



لتظلّ الشعلة وهاجّةً - 保持火焰永不熄灭

Entretenons la flamme - Keep the flame alive - Не дать огню погаснуть

Que no se apague la llama

5th plenary meeting, 15th of June 1993

World Conference on Human Rights

Vienna, 14-25 June 1993

5th plenary meeting, 15 June 1993

[A/CONF.157/PV.5]

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Agenda Item 9. General debate on the progress made in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and on the identification of obstacles to further the progress in this area and ways in which they can be overcome.

Agenda Item 10. Consideration of the relationship between development, democracy and the universal enjoyment of all human rights, keeping in view the interrelationship and indivisibility of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

Agenda Item 11. Consideration of contemporary trends and new challenges to the full realization of all human rights of women and men, including those of persons belonging to vulnerable groups.

Agenda Item 12. Recommendations for:(a) Strengthening international cooperation in the field of human rights in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with international human rights instruments;(b) Ensuring the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of the consideration of human rights issues;(c) Enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations activities and mechanisms;(d) Securing the necessary financial and other resources for United Nations activities in the area of human rights.

CRVENKOVSKI, Stevo (President):

I call to order the fifth meeting of the plenary of the World Conference on Human Rights. This meeting will continue until 10 pm tonight.

I have the honor, with the consent of the Conference, to invite His Excellency Mr. Jimmy Carter, invitee of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to address the Conference. Excellency, you have the floor.

CARTER, Jimmy, Invitee of the UN Secretary-General (United States of America):

Keywords: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS - DEVELOPMENT - FOREIGN DEBT - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - WOMEN - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Well, first of all, I want to thank this audience. This is the quietest and best-behaved audience I have spoken to since I arrived in Vienna. I come here this afternoon, first of all, as an American citizen. Secondly, I come as a former president of a great nation. And third, I come representing a non-governmental organization, an NGO, the Carter Centre. As Warren Christopher, our Secretary of State, said yesterday – ours is a nation that was founded on freedom and equality. That is true to a certain extent but, as a matter of fact, our nation was founded on freedom and equality for white people only. It was ninety years later before my nation decided to end slavery for our black citizens. It was much later, when I was a young man, that we finally brought into law itself an end to racial segregation. For which another name is apartheid. But the point is that in our country, which is a democracy, there is an ability for self-correction because the people themselves can analyze defects, mistakes, and human rights violations and change as a country.

We have made great progress in the last few decades. When I was president, as a product of a region of our country that had racial segregation, I felt very deeply that my country should be a world champion of human rights. That we should raise high the banner of human rights and keep this issue before the public in everything that I did. I announced before being inaugurated that human rights would be a cornerstone of our foreign policy. Every American ambassador on Earth was my personal human rights representative. Every embassy of the United States was a haven for those in that foreign country who suffered human rights abuses. Still, as of today, we have a long way to go; and I am talking about a great nation of which I am very proud.

Fifteen years ago, when I was president, I signed all the outstanding covenants, treaties and commitments of the international community dealing with human rights. Still, my government has not yet seen fit to ratify the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, one of the two primary covenants that spells out in definitive and necessary terms what human rights should be protected. We still have not ratified the Covenant on the Rights of Women or the Covenant or Agreement that outlaws torture, and we have not yet seen fit to sign the Covenant on the Rights of the Child. I am very proud that yesterday my Secretary of State announced a new commitment under the Clinton administration to take action on these long-overdue commitments as a great leader, as a fine nation on the global scene, to correct these mistakes of delay.

Even then, there are problems in my country. I come from a city Atlanta, Georgia, that is where the Carter Center is located. A fine city, the home of Martin Luther King Junior, the site of the 1996 Olympics. Beautiful skyline. Tonight there will be 15,000 of my neighbors without a home in which to sleep. Day before yesterday, I was talking to a reporter who was investigating more than 1800 Cuban refugees who came to my country. They committed some crimes, small or large. They have long ago finished their sentence and still are being retained in prisons in my country. The judicial system combined with the Immigration and Naturalization Service has not found yet a way to give these immigrants justice. I say this not to condemn the United States of America but to point out to you that this Conference is designed for all of us to understand what we can do, collectively and individually, to improve our own human rights records. To learn from one another and not to come here in a spirit of superiority, or self-congratulation, or condemnation of others.

There are some delegations here that have never been willing to honor the basic rudiments of human rights embedded in the Charter of the United Nations or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Now they come forward and want to say the Universal Declaration does not apply to us. And as you well know this Charter and those provisions of the Universal Declaration include freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of worship, freedom of assembly, yes, but also freedom of a person to have a trial or face his or her accusers before being imprisoned, to be free from torture, to be free from summary execution or facing a death sentence for political activities. These same countries that are opposing any progress on human rights do not permit their own citizens to participate in selecting and shaping their own governments. This is a small minority of delegations here. But my prayer is that the vast majority of you will not let these few intimidate this Conference and prevent a major step forward here, in Vienna, in enhancing not reducing the commitment of the world community to the protection of human rights. This group of obstructionists will be easily identified as we see their actions as the final statement is forged. I understand the controversies, I understand them well. I have been involved in them for many years. I can see both sides of some issues.

I would like to conclude my remarks by assessing five of them. I will try to be brief about this.

The first one is the industrial nations, including my own, the European community, the Japanese and others not being willing to acknowledge a need for economic rights and the right of development in the life of people who live in countries poorer than ours. We have been reluctant to admit that a family that is starving to death is not just interested in freedom of the press. We have not been willing to share our great wealth with others. We have not been willing to expand the definition of human rights to encompass the right to food and shelter, clothing and medical care, the right to live, the right to have fuel to burn with which to cook meals. There is no way for us to make further progress as long as this selfish attitude is maintained by many industrial countries. There is a division unfortunately between the North and the South. I lay the blame, most of it, on the nations of the North who control most of the international circles – in politics, economics, military, culture, finance. We are the ones who must yield, be unselfish and cooperate with those who have suffered too long.

The second point I want to make in this, first one is that the G7 will be meeting soon. These powerful nations, I hope, and all of you and your delegations will intercede and induce the G7 to initiate massive

debt relief for countries that are not only starving but spending more than half of their total income just to pay the interest on their debt to the rich countries. The second point is the United Nations as it presently exists, the UN, I hate to say, is now almost totally incapacitated in dealing with serious human rights abuses. Why is this so? For one reason, during the cold war there was always an obstacle to strengthen the UN, to investigate the internal affairs of some of the superpowers. That time is now gone. We have an opportunity now to open up the UN to opportunities for correcting human rights crimes they did not have before. We have a multitude of small agencies, or rather offices, rapporteurs and committees in the United Nations all separated from one another. Some in Rome, some in Vienna, some in Geneva, some in New York, some in different places in New York. None of them have adequate financial resources or adequate personnel assignments to be functional much less efficient. Each one is now guarding its own prerogatives, its own turf.

If someone in a country has a serious human rights abuse, where does one go to report it? There is no way to know. Where do you go to report it? And what is reported? What is done? There is no entity within the United Nations authorized to investigate the report of a human rights crime. The Commission, as you know, consists of forty or fifty countries. It meets next February. Quite often, the members of the commission are the ones who are human rights abusers who use their influence within the Commission to prevent the UN being effective. It is not an easy solution, I know. What can be done? We need one strong person in the United Nations responsible for human rights. The coordination of the smaller offices, committees and rapporteurs who can receive reports of human rights crimes. Who can act independently, independently of anyone, independently of the Secretary-General, without being strapped down by politics and diplomacy. An office that is adequately financed, then adequately staffed that can investigate the allegations, determine if they are true or not and bring them back to what I would like to see an international court of justice that can accommodate, that have jurisdiction over human rights crimes.

I think if this is done, if the world sees that the UN does have an agency or person that has this authority that the funding will be there. Part of it can come out of the regular UN budget, which I know is already strapped. Governments interested in human rights can give special voluntary contributions for that purpose. I would personally be willing to go out and raise money from individuals, private citizens, as I do for UNICEF, if I thought the money was going to strengthen the global commitment to human rights. It is not a hopeless case, there are those within the UN who do not want to see a High Commissioner or special commissioner or permanent commissioner. I do not care what the name is but we need to have some vitality, some independence and some adequacy in the protection of human rights.

The third thing is the development aid; going to governments. There are those who say do not use our human rights record to decide how much money you give us or lend us. That sounds good but I would not be willing as a president of a great country to send money to an oppressive regime who already is guilty of serious human rights crimes; who would probably steal the money by our most of it lost through corruption and spend a great deal more for the purchase of weapons, the weapons to be used against one's own people in one's own country. We do not need to do that. But I think the global community can, through the World Bank, the IMF, through the Scandinavian countries, through the United States' USAID program, through Japan, channel money into those countries so that it has to go directly to the people who are already oppressed and not go through the oppressors. In the last few years, ten years or so, my country gave more than four billion dollars to the military regime in El Salvador, which strengthened the oppressors of the Salvadoran people. There is very little chance at any of that money actually was used for housing, education or health care.

The next thing I would like to mention is education. I will not dwell on this. I think it is a human right to be educated about one's human rights because much of the human rights abuse in the world goes on because people do not know in deprived neighborhoods and isolated communities what are these human rights. That is very important. One example of course, is women. We have not been adequate, in any country in the world, as far as I know, in protecting the rights of women. Quite often women who are raped, when they get in to court, they join in with their rapist as the accused. Quite often women are

reluctant because of that environment even to bring charges against someone who has violated their own body. Many societies look upon men as superior and the battering of wives by husbands is condoned or ignored. More than 50 million women have had their genitals mutilated, which may have derived from an ancient culture but which is obviously a violation of the human rights of those women. Some societies even looked the other way when infanticide is practiced against girl babies. This needs to be publicized and addressed enthusiastically. I do not understand why the sign behind me says the rights of man. I think it ought to be the rights of human beings or the rights of citizens and not just male humans.

Another thing that I want to mention, and this is the last one, is to strengthen and involve the NGOs. There are a lot of things in human rights that the United Nations will never be able to do, nor will my government because of protocol, because of bureaucracies and because of diplomacy. Here we have seen an enormous outpouring of NGOs, some powerful and well-financed and well-known like Amnesty International others, hundreds, literally, of groups of young people, mostly courageous people, quite often the first ones killed or arrested, who have come here not knowing what to do. We need to devise some way to include them in the future of human rights on earth. They have tremendous information that we will never have otherwise, and they have tremendous influence collectively and individually when they go back home.

In closing, let me say that I do not claim to know all the answers about human rights. No one here does. I tried to outline some of the problems in my own country. I hope that every nation here will assess its own record and say what it can do to derive benefit from this Conference. I would say one of the first requirements is self-assessment that requires a great deal of courage. Take a look at ourselves.

Second is to be innovative. We have hardly scratched the surface of what can be done to improve knowledge of human rights, to act against human rights crimes and primarily to prevent them not just act retroactively after they have occurred. Another thing is to cooperate with one another. I hope out of this Conference there will be engendered not conflict, animosity and misunderstanding but a concerted effort at least by almost all of us.

As we leave Vienna, let us work together to strengthen the UN capability, our own and that of NGOs. The rich countries should be more generous. My own country, even before we are able to go through the political process of creating a High Commissioner, should consult with Ibrahima Fall at the UN in Geneva and say, tell us how you could spend another million dollars, or five million dollars, or ten million dollars, annually, to increase the technical capability of those in isolated countries, about how they can improve their human rights. I think the UN Centre in Geneva itself could be given new vitality and new capability, and it would not take but just a tiny bit of money, a tiny portion of very large budgets. I hope my own country, the United States, will take the leadership in this voluntary and unsolicited contribution. I think we should all be forceful and not timid. It is easy to be timid. It is easy to be intimidated. I do not know of any other subject that addresses human life that is more sensitive than human rights. That is on the cutting edge of human development, a cutting edge of peace, the cutting edge of freedom and the cutting edge of democracy. Human rights is a core of the future of a good life for human beings in all countries.

The last thing I would like to say is that we cannot afford to fail.

Thank you very much.

CRVENKOVSKI, Stevo (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now have the honor to invite His Excellency Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania, to address the Conference. The Chief of Protocol will escort His Excellency to the rostrum.

Your Excellency, you have the floor.

ILIESCU, Ion (Romania):

Keywords: ROMANIA - SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS - MINORITIES – HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen,

I am satisfied to have this opportunity to take the floor after President Carter, one of the promoters of the generous ideas of human rights. This is the first World Conference at high political level after the revolutions that had shaken the communist world and ended the cold war. It focuses on the very detonating powder of those revolutions: human rights.

My presence here is the sign of the determination of the Romanian people not only to get rid of a recent dark past that treated a human being as an object rather than a subject of the society but also not to allow it to happen again on its soil.

This Conference is called upon to project into the 21st century the message of hope and dignity embodied in the International Bill of Human Rights.

Clear signs are already in place. They indicate that the times to come will certainly witness the encroachment of the human rights ethos over the daily life of individuals from all over the planet.

After three and a half years after the revolution, respect for human rights has become a generally accepted value in the Romanian society.

Romania is now a party to the quasi-totality of major human rights international agreements and has engaged in the relevant international procedures with all openness.

International commitments to uphold human rights and the rule of law are comprehensively linked to the domestic setting through a constitutional clause to the effect that international regulations take precedence over internal laws.

Reform, especially in the domain of human rights, is not just a matter of passing new laws and regulations in place of the old. It is above all a matter of implementation. It is also a matter of social environment. Here our old mentalities often work against us. The severe legacy of our past is not so easily erased.

I believe that despite our long isolation and relative poverty, we have made remarkable progress against appreciable odds with our limited resources. I also recognize that there is still much to be done to achieve the level of human rights to which we aspire.

First, there is an economic aspect. Standards of living and the quality of life, have an appreciable effect on level of human rights. That is why we made of social protection a basic dimension of our reform programme. Institutional and infrastructural reform require resources. Great efforts must be made to redress a number of key problems identified with international help, for instance, the plight of handicapped children. The lack of sufficient minimal economic resources can be one of the greatest obstacles to realizing basic human rights.

In the political field, effective human rights mean individual empowerment. It means a society of equal citizens. We are only at the beginning of the transition from a political party system focused entirely on the partisan struggle for political power to one in which the cooperative goal of good governance for Romania will be the main priority.

I would include in this field also the freedom of the print and broadcast media. For anybody who had known the media in the old regime in Romania and compare it with the current one, the difference should be striking. Censorship of the media is completely forbidden according to our Constitution. In fact, our

press has no formal regulations of any sort. Often, rumors are printed as fact and slander, libel and calumny have become regular phenomenon. This is probably the price we have to pay until our whole society will become democratically more mature.

In the legal domain we are, at present, fully engaged in a fundamental reform. Replacing the whole legislation of a country, and in a short time, is not at all an easy task. In addition, we have to face the fact of life that years of over-centralization have created a massive reaction against central coordination of any type.

If I may draw an optimistic conclusion of the developments in Romania in the last three and a half years, I would say that our democratic political system begins to work more smoothly. As we commence a stage of economic normalization, there is a growing sense of tolerance within the society and a corresponding rejection of extremisms.

Mr. Chairman,

An integral part of the protection of human rights is also the protection of the rights of people belonging to ethnic minorities.

We have in Romania fourteen national and ethnic minorities registered as such through their political parties or organizations. Altogether, they represent about ten percent of the entire population of the country.

From the earliest post-revolutionary days, measures to recognize and protect the rights of the people belonging to minorities were adopted.

According to the Constitution, each minority is guaranteed a seat in Parliament. Our largest minority of about 1.7 million, according to the census of 1992, the Hungarians, have thirty-nine parliamentary seats.

As far as the education is concerned, Romania now has more than 1300 state-sponsored teaching units, from preschools to high schools including vocational training in the languages of minorities. In addition, there are more than 1400 teaching sections in non-Romanian mother tongues that exist in mixed schools, and higher education in Hungarian in three universities.

Of course, we have not completely resolved everything in regard to education in the languages of minorities. But that is also true for the education in the language of the majority.

From all our minorities, the Roma population are clearly the most disadvantaged. Recently, the Romanian government and the American Project on Ethnic Relations co-sponsored an international meeting in Snagov, near Bucharest, in order to identify possible methods of regional coordination on such issues as the education and training of the Roma.

It is obvious that some dissatisfaction concerning minority rights continues to exist. It is beyond question that, whether or not we feel there is an objective basis for this dissatisfaction, it is something that we must constructively and adequately address in the interests of our society. We feel that any honest appreciation of what Romania has or has not done in this regard can be made only within a regional and pan-European context. I do not deny there are problems. But I do believe we can compare very favorably with the rest of Europe.

Recently, the Romanian government initiated a Council on National Minorities to ensure a permanent dialogue between the minorities and the government, to address administrative and financial issues concerning the exercise of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and to examine and propose draft laws to Parliament that pertain to guarantee and exercise of these rights.

While recognizing the importance of minority issues based on our own experience, I would like to draw your attention on the tendency to politicize these issues. There are governments and political forces that

tend to resort to the very noble concern of protecting minority rights as a substitute for promoting territorial claims that otherwise are in no way accepted by international community. This tendency is an expression of an aggressive nationalism that prevails in certain countries, in particular in Central Europe but in other regions as well, that is today the most significant de-stabilizing factor and source of endangering international peace and security.

The overemphasis on minority issues only maintains and stimulates national and nationalistic feelings and even passions, which have extremely serious consequences, especially for Eastern and Central European countries where democratic structures are fragile and the economies ruined after the communist experiments.

I strongly urge that we should all learn from the experience of the Western countries after the Second World War when all the efforts were focused on economic recovery and development and on strengthening of democratic structures of the respective states. The same approach is valid today. The solution of minorities' issues in the states that freed themselves from the communist rule lies in respect for human rights, in building the rule of law and in the economic take-off rather than in international guarantees whatever they might be.

A code of conduct of states in their dealings related to minority protection issues is highly needed too.

Mr. Chairman,

We have come to Vienna inspired by what can be synthetically posited as the European idea. We are here to tackle what has been perceived - in the wake and during the preparatory process - as a certain dichotomy in the field of human rights.

A certain feeling of dismay might arise taking into account that human right abuses continue unabated while refinement of the tools to deal with these acts is relentlessly pursued. This discrepancy has been repeatedly exposed in statements of the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, and of Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahim Fall.

We have before us valuable proposals aimed at promoting stronger and more coherent United Nations human rights institutions. I welcome these proposals and hope that they could be refined and materialized through the debates of this Conference.

I would add one last word on the economic dimension of the human rights. We could debate endlessly on the theoretical meaning and content of a right to development and of the entire range of socio-economic rights, and we will not be able to deny that civil and political rights are deprived of any sense against the background of poverty, famine and ominous diseases. On this point, the debate has to turn pragmatic. The international community could start by identifying the obstacles by posing minimal standards and requirements on this level and provide adequate monitoring thereto.

The Vienna World Conference on Human Rights will probably mark a last decisive opportunity to bring human rights preoccupations from within the United Nations into the next century. I hope we will make full use of it, by establishing through the decisions we are going to make at this Conference, an international respect-for-human-rights environment. This the key to international peace and security.

May I say, in concluding my remarks, Mr. Chairman, that I am impressed with the arrangements of this Conference and want to express the deep gratitude of the Romanian delegation to the Austrian government and people for their perfect hospitality.

CRVENKOVSKI, Stevo (President):

I thank His Excellency for his important statement. The Chief of Protocol will now escort His Excellency to his seat. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Amre Moussa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt. Excellency, you have the floor.

MOUSSA, Amre (Egypt), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY – CULTURAL PLURALISM – DEVELOPMENT - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS – RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION - PALESTINIANS

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. President,

This Conference has been held in the last decade of the 20th century. Essentially there has been very rich and intense human experience and it has raised hopes for a tomorrow full of abundance and wellbeing. A page has been turned on ignorance and other development. We have high hopes for tomorrow that will grant humanity what has not been available to it today and yesterday.

This Conference has taken place at a time when we are seeing the crumbling of a world order and system with its positive and negative aspects; and we are waiting for a new order, the shape of which we are not altogether clear about. This could be the time of joint development, though the first few steps that we are taking gave rise to concern and need to be taken cautiously and warily. We have seen the possibility sparkle of better human rights but we have also seen the possibility of the bitterness of human rights abuse as has been said yesterday. The worst what we have seen so far is Bosnia and Herzegovina and what has taken place there – murders, terrorism, expulsions, rapes. And this is within a context of ethnic cleansing that is the worst aspect of racism and one of the greatest abuses of human rights.

The people and the nations in the middle of this century, after the destructive force of the Second World War, have got together in order to come up with a declaration of human rights. The United Nations has played the role of a pioneer in human rights, contributed to the fight against colonialism and emphasized the rights of the community and individual, the oppression of poverty, ignorance and disease. But individual's way forward and humanity's way forward has not been smooth and easy. The United Nations efforts were hindered by totalitarian regimes who continued to oppress rights and oppress the thought and human action. Greed has hampered their efforts too. This has had an impact on all the human situations and on human rights, in particular, in some societies.

Mr. President,

The human rights represent one of the main priorities for which Egypt has defined a human vision without any borders, which goes back to the very depth of its thousand-year old civilization when individual had a choice position in history. The individual had the right to life, to a cult, to liberty, to found a family, to have freedom of expression. This was one of the main concerns for Egypt. Egypt has always granted a special position for an individual as an individual and this has been reflected in religions and prevailed throughout the centuries. Egypt has always respected individual without any other thoughts behind it. We have seen the emergence of human beings in Egypt as an exceptional position. People have always found a place for refugees in Egypt. They have always found a platform in Egypt to speak from; and newspapers were always available in order to ensure the respect of fundamental human rights and the protection of the individual. The dignity of the family and individuals have always been protected and inherent, their rights are equal and alienable, whether we talk about men or women. The recognition of this is the very basis of liberty, justice and peace throughout the world.

All people are born equal in their rights. They enjoy their rights and they should be able to do this without discrimination regardless of race, color, religion, creed, opinion, ethnic or social origin, riches or birth. Each and every individual has right to freedom, liberty and to security. Every individual has right to education, work, property and has the right to found the family. Every individual has the right to freedom of opinion, of expression and every individual has the right to participate in the management of his country's affairs. All these inalienable rights are unquestionably so. Egypt has always consecrated these rights and respected them. Egypt has always respected the right of human being to life, to security without any violation, without any threats and intimidation.

Now, basing ourselves in this conviction and in order to promote this right, the Egyptian society has the responsibility to face up to those who have held up the work on terrorism and violence. Egypt had to appeal to the right and legitimacy and legal forces in order to consecrate democracy and finally so that reality should not be lost in the mass of lies. Terrorism was not allowed to prevail; it constitutes an infringement of human rights. Human rights cannot be used as a screen to shield other practices based on the violence. The latter have no right to use as a pretext human rights slogans as they, in fact, denied and flouted these same human rights with their crimes and practices.

Mr. President,

As it figures in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, rights of the society too are very important. The individual has obligations himself vis-a-vis the community he belongs to. This is why a society and a state need to protect the rights and obligations within the framework of a social system based on justice, freedom and security. Similarly, as we have also talked about the rights of the peoples, these have been codified within the United Nations. The political, social, economic and cultural rights are respected within the United Nations, and all this within the context of perfect harmony.

