



لتظلّ الشعلة وهاجئةً - 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

2nd plenary meeting, 14th of June 1993

World Conference on Human Rights

Vienna, 14-25 June 1993

2nd plenary meeting, 14th of June 1993

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The term “indigenous peoples” is used throughout these records of the plenary meetings of Conference.

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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.

MOCK, Alois (President):

I call to order the second meeting of the plenary of the World Conference on Human Rights.

First on the list of speakers is His Excellency, the Minister of Justice of Brazil. Your Excellency, you have the floor. I ask for your understanding, if possible, to be punctual because we have enormous time pressure. Mr. Minister, please take the floor.

CORREA, Mauricio José (Brazil), spoke in Portuguese:

Keywords: TREATIES - DEVELOPMENT - DEMOCRACY - BRAZIL – GOVERNMENT
POLICY - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Brazilian government and the Brazilian people, I would like, first of all, to present my compliments to the Austrian people and the Austrian government for the initiative to host this World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna. Having had the honor to host the Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, Brazil particularly wishes this second event of global interest, within the series of conferences scheduled by the United Nations for the decade of the nineties, to be successful and useful for all concerned. The fact that it is taking place in Austria constitutes for Brazil a first step in the right direction. It is, thus, totally appropriate that Your Excellency should assume the chairmanship of our meetings. I wish, therefore, to express the most sincere compliments of the Brazilian delegation to Your Excellency as well as to the other members of the Bureau on your election.

Mr. President,

When resolution 45/155 was adopted in 1990 summoning a world conference on human rights to be convened in 1993, the world was undergoing a series of radical political changes, which seemed to strengthen the notion of human rights as essential values that cannot be eluded in human life or society. After two and a half years, historical experience with its tragic ironies confronts us with a

scenario far less constructive. The multiplication of conflicts, some of which have characteristics that remind us of the worst practices of human brutality committed during World War II, can hardly generate any feelings of hope and optimism.

Despite all this, the fertile seeds planted in 1990 must not be discarded. If national, ethnic or religious conflicts keep increasing in number together with a mass of related human rights violations, the efforts of the international community to find a solution to such conflicts have been more intense than over the last decades. If intolerant practices are again observed not only in conflict areas but also in the midst of advanced societies where those practices were no longer supposed to exist, such practices have been accompanied by expressive manifestations of repudiation by the international community in general as well as by the populations involved.

The World Conference on Human Rights is without any question one of the most important seeds to which I have referred. Hence, the increased responsibility that is incumbent upon us. Hence the vital necessity that our work constitutes an effective, positive step to improve international cooperation in favor of human rights.

In order to reach this goal, we must know how to formulate concrete proposals to advance our common cause. It is also necessary to have a sufficiently open mind to accommodate concerns and perceptions that are different from our own. The deliberations of this Conference must necessarily reflect the universality of its composition. This, of course, makes our job much more complex than that of a national or a regional forum.

Above all, we must avoid questioning the validity of some concepts that have for so long been defined by the international community in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as well as in a vast sequence of international pacts and conventions already in force on that matter.

Mr. President,

According to Brazil's perception, the international instruments on human rights very clearly enthrone concepts that seem to have been questioned during the negotiations on the final document that all of us hope to be able to adopt during this Conference. The first of these concerns the indivisible and interrelated character of all rights. The second refers to the individual and collective dimensions of human rights.

After long and cautious deliberation by the National Congress, Brazil adhered simultaneously to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This simultaneous adhesion in itself emphasizes the interrelationship and indivisibility that we attribute to such rights. By establishing such an interpretation, we are fully aware that the economic, social and cultural rights, though harder to attain, constitute essential prerogatives for individuals and social communities to lead a normal life besides having a direct impact on the general situation of human rights including on the implementation of civil and political rights.

We applaud, therefore, the decision taken during the preparatory process of this Conference to examine in this forum the interrelations existing between democracy, development and human rights.

As far as Brazil is concerned, this relationship is neither simple nor automatic. Nothing could be farther from truth than that the notion that development, which is a right in itself, automatically generates democracy and the full observance of human rights. On the other hand, the problems faced by developing countries can under no circumstances be used as an excuse for violations. All governments regardless of the level of development of their countries share a moral and juridical obligation to avoid any actions that infringe upon individual rights.

Regarding the individual and collective dimensions of human rights Brazil notes with apprehension the reopening of a debate that should have been transcended long ago.

Without entering into any discussion on the nature — whether organic or individualistic, this word taken in its positive sense — of modern societies, the texts of the two international Covenants on human rights begin with the assertion that “all peoples have the right of self-determination”. We have for a long time been dealing with different interpretations of this right: some in support for the struggle for decolonization and against foreign occupation, some offering incentives to democratic representation systems based on individual voting. Brazil understands that both interpretations are equally valid and that both involve individual and collective aspects. The same reasoning applies to the right to development.

Brazil also understands that the reference to the triad “democracy, development and human rights” constitutes an essential factor for this Conference to be successful. Just as representative democracy constitutes a practically universal value and goal in the post-cold-war world, so must the issue of development be likewise conceived. If on the one hand observance of civil and political rights can no longer be contingent on the previous attainment of conditions for full development, on the other hand one cannot imagine that full implementation of human rights can be abstracted from the economic and social situation of the populations involved.

Allow me, Mr. President, to add that Brazil within this context constitutes one of the most eloquent examples. We live today, in our country, a period of unrestricted liberties, never equaled in our history and hardly reached, perhaps, in other societies. Our democratic institutions work perfectly well having emerged strengthened from the recent difficult test of a presidential impeachment.

In effect, by legally ousting in accordance with constitutional rules a president who no longer merited the mandate conferred upon him by the legitimacy of the vote, Brazil has taken a farther step in its democratic consolidation and has clearly demonstrated its political maturity. In spite of the long duration of the procedure and of the intense and decisive participation and mobilization of our society to that aim, no incident of insult to law and order, nor violation of social rules ever occurred.

In the area of human rights, the government acts in a totally transparent fashion maintaining full dialogue and cooperation with the civil society, non-governmental organizations and with the relevant bodies of the international community.

In this context, I wish to mention the work performed by the Council for the Defense of the Rights of the Human Person through preventive, corrective and sanctioning measures for the promotion, respect and defense of human rights. By receiving and inquiring into denunciations of acts and situations that violate human rights, its activities represent an important support and orientation for the adoption of pertinent measures by the competent bodies and authorities.

Despite all efforts deployed, it is necessary to acknowledge that some difficulties still exist for the full observance of human rights in our country. While political rights and individual liberties are flawlessly respected other fundamental rights are often threatened or struck by historical or structural problems.

Having taken office as President of the Republic of a country that is potentially rich but suffering from high inflation, unemployment and a poverty-stricken contingent of the order of 32 million people, President Itamar Franco has established as his government’s main priority the eradication of hunger and misery that devastates such a significant portion of our population. To quote his own words, during a recent interview in Montevideo, “...We'll have to fight inflation by fighting at the same time poverty and misery in order to enable the country to grow.”

It is not surprising that violence eventually erupts in such a scene of deep economic and social troubles. To combat violence adequately, however, denunciations, warnings and demands are not enough. They are useful and valid as ingredients in a process of mobilization. A profitable cooperation for the sake of human rights cannot be limited to the exaction of governmental actions. Such

cooperation should instead offer governments appropriate conditions to obtain the necessary means for their action.

Mr. President,

The international community has already performed important work in the establishment of universal standards of human rights in the form of Declarations and Conventions. In the sphere of control, many mechanisms have been created to monitor specific situations and thematic violations of human rights all over the world. This effort is helpful and Brazil is ready to consider in a positive way all suggestions conducive to its improvement.

We understand that this World Conference might as well offer new forms of international cooperation in the area of preventive action. We have in mind, in particular, the creation within the United Nations of a specific programme capable of offering technical, material and financial assistance to national projects with direct impact on the human rights situation such as those involving administration of justice, training of police personnel, construction and reform of correctional establishments as well as equipping the national supervisory bodies. We recognize that the advisory services offered by the Centre for Human Rights constitute a first step in this direction. We are aware, however, of their limitations. What we really have in mind is something significantly wider and more embracing, something that might accomplish in the area of human rights what the United Nations Development Programme is trying to achieve in the area of development.

Mr. President,

For Brazil, a country that holds within the American continent one of the biggest indigenous populations living in accordance with their ancestral traditions, the coincidence of holding this Conference in the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples is auspicious. We understand that the commemoration of the International Year in this forum will reaffirm the commitment of the international community to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by indigenous peoples and the recognition of the value and diversity of their cultures. The commemoration will also reflect the importance attributed to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of these communities and their participation in the process of sustainable development.

We consider that the International Year should serve as a starting point for the elaboration of concrete projects with a broader scope, longer duration and direct impact on the living conditions of the world's indigenous communities. To this end and in light of the scarcity of resources for the implementation of projects of this nature, it would be desirable to encourage a stronger participation of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, both at the financial and at the operational levels, in the programme of activities for the international year.

Also within this context, we acknowledge the importance of standard-setting activities now being carried out by the United Nations with a view to promoting and protecting indigenous rights. This is one of the few thematic areas of human rights in which elaboration of international legal instruments is still required. I wish to reiterate the Brazilian government's support of the adoption as soon as possible of a universal declaration on indigenous rights that might effectively contribute to the wellbeing of indigenous communities and to the full respect of their identity and diversity.

Mr. President,

At the beginning of this speech, I had the opportunity to refer to the World Conference on Environment and Development. We believe this Conference was successful. It demonstrated that, despite all different perceptions held by its participants, a universal dialogue, constructive and broad in scope, dealing with this subject of global interest is possible and desirable. *Agenda 21*, which was adopted by the Conference, does not fail to establish clear connections between environmental issues and human rights.

During the preparatory work of the Rio-92 Conference moments of frustration and discouragement were also felt. We should not allow the difficulties felt during the preparatory work of this Conference to make us overly negative. The humanism prevailing in the subject matter of our meeting should be an impetus for solidarity, not of confrontation. We feel confident that by working in a constructive manner here in Vienna we will be able to identify, along areas of consensus, formulas capable of strengthening international cooperation in the area of human rights, just as in Rio in 1992 our countries were able to do in relation to the environment. May Your Excellency count on the total cooperation and availability of the Brazilian delegation in order to help our work to succeed.

Thank you.

MOCK, Alois (President):

I thank the distinguished Minister of Justice of Brazil for his statement. I now have the honor to invite His Royal Highness Prince Hassan bin Talal, Crown Prince of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, to address the Conference.

BIN TALAL, Hassan (Jordan):

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT - HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION -
HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION - DEVELOPMENT

Secretary-General, foreign ministers, dear friends,

We have gathered at the World Conference on Human Rights to strengthen our individual and collective efforts to ensure respect for the human rights and dignity of every child, woman and man. In this task, we represent those who are not here with us, those millions who are tortured by starvation or imprisoned behind the bars of prejudice and discrimination and those facing death, physical abuse or incarceration for their beliefs. We speak here, ladies and gentlemen, not only for ourselves but also for the voiceless still denied their right to self-determination or those suffering the abuse of prolonged foreign occupation. We speak to act on behalf of the one quarter of our human family forced to live in poverty and deprivation as well as of the dispossessed and those forced to flee their homelands seeking refuge and international protection, yet all too often finding asylum a mirage beyond their reach. We speak here also for those yet to come: We are responsible for the future that awaits our children and humanity as a whole. Abuses of human rights offend the dignity not only of the victims but of us all. We are all members of one family - humanity - sharing our one earth in common. It is at great cost we have learned the importance of caring for the earth. We must also learn to care for those who live upon it.

