laws with extraterritorial effects adopted by certain individual countries. Resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10 and 51/17 all agree that States should refrain from adopting or applying laws with extraterritorial effects. Sudan firmly condemns the adoption of any such legislation, because it undermines the noble principles of the United Nations Charter and of international law; these include non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, and the right of every State to choose its own path to development.

Sudan, itself a victim of such coercive measures, calls upon States that have imposed sanctions to lift them and to renounce their use as soon as possible, to show their respect for the Charter of the United Nations, for the right of States to sovereignty and for the basic norms governing international relations.

Another purpose of the item before us is to improve peace and prosperity for all peoples. My delegation emphasizes that economic sanctions should not be used to exert political pressure. We support draft resolution A/55/L.9 and will vote in its favour.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, let me thank the Secretary-General for his report on the agenda item entitled "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion" (A/55/300 and Add.1 and 2). It is a brief report but a useful one.

We are living in an interdependent world. This has been true for quite some time, and it will continue to affect our lives. In fact, as we all have recognized, the process of globalization is actively expanding and deepening the mutual interdependence of societies, and is reshaping the key features of world markets in capital, goods, services, labour and technology. It has also created numerous opportunities for international interaction and cooperation. In such an environment, recourse to unilateral and extraterritorial economic coercive measures constitutes a major constraint on the expansion of international cooperation and undermines the basic principles and fundamentals of the international economic, trade and financial system.

The adoption of coercive economic measures falls within the mandate of the United Nations only in situations where there exists a serious threat to international peace and security. Unilateral and extraterritorial sanctions against other countries are inadmissible under international law. United Nations literature against unilateral actions and extraterritorial coercive measures is quite extensive.

In particular, the General Assembly on many occasions has expressed its disapproval of the unilateral and extraterritorial laws enacted by certain States. The Assembly has found such acts to be in violation of the principle of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal and external affairs of other States, as well as of the exercise of their sovereign rights. The resolution entitled "Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries", adopted at the forty-fourth, forty-sixth, forty-eighth, fiftieth and fifty-second sessions of the General Assembly, and the resolution entitled "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic Compulsion", adopted at the fifty-first and fifty-third sessions of the General Assembly, are prominent examples of a series of United Nations reactions to such unlawful actions.

Several relevant principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations provide a solid basis for the Organization to address the question of the exercise of unilateral sanctions by individual States. In this regard,

both the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of Their Independence and Sovereignty, adopted on 21 December 1965, and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted on 12 December 1974, stipulate that

> "No State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights or to secure from it advantages of any kind."

Furthermore, the imposition of coercive economic measures and the approval of domestic legislation with extraterritorial implications for the horizontal escalation of such actions and measures, also contradict established international trade law, including World Trade Organization (WTO) regulations.

Various forms of economic coercive measures and actions have been imposed against 79 foreign countries, in particular developing countries, between 1979 and 1996. The nature of such illegal measures has changed with the passage of time, and the adoption of measures with extraterritorial implications against the trade and investment partners of targeted countries has followed that of unilateral measures. The response to these policies and measures has also intensified at the international level. An increasing number of voices from multilateral forums, regional bodies and the private sector have joined those of the Member States and called for the total elimination and lifting of unilateral extraterritorial and other forms of coercive economic measures.

The critical need for an equitable, rule-based, secure, non-discriminatory and predictable multilateral trading system has been invariably emphasized in almost all United Nations resolutions and decisions on financial and commercial issues and in related financial declarations and conclusions of high-level meetings in this system. The need for a favourable and conducive international economic and financial environment and a positive investment climate as a means to facilitate and promote the share of developing countries in international trade and finance has also been endorsed by Member States by consensus year after year.

These instruments have, inter alia, invariably called on all countries to abolish all measures which could impede free international trade and financial transactions. These coercive measures also adversely affect the enjoyment of human rights of those countries against which these measures are directed. As we all know, the Commission on Human Rights has also repeatedly reiterated that the application of unilateral coercive measures has a negative impact on social and human development in the targeted developing countries.