Human rights are a single entity, and the rights of individual cannot be seen separately from the rights of the community, they are indivisible. Each and every one has the right to life and self-determination, which is why we think there should be an integral overall vision of human rights based on harmonious relationships between various rights within an appropriate framework. The framework should be democracy. Now it is perfectly true that notions of human rights have developed and expanded with the development of international community and individual life. That is why everyone has to agree on this new concept, a framework which should be based on consensus and should not be imposed by the mighty on the weak. There should not be monopoly of any given society or civilization. Human rights are universal through their application. The violation of human rights is a source of destabilization in international relations which requires international action as we see in those points of crisis and armed conflict. We have seen rise for concern in the way that human rights are being submitted to political considerations. There are different criteria been applied. Sometimes a blind eye is turned.

Mr. President,

We see many different societies, different civilizations but no conflict should necessarily occur as the result of that. Nevertheless, there are standards that exist and social behavior that are not always homogeneous. Some of us have come from countries that have developing economies, weak economies or economies that are saturated and overloaded. Others come from countries where Christianity is the basis for the civilization and other countries where Islam is the framework for the people's identity. The same goes for other countries whose conscience is based on different religions and creeds. Some of us come from societies where spiritual values are the basis for all life and others where materialism is the main pillar for the life in their society. Using that as a reality we are being pushed to work jointly to reassess the situation appealing for unity, harmony and consultation in a spirit of solidarity, responsibility, on an equal footing – in order to promote all aspects of social and economic life, in order to pave the way forward and to put an end to the difficulties encountered by our societies, in particular by developing societies, in their attempts to ensure a minimum standard of living for their citizens.

We are convinced that cooperation and international support will help to lighten the burden that is weighing down on these people since the right to development is something that could really facilitate all the other rights. Those countries that are going through stages of social transformation require solidarity and specific assistance, apart from any rhetoric and standards based on partial standards that are superficial or motivated by various objectives, which leads to more question marks than they actually bring about solutions. The peoples of the world require participation, understanding, communication. We need to assist these people. We need to try to understand them. We need to have a good appreciation of the situations prevailing.

Mr. President,

The human rights are not the property of any given civilization. They are not a monopoly either of any given culture. This is a heritage that belongs to the whole of humanity. No society should be placed in the situation where they demand another society to be subject to it.

The contributions by the NGOs in promoting human rights help to affirm for us the importance of these NGOs and their need not to deviate from the ultimate objective, which represents constructive cooperation with various countries in order to promote human rights. This means that the NGOs have the responsibility to understand well the prevailing economic and social realities.

The countries in the sovereignty require a respect just as human beings have a dignity to protect. We need new world social contracts, Mr. President, where the various parties and societies will get together, the civilizations and cultures of the world can get together. We cannot follow just one single mode of life, one single example. We need a consensus based around rules that took into consideration the characteristics of various societies in order to come out with a perfect framework that would frame common thought, that would bring together everyone in its application.

Mr. President,

The world has suffered through many lengthy periods through the policies of racial discrimination up to the time when apartheid was annihilated in South Africa, as Nazism was in Europe. Nevertheless, Mr. President, we continue to suffer from racist terrorism such as racial purifications. These are false objectives that aim at the emancipation through force at the expense of the human individual. We see the drama unfolding before us and its bloody consequences, consequences of Serbian nationalism together with other nationalisms that have shown a monstrous exterior and how it leads to murders and sub-development together with barbaric acts that represent a crime against humanity as represented in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are going through pages of history that we hoped to lay a long way back. This is still the object of condemnation of all the peoples of the world. They have not been able to profit from the lessons of history. We need to try to save the world together with its complex international relations. We need to put an end to the drama unfolding there, which could lead to a historic catastrophe. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and other peoples will not be able to forgive contemporary history if these barbaric acts are not put to an end straightaway. The massacres have distorted our views of contemporary society and has undermined our faith in justice and human rights.

The Serbian aggression, the drama unfolding in Bosnia and Herzegovina have put into question the credibility of recognized principles in protecting human rights. We want to express solidarity with those who want to intervene, to put an end to that drama. The intervention in this critical stage is vital. We need to avoid being accomplices by turning a blind eye to this flouting of human rights. Human rights are, after all, indivisible. We cannot apply different criteria to a different situation. If we did do so, this would only undermine the whole structure of human rights. We need to be credible. We need to be very cautious in setting up new mechanisms within the framework of human rights up to such a time when we can ensure a concept that is recognized by everyone. There should be a consensus around these concepts and we need to ensure that action is going to be forthcoming, as it has not been up till now. There is a possibility of having an international court judging criminals for their war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. I do not know whether all this will come about speedily enough in order to judge those crimes that have been put in the shade for not to see the crimes and crimes of apartheid.

Mr. President,

We hope that this World Conference meets with success. We want to overcome together all the obstacles that continue to lie in the way of respect for human rights and their protection. Whatever the social environment that we belong to, whatever world we live in, whether it be within a framework of discrimination or violent practices flouting human rights, flouting the right to self-determination that is an inalienable right for the peoples of the world, we are certain that the only guarantee for peace and security is to enable men to exercise their human rights. Basing ourselves on that, we invite all the people

of the Middle East to ensure that peace prevails in this region and that the Palestinian people should be able to enjoy their inalienable right, the right to self-determination.

Mr. President,

Technological advances and the gap that we are trying to fill between North and South to try to break away from the vicious circle that exists between growth and underdevelopment, all these are part and parcel of a chain in cooperation in order to ensure human rights and respect of liberties. In this human context, the action of Egypt takes place within the framework of a solid plan based on a clear vision that is built upon the Charter of the United Nations and the heritage of our people, the heritage of tolerance based on international cooperation and on the institutions that help to safeguard human rights. We have tried to find the best possible way to promote human rights in order to ensure that the path of justice is unhampered, in order to ensure that a man can prevail at the international, national, regional levels so that human dignity is left intact, so that the flag of peace and security and stability flies over our territories, so that this historic occasion taking place here in Vienna should be a way of starting a new era for the humanity.

Thank you.

CRVENKOVSKI, Stevo (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

SKUBISZEWSKI, Krzysztof (Poland):

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. President,

I wish to join all the members of the United Nations in expressing our gratitude to the Austrian government for the hospitality extended to the World Conference on Human Rights.

I intend to deal briefly with six subjects: (1) universality, (2) human rights as an international issue, (3) need for an action programme, (4) law-making and law enforcement, (5) structural reform and (6) non-governmental organizations.

Mr. Chairman,

In the twenty-five years, which elapsed since the Conference in Teheran, the world has seen both, progress and failure, in the implementation of human rights. At the dawn of 21st century, the violations of these rights remain among the main challenges to civilization; they are a threat to peace, security and sustained development.

The principles of universality and indivisibility of human rights are the cornerstone of the legal regulation and of the practice based on law. The universality stems from the equal dignity of all human beings, which is the primary source of human rights.

However, the problem, as we know, is not simple. At least two arguments are adduced to weaken universality.

The first consists in the economic differentiation of the world, which accounts for the divergent priorities in the policies of states affecting people. There is also a rather confusing discussion on the conditionality

of human rights protection. Poverty is an enemy of human rights but it is not an excuse for violating or restricting these rights.

The second argument is what is often described as cultural peculiarities. We all respect different cultures and civilizations; they are our mutual enrichment. But that is no reason for lowering or diluting human rights protection. Any relativization of human rights leads to their eventual denial.

Mr. Chairman,

I want to say a few words about human rights as an international issue. The indivisibility of peace, security, human rights and sustained development is borne out by past and present experience. The experience shows that in many instances violation of human rights has international repercussions. That alone eliminates any exception of domestic jurisdiction and justifies concern by the United Nations or regional organizations such as the Council of Europe and the Organization of American states. But let me remind you that apart from any direct or indirect international effect, which a violation of human rights may have, the very issue of and the very respect for these rights underwent a process of internationalization.

Human rights are today an international problem. Consequently, respect for human rights is no longer a matter which remains essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of the state. It is, on the contrary, a matter that Member States must settle in accordance with international law, including the law of the United Nations. Here Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter is no bar to action by the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

There is a need for an action programme. We must take advantage of the favorable international climate created by the growing recognition of the link between democracy, rule of law and human rights, especially in view of the liquidation in many countries of the authoritarian or totalitarian regimes.

The Conference should initiate the process of devising solutions and mechanisms that would open new perspectives of the international promotion and effective protection of human rights. We need the will and the power to take decisive steps to stop human rights violations including those on a large scale. This Conference should launch an action programme. That programme should provide for aid with regard to constitutional reform in the new democracies. It is a type of aid that in the long run may prove more important than financial assistance. Let me suggest the elaboration by the Secretary-General of an *agenda for human rights*, which would, I am sure, play a similar thought-provoking and practical role as his *Agenda for Peace*.

Mr. Chairman,

There is law-making and law enforcement. The Polish government accepts the view that the process of human rights standard-setting has been accomplished for the time being. Unfortunately, a number of states have not ratified the human rights conventions, including the international covenants. The Conference should urge such states to reconsider their position. Of course, where indispensable, standard-setting should be continued. Examples at hand are rights of national, ethnic and cultural minorities, human rights affected by the mass migration, rights of aliens, human rights within the context of progress in biology, genetics and medicine, and finally rights of most vulnerable groups. And let us not forget that any law-making in the sphere of human rights has to abide by the commands of morality.

At present, the main effort should focus on ensuring respect for the established human rights. In practical terms, this should mean improvement of the implementation machinery, expansion of means of preventing human rights violations and generally strengthening the United Nations structures responsible for human rights. Poland insists on a more resolute reaction to the noncompliance with the law on the protection of victims of conflicts that are internal or which combine the elements of civil and

international wars. Former Yugoslavia is a case in point. Reports by Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, special rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, are pertinent here.

The development of the international protection of human rights has brought about a proliferation of mechanisms and procedures. Today we face the task of their rationalization.

The Polish delegation is firmly in favor of making the mechanism of individual petitions to international organs broadly accessible. Otherwise the individual does not enjoy direct international protection, and we find such directness relevant in terms of effectiveness. We support the proposal to establish the procedure of individual petitions in regard to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and rights of women. Guided by the principle *ubi ius, ibi remedium*, the international community should consider the feasibility of creating an international human rights court.

The perpetrators of human rights violations, in particular the grave ones, must know that they will eventually be brought to justice. Poland welcomes the decisions of the Security Council on the international penal procedure.

The lesson of the recent experience is that the United Nations should elaborate methods and means of prompt and effective reaction to the mass violations of human rights and humanitarian law. I am referring to the two special sessions of the Commission on Human Rights. While conciliatory procedures and good offices offered by the UN organs should continue to occupy a prominent place, we should not hesitate to take forcible measures where necessary. The government of Poland welcomes the growing involvement of the General Assembly and the Security Council in the enforcement of human rights.

Mr. President,

There is much talk about the structural reform in the United Nations. Let me observe that what is striking in our activity is the lack of proper correlation between the high rank accorded to human rights in the Charter and their rather low position in the structure of the United Nations. That deficiency detracts from the efficacy of our efforts and sometimes makes the meeting of current needs impossible. The present Conference constitutes an opportunity for amending this inconsistency.

The upgrading of human rights in the structure of the United Nations requires complex and internally coherent measures. They must consist in enhancing the position of the Commission on Human Rights and in strengthening the Centre for Human Rights. Ultimately, the Commission should be upgraded so as to ensure its direct access to the General Assembly and in some cases to the Security Council. We share the view concerning the need for a reform of the Commission's competence and work.

Also, one could suggest the merger of the Second and Third Main Committees of the Assembly, that is the Economic and Social Committees, while a new main Committee could be established to deal exclusively with human rights.

Poland supports the idea of creating the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The idea deserves careful examination as part of the adaptation of the UN structures to new developments.

The Conference should also urge a reallocation of means in the framework of the United Nations regular budget in favor of human rights.

Mr. Chairman,

My final point is about the non-governmental organizations. The present intergovernmental forum in Vienna cannot pass over in silence the fact that the condition of human rights depends largely on the involvement of the non-governmental organizations and their members. The non-governmental organizations disseminate knowledge on human rights, draw our attention to human rights violations,

assist victims and are often in the forefront of the search for optimal solutions. The Polish government pays tribute to their enormous devotion and work. The Conference should appeal to the Commission on Human Rights to finalize the draft declaration on the rights and responsibilities of human rights defenders.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me join the voice of Poland to the voices of those who hope that the spirit of solidarity will prevail and will enable us to map the road well into the new age. The United Nations must act to ease human fate and enhance human dignity. We must be constantly aware of our duties - for the common good.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CRVENKOVSKI, Stevo (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Shimon Peres, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel. Excellency, you have the floor.

PERES, Shimon (Israel):

Keywords: ASIA - EDUCATION - CULTURAL PLURALISM - TOLERANCE - ISRAEL - PALESTINIANS - MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Chairman,

Bread, freedom, peace, justice and fresh air are the rights that make us human.

As we leave the 20th century, we can see how those rights were violated.

The greatest shame of this epoch still hovers over the century: the shame of totalitarian regimes, Nazism and fascism, and other dictatorships, which frustrated our freedoms and peace as they wrought fear, poverty, oppression, and bloodshed.

With the collapse of Bolshevism, we took leave of a perceived division of our globe - West and East, North and South.

The West and East symbolized the ideological split, which became a military confrontation: the NATO Treaty vis-a-vis the Warsaw Pact. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the West bid farewell to a world of identifiable enemies and moved into a world of unidentified problems.

The distinction between North and South was supposedly economic. The North - developed, the South - underdeveloped; the North - rich, the South - poor; The North - white, the South - non-white; the North practicing a market economy, the South without a market or an economy. The term "third world" implied the existence of a "first" world.

This division, Mr. Chairman, is no longer a reality.

Asia, the heart of the South, is undergoing a dramatic transformation, and prejudices of geography, race, and color are being shattered.

The moment Asian countries set belligerence aside and invested in education, in nurturing science, in employing high technology, we learned that a situation can change even as the location remains unchanged. And we have learned anew that all human beings are born equal. That is the foundation of really Jewish faith: Each person is created in the image of the Lord, a non-discriminatory Master.

We reflect the times in which we live. It is for us to create an environment in which everybody can equally enjoy human rights.

So, we have to heed the new winds of our time, to adopt new positions, to change rather than to repeat.

We have to take leave of the sword. The sources of might and wealth today are intellectual rather than physical. They cannot be attained by wars. Education determines the fortunes of nations. The world we live in respects economy more than strategy.

We cannot remain indifferent to terrorism, to atrocities, to cruelty, to death. In situations of internal bloodshed where armies of nations cannot handle them, there is a need to have a United Nations army. Those who commit atrocities should be brought to trial.

The highest priority should be given to universal education. Ignorance, like hatred, is a menace to peaceful coexistence. Knowledge is the real treasure of our time. It is also the best guarantee for human rights.

We call for political and economic democracy in every corner of the world. The democratization of governments as well as the development of modern economy depends mainly on us. We have to free our lives of the whims of despots and enable the people to elect their leaders and select their goods in a free system and in a market economy.

And then, all governments must be founded on tolerance: tolerance of religions, ethnicity, nationality, and both sexes. Human rights will never achieve its true goals until the women will have equal opportunity to men. People are not created identical. Therefore, the essence of pluralism is that people should have an equal right to be different from each other.

The opposite of tolerance is oppression. Oppression is very costly. It is the cost of a secret police, a shining army, of an evil propaganda. It makes nations poor in food and rich in fear.

Anti-Semitism brought untold suffering to the Jewish people. It still exists, even in places where there are no longer Jews. It is still alive where there are only Jewish cemeteries. It is a cancer of the intellect. It poisons the soul of the people. Eventually it makes them victims of their own evils.

We are on the side of all victims, whether black or white, whether they are Muslims, Christians, Hindus or Jews; whether they are Turks, Bosnians, or Somalis. Their fate is our fate.

Jewish history would never permit domination of another people, neither in the past nor in the present, neither Palestinians nor Arabs. Therefore, the conflict between us is not over civil rights but over the right solution. We prefer a solution that provides Israel with what she is short of – security, and that provides the Palestinians with what they are short of – self-government. No mother in Israel is happy when her son has to soldier the alleyways of Gaza. Shared tragedies should be replaced with shared understanding. In the negotiations with the delegation of the Palestinian people, we agreed to form a committee on human rights. I hope that the negotiations will gain new momentum and that before long the Palestinians themselves will be responsible for human rights in their communities.

We call on the Middle Eastern countries to draw lessons from the new Asia, from the new Europe and to build a new Middle East. Instead of continuing the past conflicts of divided sides, let us take the side of a prosperous Middle East for all of us.

We need a democratic Middle East. Prosperity and stability will effectively be maintained when the Middle East will be a region for the people not for the rulers.

We need a Middle East free from oppression, free from discrimination, free from occupation, and without hostages, without terror, without fanaticism.

We need a greening of the Middle East. By recycling existing water and producing new, by coupling land and science, by opening borders and inviting tourists who will bring tranquility, by adopting modern economy, by restraining the race of arms we can provide our children with food and hope.

Mr. Chairman,

It is for our generation to take the pains to transform the old region into a new reality. It is for our generation to take out the desert from the land, the salt from the water, the violence from the people. We have to become a new human coalition, which knows not only how to pray but also how to provide prayers with answers.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CRVENKOVSKI, Stevo (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Josef Zieleniec, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. Excellency, you have the floor.

ZIELENIEC, Josef (Czech Republic):

Keywords: ABUSE OF ADMINISTRATIVE POWER - CZECH REPUBLIC - HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION - ARMED INCIDENTS OR CONFLICTS - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Chairman, dear colleagues, dear delegates,

It is a great honor for me to address this important forum called on the occasion of the forty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; a forum that is in the centre of attention not only of us politicians but the whole world public.

Before leaving for this Conference somebody asked me, "Will you also speak about Yugoslavia?" A simple and logical question asked with the aim to find out whether the meeting of politicians from all over the world will be only formal and superficial or whether it will seriously pose the question of what should be the basis for such a conception of human rights, which would be universally acceptable in such perplexing situations as is that of the former Yugoslavia.

Today, politics become more and more the technique of mastering general problems perceived by people as political. The question of man as an individual and a subject as if no longer belonged to politics. Conflicts in the world of today prove that the instrumental idea of politics as instructions for use no longer conforms to reality. We urgently need a human rights dimension as a protection against a political abuse of power and this is why we are meeting at this global level not only as politicians but above all as people. The conception of human rights was not drawn just for its own sake but as a protection against absolute power and its abuse.

The essence and strength of humanity rests in its universality. If the idea of human rights is not to be a privilege of a chosen few it must be based on common values. Is the European civilization a universal model for all humankind? What are the common values of humankind? The present Conference will certainly not find an answer to these questions but this does not mean that we should not seek it. We owe it not only to ourselves but above all to the so-called third world countries.

We are faced in Europe today by the question of what we understand under the term of Europe, where are its boundaries, and on what values it agrees. The strict geopolitical definition of the "first" and "second" world has disappeared, the division as to values remains and the threat of further disintegration is on the horizon. What else if not the disintegration of the system suggests the term "Between-Europe" that was recently used to indicate Central and East European countries?

We can cope with disintegrative tendencies, the most extreme expression of which is the war in Yugoslavia, only if our vision of Europe is not reduced to the Communities as they exist today. Such a vision is needed both in the West and the East.

We can cope with the further splitting of the world as a result of economic, social, cultural and religious differences only on the basis of finding common, universally accepted values. Respect for these values is in the interest of both the South and the North.

Mr. Chairman,

The importance of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights is amplified by the fact that it is the first global Conference of this kind called after a long period of twenty-five years. Since the Teheran World Conference on Human Rights the political map of the world changed dramatically. In many countries these changes were the result of the longing of people for dignity and the faith that a human being is entitled to certain rights that are inalienable even if the state power denies them.

The changes that my own country, too, underwent after the 1989 revolution were inspired in the decisive manner by the idea of human rights. This idea proves to form an inseparable part of international relations and has a direct impact on international security as well as on economic and social progress.

After more than forty years of existence of a hypertrophic socialist state that considered itself authorized to decide about people's rights, the Czech Republic strongly feels the need to weaken the excessive influence of the state as well as certain prudence as regard all interference of the state into private life, however nobly it is meant. Our country has a rich experience with the hypocritical symbiosis of lofty proclamations and the practical impossibility to exercise one's rights. This is why we are realistic about human rights. Although we know that goodwill and endeavor are not enough to make the situation ideal overnight, we still believe that people have the right to ask individual governments to strive for the observance of the fundamental human rights and to guarantee that a man can freely express his own will.

A mere proclamation of human rights cannot solve the social and economic problems of the world of today. The idea of making the world perfect by leaps and bounds proved in our history not only unrealizable but also dangerous in their consequences. Our sober approach to social rights is based on the fact that their implementation presupposes a rich country able to ensure them. Our skeptical approach to collective rights stems from our traumatic experience – that rights of a group are claimed not by its representatives, that crimes are committed and elementary rights of individuals and groups are violated in the name of the collective right.

In approaching the seemingly compact structure of human rights - civil, political, economic, social, cultural, minority etc., each society proceeds from its own point of view, experiences, traditions, culture. The World Conference on Human Rights is faced by an uneasy task of reshaping the platform of human rights so as to meet the demands and needs of a great number of countries often differing in their specific conditions arising from historical traditions, social development, mentality and wide range of values recognized in individual countries.

An extremely important role in the sphere of human rights was played in the past decades by the United Nations, which made international protection of human rights one of its priorities shortly after the end of World War Two. A whole series of international treaties and conventions on human rights, worked out thanks to the efforts of the UN, now form the basis for the universal standard of their legal protection. In tune with the requirements of these documents, control mechanisms were gradually created to facilitate the international community to monitor relationship between the state power and the individual, which was until recently considered the exclusive internal domain of the state.

However, experiences show that the struggle for human rights of every individual, wherever on earth, is far from won. Many concrete examples prove that, particularly in crisis situations, we often meet with an absolute denial of the principle under which the freedom of one individual ends there where the freedom of another begins. Regrettably, there still exist cases when this approach becomes part of the official policy of a state.

My government is of the opinion that the coming talks must at any rate proceed from the universal validity of the protection of human rights and the legitimacy of the interest of the international community in cases of their violation in concrete countries.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,

The high level at which the Vienna World Conference is meeting proves the great attention the international community pays to human rights and creates favorable prerequisites for producing results and their embodiment in the final document. In our view, the draft final document as worked out by the Preparatory Committee is a good basis for the deliberations of the Conference.

We expect that the Conference will also deal with serious instances of violation of human rights and their consequences. In our view, civil wars and phenomena accompanying armed conflicts in various parts of the world, including the European continent, are the most dangerous examples of non-respect for fundamental human rights. The most shocking cases of absolute degradation of a human individual are taking place under the pretext of ensuring collective rights. New *fleurs du mal* never seen before are beginning to bloom.

The Czech Republic wishes to contribute to achieving the basic aims of the Conference. Although we realize that the pressing problems troubling the world cannot be solved within the ten days of our deliberations, we still firmly hope the Conference will produce desirable results.