It is our duty to ensure that this meeting goes beyond mere rhetoric and inspires an active commitment to universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. The differences in our political ideologies and in the economic models we have adopted have sometimes impeded consensus amongst us. But we are not here to talk about politics.

We are here to talk about *anthropolitics* - politics for people, about rights; not about economic theories but about justice and equitable access to available resources.

In this, ladies and gentlemen, we have the benefit of the diversity of our faiths and cultures, which will act as a rich resource in our search for a consensus based on our common humanity. President Mary Robinson of Ireland has recently called for a listening approach to human rights. We must heed her words here in our deliberations and listen to each other and be respectful of each other's points of view, mindful that in our various traditions the approaches we adopt in the process of consensus building might themselves differ.

This task of consensus building is critical. In these transitional post-cold war times, we need a joint commitment to meet the challenges of an emerging world order. Human rights represent a touchstone, a yardstick by which the success of our endeavors can be judged. Our aim should not be simply to reach a compromise between differing or conflicting views; but to find a common vision, a framework for global action, a consensus for the future of humankind.

As a first step, we need to reconfirm those fundamental principles on which human rights are based - the universality of human rights and the indivisibility of all rights. From this base, we can develop a truly global ethic for regulating not only the relationship between states and their peoples but also the manner in which individuals and communities treat one another.

A global consensus on human rights must affirm their universality. Human rights are universal in that they are possessed by all members of the human family regardless of differences of gender, race, religion, politics or any other distinguishing characteristic. These rights form a core minimum standard binding on all states.

Some recent criticisms of the principle of universality of human rights provided the impetus for a satellite meeting in preparation for this Conference, which was held in Jordan in April 1993 under the auspices of the International Movement of Rights and Humanity. This discussion brought together representatives of the world's main faiths and people from all regions of the world. A consensus emerged from the meeting calling for the reaffirmation of the vital importance of the principle of universality, by which all states must respect and protect the internationally recognized human rights whatever the level of the states' economic or political development. We should take the opportunity of this World Conference to reconfirm this vital principle.

However, as our brother Assistant Secretary-General Ibrahim Fall reminded us at the Amman meeting, international "standards provide great flexibility in national adaption and do not impose any specific political, legal, social or cultural model." Thus, the values, ladies and gentlemen, of each society may shape the policies and measures that a state adopts in order to implement its international obligations.

It is in this context that Jordan envisages regional human rights instruments playing an important role. May I here please pay a special tribute speaking of regional human rights to the African Charter, which in itself carries many precedents. We feel regionally that we can complement and strengthen global norms by developing additional rules and norms for the implementation of human rights in our region. It is our hope that the World Conference will provide an impetus for the adoption of a regional human rights charter in our part of the world drawing on the richness of our philosophies and the values of our faiths and cultures. Similarly, the contributions of different approaches may strengthen the drafting of future global instruments.

International monitoring of the established standards touches, ladies and gentlemen, on the sensitive issue of the nature of state sovereignty. But we must never lose sight of the fact that sovereignty does not give license to brutalize or disempower, deny human dignity. There is no sovereign right to torture and maim or to condemn individuals, or whole peoples to poverty through the abuse and manipulation of political or economic power.

Human rights issues are the legitimate concern of the international community under the United Nations Charter. All states, therefore, have a responsibility - and indeed an interest - to promote universal respect for human rights. But if human rights criteria are to be the foundation of justice in the world their monitoring should be seen to be objective. Accountability must be based on internationally recognized legal norms, and not on a particular state's subjective value judgement. For selective condemnation serves only to perpetuate conflict and hamper potential reconciliation.

We have a unique opportunity at this Conference to reconfirm the indivisibility of all rights and to commit ourselves to strengthening the implementation not only of civil and political rights but also of economic, social and cultural rights. It was President Leopold Senghor who reminded us that "human rights begin with breakfast," yet starvation is widespread. We are witness to the growing number of our children forced to eke out a precarious existence on city streets; the suffering of people evicted from their homes to swell the homelessness that shames our societies; the indigenous peoples of our world denied their cultural heritage; and the growing impoverishment of women, children and other vulnerable groups. Our indifference and failure to take strong and effective action to prevent and address these violations is in my view itself a form of abuse - one for which we all share responsibility.

As far as cultural rights are concerned, I trust that the rich culture of this beautiful city of Vienna, Foreign Minister Mock, host to our Conference, will inspire us to give special emphasis to developing the protection and implementation of these rights and to strengthen the relationship of cultural rights to human development and democracy. A society that prevents free cultural expression or excludes participation in cultural life by any part of its people is an impoverished society and one that is unlikely to practice tolerance and other attitudes fundamental to human rights.

Since the 1968 World Conference in Teheran, we have done much to identify the issues of concern. Considerable progress has been made in strengthening the protection of human rights by the adoption of specific international legal instruments. Our task at this Conference is surely to consider how to bridge the divide between the aspirations of these legal texts and the realities of people's lives. For despite our achievements, many categories of human rights violations have yet to be eliminated.

We need to move on from the mere reiteration of human wrongs to promoting human rights - right relationship between states and their peoples and mutual respect among individuals. This requires, as some of our colleagues and NGOs reminded us, a proactive approach focused on effective strategies for the prevention of violations including the promotion of a human rights framework for policy-making, education in human rights and responsibilities and the empowerment of individuals and peoples so that they live in dignity, protected by their rights.

We need to adopt a holistic approach that can embrace the interdependence of all human beings and the indivisibility of all human rights; and which can address social inequalities and environmental concerns both, national and international, in the idiom of human rights. This means protecting and respecting not only civil and political rights but also the economic, social and cultural rights that are their practical foundations.

We need more public awareness programmes backed up at the international level by the ratification of treaties and the commitment of resources. But is this sufficient? It seems that we need something more profound - a shift in our thinking so that humanity rather than economic considerations can be central to our goals both as governments and as individuals.

Such an ethic is essential if we wish to deal effectively with the myriad of new challenges facing us. We need to think only of the increasingly apparent human dimensions of the environmental crisis; the sore testing of our compassion and humanity by the widening AIDS pandemic; the growing technological and economic divide between North and South; or the difficulties of containing religious intolerance, which threatens the mutual understanding so critically needed in our increasingly multiracial and multicultural societies.

The human spirit, ladies and gentlemen, is under siege, our instinct of neighborly love threatened by the onslaught of hatred, intolerance, greed and cynicism and, may I add in this Hall with all due

respect, apathy. The world cries out for inspiration but is floundering in its search for guidance, for a way forward.

Can human rights values provide that light to guide us? Can the candle of hope rekindle in our human solidarity and love? Can we build a truly global ethic of respect for human rights and dignity, which shapes not only international action and that of governments but also our own actions as individuals? How can we move beyond the paucity of spirit caused by excessive materialism?

In the words of the Arab poet Al-Mutanabi:

He who squanders his days collecting money,
For fear of poverty,
Poverty is what he has attained.

This view has been echoed recently by Nobel Peace Laureate and prisoner of conscience Aung San Suu Kyi who writes "material yardsticks alone cannot serve as an adequate measure of human wellbeing" She reminds us that "even as basic an issue as poverty has to be reexamined to take into account the psychological sense of deprivation that makes people feel poor." She warns us that a "narrowly focused materialism that seeks to block out all considerations apparently irrelevant to one's own well-being tends finally to block out what is in fact most relevant."

Ladies and gentlemen,

Considerations of this sort were behind the shift in UNDP - United Nations Development Programme's - approach from measuring development solely in terms of GNP towards including other criteria to measure not just economic but human development. We need to move on from the "sound bite" mentality and slogans of our media age to deeper reflection and replace the "ethic" of success and materialism with an ethic of responsibility and care.

The potential for such a global ethic is inherent in our common humanity and the values shared by our faiths - the avoidance of harm to others, compassion and neighborly love. Together with the values on which human rights are based - recognition of equal human dignity and worth, mutual respect, tolerance and justice - we have firm foundations for that ethic based on an inclusive approach, one which brings women and men into equal partnership and listens to the voices of the young and others too frequently ignored.

We need a new vision - a vision that is grounded in humility, in modesty, in self-criticism; a vision for a better world based on mutual respect, tolerance, compassion and human solidarity. We need to build a code of human conduct, which informs professional interpersonal relationships and calls upon governors and governments alike to place respect for human rights and humanitarian principles at the very centre of their policies and actions.

A strong global ethic to shore up political will essential to ensure prompt action by the international community in response to murder, rape and other atrocities or ethnic genocide and to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice. We need, ladies and gentlemen, to promote greater international solidarity based on shared humanity acting as a common bond between all our peoples.

In promoting such an ethic, I have in mind that it is not just governments that have the responsibility to respect human rights and dignity but individuals as well whether in political positions, professional life or acting as private citizens. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reminds us of this common responsibility with the words "all human beings ... should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

It is in this spirit that I proposed to the General Assembly over a decade ago the promotion of a "new international humanitarian order." Since then Jordan has supported a number of resolutions in that context, the most recent being resolution 47/106 adopted last December, which calls upon the Secretary-General to report on the progress made to the Assembly next year. The end of the cold war offered us an exciting opportunity within the international community to review relationships between peoples and nations, to identify common ethical values upon which to build our common future.

It is important, ladies and gentlemen, that "the new world order" everybody is now talking about is essentially humanitarian in content and intent. In the final analysis it is humanitarian problems affecting the lives of millions of our fellow human beings, which are the products of violations of human rights as well as the ultimate challenge to supporters of those rights. The growing number of increasingly complex humanitarian issues is a tragic comment on our times. It is, therefore, not surprising that during the preparatory meetings prior to this Conference a number of governments highlighted the nexus between human rights and humanitarian issues. It is incumbent upon us, individually and collectively, to build human solidarity in favor of human rights and freedoms.

Recently, Sir Yehudi Menuhin suggested the creation of a "European Parliament of Cultures." Well, how about a Peoples' Parliament - a flexible approach to participation. Certainly, something along these lines is needed.

We must support and join in partnership with the NGOs, the individual human rights advocates, and the peoples' movements throughout the world, which nurture and enact this solidarity. It is through these groups that the opening phrase of the UN Charter "We the Peoples" is given credibility and life.

Let us build, ladies and gentlemen, on our common purpose here, so that the final outcome of this Conference will do justice to the humanity, which we all share. We can, we must, we will be inspired by this Conference to commit ourselves to building a truly global ethic of respect for human rights and dignity.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

MOCK, Alois (President):

I thank His Royal Highness for his statement. I now have the honor to invite His Excellency, the President of the Slovak Republic, to take the floor.

KOVAC, Michael (Slovak Republic), spoke in Slovak:

Keywords: SLOVAKIA - GOVERNMENT POLICY - HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT - MINORITIES

Mr. President, Secretary-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to wish you much success in chairing this historical Conference. It is an honor for me to be one of the first speakers to have the chance to address this exceptional gathering in spite of the fact that I represent one of the youngest Member States of the UN. The Slovak Republic came into being on the 1st of January 1993 from the peaceful division of the former Czecho-Slovak Federation. Its birth was influenced by several factors. The most important of them, in my opinion, were the radical changes that took place in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989 and which were the direct consequence of the struggle for human rights. The history of our nation and national minorities living in Slovakia give us sufficient cause to ensure that the observance of human rights must be considered a cornerstone of our stately existence.

The Slovak Republic has anchored the respect for human rights by incorporating the Bill of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms into its democratic Constitution. It was an important task - just a short time ago a regime brutally violating human rights in the name of Communist ideology reigned in our country.

The UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali wrote on the eve of the Conference a message entitled "Democracy is the guarantor of human rights." I represent here a new state that can only confirm this basic truth. I want to use this tribute to express my deep gratitude to all those who fought for human rights and contributed to the downfall of totalitarian regimes.