Based on these principles and commitments, the international community, inclusive of both developed and developing countries, has presented a vigorous reaction to these illegal measures and actions. Many developed countries have discussed these illegal instruments within their own coordination frameworks and rejected their enactment. Some of them have even used international and intergovernmental mechanisms to pre-empt recourse to such measures.

Collectively, developing countries have systematically rejected recourse to such measures, including at the meetings of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity. The final outcome of the recent South Summit in Havana adopted a very clear stand in this regard. Moreover, individually, developing countries have also promulgated legal acts aimed at countering the legal effects of such measures within their national territory.

Finally, the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA), as an obvious example of extraterritorial coercive economic measures, is against international law. It is an illegal instrument which has targeted the economic, commercial and financial relations of other countries with the Islamic Republic of Iran. This instrument is also against the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. This blunt instrument prevents any improvement in the atmosphere and impedes attempts to remove misunderstanding and mistrust.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 53/10 of 26 October 1998, expressed grave concern over the negative impact of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures and called for their immediate repeal. It also called upon all States not to recognize these coercive measures, to refrain from recourse to such measures and to nullify them if they are in place.

My delegation calls upon all Member States to unanimously adopt the draft resolution before us on the agenda item under consideration. The unanimous adoption of this draft resolution will represent the collective will and commitment of the entire intergovernmental body to the principles, goals and objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and other related agreed international instruments.

Mr. Osio (Nigeria): I should like first of all to convey to you, Sir, the warm greetings of my Ambassador, Chief Arthur Mbanefo, and his regret for his inability to be present here personally because of other, more pressing engagements. Accordingly, I am delivering this statement on his behalf.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in support of draft resolution A/55/L.9, entitled "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion", which was introduced earlier by the Ambassador of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. In adding our support for the draft, I have the further honour of reiterating the position of the heads of State or Government of developing countries on this issue, as contained in their Declaration and Programme of Action arising from the Group of 77 South Summit held in April 2000 in Havana, Cuba. That Declaration and Programme of Action are contained in document A/55/74, dated 12 May 2000.

I should like to quote parts of that Declaration. Paragraph 4 of the Declaration states:

> "We reaffirm that in our endeavours we are guided by all the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and by full respect for the principles of international law."

Paragraph 50 states:

> "We express grave concern over the impact of economic sanctions on the development capacity in the targeted countries, in this context noting that Libya has now fulfilled all its obligations in terms of pertinent Security Council resolutions, and we urge the Security Council to adopt a resolution completely lifting the sanctions against Libya. We also call for the immediate lifting of all unilateral sanctions imposed against Libya outside of the United Nations system."

That declaration is very pertinent to the guidance of this Assembly.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I now call on the Observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Gospodinov (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): The general object of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, defined in article 2 of its constitution, is to

> "inspire, encourage, facilitate, and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by the member Societies with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering and thereby contributing to the maintenance and the promotion of peace in the world."

This is the starting point for the International Federation's contribution to this debate. Any imposition of sanctions exposes a potential tension between two purposes: affecting the policies and behaviour of a target Government and protecting the life, health and dignity of the people of that country. Sanctions are intended to deal with the former, but risk undermining the latter during the course of their implementation.

It is the view of the International Federation that sanctions regimes can, and frequently do, intensify human suffering. This suffering is especially acute in its impact on the most vulnerable groups in society, in particular, children, people at lower socio-economic levels, refugees and displaced persons.

The International Federation's views on the impact of sanctions is informed by the work done in affected countries by the national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, including the Societies in the affected countries, as well as the participating Red Cross Societies from other countries that have worked with them.