We shall concentrate particularly on improving international cooperation in worldwide protection of human rights. In our opinion after nearly half a century since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, marked by the process of creating international norms in the field of human rights, what is generally most needed now is a more thorough fulfilment of existing obligations. One of the prerequisites is the spreading of the knowledge of international norms and the ways of their implementation. We consider this activity of priority importance for the nearest future.

Sincere and constructive cooperation of governments within existing control and monitoring mechanisms is also of utmost importance. From this point of view, we cannot speak of the past period as without problems. Suspicion and mistrust of control mechanisms have never done any service to the protection of human rights. After the Vienna World Conference, directly participating in the implementation activities should be also those whom our present efforts concern, for example, the individuals themselves. However, this requires changes in approaches to the international claims' mechanisms, their greater flexibility and credibility.

In this connection, we should mention the irreplaceable role of non-governmental organizations in monitoring human rights. The World Conference should consider the ways of achieving general recognition of this contribution of non-governmental organizations, of ensuring the utilization of their activities for the UN system and encouraging states to cooperate with them openly.

Mr. Chairman, dear delegates,

Let me conclude by thanking on behalf of my government all organizers of this Conference and mainly our hosts – the government of Austria - for their efforts in arranging this meeting. Let us all do our best for the due realization of these efforts and for coming up to what the world public rightly expects from us, participants in the World Conference on Human Rights.

If the man who asked me about Yugoslavia on my departure could be sure at the end of the Conference of the birth of such a control mechanism that will be generally recognized and capable of effective supervision on a worldwide scale, of the growing determination and practical ability of the participating sides to intervene and to defend human rights if necessary even by force in the name of common values and within the framework of agreed dimensions, then we can say that our talks were not be in vain.

Thank you for your attention.

CRVENKOVSKI, Stevo (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Anatoli Zlenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. Excellency, you have the floor.

ZLENKO, Anatoli (Ukraine):

Keywords: INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS - UKRAINE - MINORITIES - WOMEN - ENVIRONMENT - INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates.

During the forty-five years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the present generation has witnessed political and economic changes that have drastically altered the image of the planet. Disintegration of the totalitarian system on the European continent, end of the bipolarity of the world that had caused ideological confrontation open new prospects for international cooperation and require new approaches in the field of human rights protection.

An integral international human rights protection system has become one of the tangible achievements of the last decades. During this period, the United Nations' role and prestige have considerably increased. Regional cooperation has acquired generally recognized significance. Renunciation of the human rights policy as an internal affair of a state has become a genuine revolutionary factor in international relations.

However, one has to admit that today principles of freedom, justice and dignity defined by the Declaration of Human Rights remain an unattainable dream for millions of inhabitants of the planet. Obstacles mentioned at the Teheran Conference twenty-five years ago still hamper free development of human personality. Moreover, under scientific and technological revolution problems that quite recently used to have local or regional character turned into global ones. Outbreaks of racism, racial and religious intolerance are becoming more frequent. They provoke mass violations of human rights. The gap between principles declared in international legal documents and their implementation is becoming wider.

The international community should spare no effort to create favorable conditions in the last years of the 20th century for gradual elimination of these contradictions. The present Conference is to become a starting line for these efforts.

Where to begin? In our view, international community, first of all, should intensify the process of the accession to basic international legal documents on human rights. I am fully convinced that regional peculiarities should not impede ensuring the principle of human rights universality.

But accession is only the beginning. The prime importance in this domain is to bring national legislation to conformity with international standards, to establish relevant mechanism of their implementation.

Each country has its own experience in this field, its own reserves and possibilities. The proclamation of its state sovereignty and independence has become a starting point for Ukraine. General outlines of

the new Ukrainian statehood are defined in the Declaration on the State Sovereignty of Ukraine adopted on 16 July 1990. The law-making process developed on the basis of this document is aimed at ensuring universally recognized human values, building a democratic society centered on the development of human personality, its freedoms, rights and dignity.

Declaration of the Rights of Nationalities and the Law on National Minorities in Ukraine recently adopted eliminated inter-ethnic contradictions and provided for a possibility to avoid conflicts, preserve peace and stability. In my opinion, this constitutes one of our tangible achievements.

It is necessary to stress here that Ukraine has ratified practically all the international legal instruments in the field of human rights. In accordance with the Law of Ukraine on the implementation of international treaties of 1991, those international documents ratified by Ukraine constitute an integral part of Ukrainian legislature and are applied in Ukraine as internal laws. By doing that, we have considerably simplified the mechanism of implementation of the norms and standards on human rights into Ukrainian national law.

The observance of the national laws and international agreements is controlled by a Standing Commission on Human Rights of the Ukrainian Parliament. Relevant structures are established in the government and local authorities.

Indivisibility is the second basic human rights principle to which Ukraine's devotion is confirmed by its policy. Despite the fact that the process of building a new society takes place under economic crisis, inflation and decline in living standards of the population, protection of the most vulnerable groups of citizens is given constant attention by our Parliament and government. The experience we have previously gained in the field of social protection of the population should in no way be lost.

We support the ideas expressed by previous speakers with regard to the role of women in modern society, protection of their rights, ensuring their full equality and participation in the processes of democratization and development.

We also share the concerns of those delegations that spoke in favor of the intensification of efforts aimed at protection of environment. Ukraine, the country that has suffered from the tragedy of nuclear contamination as a result of Chernobyl disaster, pays special attention to ecological rights. It is extremely important to our country as it is confronted with this burden practically alone.

The participants of the Inter-Regional Conference in Strasbourg early this year who discussed human rights problems at the dawn of the 21st century came to a common conclusion that the Vienna Conference should raise the alarm. The international community, free from ideological chains at present, should turn its face to millions of people deprived of the most elementary things. The international cooperation in this field requires new approaches and a thorough revision. Ensuring human rights, a central element of strategy of development, should become our reference point for the future.

The success of the present Conference will much depend on how we manage to avoid further confrontation in solving this issue, polarization between the North and the South. Knowing the bitter experience of many years of ideological warfare and discord, we are calling today for constructive cooperation. We are convinced that such organizations as UNESCO and ILO having relieved themselves from ideological dependence could make at this stage a considerable contribution to this cooperation.

It is hard to overestimate the significance of the international solidarity for the cause of ensuring human rights in all their integrity. Especially when we talk about new nations that have just embarked on the road of democratic transformations, for they are developing their statehood under conditions of constant pressure.

Mikhailo Dragomanov, Ukrainian scientist and philosopher of the past century emphasized that retaining national sovereignty was the guarantee of ensuring human rights. For only an independent, free, democratic state is capable of guaranteeing to its citizens the rights in all their integrity and indivisibility.

It will not be an exaggeration to say that it was largely due to the support of the world community that Ukraine established and strengthened its independence in a peaceful way. This is the sign of our times, the herald of the future civilized interstate relations.

Specific hopes we place on the regional cooperation. Upon embarking on the road of sovereignty and independence Ukraine declared its intention to become a full-fledged participant of the CSCE and a member of other European structures. The documents elaborated within the frames of the European process provide for establishing human rights universality, humanization of relations between an individual and a state - a core of security and cooperation on the continent and in the world as a whole.

We express satisfaction with the cooperation within the CSCE framework and we approve the functioning of its human dimension mechanism, the Institution of the High Commissioner for National Minorities in particular.

Creation of the post of the High Commissioner is a very useful and timely step. Protection of human rights and the rights of minorities is a crucial factor for prevention of mass fight situations. This is extremely important for the countries that emerged on the territory of the former Soviet Union, where millions of people found themselves out of their ethnic motherland.

For Ukraine where a quarter of its fifty-two million population are ethnic minorities, this is a rather acute issue. In our policy we proceed from the fact that securing minority rights is an important factor of strengthening stability both inside the country and in the region.

Taking into consideration all the complexity and multi-dimensional character of the problem of national minorities, we attach great importance to bilateral cooperation in this sphere. Recently Ukraine has developed bilateral draft agreements on national minorities protection and forwarded them practically to all Newly Independent States.

In our view, bilateral cooperation provides for necessary preconditions to protect the rights of minorities on a reciprocal basis. One cannot demand from a neighboring country adequate attention to a minority without performing relevant policy on its own territory. As one of the priority tasks, we consider today elaborating confidence-building measures.

Specificity of the national minorities' problem on the territory of the former USSR demands, in our view, the increase of the mediation role of the CSCE structures. We think that the High Commissioner for National Minorities should enhance monitoring procedures with regard to bilateral agreements in this field.

Ukraine is interested in strengthening the UN Centre for Human Rights, expanding its functions and the UN activities in general in the sphere of human rights. We support the proposal to establish a post of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. This is a very delicate issue. The costs for his activities should be covered at the expense of the redistribution of the Organization's budget and voluntary contributions.

Mr. Chairman,

The significance of any event in international life is better perceived from afar. Today we cannot predict the outcome of the World Conference on Human Rights.

The goal of our Conference is expressed by its motto "Human rights: to know them, demand them, protect them." This concerns everybody – governments, parliaments, non-governmental organizations, every individual. Real change could be attained only by common efforts.

We hope that the participants of this important international forum will demonstrate their political will and wisdom in order to find common approaches to cooperation in the field of human rights in such a complex, multidimensional and turbulent world. This is our major task today.

Thank you.

[Change of the president]

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Klaus Kinkel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany. Excellency, you have the floor.

KINKEL, Klaus (Germany), spoke in German:

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS - TREATIES - REGIONAL COOPERATION - GERMANY - XENOPHOBIA - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS - DEVELOPMENT - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

Forty-five years after the promulgation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and twenty-five years after the First World Conference on Human Rights was held in Teheran, we meet here in Vienna in order to make the individual and his rights the focus of politics in a dramatically changed world, which is, unfortunately, not any more peaceful for that. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the Austrian government for your hospitality. The tolerance and cosmopolitan outlook of this city should both encourage and exhort us.

Communism foundered on its suppression of human rights. The ending of the East-West conflict was a victory for human rights. The world saw an opportunity to create a Golden Age. Unfortunately, this was not to be. Fifty new conflicts have since been counted. Even the consensus on human rights is at risk. My principle concern is to preserve it. In the interests of the countless victims of human rights violations, this Conference in Vienna simply must be a success. In a joint all-out endeavor, differences must be overcome.

We have witnessed inconceivable crimes during this century. Megalomania, arrogance, racism and political doctrines of salvation have led to unspeakable human rights violations. Germany played a particularly painful and reprehensible role in this. Today, people are being killed on a massive scale and systematically raped and driven out of their homes in the former Yugoslavia, just a few hundred kilometres away from here. The barbaric phrase "ethnic cleansing" has found its way into all languages. This list of terror is growing every day. Not only in the former Yugoslavia, the focus of the media's attention but in many often unknown places in the world.

The figures are truly alarming. In 1992, 125,000 complaints were recorded at the Centre for Human Rights in Vienna alone. They concerned summary and arbitrary executions, the disappearance of people, imprisonment without trial and torture. I am particularly disturbed by the fact that, contrary to international law, about 200 million children are being misused as labor.

This represents suffering on an unimaginable scale by individual human beings. An individual is never unimportant; nowhere should he be treated with disrespect.

Human rights violations can only be stopped if we hold on to the universality of human rights. Human rights apply everywhere and for all human beings, regardless of history, tradition, religious beliefs and stages of development. The world's cultural, religious and social diversity is not inconsistent with this. Precisely because the international community is so varied and diverse, it requires worldwide cooperation and a common frame of reference. It is the recognition that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights," as set forth in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Awareness of human rights has increased all over the world. This is a positive development which we must uphold despite all the negative aspects. We are not starting from scratch. We must recall the rules of international law established on the basis of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which are binding for us all. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1966 was the first of more than twenty global agreements. We now have a solid network of international conventions, which protect the various categories of human rights. Germany endorses the appeal to effect ratification by the year 2000 where this has not yet been done and to review reservations. Last week my country, Germany, resolved to accede to the First Optional Protocol to the Civil Rights Covenant.

The general belief in the universality of human rights was expressed in one form or another in all regional declarations issued during the preparations for this Conference. It is the heritage of major religions and philosophies.

Protection of human rights is no longer a matter for individual states and governments alone. The United Nations Charter expressly made it a concern for all. The great problems facing mankind such as the environment, development and the preservation of peace cannot be solved locally, in isolation, or by individual powers, no matter how powerful they are. The world has grown together. In this changed world, human rights must play a more prominent role than hitherto in all areas of international relations.

The United Nations is tangible evidence of this recognition that is gaining force and intensity from year to year. In the field of human rights, there are a host of encouraging examples of successful cooperation at regional level. I am thinking here of the relevant institutions of the Council of Europe, the CSCE as well as those in Africa and Latin America. Suffering and reason compel people of all continents to act together.

Every human being is, by virtue of his birth, endowed with inalienable rights. When these values are threatened, peace also is threatened. Whenever human rights are suppressed, we must sound a warning. Prevention is the best form of protection. The best guarantee includes lending assistance to those who desire to build democratic and constitutional structures of their own.

I know that we Germans, too, are observed critically. The xenophobic outrages of the last two years have appalled me and my countrymen. They are a source of genuine shame for our country. Millions of Germans have made it clear through peaceful demonstrations that they will not accept these atrocities. We will not permit crimes committed by individuals to disturb the spirit of good-neighborliness in Germany. Those who attack foreigners will fail in the face of our firm determination. We will fight xenophobia with every constitutional means, through education, information and criminal law. We are countering ignorance, intolerance and hate with our firm belief as democrats in the dignity of all human beings - Germans and foreigners alike.

However, we must not blur the difference between social evils and state terror. I acknowledge the duty of industrial nations to cooperate responsibly with developing countries in the endeavor to improve the situation of the majority of humanity who are currently struggling to survive - without hope and on the verge of starvation. The self-reliance demanded of developing countries has its equivalent in the industrial nations' responsibility to create basic conditions conducive to development and to provide assistance in a spirit of solidarity. Economic conditions cannot be allowed to make human rights an unattainable luxury for a large proportion of the world population.

Only where human rights in the economic, social, cultural and political fields are equally respected can there be any self-sustaining development. This is not a matter of political conditions but of internal prerequisites for success in development. For this reason, states that are successful in terms of democratic, human rights and economic development deserve special support.

It must be stated clearly that neither a lack in social and economic development, nor an ideology solely aimed at achieving affluence can serve to justify the denial of fundamental freedoms and political rights. The rights embodied in the two human rights Covenants must be equally respected and protected. It would, indeed, be a cynical view of human rights to allow the hungry to be silenced and subjected to torture.

We have recently made substantial progress in the further development of human rights instruments:

- The United Nations General Assembly has issued a mandate to draw up a statute for an international criminal tribunal. The pressure on those who trample human rights underfoot must be stepped up. Those who torture should not be able to sleep soundly at night.
- In order to swiftly punish the ghastly human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia, the Security Council resolved for the first time to set up an ad-hoc tribunal.
- The operational capacity of the Commission on Human Rights is increasing. It met for the first time for extraordinary sessions and at its 50th session it will discuss the appointment of a special rapporteur on violence against women. The horrific events in Bosnia and Herzegovina have demonstrated to the world what women, in particular, have to bear and suffer.

We have been waiting for too long for these important and necessary developments. This must never happen again.

The human rights must be given greater weight in the United Nations budget. The Centre for Human Rights is inadequately equipped for the growing number of diverse tasks it faces. We all know that. The United Nations allocates less than one percent of its budget to the Centre. This stands in glaring contrast to its importance. Despite their limited resources, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Director of the Centre for Human Rights, and his staff have done excellent preparatory work for this Conference. For this I would like to thank them, particularly on behalf of my country.

The United Nations' ability to act in the field of human rights must be improved. Together with its partners in the European Community, Germany advocates the creation of the office of High Commissioner for Human Rights to head the Centre. In my view, the High Commissioner should be vested with the right to take the initiative in dealing with grave human rights violations and bring them before the competent international human rights court.

Non-governmental organizations play a major role in ensuring international protection of human rights. With untiring, selfless commitment they succeed, against strong opposition, in lending a voice to people who would otherwise not be heard. We know from those who have survived camps and prisons that their worst fear was that they would be forgotten. I would like to express my respect and gratitude to all those involved in this work. In my view, a government's attitude towards human rights organizations is a measure of its conduct in the field of human rights.

Treatment of the media is another yardstick by which to measure the human rights situation in a country. The media brings light into the darkness of human rights violations. In doing so they often become victims themselves.

Mr. President,

The best instruments and the most perfect mechanism are of little avail if the international community lacks the will to use them. This also applies to our Conference. Only through open and constructive

dialogue and a readiness to relinquish maximalist and tactical positions will we achieve a result that does not disappoint the countless and mostly anonymous victims of human rights violations.

At the close of this century and on the threshold of a new millennium, the Vienna Conference offers us an opportunity to promote human rights. Let us seize this opportunity. The Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights calls upon us to protect human rights by the rule of law, "if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression."

Thank you. Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdzic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Excellency, you have the floor.

SILAJDZIC, Haris (Bosnia and Herzegovina):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - GORAŽDE (BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA) - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - SERBIA - UN. Security Council

Thank you, Mr. President,

Allow me to join those who expressed our gratefulness to the government of Austria for the warm hospitality. On my part, I thank those who speak on behalf of the victims of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a bloodstain on your TV screens today. Bosnia and Herzegovina is genocide. Bosnia and Herzegovina is everything what human rights are not. I want you to keep in mind the name of one town in eastern Bosnia. The town is called Goražde, and I will come back to that town in a while to make a proposal to this Conference.

Two hundred thousand people dead. Over one-and-half million displaced persons, refugees. Twenty-five thousand children dead. Now, hundreds of thousands in Bosnia at this moment are starving to death. Thousands of children maimed, legless, handless, armless, parentless, to remind the international community forever of the international crime of which the international community is an accomplice. Because Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a national disaster, is not a crime. It is a genocide by people, regime in Belgrade, that attacks not only the Muslims and Croats in Bosnia but Croats in Croatia, Albanians in Kosovo, Muslims in Sandzak, Hungarians in Voivodina. All in broad day light. In front of all of you. In front of those who were handed the banner of might and justice in the international community. Those are not punished. We are punished. Because we did believe in justice, we did believe in the international community. And we are guilty because we resist for so long so we have become an embarrassment to such a degree that high functionaries of the United Nations do not even mention Bosnia in their speeches. Do not even mention Bosnia.

I will not speak long. I want once more to draw your attention to the town of Goražde in eastern Bosnia that is now as we speak being savagely attacked by the Serbian forces, the Serbian forces from Serbia proper. An attack on Bosnia, which is not a place, is a country, a state-kingdom for one thousand years, for those who do not know. For Bosnia, who knew about the human rights hundreds of years ago when Jews, Hungarians and others sought refuge in Bosnia, they were given refuge and lived as first-rate citizens there ever since.

Until when shall we tolerate this? I know, I am speaking on behalf of those who cannot speak because they are denied the right to speak, they are denied the right to eat, they are denied the right to live for fifteen months without almost any action on the part of the international community. So how can we talk about human rights? Theoretically, we should speak about mechanisms to implement the human rights, to punish the tyrants wherever they are. So, Goražde today: 60,000 people waiting for death as we speak now, and it is only an hour from here by the airplane. People die in the hospitals, in the schools, in the

houses, in the streets. Hundreds of them lie dead in the streets now as we speak about human rights here, and as we go on with the so-called peace process, the process in which not only the regime in Belgrade is accused but the international community, whatever it means, for allowing the genocide to go on shamelessly.

Human rights. Where are the human rights? Where is the political will? And then the other is: what can we do? What I propose today and I hope, Mr. President, that I will be listened to, that this Conference at least appeals to the Security Council today to stop the genocide of people in Goražde. At least bearing in mind about 20,000 children in Goražde that are going to be killed. There is no doubt about it. So, I repeat, let us make an appeal today from this Conference to the Security Council. Let us demand on behalf of the participants, on behalf of humanity, because this is the crime against humanity, to stop; to take all measures because the resolutions entitle the Security Council in the United Nations to take measures, all necessary measures to stop the genocide in at least one town Goražde.

This is a test. If this is not done, I do not think there would be any credibility left for any of us, for the international community or for the United Nations. And then those who are calling from the United Nations number two for the downtrodden, for the dispossessed would be right. If this what we want, why double standards, so blatant, so open and so bloody and deadly for us? But people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this is their message, are going to fight and defend themselves because it is their inherent right, one of the oldest of the human rights, to defend themselves despite the fact that international community has tied our hands while we are being killed, while 30,000 women raped, while children maimed.

I appeal again to you to demand from the Security Council to take all necessary measures in Goražde in order to restore the credibility of this Conference, of the United Nations and of the international community.

I thank you very much.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement.

[Spoke in French]

I call on the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica on a point of order.

MAS HERRERA, Oscar (Costa Rica), spoke in Spanish, English text is edited according to the actual delivery:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. President,

On behalf of the delegation of Costa Rica, I would request you and the officers of the Conference that we take the words of the delegate of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a mandate for this assembly, and that we really officially address ourselves to the Security Council making the petitions and demands that His Excellency of Bosnia and Herzegovina has referred to. Thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank you. I now call on the Foreign Minister of Jordan.

SHARAF, Layla (Jordan):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the name of the delegation of Jordan, I would like also to support the proposal of the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina as supported by Costa Rica too.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I believe it is Lebanon.

AJAMI, Ahmad (Lebanon), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

The delegation of Lebanon supports the proposal made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina that we should send to the United Nations a representative in order to support the people of Bosnia and to put an end to the conflict that is taking place there.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I give the floor first to the Foreign Minister of Indonesia.

ALATAS, Ali (Indonesia):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere support to the proposal made by Costa Rica concerning the recommendation by the distinguished Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

Thank you. Now I call on the Foreign Minister of Malaysia.

Malaysia:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. Chairman, my delegation, like many delegations in this room, was deeply moved by the statement made by the Bosnian Foreign Minister. We would like to express our full support for the excellent proposal that the Foreign Minister made that we feel merits the support of this conference and the support that we have to give if this conference is to continue in a meaningful way. Thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Foreign Minister of Malaysia for his statement and I call on the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

UMER, Shaukat (Pakistan):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - Organization of the Islamic Conference

Thank you very much, Mr. President. Mr. President, The Organization of the Islamic Conference met this morning in a special session precisely to consider the ongoing tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the end of its deliberations the Conference adopted a document which would soon be presented to this World Conference. It is the considered view of the Pakistan delegation, which is shared by most of these Islamic world that the ongoing conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina characterized by naked aggression, excessive brutality should be brought to an end immediately. The inability of this World Conference not to take any position on the massive violations going on in Bosnia would, indeed, impacts on its credibility. In view of these factors, Mr. President, we strongly support the position of the Bosnian Foreign Minister and endorse his request that this Conference immediately, now, sends a request to the Security Council in New York to take all necessary measures to stop the genocide in Goražde. I thank you very much.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Foreign Minister for his statement and I call on the Foreign Minister of Gambia.

JAWARA, Dawda Kairaba (Gambia):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The Gambia like the previous speakers would like to associate itself with the proposal made by Bosnian Foreign Minister with respect to protecting at least Goražde from the mass genocide that we have seen happening in Bosnia. We fully support the proposal and would really recommend as our Pakistani colleague has said that such a mandate should be issued from the assembly now to the Security Council so that the issue of Bosnia is given the attention it deserves. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Foreign Minister of the Gambia for his statement. I call on the Foreign Minister of El Salvador.