Our citizens have not had yet much experience with functioning democracy. However, I am convinced that their negative experience with authoritarian regimes made them immune to backsliding to the past.

Slovakia stands for the main attributes of a free society: pluralistic democracy, market economy and the maintenance of human rights. In this last area, which we consider to be equally important to the first two areas, we have incorporated such laws as the Charter of children's rights, the Law on religious freedom and Law on alternative civilian service into our legal system. Also, laws have been passed that redress at least partially the wrongs perpetrated by the previous regime. A law on retrieving property previously confiscated from the churches is also being prepared.

With help from UNESCO a branch office of the Center for education on human rights has been established at the Comenius University in Bratislava. We appreciate the initiative of the Centre for Human Rights at UN in Geneva aimed at creating a Centre for research in and development of human rights in Bratislava.

We also respect the role of the non-governmental organizations that fought for the protection of human rights before 1989 and are working today also in the fields of charitable and humanitarian help. Several of them initiated in 1992 the project "Decade of education on human rights." Many of them are participating also in activities related to the International Year of the Family.

A significant step towards protection of human rights was the establishment of the Constitutional Court in our Republic.

International agreements on human rights, which we have ratified, are in the Slovak Republic not only generally legally binding but in the hierarchy of legal norms they supersede our domestic legislation.

Special attention is paid to equal civic status of the members of national minorities and ethnic groups. In accordance with corresponding UN documents we have bound ourselves to protect the identity of the national minorities and prepare appropriate conditions for their development.

As the President of a new state, I have considered one of my top priorities to be the initiator of a dialogue with the representatives of our national minorities. Already the first meeting brought concrete proposals that will be an inspiration when we draft a new law on national minorities.

Mr. President,

I realize that institutional and legal safeguards of human rights must be realized in daily practice. I do not think that we are a model of perfection. Many temporary problems are connected with the economic and political transformation of our society. Some groups of the population, for example, senior citizens, families with many children, the handicapped and the Roma population have felt the strong impact of the transformation to a market economy most especially on their standard of living and social security. In the short hundred days that I have been in office, I have received thousands of letters. Some of them asked me to make inquiries as to whether in individual cases human rights had not been violated.

We are fully aware of the significance of human rights issues for the further harmonious development of the world community. It is my belief that ability of the international community to create efficient international mechanisms to protect human rights is one of the most important measures of the effectiveness of international politics and diplomacy.

Mr. President,

Slovakia will follow very closely the Vienna Conference and observe its atmosphere. This is easy to do for us also due to the fact that capital of Slovakia, Bratislava, is only 60 kilometres away from the Conference site.

We want not only to be enriched by the results of this Conference but also to apply the conclusions agreed upon both in our internal policies and in our international relations.

We are also ready to help United Nations and its Vienna Centre in organizing activities aiming at the protection of human rights.

I wish this Conference much success.

MOCK, Alois (President):

I thank His Excellency, the President of Slovakia, for his statement. The Chief of Protocol will now escort His Excellency to his seat. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Warren Christopher, Secretary of State of the United States of America. Excellency, you have the floor.

CHRISTOPHER, Warren (United States of America):

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS - DEMOCRACY - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - WOMEN'S RIGHTS - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - GOVERNMENT POLICY

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thanks to Secretary-General Fall and the Preparatory Conference Chair Warzazi.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I speak here today as the nation "conceived in liberty." America's identity as a nation derives from our dedication to the proposition "that all men are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights." Over the course of our two centuries, Americans have found that advancing democratic values and human rights serves our deepest values as well as our practical interests. That is why the United States stands with men and women everywhere who are standing up for these important principles. And that is why President Clinton has made reinforcing democracy and protecting human rights a pillar of our foreign policy and a major focus of our foreign assistance programmes.

Democracy is the moral and strategic imperative of the 1990s. Democracy will build safeguards for human rights in every nation. Democracy is the best way to advance lasting peace and prosperity in the world.

The cause of freedom is fundamental for my country. It is also a matter of deep personal conviction for me personally. I am proud to have headed the United States government's first interagency group on human rights under President Carter, who I am pleased is here with us today. President Carter will be remembered as the first American president to put human rights on the international agenda. He has helped to lift the lives of people in every part of the world. Today we build upon his achievements and those of the human rights movement ever since its inception.

In this post-cold war era we are at a new moment. Our agenda for freedom must embrace every prisoner of conscience, every victim of torture and every individual denied basic human rights. But it must also encompass the democratic movements that have changed the political map of the world.

The great new focus of our agenda for freedom is this: expanding, consolidating and defending democratic progress around the world. It is democracy that establishes civil institutions that replace the power of oppressive regimes. Democracy is the best means not to just to gain but to guarantee human rights.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I cannot predict the outcome of this Conference. But I can tell you this: the worldwide movement for democracy and human rights will prevail. My delegation will support the forces of freedom - of tolerance, of respect for the rights of individuals - not only in the next few weeks here at Vienna but every day in the conduct of our foreign policy throughout the world. The United States will never join those who would undermine the Universal Declaration and the movement towards democracy and human rights.

Even before the Universal Declaration was adopted the cold war had begun to cast a chilling shadow. But the framers of the Declaration hoped that each successive generation would strengthen the Declaration through its own struggles. It is for each generation to redeem the promise of the framers' work.

Time and time again since the adoption of the Universal Declaration, human rights activists have unlocked prison cells and carved out pockets of freedom for individuals living under repression.

Today the global movement from despotism to democracy is transforming entire political systems and opening freedom's door to whole societies.

The end of the cold war is the most uplifting moment for human rights since the first Conference met. Not only were the Havel and the Sakharovs set free in large measure by their own inspiring examples but hundreds of millions of people, ordinary men and women, were also released from the hold of oppressive governments that previously controlled their lives. Now in country after country, they are turning toward democracy to secure their newly won freedoms to guarantee human rights and to hold their governments accountable.

Nowhere is this great drama playing out on a more central stage than in the former Soviet Union. Ensuring the success of democracy in Russia, Ukraine and the other Newly Independent States is the strategic challenge of our time. President Clinton is determined to meet that challenge of leadership to tip the world balance in favor of freedom. That is why he has led America into an alliance with Russian reform spearheaded by President Yeltsin.

The promotion of democracy is the front line of global security. A world of democracies would be a safer world. It would dedicate more to human development and less to human destruction. It would promote what all people have in common rather than what tears them apart. It would be a world of hope not a world of despair.

In 1993 alone, in addition to the massive turnout for democracy in Russia, we have seen unprecedented free elections in Cambodia, Yemen, Burundi and Paraguay. The Truth Commission in El Salvador has completed its healing work. And the people of South Africa have made dramatic progress toward nonracial democracy.

Around the world, people are doing the hard sometimes painful work of building democracies from the bottom up. They are making democracy work not just on election day but every day. They are promoting civil societies that respect the rule of law and make governments accountable.

Citizens' groups, like those represented in this room, are pressing for social justice and establishing non-governmental human rights organizations. Women's groups are advocating equal treatment and fighting the widespread practice of gender-based violence against women. Workers are forming free trade unions. Independent media are giving pluralism its voice. All are creating counterweights to repression by affirming and asserting fundamental freedoms of expression, association and movement.

American support for democracy is an enduring commitment. We know that establishing and sustaining democracy is not a linear proposition. The world democratic movement will encounter setbacks along the way. But without constant vigilance and hard work we will certainly fail but with it we will certainly succeed.

Look at a recent example given to us by the people of Guatemala. Two weeks ago, they overcame a coup that had dissolved democratic institutions. They showed that democracy has a new resilience in the America with roots extending deep into civil society. The resolve of the Guatemalan public backed by the United States and backed the OAS-led international community has resulted in the election of a respected human rights defender as president of Guatemala.

To those who would say democracy is exclusively a Western contrivance I would say, you forgot to tell the people of Cambodia. Ninety percent of them summoned up courage in the face of real threats to reclaim their country by voting in last month's UN-monitored elections. In what was once a killing field, democracy is taking root.

Democratic aspirations are rising from Central Asia to Central America.

No circumstances of birth, of culture or of geography can limit the yearning of the human spirit and the right to live in freedom and dignity. Martin Luther King, Gandhi, Fang Lizhi, Natan Sharansky - all came from different cultures and different countries and, yet, each shaped the destiny of his own nation and the world by insisting on the observance of the same universal rights.

That each of us comes from different cultures absolves none of us from our obligation to comply with the Universal Declaration. Torture, rape, racism, anti-Semitism, arbitrary detention, ethnic cleansing, politically motivated disappearances — none of these is tolerated by any faith, creed or culture that respects humanity. Nor can they be justified by the demands for economic development or political expediency. We respect the religious, social and cultural characteristics that make each country unique. But we cannot let cultural relativism become the last refuge of repression.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The universal principles of the UN Declaration put all people first. We reject any attempt by any state to relegate its citizens to a lesser standard of human dignity. There is no contradiction between the universal principles of the UN Declaration and the cultures that enrich our international community. The real chasm lies between the cynical excuses of oppressive regimes and the sincere aspirations of their people.

No nation can claim perfection. Not the United States or any other. In 1968 when the US Delegation arrived at the first World Conference on Human Rights, my country was reeling from the assassination of Martin Luther King. The murder of Robert Kennedy soon followed. King and Kennedy were deeply committed to building a more just society for all Americans. Their valiant work and their violent deaths left deep imprints on an entire generation of Americans - among them a university student named Bill Clinton.

Many young democracies contend with the vast problems of grinding poverty, illiteracy, rapid population growth and malnutrition. The survival of these democracies may ultimately depend upon their ability to show their citizens that democracy can deliver, that the difficult political and economic choices will pay off soon and not just in some distant radiant future.

Nations that free human potential, that invest in human capital and defend human rights, have a better chance to develop and grow. Nations that enforce the right to seek and obtain employment without discrimination will become more just societies and more productive economies. Nations that are committed to democratic values create conditions in which private sector is free to thrive and provide work for the population.

On the other hand, the worst violators of human rights tend to be the world's worst aggressors and proliferators. These states export threats to global security whether in the shape of terrorism, massive refugee flows or environmental pollution. Denying human rights not only lays waste to human lives; it creates instability that travels across borders.

The worldwide prospects for human rights, democracy and economic development have never been better. But sadly, the end of the cold war has not brought an end to aggression, repression and inhumanity.

Fresh horrors abound around the world. We have only to think of the enormous costs of regional conflict, ethnic hatred and despotic rule. We have only to think of Bosnia, just a few hundred miles away from the meeting hall but worlds away from the peaceful and tolerant international community envisioned in the international Declaration.

A lasting peace in the Balkans depends on ensuring that all are prepared to respect fundamental human rights especially those of minorities. Those who desecrate those rights must know that they will be ostracized. They will face sanctions. They will be brought before tribunals of international justice. They will not gain access to investment or assistance. And they will not gain the acceptance of the community of civilized nations.

The future lies in quite a different direction: not with repressive governments but with free people. It belongs to the men and women who find inspiration in the words of the Universal Declaration; who act upon their principles even at great personal risk; who dodge bullets and defy threats to cast their ballots; who work selflessly for justice, tolerance, democracy and peace. These people can be found everywhere ordinary men and women doing extraordinary things even in places where hate, fear, war and chaos rule the hour.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We must keep the spotlight of world opinion trained on the darkest corners of abuse. We must confront the abusers. We must sharpen the tools of human rights diplomacy to address problems before they escalate into violence and create new pariah states.

Today, on behalf of the United States, I officially present to the world community an ambitious action plan that represents our commitment to pursue human rights regardless of the outcome of this Conference.