In 1997, the International Federation's General Assembly adopted decision 52 on action on behalf of national Societies working in countries in particularly difficult situations, such as embargoes. The resolution noted that sanctions often cause a deteriorating humanitarian situation, in particular shortage of food and medicines. The decision followed resolution 4, adopted by the twenty-sixth International Conference

of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 1995, which called on the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation and all national Societies to contribute to the reduction of the undesirable side-effects of sanctions.

The International Conference is composed of all 189 States parties to the Geneva Conventions and the 176 national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. It has remained seized of the issue, and incorporated reference to it in the Plan of Action for the years 2000-2003 adopted at its twenty-seventh International Conference. The Plan seeks, among other things, to ensure that provision for the rights and needs of the most vulnerable people is the first priority for humanitarian action. Paragraph 10 of Chapter 2 of the Plan states:

> "States and the Movement encourage the United Nations Security Council, before applying economic sanctions, to take into account the needs of the civilian population and apply humanitarian exemptions, as appropriate."

The paragraph goes on to welcome the work then under way within the Security Council on the humanitarian impact of sanctions.

For us and, we believe, for many other humanitarian organizations, these are intensely practical issues related to our ability to support our member national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and, with them, to assist vulnerable people affected by sanctions. That is why it is necessary to pay careful attention to the details of the actual workings of each sanctions regime. It is, for example, now accepted that adequate procedures have to be in place to provide the appropriate humanitarian exemptions whenever sanctions are imposed.

The International Federation and its national Societies are also concerned that when sanctions regimes are implemented they can have a number of damaging consequences for the fabric of the target country. Some of these consequences are directly harmful to the most vulnerable people in the country, and they can remain so for years after the sanctions themselves have been lifted. These harmful effects include the dislocation of the economic and social structure of the country, leading to long-term unemployment, social disorder and enduring hardship for the most vulnerable.

Finally, we urge States to take into account, before designing and imposing sanctions, the likely impact on the civilian population both in the short and the long term; to monitor these consequences as the basis for modifications to the sanctions regime; and to support efforts to provide relief for the most vulnerable groups in the target country by making resources available, and by ensuring that the practicalities of exemptions for humanitarian purposes are designed to facilitate, not hinder, these efforts.

The Acting President: Again, in accordance with the decision taken earlier, I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Martino (Holy See): My delegation is pleased to take this opportunity to participate in the discussion of agenda item 31, the "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion".

The Holy See has always voiced its concern for cooperation and solidarity among peoples of all lands. In his great encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, written in 1891, Pope Leo XIII spoke of the necessity of understanding the common needs and aspirations that guide economic growth and the elimination of poverty.

In celebration of the hundredth anniversary of that first social encyclical, Pope John Paul II wrote:

> "The poor ask for the right to share in enjoying material goods and to make good use of their capacity for work, thus creating a world that is more just and prosperous for all."

Unfortunately, the "right to share in enjoying material goods" and the creation of "a world that is more just and prosperous" have been, and continue to be, challenged by the imposition of economic measures that are not only coercive, but which also tend to stifle the very spirit of cooperation leading towards sustainable economic and social development.

In his report, the Secretary-General provides the responses of the 13 Governments that replied to his request to contribute to the report. My delegation realizes that receiving only 13 responses might appear insignificant; however, upon reading each statement provided by these Governments, a truer picture emerges, and a number that might seem small speaks volumes.

The Holy See has always opposed the use of coercive economic measures, which are harmful to the social development of a nation and its people. On a number of occasions, especially in the recently concluded special sessions of the General Assembly, the Holy See has noted its concern with the effects of these measures, not only upon the nations on which they are imposed but also on those States that suffer the negative effects of trade barriers which are part of those measures.

In his address to the Jubilee of Workers, Pope John Paul II, reflecting on his understanding of the rewards that come from a recognition of the gift of human dignity, said,

> "Therefore the Jubilee Year calls for a rediscovery of the meaning and value of work. It is also an invitation to address the economic and social imbalances in the world of work by re-establishing the right hierarchy of values, giving priority to the dignity of working men and women and to their freedom, responsibility and participation. It also spurs us to redress situations of injustice by safeguarding each people's culture and different models of development."