ALFARO, Rafael Angel (El Salvador), spoke in Spanish, English text is edited according to the actual delivery:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the delegation of El Salvador, I also wish to join this important appeal for the respect of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this case, I also request that this appeal as soon as possible be addressed to the Security Council since the suffering of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also the suffering of the people of El Salvador and the whole international community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Foreign Minister of El Salvador for his statement, and I call on his Excellency the Foreign Minister of Tunisia.

BEN YAHIA, Habib (Tunisia):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Tunisian delegation fully supports the moving appeal by His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I think we have to act, not stay in rhetoric and appeal immediately to the Security Council for the sake of Bosnia, for humanity, and for the sake of our own credibility, of this Conference credibility. Taking care of human rights - there is the place where we have to exercise this full right. Thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Foreign Minister of Tunisia for his statement. I call on His Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

AL-SABAH, Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber (Kuwait), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. President, the delegation of Kuwait is very happy to be able to support the proposal made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina that our Conference should adopt this proposal, and that measures should be taken in order to address an urgent request to the Security Council that this request should be adopted. Thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait for his statement. I give the floor to His Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Senegal.

SENE, Alioune M. (Senegal), spoke in French:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. President, dear colleagues, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is today of tremendous gravity and is of concern to all people who hold dear justice and peace. The delegation of Senegal can go along wholeheartedly with the proposal made earlier to put an end to the genocide perpetrated against the Bosnian people, which goes daily through the sufferings of ethnic cleansing, which is one of the most abject infringements of human rights. This is the reason why the delegation of Senegal supports fully the appeal made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia that our Conference should immediately approach the Security Council by the most appropriate means so that this question could quickly find the most equitable and just solution. I thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Senegal for his statement. I call on His Excellency, the Foreign Minister of Egypt.

MOUSSA, Amre (Egypt), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Thank you, Mr. President. We were moved in listening to the statement delivered by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the tragedy experienced by this people in the wake of continuing Serbian aggression. The Minister for Foreign Affairs in his statement has expressed our solidarity with that people who are struggling to survive and to live. Which is why we cannot fail but support his appeal, the appeal that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina made to the Security Council through this Conference to put an end to this human tragedy, which we have decried as a crime against humanity. This aggression must be halted immediately. With the appeal of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as supported by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, this can be done. In the Islamic Group we prepared a draft which could perhaps serve as a basis for this appeal to the Security Council. Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt for his statement, and I now I give the floor to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria.

MOCK, Alois (Austria):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. Chairman, the Foreign Minister Silajdzic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has described by impressive words the tragedy and the suffering of his people. The credibility of all of us who work for human rights is at stake. On behalf of the Austrian government, I strongly support the appeal proposed by the Minister Silajdzic. Thank you very much.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

ABUTALYBOV, Ramiz (Azerbaijan):

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Thank you very much, Mr. President. Azerbaijani delegation fully supports the appeal of His Excellency, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thank you very much.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan for his statement and I give the floor to His Excellency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia.

KURDI, Mohammad Maamoun (Saudi Arabia), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

In the name of God, most Gracious, Most Merciful. Mr. President, there are not enough words to describe what Goražde has been going through recently, the sufferings of the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the flouting of the human rights. We were all moved by hearing the description of what is taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and by hearing the statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are happy to be able to go along with all our colleagues who took the floor before us and who expressed their support for sending an urgent appeal to the Security Council in order that every measure, urgent and necessary, should be taken in order to protect the town of Goražde and in order to protect the human rights that have been flouted in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia for his statement and I now give the floor to His Excellency Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iran.

Iran, Islamic Republic of:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

In the name of God, Merciful and Compassionate. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the distinguished Foreign Minister of that country so eloquently described before us calls for serious and effective action by the international community and certainly this Conference. The least it can do is to support the suggestion made by the distinguished Foreign Minister of Bosnia and like the previous delegation my delegation wishes to join them in strongly supporting that suggestion in addition to the suggestion that might be put forward before this Conference in the future by the Organization of Islamic Conference. Thank you, Sir.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I would like to thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs for Iran for his statement and I give the floor to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria.

Algeria, spoke in French:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Our Conference has just heard from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia an intolerable description of the aggressions taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the violations of human rights are on a massive scale. Our Conference would not be doing its duty if it were not to support the appeal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I thank you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria and I give the floor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary.

Hungary:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Republic of Hungary, as a European nation, as a nation that in history has been linked to Bosnia, I fully support the motion to ask the Conference expressing the sense of the Conference and to ask the President of this Conference to express this feeling, this sentiment in a letter addressed to the Security Council.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Hungary for his statement and I give the floor to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates.

United Arab Emirates, spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. President, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates would like to support the request made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and we request that it be implemented instantly. Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates and I give the floor to His Excellency the Minister from the Arab Republic of Syria.

Syrian Arab Republic:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. President, I wish on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic to inform Your Excellency that Syria is deeply touched by the excellent report, accurate report submitted by the Foreign Minister of Bosnia. We wish to support the proposal made by His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Bosnia to the effect that a message should be sent immediately to the Security Council in order that the latter will be able to take the necessary step to stop immediately the killing in that city and to protect the population, particularly children and women. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic for his statement and I give the floor to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Oman.

Oman, spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Thank you, Mr. President. The Sultanate of Oman has followed with great interest the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would like to support all those who have expressed their support that this Conference should publish a declaration on the bloody incidents taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman for his statement and I give the floor to His Excellency Minister for Foreign Affairs of Dominica.

Dominica:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

Mr. President, I represent the Commonwealth of Dominica, very small territory. I was extremely moved by the presentation of His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Bosnia. I would like to make a suggestion. After the Foreign Minister was finished, I think it was clear to all that he had impressed the Conference tremendously and he got a standing ovation. It is clear that the Conference in order to retain credibility must accept the suggestion, as it is clear that this suggestion has the unanimous support of the delegates of this Conference. I suggest, therefore, that in the interest of time you merely ask if there is any delegate who does not wish that the suggestion of the Foreign Minister of Bosnia should be made and if there are no persons, no delegates who wish to oppose it, I would recommend that the appeal should be made forthwith as representing the unanimous view of the delegates here.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

Keywords: GENOCIDE - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - UN. Security Council

The representative of Dominica has just made a proposal that I would like to put to you. If there are no delegations who are opposed, I will then consider this proposal as been adopted.

At this stage of our discussions, I note that a massive consensus has emerged in the Conference in favor of contacting the Security Council along the lines of the request formulated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This is the proposal:

The World Conference on Human Rights after having heard the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina appeals to the Security Council that it should take the necessary measures in order to put an end to the genocide that is taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in particular in Goražde.

I am very glad to see that everyone agrees with this proposal. It is so decided.

We can now continue with our debate. I give the floor to Her Excellency Madame Lucette Michaux-Chevry, Minister for Humanitarian Affairs and Human Rights. You have the floor, Madame.

MICHAUX-CHEVRY, Lucette (France), spoke in French:

Keywords: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS - WOMEN - REFUGEES - TREATIES - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - CHILDREN

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

We have just heard the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina raised before us the tragedy experienced by his country. No one can remain indifferent. France for its part has always done its utmost in an effort to resolve this conflict and today it has the intention of doing everything it can to put an end to this drama.

Allow me, first of all, to convey to you my congratulations upon your election as well as to the other members of the Bureau. I am convinced that under your guidance our work will mark an important stage in international cooperation in human rights.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am going to shorten my statement to try to respect the time constraints that have been imposed upon us.

It is an honor for me, on behalf of France, to participate in this historic event, the Vienna Conference on Human Rights. It is truly historic because since the first World Conference in 1968, the world has experienced major upheavals. New states have come into existence and have joined the United Nations. Everywhere the aspiration for the democracy and respect for human rights is being expressed with greater force.

Today more than 180 nations have assembled here, ample proof that human rights and the spirit of Universal Declaration are the common heritage of the humanity.

The ideal of the human being free from the fear of oppression and extreme poverty unfortunately remains more of an ideal than a reality.

The international situation, indeed, sadly compels us to observe that the voice of law, that of peace, is completely stifled by the din of weapons and the cries of despair of innocent victims.

What would the real meaning of this Conference be today if we did not sincerely believe that under any circumstances we are the guardians of respect for human rights, the messengers of dialogue for fraternity among men in a world torn asunder?

How can we not mention again that a few hundred kilometers away in the territory of what was Yugoslavia men are systematically and deliberately committing atrocities of another age all in the name of the so-called ethnic purity?

How can we not deplore the fact that peaceful demonstrations in various parts of the world are being repressed in blood baths?

How can we accept that thousands of men, women and children are dying of hunger, whereas others live in opulence?

How can we not denounce the fact that men are interned, tortured or kidnapped for simply asking for more freedom or justice?

How can we still in the end tolerate the prejudices of racism, and anti-Semitism and exclusion?

How can we not shudder at the tears of these children who are discovering men's horrors?

How can we not be horrified to see that the children fall the first victims of devastating weapons, particularly antipersonnel mines?

How can we tolerate that these children, our children, the heirs of the humanity's tomorrow are exploited, ill-treated and often die in indifference totally ignorant of parental tenderness and affection?

I may well ask you! I may well ask you, how in the face of the unbearable images of their slow agony can we content ourselves with simply invoking the provisions of the international Convention on the Rights of the Child?

The world today is faced with a high degree of humanitarian turbulence caused by violence and oppression in all their forms. The tragedy experienced by Somalia is a horrifying example. In this jungle of systematic destruction, our Conference must be the conference of hope thanks to the highly expressed unity in our work.

This Conference must devise ways and means of suppressing all discrimination between the men whether based on race, color, sex, language, religion, origin, opinion. It must also conceive ways and means to protect those of us who are deprived of their rights. Everything must be set in motion to abolish as quickly as possible torture and prevent forced disappearances and summary executions, which are an outrage to the human conscience.

Women should be allowed to accede to every one of their rights and find their place equal to that of men within the modern society. No society can develop harmoniously without their full and entire participation. The international community has been revolted by the systematic rape of women in the former Yugoslavia. It must condemn and punish the acts of violence against women everywhere and unremittingly. We must adopt without delay a declaration against violence drafted by the Commission on the Status of Women.

Our rule in France is that of respecting all cultures, all languages, all religions as long as they too are respectful of human rights. Persons belonging to minorities must allow the states where they live to benefit from their specific values. Diversity is a source of vitality.

There is a category of particularly vulnerable people. I would like to speak of refugees. I would like to speak of the stateless and displaced persons. There are at least twenty million throughout the world. True, the international community does take interest in them from the point of view of humanitarian assistance. I wish here to pay special tribute to the substantial work done by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees in alleviating the suffering of these people. But does this suffice? We must avail ourselves of this unique opportunity of our Conference to analyze their rights and aspirations.

We must firstly do our utmost to facilitate the right of displaced persons and refugees to return voluntarily to their homes and to avoid by all means a situation of food assistantship that undermines their dignity. Their rights must be guaranteed: right to decent treatment, right to status. The situation of a legal vacuum, which leaves a person unprotected is inadmissible. I would like our declaration to reaffirm solemnly this essential principle.

We also expect the community of nations grouped within the United Nations to give firm and concrete commitments in favor of children's rights. This organization, certainly, has done a great deal for children. It has drawn up a convention on their rights that has enjoyed unprecedented success. It must now be applied in its entirety. Yet, the Organization still has a great deal to do to convince the states to respect it, but there is still a great deal of ground to be covered to achieve the desired protection to which the signatory states of the Convention, nevertheless, committed themselves. We strongly reaffirm here our moral duty to protect children of the world.

Our action, it must not be forgotten, is based on the important principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, namely: peace and security, economic and social development, respect for human rights. Today, more than ever before, in the face of the internationalization of conflicts, the Organization must have the means to implement its objectives that are indissolubly linked with and are the firm foundations of the Charter itself. This is our responsibility towards future generations.

To achieve these objectives, the United Nations must remind all its Members that they must ratify human rights conventions, implement them without reservations and endow themselves with the strengthened means to fulfill well their new missions.

Moreover, we must decide on a substantial increase in the budget of the Centre for Human Rights. The one percent of the United Nations regular budget, which is allocated at present, is quite clearly insufficient since this body is mainly responsible for the implementation of one of the three main objectives of the Charter.

The Geneva Centre must, furthermore, be recognized as having the real primacy within the United Nations in the field of human rights. The appointment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights would contribute incontrovertibly and unquestionably to strengthening the authority and the legitimacy of the Centre placed under his responsibility. It is, indeed, the Centre, which must define the technical assistance guidelines for electoral operations and for setting up democratic institutions. It has to be fully associated with the human rights components of the peacekeeping operations.

France, as a permanent member of the Security Council, encourages this integration of the human dimension in peacekeeping operations. It considers that to restore peace in war-torn areas, an institutional and legal framework must be established, which would ensure that the fundamental rights and freedoms are respected. The operation undertaken by the United Nations in El Salvador is exemplary in this regard. The electoral system set up in Cambodia has made possible the expression of democracy. The United Nations must

continue in this direction and the regional organizations may help, as shown by the observer mission set up jointly with the Organization of American States in Haiti.

The United Nations will also have to explore new directions and should seek to prevent exactions rather than dressing wounds. This is the spirit of preventive diplomacy which the Secretary-General is striving to implement. Through coordinated action of the competent bodies, the United Nations must set up a rapid warning system to anticipate the movements of the population and refugees rather than merely manage them. Displaced, uprooted populations are without any protection and are deprived of the exercise of their rights. Whatever the cause of their plight, we owe them assistance.

The international community must ensure that people responsible for the most serious infringements of human rights or humanitarian law are punished. Too many crimes are still committed in the name of ideologies, purported ethnic superiorities or racial or religious hatred. If these crimes are not punished, impunity will gangrene the societies and the principles that we proclaim will no longer be respected. The international court in charge of judging the crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia must be the prefiguration of a permanent court that will judge the perpetrators of such crimes when national jurisdictions proved inoperative.

The protection and the promotion of human rights are, above all, a national responsibility. The international community may assist states, advise them and call upon them to respect their commitments but it cannot entirely take their place. It is up to them, to individual states, to build the democratic edifice that ensures a full exercise of all rights and all freedoms.

It is up to every state to be permanently watchful and vigilant to detect any infringements of the rights of their citizens. Democracy and human rights, indeed, involve permanent struggles. They are never won once and for all and must always be perfected. Associations, the media and parties are to be allowed to exercise their critical role. Thus, in France as in a growing number of countries there is a national institution for the promotion and protection of human rights bringing together associations, eminent personalities and administrations. Its role is to advise the government in its action to promote human rights in France and throughout the world. The advice it offers often goes as far as criticism. This is not important, what is important is that these national institutions can fulfill a useful role and exercise this role in complete independence.

The most significant progress, which I wish to salute in this area is the greater degree of dialogue between the states and NGOs whose courage and perseverance have raised international awareness considerably. We must be attentive to their message. I should like to pay tribute to the self-sacrificing efforts of NGOs who often at peril of their own lives intervened to assist people in their plight.

The future generations, ladies and gentlemen, will judge the efforts we have made to discard our prejudices and the spirit of confrontation, which too often puts states against one another. Everywhere in the world individuals for their part share one and the same aspiration - more freedom and more dignity. These values are inherent to human beings.

This is the deep meaning of the universality and indivisibility of human rights. No circumstance will ever justify that a human being is denied his most elementary rights. No situation can allow us to accept that some people never have their most essential rights respected, above all when it comes to children.

This is why three years after the World Summit on Children and the solemn legal commitments made by more than 130 countries that ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child the time has come to make a first assessment. This task could be entrusted to a body enjoying a high degree of moral authority, in other words, a kind of international ethics committee on the rights of the child.

This is, indeed, an ideal area to make the universal conscience aware of one of the most flagrant violations of the rights of humanity, of which children are the living symbol.

Thank you for your attention.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank the Minister for her statement. I give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Mahmohan Singh, Minister of Finance of India. You have the floor, Sir.

SINGH, Manmohan (India):

Keywords: INDIA - DEMOCRACY - HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT - MINORITIES - CULTURAL PLURALISM - DEVELOPMENT AID - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. President,

Like my other colleagues, I was deeply touched by the eloquent speech of the honorable Foreign Minister of Bosnia regarding the grim human tragedy being enacted in that unfortunate country. India fully shares the concern and unanimity of wills expressed on this grave matter at this Conference.

Mr. President,

I take this opportunity to congratulate the distinguished Foreign Minister of Austria on his election as President of our Conference. We are confident that under his distinguished leadership the Conference will achieve fruitful results.

We are happy that the Conference is being held in Austria - a country that is known for its commitment to the values of democracy and social justice.

Mr. President,

India's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights - political and civil as well as economic, social and cultural is unreserved and total. This commitment has evolved logically from the age-old ideals, which have been the basis of our composite culture over the centuries. India's freedom struggle was inspired by the vision of a society committed to the ideal of human rights and human obligations. Decolonization was a critical element in the assertion of human rights of our people. Having attained independence, we have been firm in our conviction that a representative democracy based on universal adult suffrage, a multiparty system and free and fair regular elections can be the only basis for the wellbeing of our people and for the enforcement of their basic human rights. This is precisely why the founders of Indian Republic endowed the country with all the relevant institutions to safeguard democracy, namely an independent judiciary, a parliamentary form of government, a free press and, over and above all, a commitment to the rule of law. These, Mr. President, are the essential guarantors of human rights in our society. We have always recognized that effective implementation of fundamental human rights requires sustained and dedicated efforts to remove poverty and socio-economic disparities. Thus, we firmly believe that both democracy and development are essential for the sustenance and nurturing of human rights of our people. We are willing to share our experience and learn from the experience of other countries in this regard so that progress towards the full and effective implementation of human rights worldwide can be accelerated. It is in this spirit that we approach our tasks at this historic Conference.

We are meeting here in a Human Rights Conference twenty-five years after the first such conference was held in Teheran and forty-five years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration. We meet in a transformed world having passed through the hostilities of the Second World War, the demise of colonialism and rigidities associated with the cold war. We meet at a juncture when democracy and universal norms of human rights are no longer a matter of debate in terms of juxtaposed political ideology. We meet when the ideals of democracy and human rights are universally accepted aspirations and imperatives.

What then do we seek in our forthcoming deliberations? What are the hurdles that we should remove, the pitfalls that we should avoid in our common quest for ensuring human dignity and human wellbeing?

Mr. President,

What we seek is the creation of universally acceptable non-discriminatory norms of human rights.

What we seek is to arrive at an acceptable definition and description of civil political, economic, social and cultural rights, which should constitute the terms of reference for the political emancipation and social development of the international community as a whole.

What we seek is an international consensus on the manner in which all of us could create a global environment in which these rights cannot only be asserted but in which they are also sustained and nurtured.

Mr. President,

We seek the creation of an equilibrium between the requirements of political and civil liberties and rights, on the one hand, and the fulfilment of socio-economic aspirations of the global community, a majority of whom belong to the developing world, on the other. We believe that political and civil rights and the emphasis on economic and social rights should not be perceived in a juxtaposed perspective. We believe that respect for the first category of these rights creates conditions for the fulfilment of the second category. There is, in our view, a logical interdependence and inevitable symbiosis between the two sets of rights. Any approach towards issues of human rights advocating competitive priorities between the political and economic, social and cultural rights is, in our view, both illogical and impractical.

Mr. President,

It is these perceptions and this approach, which have animated India's policies regarding human rights issues ever since the independence. The institutions that we fashioned to sustain ourselves as a plural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-linguistic and secular polity had the over-arching objective of consolidating ourselves as a modern democracy. Apart from the political institutions that I mentioned earlier in my speech, we took measured steps in creating institutions to safeguard the wellbeing of and to ensure justice to our minorities and all the diverse weaker sections of our society. The special commissions and institutions that we have established to protect the rights of minorities, women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes with sub-ethnic distinct identities and the legislation that we have brought into being over the years to ensure political and socio-economic justice to a society as diverse as ours are indicative of this process. We believe, Mr. President, that our approach to the development of a cohesive polity, emphasizing unity in diversity and seeking to promote social and economic development in the framework of an open society committed to the rule of law has important lessons for the evolution of all pluralistic societies.

Mr. President,

While we take pride in being the largest practicing democracy amongst the developing countries, we are deeply conscious that our endeavors have faced hurdles.

Social and economic changes in a pluralistic society can at times be disruptive. Demographic and economic pressures can and have created pockets of alienation. Corrective action has been and will be taken to tackle the causes of this alienation. Yet, some divisive elements project this alienation in ethnic, religious and secessionist terms. We have and we are facing the situation of our commitment to democracy and our territorial integrity being challenged by extremist violence. Where we, as a people, face the prospect of elements within our society who wish to impose their views by force instead of by democratic means, our response of necessity has to be and will remain firm.

More so, when those who abandon the path of democratic reasoning are aided by intrusive and motivated external forces. The predicament against which we struggle is the predicament of a negation of democracy and violation of human rights. This struggle has complexities. In fighting these disruptive forces, we do accept that at times aberrations from democratic norms can take place. We have no intention of brushing these aspects of our existence under the carpet. We are conscious of these aberrations. Despite the grave threat posed by certain disruptive forces to our national unity and cohesion, we are alert about avoiding the brutalization of our society. India's constitutional setup contains built-in safeguards in this regard. We are

engaged in structuring additional institutional safeguards to meet the situation. It is in this context that the government of India recently introduced legislation for the creation of a National Human Rights Commission with independent status and autonomous monitoring jurisdiction. It is again in this context that we have provided and are providing greater access to human rights agencies to observe the situation in our country. It is to reaffirm the atmosphere of freedom and our commitment to political transparency that we have provided access to political leaders and legislators from different parts of the world to visit us and to judge for themselves the enormity and the complexity of the democratic experiment that India has undertaken. We are assiduously vigilant about our commitment to human rights. But we are, at the same time, equally firm that the slogans of human rights do not become an instrument in the hands of interested parties to challenge our political cohesion or our territorial integrity. While this is so, we expect the international community to help us deal with externally inspired terrorism. We expect support and understanding when we try to deal with domestic discontent being encouraged to take the path of violence and secessionism. A predicament, Mr. President, that I dare say is not particular to India alone but to many countries across the globe.

Mr. President,

This is what we seek. Our hope is that the decisions and measures, which would be adopted at this Conference would serve these objectives.

To turn to what we should avoid for nurturing and upholding human rights, this does not need lengthy elaborations. Simply stated, our common endeavor should be to remove and resist the threats to human rights. These are entrenched in terrorism, religious extremism, extraneously encouraged and sustained movements of separatism and secessionism, disrupting state structures, non-democratic governments, and, over and above all, poverty and socio-economic injustice.

Whatever we do as individual countries or collectively as the members of the United Nations, the human rights movement must not be politicized, nor must it become an instrument for creating new barriers against the orderly functioning of plural democratic societies. We must respect diversities in the elements that constitute human rights in different societies while adhering to universally accepted norms. The effort should be to promote cooperation in implementing universal norms of human rights in the increasingly interdependent world that we all live in.

