



لتظنّ الشعلة وهاجّة - 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

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15th plenary meeting, 22nd of June 1993



# World Conference on Human Rights

Vienna, 14-25 June 1993

15th plenary meeting, 22nd June 1993

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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):

The 15th meeting of the plenary of the World Conference on Human Rights is called to order. The theme of today's meeting is democracy. Today we are asking the senator Hipólito Solari-Yrigoyen, [spoke in French] President of the Human Rights Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Senator, you have the floor.

SOLARI-YRIGOYEN, Hipólito (Inter-Parliamentary Union. Human Rights Committee), spoke in French:

*Keywords:* LEGISLATIVE BODIES - IPU - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS - INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS - WOMEN - SPECIAL RAPORTEURS

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

At national level, the parliaments were able to be involved in the preparatory process for this Conference. But here it is the views and proposals of the World Assembly of Parliaments, which I would like to pass on to this major assembly of governmental representatives.

For the Inter-Parliamentary Union, democracy, development and human rights are inseparable. They are the three pillars for peace.

The Union believes that there is but the participatory democracy: all individuals without any discrimination whatsoever should be able to take a conscious, responsible and free part in the management of the public affairs in their countries, either directly or through freely elected

representatives. The smooth operation of democracy requires, effectively, that the authority of the government be based on the will of the people expressed in the course of free and fair elections.

I would like to indicate in passing that today the issue of international monitoring of elections is on every one's lips and, therefore, the Union is trying to make a serious contribution to that in terms of deliberation about the subject and taking a general action on it, as it just did in Cambodia because the elections are only but a part of a whole process.

It goes without saying that the results of elections should always be respected.

An elected parliament also needs the resources to function effectively if it is going to act properly as a representative of the people's will to be able to exert an effective control over government action and to play its role as protector of human rights.

This is why the Inter-Parliamentary Union attaches particular importance to the strengthening of parliamentary institutions as part of its technical assistance programme.

Democracy and development go hand in hand. Thus, the Inter-Parliamentary Union believes that there can be no true democracy whilst we see the persistence of gross disparities, whilst the considerable proportion of the world's population continues to live below the poverty line and so long as many are deprived of access to education, primary health care, clean drinking water and decent housing, productive well-paid and satisfactory employment, and so long as malnutrition has not been totally eliminated.

Mr. President,

In preparing to this Conference, the Inter-Parliamentary Union held in the end of May in Budapest the symposium on the question of "The Parliament: the guardian of human rights."

We know that those who we represent in our assemblies elected us so that we ensure that all of their civil and political and their economic, social and cultural rights are guaranteed in law and respected in fact.

We know also, unfortunately, that our role as spokesmen for rights and freedoms might expose us to the possibility of becoming victims of human rights violations. This is why within the Inter-Parliamentary Union there is a Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, which I have the honor of chairing and which, unfortunately, has a great deal of work to do.

To return to the discussions which we held in Budapest, to which the Human Rights Centre provided precious assistance, I would particularly like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General of this Conference, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, for the inspiring words by which, he representing the UN Secretary-General Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, opened our deliberations.

Enriched by the dialogue that we have established with the representatives of non-governmental organizations, our considerations and proposals were summed up in a document that was distributed as an official document of this World Conference.

Since I have very little time, I would simply like to draw your attention to one or two matters of priority.

The symposium solemnly reaffirmed the concept of the universality of human rights.

For the majority of members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the lack of respect for human rights is a subject of legitimate international concern because the respect of these rights and freedoms constitutes one of the bases of the international order.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, nonetheless, considers it important that international action should be based on universal norms and standards applied consistently and on a non-selective basis. During our symposium in Budapest, any action or lack thereof based on political or economic considerations was severely criticized.

In this context, most of us would urge the establishment of the Office a special United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights who would in all independence watch over the implementation of and respect for the international human rights standards.

I should now like to touch upon the international human rights instruments as a subject. As members of parliaments, we have to ratify them and then take up their provisions to include them in domestic law, then ensure that the law is properly observed.

We would like that the parliaments be better involved in the process of negotiation of the international instruments.

We would like governments to provide us with the motives for which they sign or, on the contrary, refused to sign a given international instrument.