The plan will build the UN's capacity to practice preventive diplomacy, safeguard human rights and assist fledgling democracies. We seek to strengthen the UN Human Rights Centre and its advisory and rapporteurial functions. We support the establishment of a UN high commissioner for human rights.

The United States will also act to integrate our concerns over the inhumane treatment of women. We will integrate those concerns into the global human rights agenda. We will press for the appointment of a UN special rapporteur on violence against women. We will also urge the UN to sharpen the focus and strengthen the coordination of its women's rights activities.

Eleanor Roosevelt and the other drafters of the Declaration wanted to write a document that would live and last. They were determined to write a document that would protect and empower women as well

as men. But that remains an unfulfilled vision in too many parts of the world where women are subjected to discrimination and bias based solely upon their gender. Violence and discrimination against women do not just victimize individuals; they hold back whole societies by confining the human potential of half the population. Guaranteeing women human rights is a moral imperative with respect to both women and men. It is also an investment in making whole nations stronger, fairer and better. I say to you with great determination that it is in self-interest of every nation to terminate unequal treatment of women.

Beyond our support for multilateral efforts the United States recognizes that we have a solemn duty to take steps of our own.

In that spirit, I am pleased to announce that the United States will move promptly to obtain the consent of our Senate to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

We strongly support the general goals of the other treaties that we have signed but not yet ratified. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women; The American Convention on Human Rights; The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: all of these will constitute important advances. Our administration will turn to them as soon as the Senate has acted on the Racism Convention. And we also expect soon to pass implementing legislation on the Convention against Torture in furtherance of the worldwide goal of eliminating torture by the year 2000. To us these far-reaching documents are not just parchment promises to be held up for propaganda effect but they are solemn commitments to be enforced.

My country will pursue human rights in our bilateral relations with all governments - large and small, developed and developing. America's commitment to human rights is global just as the UN Declaration is universal.

As we advance these goals, American foreign policy will both reflect our fundamental values and promote our national interests. It must take into account of our national security and economic needs at the same time we pursue democracy and human rights. We will maintain our ties with our allies and friends. We will act to deter aggressors. And we will cooperate with like-minded nations to ensure the survival of freedom when it is threatened.

The United States will promote democracy and protect our security. We must do both and we will do both. We will insist that our diplomats continue to report accurately and fully on human rights conditions around the world. Respect for human rights and the commitment to democracy-building will be major considerations as we determine how to spend our resources on foreign assistance. And we will weigh human rights considerations in trade policy as President Clinton demonstrated last month.

Working with the UN and other international organizations we will help to develop the public and private institutions essential to a working democracy and the rule of law. And we will continue to support America's own national endowment for democracy in its mission to help nourish democracy where it is struggling to grow.

Two hundred years ago, in his famous Rights of Man the philosopher Thomas Man wrote this concerning Archimedes' image of the incomparable force of leverage: "Had we, he said, a place to stand we will raise the world."

Ladies and gentlemen,

The United Nations, the nations of the world do have a place to stand upon: if we stand upon the bedrock of principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, if we support the democratic movement on a worldwide basis, we shall speed the day when all the world's people are raised up in

lives of freedom, dignity, prosperity and peace. That is where this Conference should stand. That is where America stands.

Thank you very much.

Agenda Item 4. Election of the other officers of the Conference.

MOCK, Alois (President):

Keywords: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

I thank His Excellency for his statement.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It may be recalled that when we discussed at this morning's meeting agenda item 4 "Election of other officers of the Conference," I announced that the Conference will elect all the Vice-Presidents once designation of all regional groups has been received.

I now have the pleasure to inform the Conference that the group of African States has informed me of the following designation for Vice-Presidents: Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia, Zimbabwe.

You may also recall that this morning I read out the designation for Vice-Presidents for the other regional group as follows -

For the group of Asian States: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Japan, Kuwait, Pakistan, Philippines, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand and Yemen.

For the group of Eastern European States: Croatia, Latvia, Romania, Russian Federation and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

For the group of Latin American and Caribbean States: Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela.

And for the group of Western European and other States: Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Ireland, Spain, United Kingdom and United States of America.

This completes the list of Vice-Presidents as designated by the regional groups.

I take it that the Conference agrees to this composition of the Vice-Presidents of the Conference.

It is so decided.

We shall now resume the general debate. I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Sidi Mohamed Ould Boubacar, Prime Minister of Mauritania. Excellency, you have the floor.

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.

BOUBACAR, Sidi Mohamed Ould (Mauritania), spoke in Arabic:

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION - SELF-DETERMINATION - PALESTINIANS - MAURITANIA - GOVERNMENT POLICY - DEVELOPMENT - UN. Centre for Human Rights

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

Mr. Chairman, Mr. President, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, honorable ministers, honorable delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me first of all to express on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania my heart-felt gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to all those who in different states or in the United Nations specialized commissions contributed to the holding of the Conference. I would like to congratulate you, Dr. Mock, for your election as the President of the Conference and I wish to thank this great country for hosting this Conference. It is gratifying that this Conference has a Secretary-General, the great African diplomat Mr. Ibrahima Fall and the symbolic attendance of Mrs. Warzazi, this Arab woman who has been discretely but efficiently endeavoring to advance the human rights cause.

Mr. President,

For more than forty years, the United Nations expressed full confidence in human rights and equality among nations following the World War that caused great misery and suffering to humanity. If we look back to what was done in those past decades, we have to express gratitude and appreciation for the great achievements accomplished. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one of these achievements because its noble principles and indispensable reference has become a precious guide for all nations who have chosen to make rights and freedoms the basis for their civilizations. Being the first step of a long process, the Declaration opened the way of constituting a real, normative order characterized by adoption of more than fifty declarations and conventions and creation of about twenty organizations monitoring the international efficiency norms in the field of human rights as well as the signature of numerous international pacts on the promotion of human rights.

In this regard, one has to congratulate oneself for the recognition, quite at the beginning, of some basic rights, which themselves referred to specific political rights. It is the case of the rights of peoples to self-determination, of a struggle against racism and discrimination as well as women's rights. The last acquisition in this normative order is the Declaration on the Right to Development adopted in 1986 by

the United Nations General Assembly and which has invigorated once more the affirmation of the universal, interdependent and indivisible character of the human rights.

Moreover, it is a source of happiness to notice that the great efforts made towards the codification of principles and rules of behavior in the field of human rights have been accompanied with real acquisition in the political grounds. The Third World people's accession to political independence and sovereignty, which reflects the concrete right of people to self-determination, is in this regard an essential step in mankind's history.

MOCK, Alois (President):

Ladies and gentlemen,

There is no politeness, I would ask your kind attention to the speaker. Thank you very much.

BOUBACAR, Sidi Mohamed Ould (Mauritania), spoke in Arabic:

In this connection, the independence of the Third World peoples and their accession to political independence and sovereignty reflects the concrete right of people to self-determination. More recently, the progress achieved in the struggle against discrimination and racism has been a big breakthrough with a perspective of setting up a democratic society on the ruins of apartheid.

Mr. President,

The great achievements realized in the field of human rights should not allow us to forget the suffering of many peoples currently under domination, wars and famine. The Palestinian people are still living the tragedy that started at the same time when the International Organization was endeavoring to produce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This tragedy is being escalated every day, represented in violence and the trampling of rights to self-determination, to free expression, to work and, indeed, all the basic rights of men and women in those territories. In brief, the rights of men and women of the Palestinian people are being violated.

Moreover, close to this town hosting us today war is being waged in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is an unjust and unjustified war that is reminiscent of earlier times.

Mr. President,

The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 has provided us with great hope and great expectations to see the world's nations share common values of freedom and democracy. No doubts, the process of democratic transformation started by many nations includes hopes in great improvement in the field of human rights. However, the success of this process cannot be taken for granted. It faces great difficulties.

As for us the developing countries, we confront an unprecedented challenge of having to establish on a basis a weak economic infrastructure of a unique society where freedom and equality will prevail. The harm here, for us, lies in the risks that these transformations may carry, which threaten the vital gains achieved by our countries, including the main gain, stability. In this connection, we should not forget that the reinforcement of the structures and the foundation of the states based on rights should be provided with solid guarantees. What is taking place in Somalia and Liberia and the former Yugoslavia, we notice that the disruption of states goes on with blind violence and tremendous regression in the field of human rights.

Mr. President,

My country, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania is fully aware of all big issues. Under the impulsion of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, Mauritania started a genuine democratic process, which led in July 1991 to the adoption by the people of a pluralistic Constitution that guarantees all the basic freedoms and to the organization of presidential and legislative elections in the presence of numerous foreign observers. All those steps took place in total freedom, without violence but rather in the stability and respect of the right-based state. Today, Mauritania is a totally democratic country with no political detainees. More than fifteen political parties are undertaking the activities with great freedom. More than fifty papers and magazines are published. Many democratic parties have been established. In fact, the democratic process has begun in 1986 with the election of municipal advisers in urban areas and the launching of an accelerated programme for combating illiteracy and the promotion of women. All these initiatives were aimed at the participation of the population in decision-making and to give them the opportunity to learn the basic rules of pluralism.

Based on our own experience, my country calls on all people to find their ways and means that would lead to democracy according to their own conditions and their own potentialities and the different stages of development in their countries.

Mr. President,

The current political transformations would never be successful unless accompanied by real economic development. If we look at the world around us, we would notice regrettably that a large part of the humanity is suffering from difficult economic conditions affected by the economic international environment and the burden of the debt. The prices of the raw materials, the increasing indebtedness and the fall in investments have all undermined the development process courageously undertaken in those countries.

The crisis is increasing daily and the weaker sectors of the society and the vulnerable groups would be affected. Children and women who are the source of hope for the future are increasingly living in poor conditions. Thus, the social cohesion, families, communities consequently all the societies are being threatened. This dangerous situation and the tragedies that affect human dignity call on all our human conscience not to remain mere observers, besides the threat that it presents to international peace and security.

The end of the cold war gave rise to great hopes among all peoples. But to those whose horizon is black because of such suffering those hopes are still to be fulfilled. In fact, the world today does not lack the resources nor the genius technical and scientific abilities that are capable of giving life a new meaning. It is quite important to keep in mind that we have a common future and that our destiny cannot be isolated.

The mobilization of the resources previously used for the armaments in the service of development and notably the setting up of international equitable economic conditions would allow all men and peoples to really enjoy their full rights. Justice and mutual interest call on the international community to adopt the stand that is actually a turn in history.

Mr. President,

The struggle for human rights is a struggle for development. This Conference, whose resolutions and recommendations would guide humanity in the field of human rights, should clearly commit the international community to eliminate all obstacles that tamper the economic and social progress of the developing world. This would be the greatest contribution that could be afforded to the noble cause for development because without such no country would be able to secure the minimal standards of living necessary for the enjoyment of human rights and basic freedoms.

Mr. President,

We have a great hope that this Conference due to its great weight and through different international instruments and resolutions on human rights will interpret all those ideas to concrete reality. A gathering of that size to discuss human rights no doubt will result in a great transformation in our endeavors and behavior.

The United Nations Organization in this field undertakes an essential role. It should remain the privileged place to coordinate and harmonize the different efforts undertaken by the different organs in the field of human rights, in particular the Commission for Human Rights in which my country is a member. All those mechanisms might, therefore, be more rationalized. The Centre for Human Rights, their pivot, should be reinforced so that it could assume increasing responsibilities in particular with regard to its programme of consulting services for technical cooperation.

Human rights before anything are a culture that could be acquired through education, culture and information not through Conferences and gatherings alone but through different channels.

Mr. President,

in conclusion I say that the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, whose slogan is honor, fraternity and justice and which has made of solidarity a sacred value and the freedom of expression a deep-rooted tradition, will spare no effort to continue at the national and international levels to realize the great, noble objective upon which this Conference is meeting today.