Mr. President,

It is with this perception that we approach and evaluate the proposals, which are to come up during this Conference for strengthening the United Nations' role in nurturing and sustaining human rights. We believe that the agencies and mechanisms of United Nations dealing with human rights should be strengthened. We believe that the terms of reference for this more effective role of the UN should be responsive to the aspirations and sensitivities of the member countries. We believe that if any new instruments and mechanisms are to be put in place, their role and their jurisdiction should be structured in a manner that should avoid duplication of responsibilities already entrusted to existing institutions. The role and jurisdiction of new entities, new arrangements should be non-intrusive and essentially aimed at the preservation and application of human rights devoid of extraneous political factors.

Mr. President,

Attaching conditions to development assistance related to human rights record of a nation, in our view, can be counterproductive. Above all, the jurisdiction of any new institutions and their role should conform to the basic principles of the United Nations Charter.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to sum up the Indian points of view as follows.

We unreservedly reaffirm, in accordance with the UN Charter, our faith in fundamental human rights; in the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights; and the universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinctions of race, sex, language and religion.

We stress that democracy and development including protection of the environment and ecological rights are essential to the effective enjoyment of human rights.

We believe that these objectives can be achieved within the framework of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, of the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

We feel that the need of the hour is a commonality of approach and unity of purpose aimed at developing a consensus to which this Conference should contribute in a significant measure.

We are determined to continuously seek to further upgrade the quality of human rights implementation at the national level.

We are ready to join hands with all the nations represented at this Conference to do all that is necessary to create the appropriate international environment for the effective enforcement of human rights.

Mr. President,

This Conference has an historic opportunity to shape a new consensus for the promotion of human rights. We shall fully cooperate with other nations in ensuring a successful outcome of our deliberations.

Thank you, Sir.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Trivimi Velliste, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia. Excellency, you have the floor.

VELLISTE, Trivimi (Estonia):

Keywords: ESTONIA - SELF-DETERMINATION - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - FACT-FINDING MISSIONS - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

Mr. President, Excellencies, honored delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express Estonia's gratitude to Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Secretary-General of this World Conference, for his excellent guidance in bringing us all together. We would also like to express our respects to you, Mr. Mock, on your election to the Presidency of this important gathering, and finally I would like to thank the Austrian government who helped us generously with many practical details, and has made our stay, here in Vienna, very pleasant.

Mr. President,

We are far behind in our speaking schedule. Therefore, I will be extremely brief and highlight only the most essential aspects of our human rights concerns. It is significant to note that the second World Conference on Human Rights taking place twenty-five years after the first Conference, is held during the year that was designated the Year of the Indigenous Peoples. During the last twenty-five years, many indigenous peoples have become masters of their own destinies. But many others suffer the indignities that foreign oppression brings with them: economic exploitation, colonization of their ancestral lands and the gradual undermining of their cultural heritage. And worst of all indignities is that this oppression is described as "bringing them culture and civilization." Estonia is hopeful that the general, unbiased application of the fundamental right of self-determination will allow the indigenous peoples to continue to develop their cultures and traditions on parity with all the other people and to determine their political status in accordance with their free will. Estonia supports the efforts to strengthen references to the rights of the indigenous peoples in the final document of this Conference. We would like to draw your attention, Mr. President, to an interesting difference between the Rio Conference of last year, where there was a lot of talk about ensuring biodiversity

because of its benefit for all mankind, and this Conference where there is, so far, too little talk about ensuring the diversity of peoples and the benefits of their contributions to the enrichment of the world culture.

Mr. President,

One of the major areas of contention in the human rights field is the mechanism by which allegations of human rights violations are resolved. Most fierce debates and confrontations have been caused by the refusal of some states to permit independent verification of the allegations or by the denial to grant access to rapporteurs appointed by the Commission on Human Rights. Estonia, on the other hand, believes in total transparency and openness and hopes its handling of such matters will set an example in this regard. We have opened our doors to any investigative body that has cared to investigate the allegations. To date, fifteen investigative commissions have visited Estonia, yes, fifteen. None of them have found any deliberate or regular violations of human rights in Estonia. A week ago, we received the report on a United Nations fact-finding mission to Estonia organized by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights. This mission did not find any violations of human rights either, and, therefore, it seems to us, Mr. President, that the allegations against Estonia appear to be politically motivated.

In order to help to resolve similar disputes in the future, we fully support the ongoing effort to increase the resources for United Nations human rights activities and for the Centre for Human Rights out of the regular United Nations budget. As Mr. Fall noted in his opening remarks, only adequate resources can turn our talk into deeds. Estonia fully supports the creation of the post of the High Commissioner for Human Rights because it can help to alleviate fears and concerns that people may have regarding the full realization of their rights; and this can be an important component in the realization of the peacemaking process that the Secretary-General of the United Nations is promoting as part of his Agenda for Peace. Estonia has made use of similar mechanisms under the auspices of the CSCE process and has found it to be extremely helpful in countering the propaganda offensive launched against us by a neighboring big power. Coincidentally, this offensive started immediately after we resolutely raised the issue of the withdrawal of the Russian troops from our country.

Mr. President,

The last years have shown that some of the loudest proponents of human rights are those who were in the services of governmental organizations directing the suppression of dissident movements and harassing individual dissidents. We, therefore, regret that the concept of an international human rights court, designed to bringing to justice those who persistently violate international human rights norms, does not receive the support this concept deserves.

At long last, it has been recognized but not universally accepted that human rights transcend state borders and that human rights cannot be violated under the pretext that it is an internal state matter. Estonia fully supports this position. However, one must be careful that the term "human rights" does not become a political tool for advancing a political objective or become an instrument for exercising political pressure. On the surface, such use of "human rights" might appear to be effective in advancing one's political agenda but in the end such misuse of this concept could undermine the whole process and thereby hurt the object of our concern - the real living person. We believe that the effective securing of human rights will be much more fruitful if we occasionally remind each other that such possibilities do exist.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to state that Estonia intends to increase its participation in international fora that deal with the human rights issues and we will be eager to share our past experiences in this field. I know from personal experience how painful it is for an individual to be without human rights. We know from our collective experience how frustrated and hopeless all the Estonians felt when our plight was occasionally mentioned but ignored, or when high officials persistently misled the United Nations bodies about the status of human rights within their countries. We fully share the view expressed by many that there are enough

human rights laws on the books; and the real challenge for all of us is to strengthen the mechanisms that would assure compliance with the existing universal human rights instruments. If we succeed in initiating such a process, this Conference can be hailed as a success.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank the Minister for her statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Excellency, you have the floor.

AL-SABAH, Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber (Kuwait), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION - DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - KUWAIT - PALESTINIANS - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

In the name of God, most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Mr. President,

It gives me a great pleasure to speak before you today during this important World Conference on Human Rights. I wish to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on the manner in which you have been presiding over our Conference. We are confident that thanks to your wisdom and skill you will make this Conference a success and will enable us to achieve our objectives. Allow me also, Mr. President, to address our thanks and appreciation to His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros-Ghali, to the Secretary-General of the World Conference on Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahim Fall and also extend our appreciation and congratulations to all the members of the Centre for Human Rights for their invaluable efforts in preparing for this Conference. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my country's gratitude and appreciation to the Republic of Austria for the excellent arrangements and for hosting the Conference in this beautiful city of Vienna with long history of deep-rooted human culture. No doubt, Sir, that this great care and interest on the part of Austria reflect the inherent position of Austria as a defender of human rights and highlight its historical commitment in this respect.

Mr. President,

Our meeting in this Conference today at this level and size is to discuss human rights. This meeting is a sign of the importance that we all attach to this issue and demonstrates the hope of humanity that this vital issue be given enough attention and care because the defense of human rights is one of the major aims of the United Nations and has been consecrated in the United Nations Charter as one of the basic principles and purposes.

One of the major changes is the appearance of a new international order and the successful attempts to mold and crystalize it as an order based on the principles of right and justice. A new international order that envisages in the first place the preservation of human rights and dignity and stresses the high value of the human being free from all kinds of racism and discrimination.

This new international order also aims to fortify the sovereignty of every people over its wealth and natural resources. We, therefore, ought to exert all our efforts to promote international cooperation so as to guarantee the protection of man's basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. We are guided on this path by the principles and teachings of the revealed religions, which stress the dignity and special place of individuals. Here I cite Islam. Allow me, Sir, underline that Islam was foremost among the revealed religions that were keen to bring to the reality this fact as it is said in one of the holy verses of Quran:

We have placed a special dignity in man, borne them across land and sea, given them their living and preferred them many of Our other creatures.

Mr. President,

It is with pride that I shall now give a quick introduction to this illustrious and very important gathering on human rights about the achievements of my country in this field. Since the inception of Kuwait more than two-and-a-half centuries ago, the Kuwaitis have always cherished certain noble principles that draw on the teachings of Islam and that focus on the respect of human rights and on the protection of the fundamental freedoms. These principles became deep-rooted and were later crowned in our Constitution that was written upon the independence of Kuwait and that faithfully reflects the values I mentioned earlier and at the same time guarantees and protects rights of the individual. The various laws and regulations, which Kuwait has so far promulgated in the political, economic, social, cultural and juridical fields, reflect the keenness of Kuwait on the rule of law and the protection of the freedom of the individual. Our parliamentary experience has been all an indisputable proof of the degree of attachment of Kuwait to the principles of democracy and its concern to found a democratic and evolving society that develops man's rights and dignity.

At the international level, Kuwait has always been faithful to its obligations vis-a-vis human rights. It has acceded to several international conventions in this field and fully comply with them. Kuwait has also worked to fortify its ties with international and regional organizations concerned with human rights and has hosted – as a regional headquarter - some of them. Kuwait allows them free movement and access to information on the situation of human rights in the country, whence these organizations have certified Kuwait's commitment and respect of human rights.

Out of its sincere desire to alleviate the developmental burdens of developing countries, Kuwait has cooperated with several international financial institutions in an effective manner in granting development assistance to these countries to help them overcome certain obstacles to development and, hence, to assist these countries to attain stability and achieve progress and justice.

At the national level, Kuwait also works with a number of national institutions and specialized agencies like the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development to alleviate some of the burden of development for the developing countries to allow them to deeper implement human rights.

The call, which His Highness Sheikh Jabir Al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, the Prince of the State of Kuwait, made during the 43rd session of the United Nations General Assembly to cancel the interest on the loans to the poorest countries reflects the concern of Kuwait for the improvement of the economic and developmental situation in developing countries because this situation could have a negative influence if it is not addressed properly.

Mr. President,

We are satisfied with some recent international positive developments towards the establishment of the new international order in our world. We also appreciate the unceasing international efforts undertaken by the United Nations and other international organizations dealing with human rights matters as well as the advancement realized on the road of international cooperation. In spite of all this, we regret deeply the fact that the flagrant human rights violations take place in different parts of the world providing, thus, the ample proof that we still have a long way to go to end the violations throwing their dark shade on the progress of the modern society and on the advancement attained by the modern world.

Mr. President,

Kuwait was the victim of one of the most abhorrent crimes against humanity. In the early hours of the 2nd of August 1990, the dignity of man and inviolability of property were violated in my country and some of the most heinous crimes were committed against Kuwaitis and Non-Kuwaitis living in Kuwait. These crimes have stained the history of humanity and represent a desperate attempt to draw humanity back to the rule of the jungle and to the ages of darkness. Even the environment was not spared the destruction. Some of the worst premeditated crimes were committed against the nature and against the man. The human beings in Kuwait were deprived of their right to live in a healthy and clean environment.

But the entire world with our brethren and our friends, the whole world insisted on the rule of law and insisted on upholding human rights in Kuwait in the face of aggression and oppression. The crimes committed against us extended to other areas. Since the liberation of Kuwait on the 26th February 1991, more than 600 Kuwaitis and third-country citizens have been detained. No international humanitarian organizations have been given access to these detained persons, and there is no positive response to the benevolent efforts made by way of mediation to secure their release.

Mr. President,

It is indeed a tragic situation and a case of flagrant violations of human rights, wherefore I sincerely call upon you in this international gathering to help bring to end the suffering of those detainees and their families.

Mr. President,

From this rostrum, I call upon this Conference, which has gathered here to discuss the questions on human rights, I call upon you to work together in support of the constructive move, through the United Nations, to bring those war criminals to justice, since it is not imaginable that those war criminals may go unpunished while the international community stands watching. It is not fair and it is not just. These people ought to be made responsible for their atrocities and for their crimes. They have to bear the responsibility for what they have committed.

Mr. President,

The gravest violation of human rights in our region lies in the fact that the resolutions adopted by the international community and which represent the international legitimacy have not been complied with because there have been acts of aggression against my country. There is an atmosphere of instability. One cannot imagine that such an atmosphere could aid at all in the furtherance of the cause of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Another striking example of human rights violations is the ordeal of the Palestinian people as a result of its expulsion from its homeland since more than forty years and as a result of inhumane practices like murder and deportation, which are clear examples of breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Such violations are in diametrical contradiction with the ongoing efforts to end the conflict and to achieve a just solution to the Palestine problem on the basis of the relevant international resolutions.

The continued suffering of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina is again one of the paramount challenges facing mankind in our modern world. These inhumane practices against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to deprive these people of their identity. They become victims of ethnic cleansing and genocide. In the face of these human rights violations, collective action within the framework of international law becomes necessary. We have to crystalize the necessary position to narrow the scope of the occurrence of human rights violations in the world and to achieve a better world in which the dignity and rights of man are protected.

Mr. President,

The preparatory meeting to this Conference has showed the differences of opinion, which made it difficult for us to achieve common conceptions and positions of human rights and the way to protect them. But we are invited here today to overcome these differences in a spirit of this historical responsibility and to be able to achieve harmony and understanding in a manner that would safeguard our achievements and our gains on the path towards better dignity for mankind.

I thank you, Sir.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Lojze Peterle, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia. Excellency, you have the floor.

PETERLE, Lojze (Slovenia):

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - INTERNATIONAL COURT AND TRIBUNALS - REFUGEES - MINORITIES - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

In Slovenia, we are deeply convinced that the code of human rights must be considered as a universal one. All crucial changes in the last decades were led under the flag of human rights and within the standards and values enshrined in them. Not long ago, most of the states of Eastern Europe claimed to have their own "philosophy" of collective human rights, denying the human rights of an individual. Such notions of differences in human rights based on ideological concepts have not survived the time. It is in those countries that most vehemently claimed their right to a different approach to human rights that human rights have become the driving force of change.

The time has come when both the western democracies and, even more so, the states in transition, which are faced with economic, social and political controversies, must provide for the implementation of classic and other categories of human rights. The most essential condition for their implementation, however, is the existence of a democratic state ruled by law. We have to admit that much remains to be done with regard to the protection of social, economic and cultural rights. The states should commit themselves to a more resolute fulfilment of their obligations in this respect.

In Slovenia, we are convinced that further efforts should be made to enable the United Nations not only for fact-finding but also for establishing proper mechanisms to use all available means for effective intervention wherever human rights are gravely violated. Slovenia is of the opinion that human rights are such a precious value that the states should be willing to renounce a part of their sovereignty in order to ensure their full implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

The world is faced with fierce and mass violations of human rights to which we cannot turn a blind eye. One of them is, undoubtedly, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has for more than a year resulted in an ever-increasing number of victims, in inhuman suffering of the civil population, and mass exodus.

The aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, member of the United Nations Organization, obliges the international community to take immediate and resolute action. Slovenia has submitted several proposals concerning humanitarian issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the initiative to the Security Council for an overall solution to the crisis on the basis of the Vance-Owen peace plan. We believe that it is essential to preserve the political and territorial integrity of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina if peace and stability in this part of Europe are to be re-established.

The Republic of Slovenia fully supports the current efforts of the United Nations organs to strengthen the United Nations' capacity in the field of preventive diplomacy and the efforts to incorporate human rights in the programmes of post-conflict peacebuilding.

Slovenia supports the United Nations activities for the early commencement of work by the International tribunal for war crimes committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. We believe that the tribunal should adopt the principle of obligatory extradition of the perpetrators of criminal acts. In cases of non-extradition, the tribunal should hold trials in absence, thus providing at least moral satisfaction to the international community that such crimes had been convicted. We advocate the establishment of a permanent international criminal court to trial international criminal acts like war crimes, genocide, racial

discrimination, apartheid, white-slave traffic, torture, unlawful seizure of aircraft, international terrorism, environmental pollution, international drug traffic and money laundering.

The violation of human rights in any part of the world is the root cause for the emergence of refugees. With the preservation of non-democratic regimes and dictatorships and, in particular, with new focal points of crises, the already enormous flood of refugees is still increasing. Our special concern goes for the masses of refugees in Europe, fleeing armed conflicts and mass violations of human rights. The crisis in the Balkans alone has resulted in several million refugees and displaced persons, and their number is still increasing as the conflicts continue. We are faced with a new category of the so-called temporary refugees. This calls for the international legal regulation of their status with an additional Protocol to the Convention on the Status of Refugees of 1951. These issues are of special concern to Slovenia that is now giving shelter to more than 70,000 refugees.

Mr. Chairman,

Most countries in the world are not ethnically homogenous. This fact dictates the need for commonly agreed rules for the protection of minorities, which require amendments and supplements. They should be accepted by all nations of the international community. Unacceptable is the thesis to unite all members of one nation in one state by force but, in accordance with the commonly agreed rules, every nation has the right to care for its minority in another state. This principle has been respected by Slovenia, both in the protection of national minorities on its territory and in the care for its minority in the neighboring states. Slovenia respects the principle of the non-changeability of borders and has no territorial claims with respect to its minorities living in other states.

Slovenia advocates the view that, based on the Declaration of Human Rights, an efficient international mechanism for ensuring the rights of minorities should be gradually created. In our opinion, an important part of such a mechanism is the consultation of states in solving the issues concerning the implementation of various rights of minorities. Consulting on policy-making is something, which the United Nations has successfully introduced in some other fields and should now also be worked out for minorities. Slovenia is willing to render services in order to set up appropriate standards for the protection of minorities.

The preparations for this Conference have again brought up the idea of establishing the function of a High Commissioner for Human Rights. Slovenia fully supports this initiative. In addition, we believe that a considerably larger share of the entire resources at the disposal of the United Nations should be allocated for various activities in the field of human rights.

Today, we cannot speak of the implementation of human rights without mentioning the decisive role of non-governmental organizations in this process. Slovenia believes that all the Member States of the United Nations should provide for appropriate conditions for the development of non-governmental organizations aiming at the strengthening of human rights.

Thank you for your attention.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Javier Solana Madariaga, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain. Excellency, you have the floor.

SOLANA, Javier (Spain), spoke in Spanish:

Keywords: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - DISCRIMINATION - CHILDREN - PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - TORTURE - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. President,

First of all, I wish to thank the Austrian government for their generous hospitality in hosting this World Conference on Human Rights. It provides an excellent opportunity for reviewing the progress made since the Teheran Conference in 1968, for reaffirming the principles of human rights and for concentrating on the action that the international community must take to enhance the promotion and protection of these rights in coming years.

As planned in the Conference agenda, we shall be able not only to review the achievements to date in this field, but also, and what is more important, make an in-depth study of what could be our future goals and jointly draw up a strategy that will enable us to finally eliminate the causes that prevent many millions of human beings from enjoying their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Although since the adoption of the universal declaration of human rights in 1948 the protection, promotion and defense of human rights have never ceased to be a matter of priority for the international community, and although the results achieved up till now can, in general terms, be considered positive, we cannot rest on our laurels.

Unfortunately, practices such as killings, summary and arbitrary executions, torture and enforced disappearances continue to be generalized.

Likewise, we cannot fail to note that only a few kilometres away from here, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an extremely cruel war is being fought of which millions of innocent people are the victims. Practices such as ethnic cleansing, accompanied by death, rape and torture, which seemed to have been banished forever, have reappeared more virulent than ever before. In this respect, Spain in pursuant the efforts that it has already made and by virtue of its position on the Security Council joins the call that just has been made by this Conference. Nor do we wish to, nor must we, forget that in many other parts of the world there are conflicts and situations that are giving rise to serious, systematic and flagrant violations of human rights.

Mr. President,

In these times of uncertainty, of great need for some and of extreme suffering for others, it is becoming more essential than ever that we should achieve better, more effective and more just protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people, and to this undertaking we must, once more, commit ourselves.

Mr. President,

As far as the Spanish government is concerned, Mr. President, all rights derive from the inherent worth of the human being, without distinction; therefore, we deem that the main object and the ultimate beneficiary of all the rights and fundamental freedoms must be the individual.

Based on this conviction we cannot fail to insist on the universality, the indivisibility and the interrelation of all human rights, whose attainment and enjoyment by individuals must be demanded both by the

international community and by countries individually with the same emphasis and urgency and in an integrated and balanced way.

This principle of universality implies, in our opinion, that every country has the obligation to promote, protect and respect the human rights norms that have been universally accepted. For the Spanish government, Mr. President, the regional or national particularities that may derive from different cultural or religious heritages can only be understood as a means for reinforcing the universal nature of the norms on human rights, which are the common heritage of the international society.

On the other hand, we believe that no country must deny an individual, the exercise of any right because he has not obtained in its society the full enjoyment of other rights. Independently of the economic, political or cultural systems we are of the opinion that the protection, promotion and defense of all, and here I wish to stress the word all, human rights constitute an ineludible obligation for all countries. At the same time, on making such protection, promotion and defense a fundamental concern to the international community and an objective of high priority for the UN, we consider that the serious, flagrant and systematic violations of these rights and freedoms, wherever they may occur, affect us all and are a legitimate concern of the international community, which is authorized, pursuant to the objectives and principles of the United Nations Charter, to strive to eradicate them.

The Spanish government, Mr. President, believes that there is a close relationship between human rights, democracy and development. We acknowledge that the extreme poverty suffered unjustly by so many millions of people, the overcoming of which must have top priority for the international community, can constitute a lack in the full enjoyment of some human rights. However, we cannot for this reason forget that they and democracy, among others, form part of the essential requirements for achieving stable and sustained development to which all human beings are entitled to aspire and enjoy.

Mr. President,

As I said at the beginning, the great achievements so far, both with regard to the norms adopted and the application and control of such norms, are not enough, since a daily look at the international situation shows that the violations continue and that there is still much to do in every sphere.

In this respect, the persistence of all types of discrimination and intolerance, whatsoever their origin, is of special concern to Spain. It would be a very good thing if we could take advantage of the opportunity offered to us by this Conference in order to bring to an end all forms and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, etc. And together take on a firm commitment to coordinate our efforts in the struggle against them.

Mr. President,

The discrimination whose passive object is women is also a cause of special concern to us. In this respect, we consider that one of the great priorities of this world Conference should be the effective recognition of the rights of women, especially those rights that protect them against any kind of violence, as well as the attainment of complete and equal participation by women in all levels and aspects of daily life.

We likewise consider that this world Conference should be used as a privileged platform for the adoption of such directives that will enable us, both nationally and internationally, to reinforce the mechanisms and programmes aimed at better defending children and the physically or mentally disabled.

In the case of the former, that of children, it is imperative that we terminate the violence of which, whether for socio-economic reasons, natural disasters or armed conflicts, they are the daily victims, and that we secure for them the harmonious development of their personalities through ensuring them a suitable family environment.