We would like to be able to give our opinion on whether such a reservation is well founded or not.

We would also wish that the ratification, which is an act engaging the national responsibility, always be accompanied by its corollary: the review of the national legislation with regard to the international standard in question. Unfortunately, we cannot but acknowledge that parliaments themselves are usually under-equipped to carry out this task.

We would wish to be able to give our opinion on granting of competence to international committees authorized to receive complaints and not be held aside when reports are reviewed by the committees. The human rights commissions, which exist in many parliaments and the directory of which has been drawn up by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, are particularly well placed to give an opinion on these subjects.

Many of us believe in the timeliness and effectiveness of national independent mechanisms responsible to parliament such as an ombudsman. Furthermore, many of us are of the opinion that national human rights commissions are the means of creating the human rights culture, which enhances the protection of citizens.

Mr. President,

I have no intention of not voicing out a subject to which the Inter-Parliamentary Union attaches a high priority. I refer to the rights of women. There are far too few women in decision-making, particularly within politics and in the parliaments.

Only too often the women are exposed to violence and particularly to rape. The Union reaffirms that the use of this practice in armed conflict is a war crime that should be considered as a crime against humanity according to the international law. We would urge the nomination of the Special Rapporteur responsible for looking at the issue of human rights violations against women and I hope that this Conference will give a positive opinion on this issue.

Before concluding could I, Mr. President, appeal to this assembly to do all it can so that in the preparation of the final document the Conference takes into account the views of members of parliaments, which are clearly and in a very detailed fashion reflected in the summary of our Budapest discussions.

To do so, I would make a special appeal to all my parliamentary colleagues who are here as members of governmental delegations as seems perfectly reasonable and acceptable to the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

It is essential that in major international Conferences and bodies responsible for defining the position of the international community, the parliaments and governments work side by side. Should they not after that both work hand in hand also nationally to ensure that decisions taken at international level are followed by effective measures? This will be the case for the results of this Conference. The Inter-Parliamentary Union is committed to this.

Thank you, Mr. President.

**MOCK, Alois (President):**

Thank you very much. The Conference will now resume its general debate. I now give the floor to Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Director-General of United Nations Office at Vienna. Sir, you have the floor.

**GIACOMELLI, Giorgio (United Nations Office at Vienna):**

*Keywords:* HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT - CRIMINAL JUSTICE - JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE - NARCOTIC DRUGS

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

A great Austrian thinker and scientist, Irenaeus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, identifies the cause of the main problems facing humanity today as the gap that has opened between reason and emotion or, put differently, between intellect and instinct, logic and passion.

To illustrate this, he tells an anecdote in which five persons from different cultures have come together to plan and organize an expedition to outer space: as long as they focus solely on the technical challenge, they quickly reach agreement but as soon as they discuss social justice and better forms of government - they quarrel and start fighting.

This anecdote, I believe, epitomizes the challenges before this Conference. Being responsible for the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice programme as well as the International Drug Control Programme of the Organization, I am constantly confronted by startling evidence of the duality of human nature. And yet, I believe that as creatures endowed with conscience - and as such subjects of our own destiny - we should be able to bridge the gap that we have allowed to develop. I am convinced that instrumental to this endeavor is progress towards greater justice as well as freedom from drug abuse. These are, at one and the same time, prerequisites and corollaries of a socially just world.

The year after next, we shall be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. It was founded in the exceptional period of remorse and spirit of "never again" that followed the realization that humanity had toppled into the abyss. It demonstrated that man is most sincere in his resolution to be good immediately after a catastrophe. This was again demonstrated recently when the world conscience, repulsed by the inhuman and inhumane conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, led to the creation of an Ad Hoc International Tribunal to bring to justice violators of international humanitarian law and to act as a deterrent to future similar conduct.

In this spirit of determination to close the gap - to continue my metaphor - governments adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Since that seminal event, many additional human rights instruments have been fashioned covering a multitude of specific concerns, individual and collective.



But it would take a very brave person, indeed, to say with certitude just how much has been achieved in practical human terms in the years since the adoption of the Declaration of Human Rights as a result of this process of codification.