My delegation believes that those words and the sentiment they convey can easily be translated into our discussion today — that is, addressing economic and social imbalances and redressing situations of injustice.

Upon reading the responses provided in the report of the Secretary-General, it is evident that opposition to the use of coercive measures is widespread. That same opposition can be seen in the following paragraphs from resolutions adopted at the fifty-first and fifty-third sessions, in which the General Assembly:

> "Recalling its numerous resolutions in which it has called upon the international community to take urgent and effective steps to end coercive economic measures" (*resolution 51/22*)

and,

> "Expresses its deep concern at the negative impact of unilaterally imposed extraterritorial coercive economic measures on trade and financial and economic cooperation, including at the regional level, as well as the serious obstacles posed to the freedom of trade and the free flow of capital at the regional and international levels" (*resolution 53/10, para. 3*).

My delegation adds its voice to those replies received by the Secretary-General and to the Assembly resolutions which call for an end to the use of any measures that are coercive and that are incompatible with international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The many heads of State and Government who gathered in this very Hall only a few weeks ago reaffirmed their commitment to that same Charter. My delegation hopes that the spirit of that Millennium Assembly will continue and help to bring an end to any measure that would hinder the social or economic development of any nation or its people.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution A/55/L.9 will be taken at a later date.

One representative has requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the 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. Al-Awdi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation has listened to the statement by the representative of Iraq in which he dealt with my country, Kuwait, and my Government in an inappropriate manner and in the wrong place. Regrettably, the representative of Iraq has arrogantly and selfishly tried to confuse the issue of the unilateral measures that we are talking about with the legal sanctions imposed by the Security Council in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter.

The representative of Iraq always, and deliberately, evokes these issues and confuses them, believing that the people sitting in this Hall are ignorant and do not understand this issue. This is a mistake.

According to my understanding and my reading of the draft resolution before us, it talks about unilateral, extraterritorial economic measures, and therefore has nothing to do with the issue of sanctions in general, nor with sanctions imposed by the Security Council.

Sanctions have been imposed against Iraq because Iraq violated the Charter of the United Nations by occupying Kuwait. We in Kuwait call upon our brethren in Libya and Cuba to deny Iraq the opportunity to mix these two different issues and to exploit the issue of unilateral measures to justify Iraq's violation of Security Council resolutions, the principles of the Charter and of international law. We call upon these countries to explain to everyone else that what Libya and Cuba are facing is different from what Iraq said today about the sanctions imposed by the Security Council.

The representative of Iraq talked explicitly about international laws and the Charter. I would like to ask him, what name does he give to Iraq's actions in Kuwait? Did Iraq not occupy Kuwait? A major, strong country like Iraq occupied a small country like Kuwait. He referred more than once to international law. I would like to ask him, what name does he give to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait? He calls for the implementation of international law, but he has to respect it before he invokes it.

Iraq is using the same old arrogant method. We heard the statement by the Ambassador of Libya, for whom we have the greatest respect. However, I would like to know, is Iraq using a different method? Iraq is exhibiting the same flagrant arrogance as the major Powers. It is the same method. Iraq is using its might to advance its interests. When a small country like mine is involved, Iraq does not give a damn; it occupies it in violation of international law and conventions.

What Iraq did to my country — such as aerial bombardment — has nothing to do with the issue before us today. We completely reject the link he tried to make. We would like to emphasize that what the Iraqi Ambassador talked about today concerns unilateral sanctions. The issue before the Assembly is not legitimate sanctions imposed by the Security Council. The representative of the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies talked today about unilateral coercive measures and not legitimate sanctions. Legitimate sanctions, which are what the representative of Iraq has talked about, were implemented in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

We reiterate that we will not be silent about this. If Iraq raises this issue, we will reply. If the Iraqi Ambassador discusses Kuwait, I will respond. Iraq is trying to scare us, to intimidate us, but we are not afraid. Before Iraq talks about the United Nations Charter and international law, it should respect them. We call upon those in Cuba and Libya not to provide Iraq with a means to justify its acts.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I regret having to take the floor at this late hour, but I am obliged to respond to the representative of the Kuwaiti regime, a puppet of the United States and talking on its behalf. The representative of Kuwait wants to tell the General Assembly and the representatives of the States in attendance what they should talk about, how, and what issues they should or should not deal with.