In the case of the disabled person, the Spanish government is firmly committed to the elimination of all types of discrimination and to assure them the equal enjoyment of all human rights, including their active participation in every order of society.

Finally, within the goals that we consider must have priority at this Conference, is that of the definitive eradication of the social scourge of torture. We must redouble our efforts in order to ensure that states, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals undertake to establish and maintain concrete programmes that will lead to the ending of the practice of torture as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

During this brief contribution, we have mentioned only those aspects that, within a wide range of action, we deem must be given priority at this Conference.

Nevertheless, we must be realistic and admit that no action in favor of human rights can be adopted and put into practice if we do not improve the operation and financing of the system's mechanisms.

In this connection, the Spanish government believes that we should considerably increase the budget of the Centre for Human Rights by means of a suitable redistribution of the United Nations regular budget. This effort would make it possible to improve its operation as well as that of the follow-up committees of the major conventions, the control systems, both public and confidential, initiated by the Commission on Human Rights, the advisory services and technical cooperation in the field of human rights.

Likewise, and with a view to the greater effectiveness of the system and better control of the means placed at its disposal, we would be in favor of transforming the position of director of the Centre for Human Rights into that of high commissioner for human rights, with clear duties of coordination and prevention in this field.

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by recalling the distinguished Spanish philosopher, Francisco de Vitoria, who was a clear precursor of the current concept of human rights and who said that:

The law of nations holds force not only as a function of the pacts or agreements of men, but has true force of law. The whole world, which to a certain extent forms a republic, is empowered to bestow laws that are just and beneficial for all.

With this idea in mind, I wish to restate our firm belief in the universality of the norms on human rights and to express the clear commitment of the Spanish government and people to the promotion, protection and defense of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

From here I offer you, Mr. President, the full cooperation of the Spanish delegation, directed towards ensuring that this Conference which is now starting will conclude, under your effective guidance, in the great success that we all believe and hope it will.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jacques Dupont, Minister of State, Director of External Relations of the Principality of Monaco. Excellency you have the floor.

DUPONT, Jacques (Monaco), spoke in French:

Keywords: MONACO - HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me, first of all, to express to the Austrian authorities the deep gratitude that is due, indeed, to the organization of this meeting, the warm welcome that has been extended to the participants at this Conference as well as the excellence and nobility of the statements made here by the President of the Austrian Republic and the Federal Chancellor. I would also like to commend Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali for the great contribution to the work of this Conference he made by addressing the Conference. The Secretariat of the Conference also deserves our thanks for its effective work, its commitment, devotion and the facilities it has made available to us.

Mr. President,

On the 28th of May of this year, the Principality of Monaco became the 183rd Member State of the United Nations Organization and is now participating here today as a member in this Conference. This for our country is a source of great satisfaction and pride.

Forty-five years have passed since the proclamation by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The grand principles then proclaimed, the principles of liberty and equality, are a reality for many peoples today. If unfortunately for the others they are still only a source of hope, they, nonetheless, constitute a service of man in his fight against the arbitrariness, a fundamental reference.

Like any state whose policy and social life are based on these principles, Monaco is in favor of all activities designed to promote human dignity and respect for human rights.

Monaco, therefore, very pleased to note the invitation extended by the United Nations to representatives of states united in a World Conference, to deal with the major issues of human rights. But can we really celebrate today when so many countries are still torn by war; at a time when at a few hundred kilometers away from here peoples we thought could live in harmony are fighting; at a time when the most powerful of them are systematically violating the rights of the weaker people, bombarding their towns, expelling peasants from their land; at a time when women and children are the victims of the most abhorrent and barbarous forms of violence.

Mr. President,

For the Principality of Monaco, there is no doubt, no restriction: people must fully enjoy their rights in conditions of freedom of thought, belief, movement and activity.

Certainly, these rights should be limited as also written in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to ensure that the exercise of these rights are not detrimental to others. One cannot speak of human rights, indeed, without also speaking about duties that people have to their communities in order to meet the requirements of public wellbeing.

These basic principles inspire the political life of the Principality of Monaco. Our Constitution recognizes the equality of all before the law, the sanctity of home and property, the right to work and respect for family life and the guarantees freedom and security of the individual at the same time as that of religion, freedom of worship and of opinion; it grants the right to free schooling and provides the latter, and also that of freedom of association and of meetings as well as the right to trade union activities and to strikes.

Mr. President,

Our Conference will be assessing the human rights situation throughout the world. It will do so, I hope, while steering clear of political confrontations and while taking a realistic and pragmatic approach

dealing with what is the essential in this area and that is the human being and the human being's aspirations for protection and promotion of rights and freedoms.

Over and beyond this, it is important for our Principality to also state how crucial it is to deal with the environment within which people evolved, how necessary it is to organize effective protection of the environment.

Those elements that allow human life – air, water, sea – do not they require, indeed, as Prince Rainier III reminded us at the Rio de Janeiro Conference that the international community should mobilize itself to ensure that future generations do not have to suffer from our own negligence.

This is a dimension, in our view, to which the Conference should be sensitive and one, which does deserve some thought. Is it not part of the Conference's perspectives to protect human rights, for how one could imagine that mankind whose very first right is clearly that to life could, if we are not careful, find that its direct environment might end up so damaged that human health would suffer therefrom.

Mr. President,

The humanitarian calling of the Principality of Monaco makes it very sensitive to everything that deals with human beings, human wellbeing and development.

Monaco, therefore, will always side with those who ensure that right shall prevail over might.

Thus, in the coming days, my delegation will unreservedly support all proposals and measures which indicate and show a determination to progress towards greater tolerance and respect for human dignity human beings, of all human beings.

I thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Geza Jeszenszky, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary. Excellence, you have the floor.

JESZENSZKY, Geza (Hungary):

Keywords: DEMOCRACY - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - HUNGARIANS - SERBIA - MINORITIES - INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS - REFUGEES - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for being here at this late hour.

During the long decades of the cold war, Austria and Vienna represented for us, Hungarians, the most important window to a world embodying freedom, human rights, democracy and free enterprise. Therefore, we consider Vienna to be the most fitting host for this World Conference. It gives me added pleasure to see a good friend and colleague, Dr. Alois Mock, presiding over our deliberations, and I offer him the best possible cooperation of my delegation.

Mr. President,

The demise of the cold war, the crumbling of the dictatorships form solid premises for us to respond effectively to the universal need of establishing democratic and secure environment for our societies. Yet, in a number of places, also in our immediate neighborhood, nations are still traversing the uncertain waters of transition, where dark forces of the past are still haunting us. Free and fair multiparty elections, genuine democratic institutions or the rule of law cannot take firm roots if the community of democracies does not display the necessary will and capacity to stand firmly against aggressive wars, ethnic cleansing, violations of minority rights and curtailment of fundamental freedoms. Today, the Central and Eastern

Europe – this volatile region - abounds in examples showing both the promises of the future and the sad results of our failure to address in a timely and adequate manner human rights violations and abhorrent instances of ethnic discrimination turning into violence. Only too often have we witnessed elections and fake so-called democratic institutions becoming docile tools of abusive governmental power, while national exclusiveness and intolerance, often accompanied with anti-Semitism, or for that anti-Hungarianism, or other forms of racial or ethnic discrimination may even get a kind of misguided popular support. It is our common responsibility, political as well as moral obligation to search for appropriate and resolute responses to the challenges emerging as a result of the recent changes.

Only a few hundreds of kilometres from our chamber of discussions, the gravest violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms continue to occur on a most horrifying scale as it was rendered so emotionally and so convincingly by the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ever since the outbreak of the Southern Slav crisis in the former Yugoslavia almost two years ago, Hungary has strongly called for concerted action by the international community to stop the aggressive war and killings, to resolutely reject the acquisition of territory by use of force and to address the human rights dimension of the conflict.

To our deepest regret, at that time the world stood unmoving and undecided. Later, unfortunately the syndrome of "too little too late" has become the major feature of the multilateral approach. Meanwhile, the abhorrent practice of ethnic cleansing has started and, although it shocked the world, the community of nations failed to respond effectively to the horrors committed by the criminals in the name of nationalism. Mass killings, torture, inhumane treatment, mass rape, arbitrary detention and forceful expulsion have been going on unabated, in fact, in front of our own eyes because we are neighboring Voivodina, the occupied parts of Croatia as well. In this respect, one cannot escape questions to be asked: where will all these gross and flagrant violations of human rights lead us, if unchecked, as the case has been? What is the message the international community is sending with its policy of inaction and hesitance to potential other violators? I am sure, no one in the world wants to witness new Bosnias in other parts of the world, but we have to face this danger unless we can handle this strategy.

In this context, Hungary remains profoundly and most seriously concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation until recently of 400,000 strong Hungarian community living in Voivodina in Serbia. We have consistently called for international protection of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, for they find themselves living under constant threat, intimidation and persecution. We cannot do otherwise this time either. Therefore, we strongly urge effective international presence of observers in Serbian Voivodina to safeguard the rights of the Hungarians and other minorities. So far, the restraint of the leaders and members of the ethnic communities living in that unique ethnic mosaic has preserved relative calm, but that province too can easily become a direct target of extremist Serbian groups.

Mr. Chairman,

The Charter of the United Nations not only reaffirmed faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human being, but also contains the obligation to promote and protect universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights form a solemn pledge and a source of inspiration for generations of our times. The impressive panoply of human rights instruments adopted subsequently in the United Nations is an achievement we all should cherish. These standards, first of all the Covenants, bear testimony of the universal validity of the rights laid down in those instruments. Universal adherence to the human rights treaties should be high on our agenda. The successor states of the federal structures, which failed to preserve the loyalty of the member nations, must also strictly observe them. Hungary, for its part, by its own example, remains committed to these universal values. Being a party to all the major human rights instruments, my government has subjected itself to international scrutiny by accepting all the complaints mechanisms provided for in these treaties. Nobody can claim perfection in this world, but one

has to admit that transparency in a country's human rights policy and practices is an important safeguard and a kind of litmus test for a government's genuine intentions.

Mr. Chairman,

Hungary welcomes the ever-growing recognition that we cannot speak of freedom, democracy, justice and the rule of law when the rights of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are violated. Creation of a climate of substantive dialogue and cooperation between the minorities and the government is a condition *sine qua non* of establishing modern democratic institutions within as well as among the countries. Hungary, for example, welcomes the statement made yesterday by the Slovak President, who spoke about the dialogue with the representatives of the national minorities living in that country and that there is an intention in Slovakia to draft a new law on national minorities. I hope and assume, it will take into consideration their legitimate interests as expressed by their elected representatives. I hope other neighbors of Hungary will do likewise as Ukraine has already embarked upon this road. The examples of Alto Adige/Süd Tirol, Schleswig, the exemplary coexistence of the Finnish majority and the Swedish minority in Finland, the cantonal system in Switzerland and the federal structure in Spain are models, which deserve credit and unqualified support by us all. In this regard, one may not lose sight of the inescapable conclusion that these successful attempts to resolve the situation of minorities and separate national communities have all taken root on the soil of democracies. These models, at the same time, give us evidence that the most appropriate way to solve minority problems is to ensure their wellbeing and loyalty by providing favorable conditions for the preservation and promotion of their identity.

As history has shown, the acceptance of the legitimate aspirations of the minorities to preserve their culture, language and religion as well as to maintain unhindered contacts with their mother nations has not undermined but rather strengthened the unity of the states concerned. It is not the recognition but the denial of their legitimate demands that leads to instability, conflict or bloodshed.

As Arnold Toynbee, one of the greatest thinkers of this century put it in 1915, alas, his remarkable foresight:

Primitive people exterminate their minorities, civilized ones collect signs of their satisfaction.

The various concepts of autonomy recently evolving in particular minority situations lie along the same line of thinking. Their sole purpose is to create proper framework for the exercise of the rights of minorities through the system of self-government.

Mr. Chairman,

It is our firm belief that the United Nations, as the most comprehensive multilateral organization, has an irreplaceable role to play in the promotion of respect for and observance of the rights of minorities. It is in this context that my government has attached great importance to the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities that constitutes the first universal international document stipulating the obligations of states to protect and promote the existence and identity of minorities. However, my government remains convinced that elaboration and implementation of a document containing legally binding international norms are indispensable to the active and effective protection of minorities. We consider the adoption of the Declaration as a promising start for a process, to begin as early as possible, of norm-setting activity resulting in an all-embracing instrument binding on states in terms of international law, including international guarantees for the effective protection of minorities.

Mr. Chairman,

In accordance with our common obligations deriving from the Charter with respect to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms beside the urgent task of norm-setting of the rights

of minorities, there is an immediate need to search for ways and means of innovative and preventive protection of this vulnerable group of the society. In the light of the current tragic events in our close neighborhood, in the former Yugoslavia, we continue to call for the establishment of an institutional system of international guarantees; the setting into motion of fact-finding, monitoring, on-site inquiry missions; and the appointment of a special rapporteur on violations of the rights of minorities to assist in identifying problems, promoting dialogue and finding solutions.

The emergence of refugee outflows is inseparable from and a direct result of large-scale violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. During the past few years the global refugee situation has worsened dramatically with 17 million refugees and over 20 million displaced persons worldwide - a sad testimony of our times.

The interrelationship between violations of human and minority rights, refugee influx and their threat to international peace and security has been clearly proven by our turbulent world; thus the interlinkage between them has been wisely recognized by the international community, but it is our common responsibility to turn this recognition into practice.

Hungary attaches particular significance to the role and responsibility of the Security Council regarding the interconnection between large-scale and flagrant violations of human and minority rights and threats to international peace, security and stability.

The main task ahead of us now is to build up the capacity of the United Nations for early warning of and effective response to massive human rights violations and conflicts arising therefrom. Human rights should be part and parcel of any political early warning system within the United Nations, as envisaged in the Secretary-General's *An Agenda for Peace*.

Hungary supports the appointment of a High Commissioner for Human Rights, for it would be an important step in the right direction. This High Commissioner could be available for good offices, counselling and instrumental in organizing the deployment of civilian peacekeepers, police-monitors, human rights fact-finding, on-site inquiry, monitoring and observer missions.

Mr. Chairman,

The second World Conference on Human Rights provides us with a rare opportunity to firmly commit ourselves to the enhancement of the effectiveness, responsiveness and operational activity of the United Nations in the field of human rights. Since there are millions of victims of human rights violations all around the world in desperate need of help and protection, we cannot afford to fail in seizing this historic opportunity. It is my fervent hope that this Conference will make an important contribution to better human rights conditions in our contemporary world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement.

[Spoke in French:]

I give the floor to Liu Huaqiu, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China. Mr. Minister, you have the floor.

LIU, Huaqiu (China), spoke in Chinese:

Keywords: POVERTY - DEVELOPMENT - DUTY OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE COMMUNITY - SOVEREIGNTY - SELF-DETERMINATION - PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE - DEVELOPMENT - CHINA - GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. President,

The World Conference on Human Rights is convened on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is a noteworthy event in the international community today. We hope that this Conference will contribute positively to strengthening international cooperation in the field of human rights and to promoting full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms of people of all countries. Please allow me to take this opportunity to offer, on behalf of the Chinese government and people, our warm congratulations to the Conference and wish the Conference a success.

Mr. President,

In the wake of World War II and the victory over the brutal fascist forces, the United Nations worked out the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which give expression to the longing desire of people across the world for the respect and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It has, through relentless efforts, scored many achievements in safeguarding and promoting human rights. During this period, nearly a hundred countries broke the shackles of colonialism and won independence successively, which culminated in the total collapse of the centuries-old evil colonial system. All this has created prerequisites and opened up broad vistas for the realization of basic human rights for people of all countries in the world. The United Nations and the international community have done a great deal of work in terms of eliminating colonialism, racism, apartheid, massive and gross violations of human rights as a result of foreign invasion and occupation safeguarding the right of small and weak countries to self-determination and the right of developing countries to development and helping people of all countries to obtain the basic human rights.

All these represent a major development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Moreover, the series of programmatic documents such as the Proclamation of Teheran and the Declaration on the Right to Development adopted successively by the United Nations have further enriched the contents and defined the objectives and guiding principles for international activities in the field of human rights.

In preparation for this Conference, Africa, Latin America and Asia convened regional preparatory meetings, which passed respectively the Tunis Declaration, the San José Declaration and the Bangkok Declaration. These important instruments on human rights have identified some pressing issues of concern to the developing countries that make up the overwhelming majority of the world population and put forward their practical and feasible principal propositions, thus, further enriching and expanding the contents of the human rights protection and promotion.

The issue of human rights has attracted the universal attention of the international community as it is based on the basic rights and vital interests of the people of the world. In recent years, the international situation has undergone drastic changes. The world has entered a historical juncture whereby the old pattern is giving way to the new one. The international community has before it the difficulties and challenges, on the one hand, and the hopes and opportunities, on the other. In the international human rights field, the pressing task facing the people of all countries is to sum up the experience and set the correct direction and principles for the future cause in light of the changing situation with a view of effectively protecting and promoting basic human rights.

This World Conference on Human Rights is an important conference linking the past and the future. Its success will undoubtedly be of great significance to realization of this objective. We should also be soberly aware that the serious consequences of colonialism, racism, apartheid, foreign invasion and

occupation are, yet, to be fully removed. People in countries that are still under foreign occupation or apartheid have not, yet, enjoyed the basic human rights and freedoms.

The cold war characterized by the confrontation between two military blocks has come to the end. The world today is far from being tranquil as is evidenced by the increasing facts of destabilization and emergence of new hot spots. People in some regions are still struggling for survival. Many developing countries find themselves in greater economic difficulties and impoverishment. Over one billion of people in the world are still living below the poverty line suffering from starvation, diseases and shortages. These, no doubt, are the stumbling blocks in the way to realization of the universal human rights. Therefore, removing these obstacles and carrying out the international cooperation in this connection should be given the top priority by the international community in its efforts to promote the cause of human rights.

Mr. President,

The concept of human rights is the product of a historical development. It is closely associated with specific social, political and economic conditions and the specific history, culture and values of a particular country. Different historical stages of the development have different human rights requirements. Countries at different development stages or with different historical traditions and cultural backgrounds also have different understanding and practice of human rights. Thus, one should not and cannot think the human rights standards and models of certain countries are the only proper ones and demand all other countries to comply with them. It is neither realistic, nor workable to make international economic assistance or even international economic cooperation conditional on them.

The concept of human rights is an integral one, including both, individual and collective rights. Individual rights cover not only civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights. The various aspects of human rights are interdependent, equally important, indivisible and indispensable. For the vast number of developing countries to respect and protect human rights is, first and foremost, to ensure the full realization of the rights to subsistence and development. The argument that human rights is the precondition for development is unfounded. When poverty and lack of adequate food and clothing are commonplace and people's basic needs are not guaranteed, priority should be given to economic development. Otherwise, human rights are completely out of the question. We believe that the major criteria for judging the human rights situation in a developing country should be whether its policies and measures help promote economic and social progress, help people meet their basic needs for food and clothing and improve the quality of their life. The international community should take actions to help developing countries alleviate economic difficulties promoting their development and free them from poverty and want.

The rights and obligations of a citizen are indivisible. While enjoying his legitimate rights and freedom, a citizen must fulfill his social responsibilities and obligations. There are no absolute individual rights and freedoms except those prescribed by and within the framework of law. Nobody shall place his own rights and interests above those of the state and society, nor should he be allowed to impair those of others and the general public. This is a universal principle of all civilized societies. Moreover, to maintain social stability and ensure the basic human rights to citizens do not contradict each other. The practice of the international community has proved, once and again, only when there is justice, order and stability in a country or society can its development and the wellbeing as well as basic human rights of all its citizens be guaranteed.

According to the United Nations Charter and the norms of international law, all countries, large or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, have the right to choose their own political system, road to development and values. Other countries have no right to interfere. To wantonly accuse another country of abuse of human rights and impose the human rights criteria of one's own country or region on other countries or regions are tantamount to an infringement upon the sovereignty of other countries and interference in the latter's

internal affairs, which could result in political instability and social unrest in other countries. As a people that used to suffer tremendously from aggression by big powers but now enjoys independence, the Chinese have come to realize fully that state sovereignty is the basis for the realization of citizens' human rights. If the sovereignty of a state is not safeguarded, the human rights of its citizens are out of the question, like a castle in the air. The views that the human rights question goes beyond boundaries and that the principle of non-interference in other's internal affairs is not applicable to it and actions on these premises are, in essence, a form of power politics. They run counter to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to the lofty cause of the protection of human rights.

China believes that the protection of human rights, like the promotion of development, requires international cooperation and a peaceful and stable international environment. For the purpose of strengthening international cooperation in the field of human rights and promoting activities in the protection of human rights in the whole international community, the Chinese delegation hereby puts forward the following principled proposals and wishes to discuss them with you.

First, the international community should give its primary attention to the massive gross violations of human rights resulting from foreign aggression and occupation and continue to support those people still under foreign invasion, colonial rule or apartheid system in their just struggle for national self-determination. It should also commit itself to the elimination of the massive gross violations of human rights ensued from regional conflicts.

Secondly, world peace and stability should be enhanced and a favorable international environment created for the attainment of the goals in human rights protection. To this end, countries should establish a new type of international relationship of mutual respect, equality, amicable coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation in accordance with the UN Charter and the norms of international law. All international disputes should be solved peacefully in a fair and reasonable manner and in the spirit of mutual accommodation and mutual understanding, and consultation on equal footing instead of resorting to force or threat of force. No country should pursue hegemony and power politics or engage in aggression, expansion and interference. This is the way to ensure regional and global peace and stability and to prevent armed conflicts that may incur massive violations of human rights.

Thirdly, the right of developing countries to development should be respected and guaranteed. To create a good international economic environment for the initial economic development of developing countries the international community should commit itself to the establishment of a fair and rational new international economic order. Developed countries, in particular, have the responsibility to help developing countries through practical measures in such areas as debt, capital, trade, assistance and technology transfer, to overcome their economic difficulties and develop their economy. This is the way to gradually narrow the gap between the North and the South, which may otherwise be widened, and finally to bring about common development and prosperity.

Fourthly, the right of each country to formulate its own policies on human rights protection in light of its own conditions should also be respected and guaranteed. Nobody should be allowed to use the human rights issue to exert political and economic pressures on other countries. The human rights issue can be discussed among countries. However, the discussions should be conducted in the spirit of mutual respect and on an equal footing.

Mr. President,

It is the sole objective of the Chinese government to serve the Chinese people and work for their interests. Therefore, China has always attached importance and been committed to the guarantee and promotion of the basic human rights of its people. It is known to all that the old China was an extremely poor and backward semi-feudal and semi-colonial society where the Chinese people did not have any human rights to speak of as they were enslaved and oppressed by the imperialists and Chinese reactionary forces.

This bitter past was not put to an end until the founding of the People's Republic. Since then, the Chinese people have, for the first time in history, taken their own destiny into their own hands, became masters of their own country and enjoyed basic human rights. According to China's Constitution, all power in the People's Republic of China belongs to the people. The law guarantees that each and every Chinese citizen, regardless of gender, family background, ethnic status, occupation, property status and religious belief, enjoys genuine democracy and freedom, civil and political rights as well as extensive economic, social and cultural rights.