May peace go along your path. Thank you.

MOCK, Alois (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now have the honor to invite His Excellency, Mr. Kiro Gligorov, President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to address the Conference. The Chief of Protocol will escort His Excellency to the rostrum.

GLIGOROV, Kiro (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia):

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS - THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA - GOVERNMENT POLICY - GOOD NEIGHBOURLINESS - MINORITIES - REFUGEES – EUROPE - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

I would like to use the opportunity, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election President of the World Conference on Human Rights and I wish you success in the discharging of your very important task. You may be assured that the delegation of the Republic of Macedonia will give you in this its full support. It is very significant as you, Mr. Minister Mock, chair today this most important world forum on the protection and promotion of human rights. I am particularly glad that the Conference is taking place in Austria, a country with which the Republic of Macedonia has traditionally excellent relations, and also in Vienna - the city which is permanently making efforts to contribute to the development of international relations and cooperation among all states of the world.

The Republic of Macedonia, as one of the youngest members of the United Nations, approaches this Conference with great hopes and expectations and is prepared to make its full contribution to its success. We believe that the protection and advancement of human rights in the present international situation is of highest significance especially as a concern and a task of the United Nations Organization.

I think that serious preparations have been carried out for a successful work of the Conference. In this regard we appreciate very much the contribution made by the Secretary-General Mr. Boutros Boutros-

Ghali, an old and distinguished friend of my country. I want to stress in particular the significance of his statement delivered this morning.

Mr. President,

This Conference is being held at a time when violation of human rights, both individual and collective, is taking dramatic proportion. Basic human rights, even the right to life and the right to existence are being daily denied. The enjoyment and development of all political, economic, social and other human rights are hampered. The reasons for this lie in the dramatic and difficult situation through which the world is going on. The fact is that poverty is increasing instead of being decreased, that development stagnates or lacks behind instead of going forward. The discrimination of the people based on race, color, nationality, religion and others instead of vanishing, it is being increased, and international humanitarian laws are permanently being broken and force is being used even more, although all this is banned by the United Nations Charter. The well-known gap between the rich and the poor is widening and the international community has not been successful in liberalizing the world trade and the world economic system. It is especially bad that it does not succeed in stopping the military conflicts and preventing the appearance of new ones.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Macedonia has chosen the way towards independence through peaceful and democratic means. This firm determination was strongly influenced by the desire of the people to protect their fundamental rights and freedoms. In conditions when military conflict that has inflamed former Yugoslavia, we have succeeded in preserving the peace securing, thus, a base for a profound and rapid transformation of our country into a modern, democratic state based on the rule of law and market economy. We are doing everything possible to prevent the spillover of the war to our country as well as the presence of UN peacekeeping forces in the Republic of Macedonia. We shall succeed in this endeavor if the international community provides us with greater assistance. I take the liberty to say that hesitation of some United Nations Member States to recognize the Republic of Macedonia and to establish diplomatic relations and objections by a member-country of the United Nations creates among the people of my country a feeling of insecurity.

From this stand point of view, I would like to emphasize that the Republic of Macedonia will continue its efforts towards fast resolution of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia in accordance with the United Nations resolutions.

The Republic of Macedonia is not threatening anyone nor has it any claim towards other states. We want to have most friendly relations with all our neighbors. We are doing our best for the respect of human rights and freedoms in my country. All national minorities are recognized. We are dedicated and constantly engaged in creating maximum conditions for their full emancipation and equal participation in the life and development, in spite of the fact that certain problems still remain to be resolved. This can only be achieved by patience, tolerance and mutual respect.

We would like that the parts of our people living in the neighboring countries as national minorities or as emigrants and migrant-workers in various countries of the world have their national identity recognized and their human rights and freedoms respected as well.

Mr. President,

The priorities of this Conference are clearly stated in the draft final document. The wide preparations and the work of the Preparatory Committee were certainly valuable for this. The Republic of Macedonia approaches all this as a European, developing, land-locked country as well as a country in transition highly interested in the successful outcome of this Conference. This Conference should without any hesitation and bias stand for the respect of the fundamental human rights and freedoms and above all for the right to life condemning all manifestations that threaten this right. It should be

particularly rigorous in dealing with all violations as well as practices of ethnic cleansing or any form of racial discrimination and should uphold the universality of human rights.

Today we are faced with the dramatic problems of the refugees. It is necessary that the international community makes all that is possible for their solution. It is unfortunate that many refugees wait for years for their status to be resolved and that they have lost every hope this will come about during their lifetime.

The Conference should pay great attention to the new generation of human rights, the right to development, the right to live in a healthy environment, the right to a decent life, etc. At present, the progress in this respect is not really possible without democratic development. Moreover, it is very important that international relations are democratized also. The international community should be in a position to defend the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, the principle of sovereignty and integrity of all members of the United Nations.

The present development in Europe and the world shows that the right of the minorities has to be resolved. It is clear today that exactly the absence of solution for this issue is the main reason for many disputes and military conflicts and this unfortunately may continue in the future. This represents both global and urgent problem that cannot be left unresolved.

Mr. President,

In desire to make concrete contribution to the work of this Conference we suggest that it considers and accepts the following proposals of ours:

1. The Conference should recommend to the General Assembly of the United Nations to decide to begin the work on a convention for the minorities. As it is known, after the United Nations Seminar on Minorities held in Ohrid in 1974, Macedonia has proposed to the United Nations General Assembly adopt a declaration on minorities. After many years the General Assembly has done so in 1992.
2. The Conference should propose to the United Nations General Assembly to consider the possibility of establishing a UN high commissioner for minorities. I would like to remind that a similar function has already been established by the CSCE.
3. The Human Rights Commission should become a Commission of all United Nations members to report directly to the General Assembly, not through the UN Economic-Social Council, thus, developing into an Annual World Conference of Human Rights.
4. A special United Nations body should be established for negotiation on new United Nations instruments in the field of human rights, as it exists in the field of disarmament. This would rationalize the preparations of the new conventions, instruments.
5. A special body should be established within the United Nations in charge of verification of obligations undertaken under the present and future human rights conventions. This would provide a complete insight into their implementation on a world scale, regionally and by countries.

Mr. President,

At the end, I would like to stress that the international interdependence today has reached such a degree that it may be freely said that all United Nations members have to follow most strictly the principles of mutual respect, tolerance and non-use of force. A better today and even a better tomorrow is the aim and desire of all. In the realization of such a justified hope this Conference may give a large contribution as millions of people rightly expect so.

Thank you very much.

MOCK, Alois (President):

I thank His Excellency for his statement. The Chief of Protocol will now escort His Excellency to his seat. I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Willy Claes, Vice Prime Minister of Belgium. Excellency, you have the floor.

CLAES, Willy (Belgium), spoke in French:

Keywords: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS - WOMEN - CHILDREN - DEVELOPMENT- AID COORDINATION - HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. President, your Excellences, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. President, my dear colleague and my dear friend,

I should like to congratulate you with all my heart on your election as President of this World Conference. The task you have before you is an extremely difficult one but I think that the nobility of its objectives is one that is obvious to all. Today in Vienna, we are facing heavy responsibilities and aware of the needs imposed on us by the hopes that all humanity has for us in our work. No effort will be spared in order to ensure the success of our endeavor. Please do be aware that I am fully conscious of the difficulties of our job. Bringing together viewpoints in convictions of over one-hundred-and-eighty countries and bring them together in a single declaration, plus an action programme is no easy task. I am, nonetheless, convinced that your experience and your talent backed by the quality of Austrian diplomacy will be capable of ensuring the success of the work of this Conference and will meet the expectations of the international community.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

In his statement my Danish colleague, Mr. Niels Peterson, will give the views of the European Community and its Member States. I fully endorse his statement. Belgium's international activities in the field of human rights have been designed and realized very significantly in close cooperation with our partners in the European Community. Along with them, Belgium will continue to consider the respect of human rights as an essential factor in its relations with third party countries.

Mr. President,

The United Nations made this year, 1993, the year of indigenous peoples. It is, therefore, perfectly justified for the World Conference to attach major importance to the fate and aspirations, which have been neglected all too long, of 300 million persons who are an integral part of the world community.

It is also perfectly normal for the Conference to make the necessary recommendations designed to protect and safeguard in the spirit of a new partnership the rights of these populations to ensure that their specific contribution can be fully recognized.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

Since the solemn proclamation forty-five years ago of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, numerous instruments have enriched the considerable normative work done by the United Nations.

Throughout the world, the governments have become aware of the increasingly growing determination of their populations to ensure the respect, protection and promotion of rights that enshrine the dignity of all human beings.

This positive development is one that we can but welcome and we wish to encourage it. The adherence of states to various instruments to protect human rights is not a purely diplomatic formula. Indeed, by

endorsing these the states guarantee the application of these rights vis-à-vis those whom they administer.

It is up to the governments, therefore, to ensure the adoption of measures to promote and protect these rights with assistance of non-governmental organizations and national and international associations that are active in the field. These will make an inestimable contribution to the defense and protection of human rights.

I should like, moreover, to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all those, men and women, who have been working on a voluntary basis and in certain places at risk of their very lives and have been working to ensure the success of this admirable cause.

Mr. President,

If the real progress has been made in the codification of human rights, we must, nonetheless, not ignore the fact that the implementation of this area is one where the task that remains is enormous. The news every day bring us grim evidence of this.

Very close to us, on the same continent that is hosting the Conference, a bloody tragedy is unfolding every day, atrocities are committed, flouting the most elementary human rights and quite simply human dignity. This negation of human rights and of humanitarian law cannot remain unpunished. We are witnessing a recrudescence of alarming symptoms of intolerance. Human beings are threatened and ill-treated because of the color of their skin, because of their lifestyle, or their religious convictions, or their cultural identity does not, perhaps, fit in the societies where they had hoped to find a stable and peaceful residence. From hatred or fear of another to burning his home, the distance is all too short. Only together, by mobilizing our efforts, can we block the path of such scourges as xenophobia, racism and intolerance.

Among his indescribable acts, I should like to refer here to ill-treatment that is committed all too frequently against women and children. Recently, the King of the Belgians condemned them in the form of slavery known trafficking of women. We must most energetically condemn this odious trade that defies the most elementary respect of the human being.

On the eve of the International Year of the Family it is also intolerable that thousands of children remain thrown on their own resources condemned to survive in the streets, they are an easy pray for the vilest forms of exploitation. The ignominy sometimes goes as far as the outright murder of these children who are considered "disturbing."

The persistence of these disgraceful practices that I have just mentioned is frequently the consequence of the extreme selfishness. All of this indicates how much our world needs to discover and rediscover the virtues of solidarity both among nations and beyond the frontiers of nations. It is there that we need, indeed, a breath of fresh air.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

We are certainly aware that the economic and social difficulties experienced by our Western countries are incommensurate with the agonizing problems, which many of our Third World partners have to deal with on a daily basis.

Famine, extreme poverty, large-scale illiteracy and absence of healthcare, civil wars all result in depriving a considerable part of humanity of the enjoyment of the most elementary rights. One cannot construct a human rights paradise in a social and economic desert. This is where the essential importance of the indivisibility of human rights lies.

The developed countries must show their solidarity with respect to the least developed countries. This moral and political obligation means the development aid. Belgium is keen to establish a basis for a solid partnership with the countries concerned but it is also keen to ensure that this solidarity is reflected in a fair distribution of wealth within these countries.

Moreover, clear gaps in economic and social progress cannot justify a deliberate rejection of civil and political rights. All individuals can claim the protection of the most fundamental rights and respect of their physical and legal integrity, regardless of their conditions or place of residence.