This podium is a free one. Countries have the right to express their viewpoints freely. It is true that the United Nations Headquarters is in the United States of America, but, in accordance with the Headquarters Agreement, States have the right to exercise self-expression freely from this rostrum — despite the fact that it is located in a State that exerts all forms of coercion against other peoples.

All the delegations here dealt with sanctions, be they unilateral or multilateral. It is difficult to talk about an item entitled "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion" and ignore the multilateral coercive measures that are being imposed.

As I said in my statement, many of these multilateral measures are imposed coercively on international organizations because one hegemonist State wants this. In fact, they are unilateral coercive measures. The sanctions imposed against Iraq are an example of that. At the moment all countries of the world — except the United States and its agent Kuwait — are opposed to the sanctions imposed against Iraq.

On the other hand, I referred to Kuwait in one word in my statement. I said that Kuwait provides land bases and facilities for American aircraft to bomb Iraqi civilians daily. American aggression is in fact a unilateral use of force against Iraq, for which there is no legitimate excuse, legal basis or United Nations authorization. According to the Charter of the United Nations, this is then an act of aggression. Anyone who provides facilities for those who commit acts of aggression is actually an accomplice to such acts. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia provide facilities, land bases and financing. They finance this aggression against

Iraq. This is a fact that the international community should be aware of. Those who call for respect for international legitimacy and resolutions should abide by them first.

This has been going on for 10 years now, and it continues. They attack us every day and deny us the right to protest their aggression. Kuwait is a small State neighbouring Iraq with a population of about 600,000 people.

Therefore I call on the representative of Kuwait to respect the rights of the representatives of other States to express their views freely in this Assembly.

The Acting President: May I remind delegations that, in their second intervention in right of reply, according to the rules of procedure, they are entitled to five minutes.

Mr. Al-Awdi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I will not respond at length to the statement of the representative of the Iraqi regime. We have long been familiar with his accusations and lies, so I will not address them in my reply.

As to what he said about the question of aggression, we are a small State and do not undertake aggression against anyone, to which our history bears witness. It is his powerful country that behaves in that way. With respect to our relationship with the United States, we have no fear. It is a friendly country to which we are bound by agreements. We are unafraid in that regard.

Iraq is trying to divide the Arabs. We have promised to support Libya in its just cause so as to preserve Arab unity. The same is true of our Palestinian brothers. However, there are instructions being sent from Israel to Iraq not to raise questions that may sow discord.

It seems to me that there is some confusion here as to who adheres to the Charter and who does not. Which is the powerful and arrogant State and which is the small and weak one? Everything that Iraq has said is false. I am preventing no one from addressing any agenda item, but I reserve the right to express my opinion.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I apologize for asking to speak yet again, but I will be very brief. I should like to respond to one particular point that has just been made.

Anyone who speaks in this Hall should respect other speakers' intelligence, as he should also respect facts and reality. When the representative of Kuwait states that his country is not an aggressor against any other State or entity, what should we say about the fact that American and British aircraft take off daily from Kuwaiti territory to bomb children in another State? Perhaps the representative of Kuwait feels that being allied with the United States allows him to tell lies and that the international community will believe him.

A second issue raised by the representative of Kuwait concerned the relationship between Israel and Iraq. He claimed that Iraq receives and carries out instructions from Israel. I leave it to the intelligence of members to assess this accusation. It is obviously absurd — as absurd as the person who uttered it.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.