China is a unitary multi-national state. To strengthen national unity and safeguard the unification of the motherland accord with the common interests and aspiration of the Chinese people of all nationalities. To handle properly the ethnic question and the relations among different nationalities has all along been of vital importance to the stability, development and equality among all nationalities of the country. The Chinese government, therefore, attaches great importance to the work in this regard. Equality and unity among all nationalities and regional national autonomy are China's basic principles and policies for handling matters concerning nationalities. As a result, people of all nationalities living in the same big family are now marching towards common prosperity.

Since China began to implement the policy of reform and opening to the outside world, its economy has been developing vigorously and its democratic and legal system improving steadily. The nearly 1.2 billion Chinese populace of all nationalities, who are united as one, have seen their material and cultural wellbeing improved considerably. As their basic needs have been more or less met they are briskly heading towards a fairly comfortable and affluent life. China has made steady progress in promoting and protecting human rights, which has been acknowledged and commended by all fair-minded people in the international community.

China respects and abides by the basic principles of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It attaches importance to and has actively participated in the international exchanges and cooperation in the field of human rights as well as UN activities in this field. China has acceded, one after another, to eight international conventions on human rights and is earnestly honoring the obligation it has thereby undertaken. It is ready to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation with other countries on human rights in the international arena and to contribute its part to the effective promotion and protection of human rights in the international community and to the achievement of the lofty ideal that people throughout the world will be able to fully enjoy the basic human rights.

Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency, the distinguished Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, for his statement. I now call on Mr. Fernando Ochoa Antich from Venezuela.

OCHOA ANTICH, Fernando (Venezuela), spoke in Spanish:

Keywords: VENEZUELA - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS - DEMOCRACY - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - DEVELOPMENT

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

There is a surprising paradox in the field of human rights. We have now celebrated the 200th anniversary since the Declaration of Human Rights, and yet we are meeting today in Vienna in 1993 to continue calling for observance of the same rights that appeared essential at the time of the French Revolution. On the one hand, it seems we are making no progress, that the same arbitrary acts continue to be committed but, on the other hand, there is now at the world level a human rights ideology. At this time of radical changes without firm values but with changing ideas, the protection of the rights of the individual has

become one of the few issues that is of interest for people of different races and inhabitants of all parts of the world.

In attempting to deepen and to universalize the implementation and fulfillment of human rights, it is logical that there should be doubts and arguments because the variety of the peoples involved necessarily means adjustments due to the diversity of customs and lifestyles. However, human rights should not be seen as an alien ideology based on particular ethical or cultural values. The very concept of human rights, which will emerge from this assembly, has to reflect fundamental principles that are valid for the whole world. This indeed the challenge of our times. Within our diversity and respecting our differences we have to grasp this joint concept that exists, which is latent in all of us and which can become the new ideology of mankind. Human rights are universal. What unites us all, despite our differences, is a single shared concept of human dignity. These principles are definitely higher than the sovereignty of states.

It is also important to emphasize that respect for the rights of the individual is a problem of each and every one of us. There is no area of the world that is free of problems with regard to violations of these basic rights. Neither is there any country nor region which can arrogate to itself the monopoly of truth with regard to their implementation and the most effective way of promoting them. In this area, we are all responsible and all of us can become victims. The promotion and protection of human rights like the prevention of violations is not only the responsibility of States and the United Nations. It is a matter for every one of us. It is a matter for all citizens. Nevertheless, we have to reaffirm our faith in the unique and exclusive responsibility of the state in terms of the protection of human rights without it being moved towards individuals and that the guarantee for the enjoyment of human rights must be based on that.

Accordingly, as the Foreign Minister of Venezuela, I wish to emphasize the contribution of non-governmental organizations and their contribution to mobilizing and sensitizing the public opinion in all matters related to this issue. Their vigilant and militant positions not only in Venezuela but throughout the world have facilitated the very holding of this Conference and enriched the discussion with inputs that may still be controversial but mark the course of discussion on these issues. The contributions of NGOs are not being taken sufficient note of in this Conference. NGOs represent people and it is impossible to conceive a mechanism to protect human rights, which is fully operative without their participation. The Quito Declaration of NGOs from Latin America and the Caribbean provides original ideas and it is definitely necessary to take in mind their suggestions in our work at this Conference.

It is particularly worthwhile to listen to arguments and to think on the possibility of setting up the office of a UN High Commissioner and to establish an international criminal court with the competence to address gross violations of human rights. There are crimes that cannot be considered the internal affairs of a country or indeed of a single region. Massacres, ethnic cleansing, systematic torture, all these constitute real crimes against humanity and should be treated as such.

For Venezuela, one issue of major importance is the close link between democracy and human rights. Only through democracy does it possible to overcome violence, to investigate acts of violence and to punish those responsible. Only in a situation of democracy can bodies be established and exist with the basic intention of preserving human rights. Accordingly, we are proud that at this time of civil, religious and ethnic wars, Latin America is a zone of democracy, peace and of efforts to ensure respect for essential values such as respect for life and non-discrimination. Latin America is living in peace because throughout the continent essentially democratic governments prevail. Nonetheless, democracy, stability and peace cannot survive in conditions of chronic destitution under development and abandonment.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has warned that political progress and economic development are inseparable. Both are equally important and must be pursued simultaneously. If political stability is required in order to implement effective economic programmes, when economic conditions deteriorate too much political conflict and discord find fertile ground.

At this time in Latin America, we have more than 200 million poor people. Critical poverty, lack of education and hygiene to which these people are subjected obviously constitute a violation of their most fundamental rights as was recently noted by the Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States at its meeting in Managua. Each of our governments has a tremendous social agenda in

an attempt to help those layers of the population to overcome their destitution. Nevertheless, despite the enormous effort made, we are handicapped by economic difficulties which impede social spending. We are not asking for assistance in order to overcome those difficulties. We are simply calling for fair treatment. We have reconverted our economies in order to compete internationally. Despite the declarations, despite political and economic ideologies, concrete facts show that markets are closed to us. We are asked to clean up the environment by reducing oil consumption. An attempt is being made to protect the tropical forest by limiting our country's timber exports. An attempt is being made to save the marine fauna by imposing limitations on our exports of tuna. But no thought is given to the rights of the population of our regions to a dignified and prosperous life, which could be achieved through greater trade and opening up of the international markets.

Human rights are violated when there is disproportionate contamination of the environment of our planet and then an attempt is made to impose measures that only affect the least developed countries. The right to development is violated when obstacles are raised to the prosperity of some economies imposing obsolete limits on trade. In an international environment, which is now freed from the great strategic confrontation, problems relating to the rights to development have to be addressed from an angle of solidarity. This Conference should see the emergence of a commitment to promote development, democracy and respect for human rights as elements that complement each other.

Nevertheless, I should like to emphasize that despite our interest in the right to development, the centre of our efforts has to be the individual. We cannot sacrifice men on the altar of all-out devotion to economics. Macro-economic figures are important but they cannot be converted into an end in themselves. The progress of the human person, his or her wellbeing and fulfilment have to be the essential objective of our governments and also of a world assembly like this one. We have to promote economic and social rights. We are convinced that they must be well-rooted in order to achieve world peace. But we place our highest value on the inalienable rights of the individual, those same rights that have motivated the mankind for more than 200 years and which still are being violated in many parts of the Earth.

The right to life, to freedom to equality, all these continue to be unattainable objectives for too many people throughout the world. This assembly has been moved by the tragic statement by the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The conscience of the world will be outraged if we do not demand clear conduct in this sphere. But I wish to say here that the action of the Security Council will not have been sufficient because of a lack of political will on the part of some states that have not fulfilled their historic responsibility because of their membership of the Security Council. We cannot say that the objectives of this assembly will have been met so long as disrespect prevails in any part of the planet for these shared values, which have brought us together in Vienna. Our task is enormous but the unity which I have perceived at this Conference with regard to some fundamental issues allows me to be optimistic.

Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I should like to thank His Excellency, the distinguished Foreign Minister of Venezuela, for his statement. I call on His Excellency, Mr. Todor Tchurov, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria. Excellency, you have the floor.

TCHUROV, Todor (Bulgaria):

Keywords: INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - SOVEREIGNTY - BULGARIA - GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. President,

It is a great honor for me, on behalf of the republic of Bulgaria, to address this historic World Conference on Human Rights.

I would like at the outset to congratulate the distinguished President as well as all other members of the General Committee upon your election and to express my profound confidence that under their competent

guidance the World Conference on Human Rights will be a success and will contribute to the realization of the noble ideals of human rights and fundamental freedoms. I would also like to express my delegation's readiness to contribute in a spirit of cooperation and good will to the work of the Conference.

Allow me also to extend Bulgaria's deep appreciation to the government and people of Austria for their hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Conference.

Mr. President,

For centuries, the brightest minds in the history of mankind have devoted their strength and energy to the creation of such a system of values that would give highest priority to the dignity and worth of every human being. Century after century, people have dreamed of a world free of violence, oppression, human sufferings in which liberty and social justice became true for each and everyone. To what extent, however, are these dreams and aspirations reality today? To what extent respect for the rights, dignity and worth of the human personality is an inseparable part of human civilization?

Forty-five years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights we are witnessing two conflicting tendencies. On the one hand, a lot has already been achieved:

- a comprehensive system of internationally recognized principles and norms in the human rights field has been established and is continuously being elaborated upon;
- ways and means for the realization of the international standards for millions of peoples worldwide have been worked out;
- control mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the international human rights instruments have been established at national, regional and international levels;
- public awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms has been raised and made them an inseparable element of the public consciousness and a cornerstone in interstate relations;
- direct participation of individuals and non-governmental organizations in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms has been dramatically increased.

On the other hand, however, the world is facing challenges that require urgent international action. Extreme nationalism and racial hatred, xenophobia and antisemitism, political oppression, ethnic and religious intolerance endanger internal stability and international peace and security. Every day women, children and men are becoming victims of ethnic cleansing, of arbitrary executions, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, of involuntary or enforced disappearances, of detentions and persecutions only because of their religious, ethnic, political or other affiliations. Millions are forced to leave their native land, millions are dying from lack of food, water or basic medical care.

The fundamental changes that shook the world are creating new opportunities to strengthen what has already been achieved. The serious nature of the challenges we are facing today compel us to take a critical, constructive, pragmatic and comprehensive approach in search of effective ways and means for overcoming the existing problems and promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Critical, because the realities of our time teach us that the delusion with the success achieved so far leads in practice often to piling up of problems and their transformation into crisis phenomena with long-term consequences. Constructive, not only because the past decades have undoubtedly proved that bloc opposition hampers progress in the field of human rights but also because of the intricacy, diversity and complexity of the existing problems in the social and humanitarian sphere. Pragmatic, because the million victims of human rights violations are expecting from us not just compassion but concrete practical assistance. Comprehensive, because in our interdependent and interrelated world the problems related to human rights and fundamental freedoms cannot be solved on their own ignoring the factors that have caused them.

Mr. President,

As a whole, human rights standards determine the specific minimum framework of social relations. Thus, the recognition of their universal character and their practical implementation should not be prejudiced by any political, ideological, national, religious or other interests.

Unfortunately, the recognition *de jure* by governments of their respective responsibility concerning human rights and fundamental freedoms does not give sufficient guarantees for their strict observance. The experience gained so far is full of examples about undertaken but unfulfilled obligations with regard to human rights.

No country in the world can be credited so far with a perfect human rights record. But while in some countries there is a good will and continuous strife for improving the existing human rights pattern, in other parts of the world gross and mass violations are everyday occurrences. In this regard, control and effective investigation of human rights violations can serve as an important component of the human rights protection system. During the last decades a variety of human rights international control mechanisms have been developed. A number of institutions are contributing considerably to the activities aimed at uncovering, condemning and preventing cases of human rights violations. I cannot but commend all these bodies and organizations, and especially non-governmental organizations and human rights activists for their time and effort, commitment and dedication.

It is impossible, however, not to mention the numerous disadvantages of the existing system - the slow reaction and the lack of sufficient number of ways and means for preventive action, the absence of effective international system of remedies, to mention just a few. The very existence of so many cases of gross and mass human rights violations taking place even at the time when we have gathered at this unique forum is a sufficient proof of our failures and of the necessity for seeking new, non-traditional, more flexible and more effective forms of reaction. It is against this background that we appreciate the proposal of establishing an office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights. We would like also to reiterate our conviction of the necessity to find a reasonable positive solution of the financial and other problems of the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva.

Mr. President,

Until recently, the concept of national sovereignty was often used by governments as a means to conceal human rights violations from the attention of the international community. Today, however, it is widely recognized that the status of human rights is an object of legitimate international concern. This is especially applicable to those countries that are being integrated in the international community through a process of gradual recognition and whose human rights record still remains to be proved.

Mr. President,

In a short period of time Bulgaria underwent tremendous changes. The democratic institutions have been established based on separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, the rule of law, multiparty system, free press, independent trade unions. Substantial part of the reform of the legal system and administrative practices is the establishment of effective guarantees in the human rights domain.

Part of the process of changes is the transition towards market economy. Quite naturally, despite my government's efforts and the encouraging results achieved so far, the difficulties of the transition are already adversely affecting the achievements reached in the field of social and economic rights. Bulgaria, however, remains firmly committed to further promotion of the reform.

Mr. President,

The rights and fundamental freedoms concern each and everyone - women, children, men - without distinction as to race, language, religious, political or other affiliations, material or social status. In the name of the future generations, it is our responsibility to make them a reality.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency for his statement. Before calling on the next speaker I would like to remind you that the officers of the Conference will be meeting for the first time tomorrow morning at 9 am in room N/O. Thank you.

[Spoke in English:]

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Paek In Jun, Vice President of the Supreme Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Excellency, you have the floor.

PAEK, In Jun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), spoke in Korean:

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION - SOVEREIGNTY - DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - DEVELOPMENT - CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS - DEMOCRACY - DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA - GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. President,

Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you on your election as President of the World Conference on Human Rights and express my conviction that under your skillful leadership the Conference will be conducted successfully. At the same time, I would like to express my sincere appreciations to the host country and the members of the Secretariat for their excellent preparations of the Conference and kind hospitalities extended to all participants. I also take note of some positive results produced in the meetings of Preparatory Committee and the regional meetings held prior to this Conference.

Mr. President,

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the 10th December 1948, the international community has adopted and made effective several of international human rights instruments in order to codify human rights and on the basis have made continued efforts to ensure respect for and protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms at national, regional and international levels, thus, making no small contributions to the maintenance of world peace and security.

It is, however, unfortunate to note that in the international human rights field the tendency towards politicizing human rights issues based on confrontational concepts, which existed during the cold war era, not only continues but has become exacerbated.

In several parts of the world, the acts of violation of the sovereign rights and the right of peoples to self-determination caused by the censure of political systems of the sovereign states and the imposition of sanctions and pressure upon them under the pretext of human rights protection have not yet stopped.

Moreover, the tendency towards the politicizing human rights as in issue is becoming ever more serious due to the attempts on the part of those forces that pursue the political and strategic ambitions of establishing unique supremacy in the international human rights field today.

The serious economic and social problems, which existed in the developing countries in the past, still remain unresolved even today and this constitutes the most fundamental impediment to the enjoyment of human rights by the peoples in those countries.

Today, the international community witnesses with deep concern the successive explosions of various forms of new human rights violations, which were hidden deep behind the long-drawn curtain of the cold war.

In some regions, the ethnic, racial and religious antagonisms, armed conflicts and various bloody situations that are unprecedented since the Second World War have occurred resulting in grave violations of human rights of millions of human beings with several tens of millions of people either losing their lives as victims or becoming refugees; and this is an ongoing situation.

In several countries, the social and political instability and economic stagnation, which did not exist in the past, have emerged with the extreme anarchy, mass unemployment, open killings, violence and sale of human beings. In some western European countries a new type of human rights violations calling for racial hatred, neo-Nazism and xenophobia have emerged. Such grave developments clearly call for the international community to intensify its efforts to ensure the respect for, protection and promotion of human rights.

Mr. President,

My delegation believes that the World Conference on Human Rights will mark an important turning point in taking practical measures aimed at removing various obstacles in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms and we would like, in this regard, to state the position of our government.

Firstly, we hold that if the human rights issue is to be solved smoothly, it should, in no case, be used for any political purposes whatsoever.

If the human rights issue is deviated from its particular and lofty ideal of ensuring the dignity, freedom and wellbeing of the human being and is used for the realization of the political purposes of a country or a group of countries to disintegrate and overthrow the social and political systems of other countries, it is not a human rights issue in the true sense.

In order to realize the non-politicization of the human rights as an issue, the principle of respect for the state sovereignty characterized by non-interference in the internal affairs should be thoroughly observed in the international cooperation for solving human rights issues.

The state sovereignty is the basis for realizing human rights. Only when the state sovereignty is thoroughly respected it is possible to create an atmosphere for human rights to be fully guaranteed at the national level.

The issue of human rights of citizens in each country is not one to be solved by any ultra-state mode but rather one that the sovereign state concerned should take responsibility for.

Therefore, the international community should reject violations of sovereign rights by some countries committed against the other countries that they do not like with the imposition of the political pressure, economic blockade and military intervention against those countries under the pretext of human rights protection. Rather one should firmly maintain the principle of sovereign equality and respect for sovereign rights.

At the same time, the international community should oppose any attempts of usurping the international legal systems as the lever of unjust pressure and interference upon the sovereign states.

The application of a double standard pursuing political aims in the issue of human rights should never be allowed.

Some countries maintain certain standards to justify such tremendous domestic human rights violations as racial discrimination, murder, crimes, unemployment and acute problems of education and public health,

and they then accuse other countries groundlessly while applying yet another standard. This is the situation that should be overcome.

A situation where some countries either hide from or cover up the human rights violations in those countries with which they maintain political and strategic alliances and then intentionally condemn politically hostile countries, this is also a situation that should be resolutely rejected.

If the universality of human rights is to be achieved, the selectivity that purposefully chooses and calls to account only specific countries or situations for mere political reasons should not be pursued.

When all states oppose the considerations of and dealings in human rights based on political purposes and handle human rights issue on the basis of respect for state sovereignty, objectivity and impartiality, the atmosphere of detente and reconciliation will eventually prevail in the international human rights field.

Secondly, we hold that if the human rights are to be fully ensured at national and international level, the human rights and fundamental freedoms should not be confined only to legal stipulation and protection but be exercised and enjoyed on a practical level as well.

The rights that a human being should enjoy in all fields of social life including political, economic and cultural fields are not exercised and enjoyed automatically simply because they have already been conferred with by the law.

The human rights can be practically exercised and enjoyed when conditions of social and material life guarantee together with legal guarantee are created.

In order to enable all citizens in each country to really exercise their political rights including the right to be elected as provided for in the constitution of their country, the measures of state and society to enhance the ideological consciousness and cultural level of the citizens and to ensure economic and social stability should be carried out accordingly.

In order to enable the citizens to enjoy economic, social and cultural rights, the measures to remove poverty, unemployment, diseases, illiteracy and crimes, which jeopardize the existence of the human beings, should be taken up.

The issue of realizing the economic social and cultural rights is raised as a more pressing task in the developing countries today.

At present, problems of poverty, diseases, heavy debt burden and unfair international economic and trade relations gravely threaten the developing countries and constitute a great obstacle to the enjoyment by the peoples of these countries of not only the right to subsistence and the right to development but also to the enjoyment of the political rights.

Such phenomena as ignoring the appalling situation of the right to subsistence and the right to development in the developing countries and putting political conditions in economic assistance under the pretext of internationalization of human rights issue should be put to an end.

The international community should, without any delay, establish international environment and measures to realize the right to subsistence and the right to development of the developing countries as called for in the Declaration on the Right to Development adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 24, 1986.

In particular, the developed countries should take responsibility for the origin of the economic difficulties of the developing countries, which are getting worse with each passing day, and should actively respond to the realization of the right to subsistence and the right to development of the developing countries.

Thirdly, we hold that the priority in the solution of human rights issue should be instituted in keeping with the historical and cultural characteristics and development stage of each region and country.

Today, a certain country and a group of countries are pretending that the human rights perception, theory of values and social system of their style were an omnipotent model to be applied universally and are trying to impose this upon other countries. In case of any countries disobeying, they are putting pressure upon them, willfully assessing and slandering the political systems and human rights situations in those countries.

As long as there exists a divergence between countries and regions in social and political systems, the level of economic development, historical and cultural traditions and customs, it is quite impossible and senseless to apply the human rights perception and policy and social system of one country or one group of countries to other countries in a uniform manner.

The protection and promotion of human rights in its true and unique sense are to be realized not by directives and pressure of any outside force but by the political and economic systems and laws chosen by each country and people. Therefore, no country has any right to behave as a human rights judge.

The assertion of many developing countries, including Asian countries today, that the peculiarities of each country and region should be taken into due account in the solution to human rights issues fully conforms to the present reality.

In today's reality, in the case of the developing countries the realization of the right to subsistence and the right to development should be given priority. In the countries and regions with economic, social and cultural inequalities, the enjoyment by all citizens of human rights on an equal footing followed by the removal of such inequalities should be given precedence.

In the countries and regions where the importance is attached to the historical and cultural traditions and customs, the issue of applying and developing universal human rights perceptions in keeping with those traditions and customs should be carried out.

Fourthly, we hold that, if the human rights issue is to be solved satisfactorily at national and international level, true democracy should be put into effect.

Since the rights and freedoms of the human being are guaranteed, exercised and enjoyed with the state as the unit, the thorough realization of democracy, which is the main form of state activity, is of vital importance in the overall insurance of human rights.

The democracy can be said to be a true democracy when it places at the centre of the popular masses not a certain minority group of the society and establishes the policies that reflects the will of the popular masses in the society and serves their interest.

Only when such a democracy is in place can all citizens become masters of the political life of the state and give a full play to their creativity in all fields including economic, social and cultural fields.

The democracy in the international relations should be a democracy that opposes aggression, intervention and domination of other countries and respects their sovereignty.

Even today, when humanity is at the threshold of a new century, gross human rights violations such as racism, apartheid, colonialism and aggression, interference, domination and power politics by the outside forces still exist. It is a disgrace to humankind and a challenge to the modern civilization and democracy that this situation still obtains.

The international community is encouraged to put an end to all forms of racial hatred such as racism, apartheid, neo-Nazism and xenophobia as well as the violation of the state sovereignty, disregard for the existence of country or nation and forcible imposition of domination upon them, and to realize the democratization of the international relations.

Mr. President,

The issue of ensuring the human rights is, in essence, an issue of meeting the requirements of a human being, the most precious being in the world, to fully exercise and enjoy his or her rights and freedoms and to give a full play to his or her creativity in all fields of social life including political, economic and cultural fields.

The human rights of peoples can be fully ensured only when the state concerned pursues the policy to defend the dignity of human beings, places everything in the society including material wealth to the service of a human being and creates the human relations consistent not with antagonism and enmity but with mutual assistance on the principle of not only taking responsibility for and defending but also constantly improving the human rights of its citizens.

In our country, the state takes the responsibility for the political freedoms and rights - economic, social and cultural rights of the popular masses - and provides not only thorough legal guarantees but also all conditions necessary for their practical exercise and enjoyment.

Today, our people as masters of the state and society are fully enjoying true freedoms and rights in their social and political life and their life free from any want and fear about future, united single mindedly benefiting from measures of state and society such as free medical care and free education.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a member of the international community will faithfully fulfil its international obligations, thus, making a positive contribution to the insurance of respect for and promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world.

Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Povilas Gylys, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. Excellency, you have the floor.

GYLYS, Povilas (Lithuania):

Keywords: LITHUANIA - DEMOCRACY - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS - HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the people and government of Austria for hospitality extended to the World Conference on Human Rights.

The priority of human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law are the very values, which the Lithuanian people fought for in 1990 when independence was re-established, and which they are now making a daily reality.

Five broad objectives underpin the human rights policy of Lithuania. They are:

First, to construct our nation's political system and civil society after five decades of foreign occupation, which greatly undermined our development capacity.

Second, to establish a sound economic base as we move forward in our transition to a market economy.

Third, to maintain the security of our nation and build stability and civility in our region by continuing to promote peace, diplomacy and cooperation.

Fourth, to increase the level of our integration into the world community as global issues evolve in increasingly interdependent ways.

Fifth, to empower our citizens with more control over their economic, political and spiritual destinies.

Our national policy must start with values that we, as a nation, cherish. Last year, we approved our Constitution that centres on values such as human dignity, personal freedom, individual rights, minority rights, free press and religious freedom. These are the values that lead us to seek an international order that encourages self-determination, democratic institutions, economic development and human rights. Our ultimate purpose is to protect and advance these values.

Human rights as an idea is hardly an invention alien to most civilizations. Even though the cultural and social context, the level of development of each country are factors that have to be taken into account, the United Nations Charter and more specifically the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognize the human rights and fundamental freedoms are universal and a matter of international concern that cannot be considered to be an internal affair of any given state. With the disintegration of cold war tensions, fundamental human rights and freedoms should serve as the basis of a new world order. These values that are common to all cultures, all religions and all stages of development must be resolutely translated into universal observance. We affirm our respect for cultural, religious and ethnic differences but recognize that it is the duty of states regardless of the level of economic, political and social development to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is the universality of those rights, which is at the root of international cooperation in this effort.

Pluralist democracy and the observance of human rights for individuals as well as for minorities have become prerequisites for progress in all political and economic matters. In order to bring about lasting change in attitudes the legitimacy of human rights, especially in former totalitarian societies, must become a human rights culture. To that end, Lithuania looks to the vast experience and machinery of the United Nations as well as that of its partners, non-governmental organizations for advice on instilling respect for human rights particularly at the local level. Among our priorities: to establish a juridical status for non-governmental organizations, offer training of NGO leaders and administrators, and encourage more relations between the state and the voluntary sector.

Mr. President,

Lithuania places great emphasis on the need to develop education in human rights and participatory democracy. The creation of a Centre for Human Rights in Lithuania is under consideration to include documentation and information and training courses in human rights for NGOs, trade unions, women, journalists, lawyers, police officers and teachers.

Mr. President,

My delegation wishes to underscore the growing and primary importance of advisory and technical services offered by the Centre for Human Rights and other United Nations human rights units such as the Electoral Assistance Unit. But assistance should not stop at the ballot box.

Some argue that freedom releases the creative energies of people to pursue a path of rapid economic development. Others insist that economic and social development are more important than political freedom. We view our political, economic and social growth not as an end in itself but as a part of human development and the democratic process. We do not believe that economic development and human rights are mutually exclusive. We recognize that political democracy will always be fragile until basic economic rights are guaranteed.

Just as states must create conditions necessary to achieve the full enjoyment of human rights so should the United Nations. If the UN is to maintain its moral authority, the UN needs to pursue a more energetic human rights agenda particularly in field operations. We recognize human rights as a critical element of any successful United Nations peacekeeping or humanitarian operation. Gross human rights abuses such as execution, torture, rape and deliberate starvation aggravate conflict situations that the United Nations is

attempting to resolve. Inclusion of a human rights component in the United Nations field operations such as on-site monitors and early warning mechanisms, would enhance effective prevention.

Mr. President,

Though we recognize the merits of quiet diplomacy, we fear that public silence in the name of neutrality and in the face of atrocities will erode the authority of the Organization and exacerbate a deteriorating situation. My government encourages the Secretary-General and the Security Council to bolster human rights applications in United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian projects. Lithuania endorses the creation of a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

As a minimum, the United Nations should report promptly and publicly on any serious abuses. At the same time, if charges of gross human rights violations prove to be unwarranted, we encourage the United Nations to set the record straight just as vigorously. This recommendation, I would like to stress, is of a particular interest to small states such as my own, which are especially vulnerable to selective and subjective pressures exerted at times by bigger powers furthering their own domestic and foreign political agendas.

Lithuania supports increasing the human and financial resources of the Centre for Human Rights from the regular budget of the United Nations. In the face of deepening economic recession the UN is being challenged to raise cooperation to a higher level not only in its own system but with regional organizations by joining forces as much as possible. An inter-institutional division of labor, in which various institutions would be given clear mandates in the field of human rights education, protection and implementation, could also be a priority of the UN in the coming years. Particular emphasis should be placed on building a viable system that establishes accountability for serious human rights abuses.

Such a thrust would bolster and inject new life in UN human rights initiatives and those of its counterparts.

Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement.

[spoke in French]

I now call on His Excellency Mr. Fambare Natchaba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Togo. Your Excellency you have the floor.

NATCHABA, Ouattara Fambare (Togo), spoke in French:

Keywords: TOGO – POLITICAL CONDITIONS – NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
– DEVELOPMENT - SOVEREIGNTY - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS -
HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION

Mr. President,

Coming one quarter of a century after the first, this World Conference on Human Rights presents itself as an exceptional historic event with respect to important political changes characterizing international relations and the domestic life of numerous states as well as the underlying desire of the international community to better live and better serve the noble cause of human rights.

This shows how happy the delegation of Togo is to be part of this major meeting of the international community here in Austria.

I should like to express to the government and the people of Austria the deep gratitude of my delegation for the very warm welcome we have received and for the quality of the facilities that had been placed at our disposal.

I am very pleased to be able to address to you, Mr. President, my warmest congratulations on your unanimous appointment and election as President of our Conference.

Your perfect knowledge of questions relating to human rights and the traditional commitment of your country in defending human dignity and social progress allows us to count on a happy outcome for this World Conference.

I should like to assure you of the complete cooperation of my delegation in the exercise of your delicate task.

It is also a great pleasure to pay particular tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the tremendous efforts he makes to promote full integration of the human dimension in the maintenance and consolidation of peace and security on an international basis.

Finally, I should like to pay tribute to the knowledge and expertise of the Secretary-General of the Conference who has been so devoted and working with such conviction to ensure the triumph of the ideals of the promotion, defense and respect of human rights.

Mr. President,

Forty-five years ago, the nations of the world together adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Based on a profoundly humanistic, globalist and universal vision of the human rights, the Declaration enshrined, on the one hand, the joint fate of the people of the world and the commitment of the founding fathers of the United Nations to encourage the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without any distinction as to race, sex, language or religion; and, on the other hand, to usher in a new period of greater respect for human dignity.

Subsequent to this, indicating the determination of states to further contribute to harmonious development of relations between members of the human family, other international legal instruments were created, which witness at the same time the multi-dimensional nature of the principles first set forth in 1948.

Today throughout the world regardless of cultural, social, religious or other specificities the promotion and protection of human rights stand out as an inevitable and sacred requirement and as one of the bases for solidarity among the peoples.

We are, nonetheless, obliged to note that today there is an extremely salient contrast between the numerous international instruments dealing with human rights and the persistence, even the resurgence, of flagrant and massive violations of human rights.

Mr. President,

Since its accession to national sovereignty, Togo has been committed to respecting the principles and standards enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Moreover, the adoption during previous years of legislation relating to liberalization of the press and political pluralism as well as the approval by a referendum on the 27th September 1992 of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic have indicated the firm determination of the government and of the people of Togo to make progress in democratizing national institutions.

Determined to construct a state of law within which fundamental human rights, public freedoms and the dignity of the human person will be guaranteed and protected, Togo has integrated into its own Constitution and endorsed fundamental democratic principles and principles related to the protection of human rights as contained in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants of 1966 and the African Charter of Human Rights and Peoples' Rights.

On a national level, the Togolese government created in 1987 a national Human Rights Commission whose task is to defend, protect and promote human rights. This Commission, which is unanimously supported by all Togolese citizens, has promoted the creation of numerous human rights leagues in our country.

The Constitution of the Fourth Republic, to which I alluded earlier, confers a special title on the national Commission for Human Rights. This Constitution, itself a symbol of this new approach, for the first time in the political history of Togo deals with the rights and duties of citizens in over forty articles.

In order to support this human rights policy, the government created a Ministry for Human Rights following the sovereign national conference.

Within the framework of its contribution to the efforts of the international community to promote better respect for human dignity, we should note Togo's regular participation at human rights seminars and colloquia, and the organization of similar types of seminars in Lomé in Togo.

Under preparatory work for the present Conference, my country organized, thus, with the support of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and other international institutions, a regional seminar for Western Africa on human rights held from the 15 to 17 October 1992.

This seminar, whose objective was to ensure greater public awareness in West Africa to this World Conference and to determine the specific contribution this region could make to the preparatory process, brought together governmental experts in the field of human rights and resource people coming from ECOWAS member countries.

It is important, however, to stress that efforts to promote, defend and protect human rights have suffered in my country from the fall-out of profound changes generated by the democratization process because of the difficulties of the transition period.

Indeed, planned initially to last one year, the transition period in Togo today is in its 22nd month as the successive transition governments have experienced tremendous difficulties essentially due to the emergence of serious misunderstandings between the main actors in national political life as to what was at stake in democratization. Political violence resulted from this has shaken the entire territory of the country and has led to tragic escalations, which are very regrettable and which have had as a result a tearing apart of the nation and movements of populations.

Anxious to do everything it can to complete the transition process as rapidly as possible by creating the institutions called for by the Constitution, the Togolese government is sparing no effort to assure a definitive solution to the political crisis in our country.

It is in this perspective that our government is doing everything it can to end violence and insecurity by creating and deploying a special force of maintenance of order to ensure throughout all of the national territory peace and security for all citizens and to ensure proper socioeconomic activities before, during and after the next elections.

It is also in the same spirit that the Togolese government has remained attentive to all attempts of a renewed dialogue for cooperation among all political actors in Togo during a consensual management of the transitional period.

The crisis government remains convinced that a relaxation of the political situation in Togo would involve the dialogue between the children of this country, who themselves take on, in the spirit of peace and mutual acceptance, the challenges of a democratic game.

Thus, in order to restore social peace and national harmony and to promote the effective enjoyment of human rights, the Togolese government is creating the indispensable conditions for the organization of free, democratic and transparent elections.

In this perspective, consultations for a new meeting between all major political figures in Togo are underway. The Head of State and the Prime Minister are trying, thus, to give a new chance for a consensual pursuit of the democratization process in our country. Also, it is advisable that all the parties

involved will use wisely the postponement of the elections until the 22nd June 1993 to ensure that the people can properly be consulted as soon as possible and in peace.

Mr. President,

1993 is the 45th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that is perceived through the principles which it sets forth as the common ideal to be achieved by all peoples and nations and that was and continues to serve as a fundamental source of inspiration for national and international efforts aimed at protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The present Conference is a continuation of these efforts and is to be seen in an international context characterized by renewed interest in human rights and democracy. It offers an auspicious occasion to reaffirm our irreversible attachment to the principles and universal principles and standards of human rights.

This Conference also gives us an opportunity to objectively assess the progress that has been made to clearly identify without complacency the obstacles that have been noted and to seek the proper ways of guaranteeing respect for human dignity and to ensure the lasting culture of human rights.

A reflection of the great complexity, multidimensional nature of human rights as well as the difficulties in adapting national legislations to universal standards, the divergences in approach at the same time should not compromise our joint determination to ensure significant progress in the course of human rights.

Thus, we should be pleased at the general agreement at the Preparatory Committee calling for our discussions to be articulated around the triad –development, democracy and human rights.

These three questions are inseparable and interact dynamically since the effective enjoyment of human rights presupposes the existence of a viable economy capable of satisfying the vital needs of populations and presupposes the existence of a politically pluralistic arena that favors creativity. In other words, the economic and social progress facilitates the realization of human rights at the same time as genuinely democratic systems encourage respect for human dignity and stimulate a spirit of initiative.

It is for this reason that we must strive increasingly to expand the area of freedom and realization of the right to development generally considered as the synthesis of all rights or the right to such a synthesis.

The expansion of such freedom requires, in particular, a strict respect of democratic principles, particularly the separation of powers, the involvement of institutions and national non-governmental organizations in promotion and protection of human rights, systematic integration of human rights in teaching in schools and universities.

Moreover, it is essential to ensure a balance between individual rights and collective rights and to ensure that the recognition of cultural, social, linguistic, religious and other particularities do not open a way to disguised violations of human rights.

Furthermore, we must enhance the authority of international instruments on human rights, encouraging State Parties to progressively withdraw the reservations that they have made there as the adaptation of their domestic legislation to international standards takes place.

Finally, we should not slow down or prevent the realization of certain rights under the pretext that others are not yet guaranteed.

The implementation of the right to development implies obligations of states, the international community and individuals as well as non-governmental organizations.

It is primarily states who are responsible for the exercise of the right to development. At the same time, we are obliged to note a flagrant lack of balance between the international economic system and the gigantic efforts made by numerous developing countries to design and apply development policies destined specifically to ensure an equitable distribution of national resources and to satisfy the vital needs of their populations, in particular, women and children.

By the same token, non-governmental organizations working to defend human rights and to promote development have a primordial role to play in the dissemination of information, in ensuring greater public awareness on the part of public at large and of governments as well as in initiating and carrying out priority projects for educating people as to human rights and the community development.

Because of the indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, one cannot defend nor protect one category of rights to the detriment of other categories, nor can one find justifications for the systematic flouting of human dignity.

This implies that an adequate balance must be found between principles of universality and objectivity for human rights and the recognition of regional and national particularities.

The invocation of noninterference and national sovereignty, thus, cannot be used as a facile excuse or an encouragement for flagrant and massive violations of human rights. Nonetheless, we should be extremely cautious in using the right to interference on humanitarian grounds. This is a very vague concept and one that is highly emotionally charged.

Mr. President,

The emergence of a vast world movement to defend human rights and democracy, which is characteristic to the increasing attachment to liberty and justice, makes it necessary for us to think about the path we have already traveled in promoting, defending and protecting human rights and adopting bold and innovative measures in order to ensure scrupulous respect for human dignity.

It is the view of the Togolese delegation that the World Conference on Human Rights should initiate, therefore, a real renewal structured along the following axis:

- the reaffirmation of the validity of international instruments relating to human rights and the solemn commitment of State Parties to conform to this in the appropriate manner,
- the promotion of the universality of these instruments and the encouragement of states who have not yet done so to accede to them,
- enshrine the universality, objectivity and non-selective and indivisible nature of human rights,
- assuring a balance between individual and collective rights as well as between civil and political rights and economic social and cultural rights,
- ensuring a balance between the respect for principles and standards in an international sphere as regards human rights and the invocation of principles of national sovereignty and non-interference,
- improvement of the machinery for the submission of the periodic reports, in particular, by granting appropriate technical assistance and diversifying the sources for information,
- enhancing the United Nations role in the field of human rights, in particular, by increasing material and financial means for the United Nations Centre for Human Rights to carry out its activities,
- the assistance to be granted to Member States as to education in the field of human rights,
- the creation of regional and sub-regional United Nations human rights centres,
- supplying more substantial assistance to national institutions for the defense of human rights in developing countries,
- enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations that are working in the field of human rights.

Mr. President,

In light of the progress made, the obstacles that were perceived and the tremendous possibilities for activities, the World Conference on Human Rights must mark a clear change in efforts made over a number of years to reinforce promotion, defense and protection of human rights.

It is, thus, imperative that the political will, which made it possible to convene and organize the present meeting, should also prevail in the adoption of a final document consolidating the achievements and determining a practical and resolutely future-oriented programme of action.

On the eve of the 21st century it is essential to ensure that through successive approaches and persevering activities by all States Members of the United Nations as well as through the effective assistance of the international organization and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the field of human rights, that the culture of human rights should be definitively part of the acts and behavior of citizens of each nation and of the peoples of the world.

Thank you very much.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Togo for his declaration.

[Spoke in English:]

I now give the floor to His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia. Excellency, you have the floor.

SAUD AL-FAISAL, Prince of Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: CULTURAL PLURALISM - ISLAM - HUMAN RIGHTS - SAUDI ARABIA - LAWS AND LEGISLATION

In the name of God, most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Mr. President, Excellencies,

I have the honor to convey to your distinguished gathering the greetings and best wishes of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz, and to convey to His Excellency Alois Mock, the Foreign Minister of Austria, and to the government and the people of Austria warmest thanks and appreciation for having hosted this Conference and for the great efforts that have been made and the facilities that have been provided for creating the appropriate conditions for holding this Conference.

I also take pleasure in conveying thanks and appreciation to His Excellency Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for the attention he has devoted to this Conference and the contributions made by the United Nations to its work. I should also like to express particular thanks to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Dr. Ibrahima Fall, for his great efforts in preparation for this Conference.

The large and high-level international participation in the work of this Conference is a clear proof of the existence of a strong international will to achieve better international cooperation and a more profound understanding of the issues of human rights throughout the world. We fervently hope that such a participation will provide a favorable opportunity to enrich our dialogue on the important topic in an objective, effective and practical exchange of views. This is particularly needed in these times that witness numerous flagrant violations of the humanity and dignity of mankind and its legitimate rights such as the genocidal aggression inflicted upon the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, mass murder, forced migration and rape in what is known as the hateful policy of ethnic cleansing. All this is done as a flagrant challenge to all human values and ideals, and is a flagrant violation of all international norms and covenants under the eyes of the international community. In addition to this, there are serious violations

of human rights in the occupied Arab territories including the deliberate deprivation of the Palestinian people of their legitimate right to self-determination.

Our Conference provides a valuable opportunity to review the question of human rights in all its aspects and to address it in a just and balanced fashion without selectivity or double standards in order to be able to put an end to such violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Mr. President,

God Almighty in the Holy Quran said, "We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of Our Creation." God considered mankind to be one single human family by virtue of origin and birth. He said: "Mankind! Reverence your Guardian-Lord, Who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered countless men and women."

A family that was made diverse in order that its members should know and understand one another and cooperate among themselves. "Mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you." The message of Islam came as a confirmation of all the messages and was open to people of all races, colors and nationalities. Thus, Islamic Sharia came as a comprehensive system for universal human rights, which defines duties and obligations at all levels of human relations, which in turn, is based upon respect for humanity and dignity of mankind and the right of people to lead an honorable life safeguarded from aggression whether against their lives, honor, privacy, homes or families.

The rights and freedoms guaranteed by Islam to mankind were not meant merely as moral exhortations but rather as legislative orders, which it enshrined in all the legal texts necessary for ensuring their implementation and enforcement while combining them with implicit duties. This comprehensiveness of Islamic values reflects the great importance attached by Islam to human rights.

The source of human rights in Islam is the Creator of this universe, Who created and gave order, and Who ordained and gave guidance. This divine force is what protects human rights amongst the faithful and gives these rights their sanctity and mandatory force; belief that is rooted in faith that causes the willing acceptance by choice and compliance with these duties and rights and to comply with their application, preservation and protection.

Furthermore, human rights in Islam were not ordained for the benefit of one nation to the exclusion of another but were rather ordained for all humankind. Thus, from its inception it was universal by nature, transcending all geographical or political boundaries.

Mr. President,

God has honored the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the custody of the Two Holy Places of Islam. He gave it the good fortune of being an Islamic state governed by Sharia on the bases of justice, *Shura* and equality, especially those related to the principles of human rights. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz, made these established facts clear on the occasion of the issuance of the basic law of governing, the Charter of the Shura Council, and Provincial Statutes. He said that the source of these Statutes was the Islamic Sharia. These Statutes, which determined the character of the state, its objectives, duties and responsibilities and which defined the relationship between the ruler and the ruled based on brotherhood, mutual advice, loyalty and cooperation.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a developing society, which is firmly based on the established rules that are the mainstay of Islamic civilization, a society that has firmly set itself to face the challenges of our time with determination on the path of reform. These laws and Statutes place upon the state primary

responsibility for the protection of human rights in accordance with Islamic Sharia. The state thereby guarantees private property and its inviolability, prohibits public confiscation of property, undertakes the responsibility to achieve economic and social development, to preserve and protect the environment. These laws and Statutes guarantee the wellbeing of the citizen and his family in emergencies, sickness, disability and old age. They provide for the social security system and guarantee the opportunities for all who are able to work. They have the responsibility to protect both the employer and employee; they also provide general education and health care for every citizen. The Statutes of the government guarantee the inviolability of homes; and give equal right to litigation to both citizens and expatriates in the Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was in the forefront of the Islamic states that ratified the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam, issued by the Organization of the Islamic Conference on the 4th of August 1990, considering it to be the tributary that would provide a proper foundation for positive and practical international cooperation and that would flow into the main stream of universal support for human rights and freedoms coming as an expression of the will of over one billion people. This gives it a truly universal character by any measure. While the principles and objectives upon which human rights are founded are of a universal nature, their application requires consideration for the diversity of societies taking into account their various historical, cultural, religious backgrounds and legal systems.

Mr. President,

While it is commendable that the international community should address the question of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, serious and sincere efforts must be made to achieve the following, if we are to succeed in achieving the desired respect for these rights:

First, ending the flagrant violations of human rights, which we witness today such as mass extermination and the hateful ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, deprivation of the people of Palestine of their right to self-determination and racial discrimination. Success in these efforts would undoubtedly confirm the credibility of efforts made to support and firmly establish human rights throughout the world.

Second, to address international problems involving violations of human rights with a single objective standard.

Third, to apply the concepts of human rights in a manner that takes into consideration differences in the nature of societies, their customs, traditions and beliefs.

Fourth, human rights should not be abused nor used as a pretext for unjustified interference in the affairs of other states.

Fifth, economic and social development must go hand in hand for the protection and promotion of human rights.

The successful achievement of these objectives requires avoidance of precipitate action in creating mechanisms that would only lead to deepening of differences and disregard for the sensitivities, which appeared during the preparatory work for this Conference. The comments made by the Islamic Group, the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement and those made by the Afro-Asian Group and the Latin-American Group must be reflected in the text of the draft final document of the Conference, which is before us, if we are to reach a common ground that would lead to the universality of human rights and their implementation.

In conclusion, permit me, Mr. President, to express the hope that our Conference will be able to achieve its goals and objectives in a spirit of realism and objectivity and provide a proper foundation for constructive and positive international cooperation, to preserve human dignity, to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and support continued and sincere efforts to reach a common concept that would strive for justice and equity and aspire to a life where pride and dignity reign, and freedom and equality prevail.

May the peace and mercy of God be upon you.

NIASSE, Moustapha (President):

I thank His Royal Highness for his statement.

[Spoke in French:]

Given the lateness of the hour, we just heard the last speaker of the night. The two next speakers said that they wish to speak tomorrow morning, that is His Excellency Mr. Manuel Chantre, Foreign Minister of Cape Verde and His Excellency Mr. Paul Kowanga Ssemogerere, Second Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Uganda.