Guarantying everyone the exercise of his or her economic and social rights, free enjoyment of the fruits of progress and a dignified life, it is in this manner that states will prevent marginalization and social exclusion of each individual of their populations. The true democracy can only be based on a society of solidarity, one with social justice and economic stability.

Guided by this very close relationship between democracy, human rights and development, Belgium, which has considerable experience in international cooperation, chooses to grant privileged assistance to those countries who have taken the course of democratization.

It is far from us to wish introduce new conditions to development assistance.

Our aim, however, is to encourage the countries concerned to bring together the vital elements for sustainable development.

I am not the only one to believe that the respect for human rights, free elections, popular participation in decision-making processes, independent courts, healthy and transparent public management and a drastic reduction in the purchase of arms are all elements that will promote real development.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

I should like to close my statement by briefly referring to two topics, which are at the heart of our work and on which there is a certain amount of controversy. I am referring to the universality of human rights and the responsibility of states.

At the very same time that the community of nations meets at a summit to determine how to better guarantee more complete exercise of human rights throughout the world, some are continuing to question the universality of these rights. I find this an alarming phenomenon. Have they forgotten that the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration committed Member States to ensure the universal and effective respect of human rights without any distinction? Have they forgotten that the previous World Conference organized in Teheran in 1968 had proclaimed that this Universal Declaration expressed the common conception of the peoples of the entire world?

The basis for the universality of these rights originates in the equal dignity of all human beings. Calling into question this principle would be tantamount to undermining the very foundations of the joint edifice set up within the framework of the United Nations.

Do not think that I wish to ignore regional or cultural differences. They are what gives this many multi-faceted world its richness. They must be reflected in regional arrangements for promoting and protecting human rights. These arrangements thanks to appropriate machinery for control and monitoring can in harmony with the work of the United Nations lead to a better application of universal principles.

Mr. President,

We are all convinced that it is up to states, first and foremost, to respect and ensure the respect of human rights on their territory. But this duty also commits them vis-à-vis the community of states.

In the global village that our world has become, where almost everything is known very rapidly, any serious failure in the field of human rights is of legitimate concern to the international community. An increasing number of countries now consider that states cannot cover up violations that they are guilty of by taking refuge under the very convenient pretext of non-interference.

States are perfectly justified in expressing in the way and with the intensity that is appropriate their legitimate concerns as well as that of their public opinion. It is for this reason that a range of international machinery for control and assistance now accompanies conventions and other normative instruments elaborated within the United Nations.

The appointment of a high commissioner for human rights would be, in my view, a very useful addition to the system, both in the field of assistance and monitoring. Moreover, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations has said, human rights violations are frequently indications of crises, which may threaten international peace and security. I am convinced that the Security Council, which is the guardian of international peace and security, must increasingly take into account the flagrant and systematic violations of human rights.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

The vocabulary of our work and the complexity of our agenda should not keep us from seeing that it is the human being that should be the centre of our concerns. Respect for the integrity and value of individuals, this is the fundamental condition for stability and peace throughout the world. Human beings are the subjects of inalienable and universal rights and it is up to each and every one of us to defend these energetically and stubbornly.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

MOCK, Alois (President):

I thank his Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to his Excellency Mr. Dick Spring, Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland. Excellency, you have the floor.

SPRING, Dick (Ireland):

Keywords: IRELAND - DEVELOPMENT - WOMEN - YUGOSLAVIA - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - UN. Centre for Human Rights - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Thank you, Mr. President,

First let me to congratulate you on your election and we look to your skills and experience to guide us to our deliberations. Through you, I would also like to thank the government and people of Austria for the excellent arrangements and your hospitality.

This World Conference has been preceded by a long and intensive period of preparation. I am pleased to note that amongst the reports we shall be considering is one prepared by the President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, as General Rapporteur of the inter-regional meeting organized by the Council of Europe in January last.

In the coming ten days the Conference will discuss many issues on the international human rights agenda.

But behind the agenda, the documents, the debates in Committee, there is one fundamental question that all governments must ask, and that our populations are asking with increasing concern.

That question is: Why?

Why, after almost fifty years of work in the UN system, after the adoption of so many agreements on human rights, after the years of tireless effort by non-governmental organizations, are fundamental human rights so massively violated throughout the world?

And it is not only in the area of civil and political rights that this question arises.

How can it be that in a world as advanced as ours - in technology, in finance, in transportation - millions can starve and be left homeless, and be denied basic health care?

We cannot plead ignorance. We know.

Every report, every analysis brings us details of the suffering - of individuals, of minorities, of ethnic communities, of religious groups, of whole populations.

And even if some in Europe had become complacent, the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and its associated brutalities - the ethnic cleansing, the detention camps, the rape and denigration of women, the mutilations - have shaken us out of our complacency.

We have been forced to ask why?

We cannot expect that the next ten days will provide all the answers. But if our concern is deep enough, our examination sufficiently clear-sighted, and our will strong enough this Conference can make a difference.

In many ways the conditions for progress are better now than at any time in the recent past. The end of the cold war has removed the ideological rivalries that absorbed energies and held back progress in international discussions. It has removed the competition for regional and global advantage that enabled dictatorial and repressive regimes to act with impunity.

But it has also revived old and dangerous enmities, often in areas where state structures are not well developed and where human rights infrastructures are inadequate or indeed non-existent. The building of a human rights culture in these states is just one of the many tasks before us. The starting point for our work here and elsewhere is the universality of human rights. We must insist on universality of human rights.

The rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration, the Covenants and the other internationally agreed instruments are the property of everyone. They cannot, and must not, be taken away or reduced by anybody.

In particular, we must reject the argument that the international promotion of human rights constitutes unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of states.

The rise to political independence of peoples and nations is one of the defining characteristics of our age. But it would be a profound perversion of that ideal, intended to destroy tyranny and give to peoples the freedom to pursue their own genius and destiny, if independence were used to cloak or protect new tyrannies.

We must make this clear and vehicular. For without it we will make little or no headway.

The changes in international politics offer new hope for progress in our debate on the relationship between human rights, democracy and development.

We can now focus on the real object of our concern - justice for the individual.

For it is the individual human person that brings together and gives coherence to the three strands of this debate - the individual's right to live in freedom and dignity, the right to control his or her own life and destiny and the right to freedom from want.

Ireland has never accepted that human rights should be subordinated to the imperatives of economic growth. The evidence shows that that road leads to authoritarianism and exploitation.

It must be decisively rejected.

Development does not precede the full realization of human rights. On the contrary, there is, I believe, a profound truth in the view that respect for human rights, the rule of law and the existence of democratically accountable institutions are essential for equitable development.

I realize that this is an issue on which there are still differences. But it need not polarize our discussions. For, after all, the very idea of development is founded on the concepts of solidarity, partnership and interdependence - between peoples, between states, between North and South.

The recognition of our interdependence, the acceptance of solidarity, and the end of ideological rivalries create the conditions for a deeper, more open, more trusting dialogue. Progress in this area at this Conference would mark a qualitative advance for the cause of human rights.

What could help promote such a dialogue and such progress?

In the first place, I believe that we must give greater attention to economic, social and cultural rights. Not at the expense of civil and political rights or before such rights but alongside them.

Can we say that the starving do not have a fundamental right to food? That the illiterate do not have the right to education? That the sick and vulnerable do not have a right to health care?

Of course, they have these rights.

We have accepted such rights in the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights and implicitly in several other human rights instruments.

We must put beyond question the fact that such rights exist and move to the urgent question of implementation.

Second, we must make sure that the agenda on human rights, democracy and development is open and honest. It is imperative that the old divisions of the cold war are not replaced by new religious or cultural obstacles created willfully by those who wish to oppose progress or unwittingly by a failure of mutual understanding.

For its part, the donor community, which is by and large is the North, must not seek to impose cultural or religious views that offend deeply-held beliefs and value-systems in the South. By the same token, all should accept that the rights enumerated in the Declaration and in the Covenants are universal in scope and application.

A third condition for progress in this area is, I believe, the development of specific support programmes for human rights and democracy and their integration into the overall development effort. The European Community has made a start on this. And we, in Ireland, have also begun to develop such programmes as part of our technical assistance - for example in election monitoring, voter education and in police and administrative training.

Our move into these areas stems from a belief that the argument that people want bread before freedom is not only morally bankrupt but economically questionable. Many of the humanitarian crises of recent years tell us this. The scale and depth of the suffering from famine in Somalia and in the Sudan are largely man-made. They demonstrate that the link between development and economic rights, and civil and political rights is more profound and more important than many of us thought in the past. I believe that this linkage needs to be taken up in a deeper and more urgent way within the UN development system and in the international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF.

Development is one area where I hope and believe that we can make genuine progress.

But there are others, equally urgent.

We must intensify our work against torture and racism.

We must continue our efforts on behalf of indigenous peoples, minorities, children, people with disabilities and refugees.

And we must give particular attention to the rights of women.

The Final Document covers many aspects of this question. But I think it particularly important that the Conference should focus on violence against women and the elimination of gender bias.

The crisis in Yugoslavia has highlighted in a particularly brutal way the vulnerable position of women in times of conflict. The rape of many thousands - rape as a deliberate instrument of oppression - has been documented by several international enquiries. But the printed page - graphic as it is - cannot convey the full horror of what has happened in the former Yugoslavia.

I met last week those working with the victims and heard at first hand their story. Many of the non-governmental organizations here today have heard that story too - not only in Yugoslavia but in many other conflicts. We must give priority to helping the victims and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Unfortunately, violence against women is not confined to times of war. It is a feature of our societies, which shames us all.

There is an urgent need to reform existing human rights mechanisms to give greater protection to the rights of women. As a first step, this Conference should recommend the adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution on the elimination of violence against women, and the appointment without further delay of a Special Rapporteur on gender discrimination and violence.

The adoption of Declarations and agreements will mean little if they are not accompanied by a clear commitment to implement undertakings and stronger machinery to ensure that commitments are adhered to.

Ireland has already abolished the death penalty. As part of our commitment to the implementation of international human rights agreements, I am pleased to announce that the government have decided to

accede to the major international instrument on this subject - the 2nd Optional Protocol to the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Arrangements are being made to deposit our instrument of accession with the United Nations Secretary-General.

Beyond this there are several steps that Ireland believes are now required to strengthen the international system.

The first is the appointment of a UN high commissioner for human rights to oversee and coordinate action within the UN system and to subject serious violations to the spotlight of public scrutiny. We should take that decision as soon as possible.

The early appointment of a UN high commissioner for human rights to take charge of the Human Rights Centre would be a sign of hope to a world still afflicted by major violations.

Second, I believe, there is a pressing need for increased budgetary resources for the Centre for Human Rights to match the importance accorded to human rights in the UN Charter. The allocation of less than 1% of the UN's budget to human rights activities falls far below the amounts needed to ensure effective monitoring and the provision of adequate advisory services. The resources should be doubled as a matter of urgency.

Thirdly, we must work for increased contributions to the Voluntary Human Rights Fund. Ireland has increased significantly its contributions this year, and it is my intention to make further increases in the years ahead.

Fourthly, we should consider how best to reflect the universal nature of human rights in the structure of the Human Rights Commission itself. Is it appropriate as we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration that the Commission should still be a body of limited membership? Ireland would welcome a debate on the question of universal membership of the Human Rights Commission and I suggest that the ground be prepared at this year's General Assembly.

Fifthly, we should strengthen the mandates given to the Special Rapporteurs in such areas as torture, summary executions, and racism. These are amongst our main weapons in the fight against abuses and we must ensure that the Rapporteurs are given all the support that they require. In particular, we cannot accept that they be denied access to areas or people necessary for the conduct of their enquiries.

Sixth, I believe that the recent agreement on the establishment of an ad hoc tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia is a development of the greatest importance for the protection of human rights. The time has come for the creation of an international criminal tribunal of wider scope to prosecute persons responsible for violations of humanitarian law wherever and whenever they occur.

In concluding, Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to the work of non-governmental organizations - the many thousands of men and women who have taken it on themselves to bear witness to human suffering. They are at the front line of human rights protection. Where abuses are concealed, they bring them to light. When governments falter, they remind us of our obligations. Where the international community fails to act, their voice is a call to conscience.

I am pleased that so many NGOs including a number from my own country are participating in this Conference. We must ensure that their voice is heard, that their experience and expertise is used and that they have the fullest international protection possible beginning with the adoption of the UN declaration on the protection of human rights defenders.

The work of NGOs and our work here at this Conference has an importance far beyond the detail of our discussions. It gives hope. In her moving account of living under fear Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate, said:

It is not enough merely to call for freedom, democracy and human rights. There has to be a united determination to persevere in the struggle, to make sacrifices in the name of enduring truths, to resist the corrupting influences of desire, ill-will, ignorance and fear.

That united determination to persevere is the best answer we can give to those everywhere who look to Vienna with hope for this Conference.

I thank you, Mr. President.

[Change of president]

NIASSE, Mustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency for his statement.

Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to remind you about the request of the Austrian delegation. The Austrian delegation would like to remind the Heads and Deputy Head of the delegations that the reception organized by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria takes place tonight at 7 pm at the Hofburg Palace. I thank you.

I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

ALATAS, Ali (Indonesia):

Keywords: HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT - NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS -
CULTURAL PLURALISM - INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION - DEVELOPMENT -
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. President, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Indonesia deems it a singular privilege to participate in this second World Conference on Human Rights for it constitutes another landmark event in our long journey to arrive at a world order that is worthy of the spiritual kinship of all humankind.

It has been twenty-five years since the First World Conference on Human Rights was held in Teheran and forty-five years since the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that laid down the inalienable rights vested in all persons and all peoples by the simple virtue of their being human. This is indeed an opportune time for the United Nations again to convene a World Conference to evaluate the progress we have made since then, to identify the obstacles and challenges to further progress and to devise the ways to overcome them.

Allow me, therefore, to express Indonesia's deep appreciation to the government and people of Austria for hosting this Conference and for the excellent arrangements made to ensure the efficiency of our proceedings. Before proceeding I should like to say that in compliance with the appeal of our President to keep our statements as short as possible, I shall not read out my entire address. I do wish it to be recorded, however, that the full text of my statement as submitted to the Secretariat and distributed to delegations be regarded as having been presented in its entirety.

Mr. President,

Indonesia comes to this Conference with a profound awareness of the vital stakes involved in the outcome of our deliberations, for we are a developing country, which recently regained its national independence and, therefore, knows only too well how it is to hunger and to struggle for the most fundamental of human rights: the freedom to be free, the freedom from want, from ignorance, from social injustice and economic backwardness. We are also here as a country of Asia, that vast continent, which over the millennia has given to the world its major religions, the wisdom of its philosophical thoughts and the rich diversity of its age-old cultures and civilizations. Hence, we do realize the constructive contribution that we can and should make to this World Conference. As the state currently holding the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, we are also entrusted to reflect the consensus position on human rights taken by 108 Member States of the Movement, which met in a Summit Conference in Indonesia last year, a position as embodied in the Jakarta Message and the Final Documents that emanated from the Conference. And lastly, but by no means least important, we are here as a responsible member of the United Nations and as such fully conscious of the commitment of all members to adhere to the Charter of the United Nations and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We are, therefore, constrained to voice our concern at the recent spate of international media reports that tend to give the impression as if the success of this Conference is being threatened by a clash of values between the developed countries of the North and the developing countries of the South, by a confrontation between the perceived universal, mostly Western, concept of human rights that stresses political and civil rights and the purported "dissident" view, particularly of Asian countries, which emphasizes the indivisibility of all categories of rights and the need to take into account the diversity of socio-economic, cultural and political realities prevailing in each country.

I believe this depiction to be not only erroneous but also unwarranted and, therefore, counterproductive. Speaking for Indonesia and I believe also for the other Asian countries and the Non-Aligned countries, I can say in all truthfulness that we have not come to Vienna to engage in confrontation nor to advocate an alternative concept of human rights based on some nebulous notion of cultural relativism as spuriously alleged by some quarters.

On the contrary, as clearly stated in the Bangkok Declaration, we recognize that the observance and promotion of human rights "should be encouraged by cooperation and consensus and not through confrontation and the imposition of incompatible values." Indeed, there can and should be no room for confrontation or unnecessary polemics considering that we all proceed from the same basic premises: our shared view on the universal validity of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms and our common adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and our commitment to the Charter of the United Nations that requires us to cooperate in promoting respect for human rights for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

If this is the case, then I cannot see how and why anyone can have any quarrel with the central proposition we have always advanced, namely that in considering human rights issues and in promoting and protecting these rights we should all base our approaches and actions on what the United Nations Charter enjoins us to do rather than on the particular perceptions and preferences of any one country or group of countries. While the question of human rights has of late become the focus of heightened international concern, it is of course not a new issue. Since 1945, human rights have been enshrined in the Charter and since then our Organization has developed a growing corpus of covenants, conventions, declarations and other instruments, which constitute a veritable International Bill of Human Rights. In the process, commonly agreed conceptual perceptions, principles, procedures and mechanisms have been established within the United Nations system. I, therefore, believe and it is, as I earlier stated, our central proposition that the promotion and protection of human rights will be far better served if all of us were to adhere more conscientiously to those common understandings and procedures as already agreed upon over the years rather than be diverted into a futile debate over misperceived dichotomies.

Mr. President,

Neither can it be said that the present concept of human rights, the theoretical and legal basis of which was first conceived and developed in the West, is unknown or unappreciated in the countries of Asia and Africa. We, in Indonesia, do know how this concept sprang from the libertarian writings of such European political and legal thinkers as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Montesquieu, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Cesare Beccaria and John Stuart Mill — and from their various postulations and juridical constructions of a "social contract" and of the inherent, "natural" rights of individuals in facing the powers of the state and of governmental authority. These were the ideas that eventually gave birth to the modern state and the attendant civil and political rights of the citizens. But these were also among the very same ideas that inspired the struggle of many new nations of Asia and Africa to cast off the yoke of colonialism, just as they helped ignite, during an earlier time, the French and American revolutions.

Thus, if today there appears to be still some controversy on the concept of human rights it is not so much from any contention between East and West or North and South but it seems to me the lingering echo of an earlier clash between two Western traditions, between the principle of individual liberty which, for example, Thomas Jefferson passionately espoused and the principle of a strong, lawful authority, which Alexander Hamilton just as passionately espoused.

I believe, however, that in essence the conflict between these two traditions or principles has some time ago already been resolved and for our age the writer Walter Lippmann summed its resolution in the following terms:

The conflict of the two principles can be resolved only by uniting them. Neither can live alone. Alone, that is, without the other, each is excessive and soon intolerable. Freedom, the faith in man's perfectibility, has always and will always lead through anarchy to despotism. Authority, the conviction that men have to be governed and not merely let loose, will in itself always lead through arbitrariness and corruption to rebellion and chaos. Only in their union are they fruitful. Only freedom which is under strong law, only strong law to which men consent because it preserves freedom, can endure.

It is certainly not my intention, Mr. President, to dwell on the past or to indulge in theorizing for that is decidedly not the purpose for which we are gathered today. But the point I do wish to make is that while we in the developing world do understand and do appreciate the genesis, the thinking, the motivation underlying present-day Western policies and views on human rights, we should at least expect similar understanding and appreciation of the historical formation and experiences of non-Western societies and the attendant development of our cultural and social values and traditions. For many developing countries, some endowed with ancient and highly developed cultures, have not gone through the same history and experience as the Western nations .

In fact, they often developed different perceptions based on different experiences regarding the relations between man and society, man and his fellow man and regarding the rights of the community as against the rights of the individual. Now, in saying so, Mr. President, it is not my intention to, therefore, propose a separate or alternative concept on human rights. No. But this is a call for greater recognition of the immense complexity of the issue of human rights due to the wide diversity in history, culture, value systems, geography and phases of development among the nations of the world. And, therefore, this is also a call addressed to all of us to develop a greater sensitivity toward this complexity and greater humility and less self-righteousness in addressing human rights concerns.

Mr. President,

What then are the commonly agreed understandings and perceptions to which I referred earlier and which should appropriately guide us in addressing the issue of human rights? Let me to highlight a few.

The universal validity of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms is, indeed, beyond question. But the United Nations Charter has rightly placed the question of their universal observance and promotion within the context of international cooperation. And I am sure we all agree that international cooperation presupposes as a basic condition respect for the sovereign equality of states and the national identity of peoples. In this spirit of cooperation and mutual respect, there should be no place for the practice of exchanging unfounded accusations or preaching self-righteous sermons to one another. In a world where domination of the strong over the weak and interference between states are still a painful reality, no country or group of countries should arrogate unto itself the role of judge, jury and executioner over other countries.

Secondly, human rights questions are essentially ethical and moral in nature. Hence, any approach to human rights questions, which is not motivated by a sincere desire to protect these rights but by disguised political purposes or, worse, to serve as a pretext to wage a political campaign against another country, cannot be justified.

Thirdly, human rights are vital and important by and for themselves. So are efforts at accelerated national development, especially of the developing countries. Both should be vigorously pursued and promoted and of course, there is a relationship between them. But Indonesia cannot accept linking questions of human rights to economic and development cooperation, by attaching human rights as a political conditionality to such cooperation. Such a linkage will only detract from the value of both.

On such conditionality, the Leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement, during their Tenth Summit in Jakarta last year, emphasized:

[...] any attempt to use human rights as a condition for socio-economic assistance, thus sidelining the relevance of economic, social and cultural human rights, must be rejected. No country should use its power [...] to impose conditionality on others.

Fourthly, it is now generally accepted that all categories of human rights — civil, political, economic, social, cultural, the rights of the individual and the rights of the community are interrelated and indivisible. This implies that the promotion and protection of all these rights should be undertaken in an integral and balanced manner, and the key word is balanced, and that inordinate emphasis on one category of human rights over another cannot be justified. Likewise, in assessing the human rights conditions of countries, and of developing countries in particular, the international community should take into account the situation in relation to all categories of human rights.

This is also consistent with the basic principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, *inter alia* in Article 29.

It is clear, therefore, that implementation of human rights implies the existence of a balanced relationship between individual human rights and the obligations of individuals towards their community towards their society, towards their nation. Without such a balance, the rights of the community as a whole can be denied, which can lead to instability and even anarchy. In Indonesia, as in most other developing countries, the rights of the individual are balanced by the rights of the community, balanced by the obligation equally to respect the rights of others, the rights of the society and the rights of the nation. Indonesian culture as well as its ancient well-developed customary laws have traditionally put high priority on the rights and interests of the society without, however, in any way minimizing or ignoring the rights and interests of individuals and groups.

In promoting human rights in developing countries, including our own it should also be borne in mind that there are other fundamental rights and concerns besides certain civil and political freedoms to which equally, not more but equally, urgent attention should be devoted, such as the right of the vast majority of the people to be free from want and from fear, from ignorance, disease and backwardness. At the same time, most developing countries are presently at a stage of development that, indeed, necessitates increasing focus on the human being as both the principal agent and ultimate beneficiary of all development. And that is why developing countries attach such great importance to the right to development and to the right to pursue development in an environment of peace and national stability.

The right to development has been recognized in the UNGA Declaration of 1986, of which Article 1 clearly states that the right to development is an inalienable human right.

Fifth, while human rights are indeed universal in character, it is now generally acknowledged that their expression and implementation in the national context should remain the competence and responsibility of each government. This means that the complex variety of problems, of different economic, social and cultural realities, and the unique value systems prevailing in each country should be taken into consideration.

In this context, I fully concur with the view expressed by the former Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in his 1991 annual report that

The principle of non-interference with the essential jurisdiction of states cannot be regarded as a protective barrier behind which human rights can be massively or systematically violated with impunity.

But, as he also observed in that very same report:

Maximum caution needs to be exercised lest the defense of human rights becomes a platform for encroaching on the essentially domestic jurisdiction of states and eroding their sovereignty. Nothing would be a surer prescription for anarchy than an abuse of this principle.

Mr. President,

The international scene has changed profoundly since the first World Conference on Human Rights in Teheran twenty-five years ago. Scientific and technical progress has triggered the processes of globalization, cross cultural interlinks and the internationalization of value systems. The cold war and the bipolar East-West conflict have ended.

The issue of human rights has ceased to be a bloc controversy and once again it has acquired a life of its own in the consciousness of the international community.

Let us not make it again a block controversy between the North and the South or between the West and the East. The desire of the international community to promote human rights is manifested by the fact that even during the period of greatest tension between East and West significant and meaningful progress was, nevertheless, made. The instruments adopted during this period have broadened the scope and dimensions of human rights, further extending protection to all peoples. In recent times, the concept of human rights has come to incorporate, and we thoroughly welcome it, the rights of women, of children, of migrant workers and their families, as well as the right to development. This year, we will observe the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples as a further example of the scope to which human rights have been extended.

But there is, unfortunately, a wide gap between international aspirations on human rights and the reality of their implementation. For in various parts of the world, the human rights of millions of people are still in grave jeopardy. Human rights cannot thrive in a world burdened with widespread

poverty, environmental crises, rapid population growth, by unresolved disparities and inequities in the world economic system. In the terrifying surge of national, ethnic and religious conflicts, human rights are among the first victims. Indonesia, therefore, condemns the persistence of institutionalized racism in the form of apartheid in South Africa, and the continued massive and systematic violations of the fundamental national and human rights of the Palestinian people. I should also like to cite the painful irony and incongruence of this Conference discussing the fundamental rights and freedoms of human beings and nations while a few hundred kilometers from here an entire nation, a sovereign and independent state, is being subjected to brutal aggression, mass murder, systematic rape and the inhuman practice of ethnic cleansing.

It has not helped the cause of promoting and protecting human rights that the way in which concerns on human rights are expressed at the international level has so far failed to reflect the immense political, economic, social and cultural diversity of the world we live in. When this diversity is disregarded, as it often is, then we are confronted by imbalances such as politicization, selectivity, double standards and discrimination.

To improve the universal promotion and the protection of human rights, we have, therefore, to address these imbalances through the adoption of an integrated and balanced approach and through recognizing the inherent relationship between peace, development, democracy, social justice and the universal enjoyment of human rights.

Mr. President,

We are also called upon in this Conference to consider improvements in the international mechanisms for the promotion and protection of these rights. In my statement I have elaborated on them and I shall not elaborate on them further. We would like to make only one point.

We equally recognize the important role that could be played by national institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights and, in this context, I am pleased to announce the recent establishment of an independent National Commission on Human Rights in Indonesia.

We have also noted the proposal to establish the office of a high commissioner for human rights. We believe that this proposal needs further careful study in the context of our overall effort to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations human rights mechanisms so as to avoid duplication of efforts as well as waste of resources.

To conclude, Mr. President, Indonesia has always been of the view that the primary objective of international action in the field of human rights is not to indulge in acrimony nor to sit in judgment over one another but together to enhance the common consciousness of the international community in promoting the observance of these fundamental rights. Indeed, what is needed at this present stage is not heightened confrontation but rather increased cooperation, compassion and mutual tolerance. We should not try to remake the world in our own image, but we can and should try to make the world a more humane, tolerant, peaceful and equitably prosperous place for all.

In the field of human rights, the concepts, the instruments and the international understandings are already there for us to build upon. We must continue to nurture them so that in time they will be able to bridge the vast diversity of cultures, traditions, social, economic and political systems in the world today without disregarding any one of them or allowing any one of them to dominate the others. Then we shall be able to weave together the three major strands as reflected in the UN Charter - the resolution of conflicts, the promotion of development and observance of human rights - which together compose the precious tissue of lasting peace.

I thank you very much, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Mustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Fernando Solana, Foreign Minister of Mexico. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

SOLANA, Fernando (Mexico), spoke in Spanish:

Keywords: MEXICO - GOVERNMENT POLICY - SOVEREIGNTY - DEMOCRACY - INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen.

The United Nations in opening this Conference have embarked upon a new historic phase in the defense and protection of human rights. Just a few years ago, the political conditions of the bipolar world would have made it impossible for us to convene a forum of this kind. States that refused to give the support to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 are now here as major driving force behind this Conference.

For Mexico, the defense of human rights has been and continues to be an absolute priority as part of its action taken in the international arena. We have always been guided by the need to defend and protect human rights. In 1811, at the beginning of the war of independence, Miguel Hidalgo declared the abolishment of slavery. In 1813, José María Morelos wrote *Los Sentimientos de la Nación*, one of the fundamental documents of human rights in America, which was the inspiration of the first Mexican constitution, that of Apatzingán, which in writing specified the rights of Mexicans and the guarantees of law given to those who resided on the national territory.

Mexico has always been respectful towards international law and has condemned those regimes that have trampled the dignity of human rights. In 1935, we opposed the fascist invasion of Ethiopia. We were the only country to reject the annexation of Austria by the Nazis. For more than forty years, we stayed away from the Franco regime, and we had the same attitude towards various dictatorial regimes in Latin America always showing solidarity with their peoples. In 1974, we cut all our links with the apartheid system in South Africa when some countries still protected their strategic interests there. This behavior was required by our beliefs, and our history required that we act in this way as well.

At the same time, Mexico has always been a land of refuge and a land of tolerance, a place of asylum for those who were politically persecuted by Nazism, fascism and other kinds of dictatorships.

This Conference, like the United Nations, is a gathering of sovereign states. Sovereignty is a principle upon which international society and coexistence between its members are based. However, it is obvious that the community of nations has expressed its will to internationalize certain issues that previously were considered to be of the exclusive competence of individual states.

In the case of human rights, from 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has emphasized our desire to enshrine those human rights internationally. Almost half-a-century later, we are meeting here in Vienna to continue to fight to achieve this aim. Last year, when the issue of the environment and development was discussed and in 1990 when drug trafficking was under discussion, we did exactly the same thing, though the results of international cooperation have unfortunately not been such as to allow us to bring an end to the growing violence and criminality related to these issues.

This demands from our peoples and governments to achieve a greater observance of human rights and to act in accordance with the rules of peaceful coexistence. This requires a lot of political will, and it is a very delicate task: combining national sovereignty and a global consensus and protecting the very foundation on which the international community is based.

Mexico is decisively in favor of international cooperation to strengthen the effective and real protection of human rights. Only through cooperation and only within the framework of existing law will it be possible for us to be the effective and real defenders of human rights of the 5.3 billion of inhabitants of this world.

A great deal has been said about what the relationship between human rights, democracy and development should be. Our Secretary-General this morning made an excellent and, I believe, very timely presentation, which is endorsed by Mexico. The close relationship is essential. It is very difficult to draw up a hierarchy of these concepts or put one above the other. Without democracy you cannot consolidate development. Without the culture of respect for human rights neither one, nor the other can be attained. Mexico considers that one of the essential objectives of this Conference ought to be creation of the conditions under which we can have effective international cooperation, creation of necessary conditions for each individual nation to promote human rights based on its own achievements and efforts.

There will be no point in trying to defend human rights if this is done at the expense of a breakdown in the international legal order that has been built to allow coexistence between states with various levels of economic, political and military power.

Mexico is against distortion of the values concerning protection of human rights because this violates fundamental principles of the law of nations and of coexistence between states. Throughout the history, rather unworthy undertakings such as conquest, colonialization, subordination of ethnic groups have been justified by rather dubious claims that civilizing missions are being carried out.

International protection for human rights should be achieved under conditions that guarantee objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity concerning treatment and handling of specific cases.

Nor should we confuse the defense of human rights with the export of specific social or political models when they have been flagrantly and systematically violated with the export of models of social or political organization. No political system can legitimately impose itself from the outside.

There are proposals to establish in the United Nations new mechanisms, which will improve those which already exist. But there is no point in setting up new bureaucracies in the false hope that they will solve problems which deep down are much more complex than that.

What we can do as of now, and this Conference has so decided, is to open up a discussion amongst governments, national institutions and non-governmental organizations.

Respect for human rights means that we must concentrate our efforts on the most vulnerable, men and women, who are denied the very possibility of having an existence in dignity: the extremely poor, the migrant workers, ethnic minorities, refugees, national groups that are living abroad and those who are seeking respect for their identity.

Approximately two billion people live in extreme poverty. The lacerating deficiencies in education, health and various other services do not allow us to speak of the enjoyment of the most basic human rights. For the marginalized, for whom the only concern is day-to-day survival, the issue of human rights is nothing more than a mirage.

Mexico maintains that the observance of human rights cannot be built on a foundation of ignorance and poverty. Nor should we get involved in a fruitless debate about which of those rights should be given priority. All those rights that lead to a greater wellbeing and the possibility of realizing the full potential of the human being, are equally valuable.

A first step forward in defending human rights would be to combat extreme poverty and ignorance. This Conference and the United Nations in general should devote more attention to this.

This, of course, does not exclude international action through established multilateral procedure to denounce and deal with the mass and systematic human rights violations. Mexico has supported and will continue to support such actions. But we believe this is a job of the bodies made up of states to apply measures to ensure that fundamental rights and freedoms are protected.

Another equally important step would be to ensure the universality of application of the mechanisms available to the international community on this matter. We cannot tolerate the historic practice of some countries in engaging in politics of interests with human rights or trying to use intervention under the humanitarian pretext. We believe they should be replaced by international action and cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Mexico has always been on the forefront of the United Nations fight to promote and protect human rights. We are a State Party to the existing conventions and covenants on human rights and we participate actively in the Human Rights Commission. We have been members of various treaty bodies and we have supported the procedures so that they have a more swift and effective action.

In our Constitution, Mexico included the provisions of existing human rights convention and covenants and in 1990 created a national human rights commission, an independent body for the promotion and protection of human rights. These measures, together with the constitutional reforms, are designed to guarantee the rights of the indigenous populations and full protection for vulnerable groups such as migrant workers and children, have made it possible to advance towards a comprehensive regime for guaranteeing protection of their fundamental rights.

Mr. President,

History shows us that defense of human rights has always resulted from interaction of forces and movements that are truly national. International action has only been beneficial when it compliments national action and when it respects the principles of coexistence between states.

Experience also shows that human rights and the rights of peoples are inseparable. Individual rights progress together with collective rights.

It is up to us to foster an international environment that encourages each country to do what it can within its own historical development and within the framework of its institutions to consolidate a culture of absolute respect for the rights of all men and women in the world. An environment that would strengthen and perfect also the respect for national differences, customs and habits of each people. In short, an environment of full respect between the states and international law that regulates their peaceful coexistence.

Thank you, Mr. President.

NIASSE, Mustapha (President), spoke in French:

I thank His Excellency for his statement. The meeting will resume at 21 hours, 9 pm, this evening. We will continue our discussion with the next speaker. His Excellency was the last speaker this afternoon's session.

Thank you very much.