But one must but believe that lives have been saved, much torture prevented, many unjustly detained freed, the hard edge of discrimination blunted, many vulnerable protected, gross and massive violations of basic rights deterred. Undoubtedly, we should have a much better idea of the balance of achievement by the end of this Conference.

Anyway, personally, I can see one very clear achievement: namely, that disregard of civil and political rights is not now normally an overt and official policy and actual violations are rarely admitted. By historical standard this represents a giant step forward for humanity.

Having said that, I will not surprise anyone in this audience in asserting that the world depicted in United Nations human rights instruments is, nonetheless, a distant cousin, at best, of the world that we know. There is, thus, much still to be done.

This Conference convenes at a time of far-reaching political developments. For most of the life of the United Nations, the world has been transfixed by the competition, taking many forms between two diametrically opposed views of “the good society” and the just social order.

Now a new mood is emerging. This may be described as a distinct preference for pragmatism while putting the human person at the centre of concern. People really matter, seems to be the refrain, and they wish to be heard.

As we grope towards a human and more humane social construct, with all its implications - in the area of human rights, in the spheres of economic and social policy and thinking about development - the end of the post-cold-war order is punctuated by explosions of violence and horror and, in places, complete breakdown of the social order.

I have mentioned one instance. There are many others. The tragedies, big and small, are on our TV screens or in the newspaper headlines - day after depressing day. These events and the many different signs from various parts of the globe of economic distress and of social polarization have been instrumental, I would suggest, in creating a sense of malaise. It is a malaise that we need to shake off.

At this juncture, it is perhaps particularly important for the international community not to allow us to slip backwards, to let the foundations that have been so laboriously built over the past years be eroded.

The Conference provides a timely opportunity to raise, collectively, spirits and aspirations. Other opportunities will present themselves in the 50th anniversary year, for example, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen and the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

It is important that we set high standards for ourselves. It is also important that the gap between ideal and reality does not widen. If the gap between accepted principles and the actual practices widens, it will lead to a cynicism and a further erosion of moral and political standards in the community.

An important aim of ours should, thus, be to keep to a minimum the gap between declaration of intent and actual behavior.

The quest for human rights is but a specific form of the more general quest for “the good society.” Most typically, human rights are seen in terms of the relationship between the government and the subject, that is from the perspective of what governments should do for the citizen and what they should refrain from doing as well as what governments may expect from their citizens. But there is, of course, also the question of conflict of rights and the wider question of the standards by which citizens

treat each other: or to put it differently, whose view of the good society prevails when the different views conflict?

Whilst not all human rights issues raise criminal justice ones, the converse is not the case. All criminal justice issues involve human rights - whether of a suspect, detainee, prisoner, victim and, indeed, society at large. How does one balance the respective rights of the victim, the accused, the public at large, in the criminal justice process? To prevent crime efficiently, to investigate crimes successfully, to bring prosecutions and obtain convictions, what methods are reasonable, what rights can be abrogated? Does the law-abiding citizen gain more from better personal security through a rather intrusive police presence or lose by that very intrusion? Does society benefit from a liberal and humane system of criminal justice which respects the rights of the accused and convicted or only the criminal?

The work of the United Nations in this area answers the question clearly in favor of society. An inhumane criminal justice system compounds inhumanity. If governments do not respect human rights including those of convicted persons, how can they expect their citizens to do so? And prisoners who are inhumanely treated are more likely to become recidivists and hence pose a continuing threat to society. The work of the United Nations in these areas is available to delegations of this Conference in the "Compendium of United Nations Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice", which has recently been reprinted in English. It is hoped, in the near future, to have it available in all official languages.

The institutions of the state, ideally, should be impartial and treat with equal consideration all citizens, whether nationals or not. A society founded on respect for human rights, granting the equal worth of each person, implicitly tends to protect the weaker against the stronger.

The integrity of public institutions, which is paramount, can be variously protected. In this connection, I would point to one method - maintaining and guarding the independence of the judiciary, which lies in the area of immediate professional concern of United Nations. The subversion of state institutions through organized crime is another serious issue. The proceeds of illicit production and trade in drugs have assumed frightening dimensions and sustain and expand the influence of the criminal over the legitimate order. Thus, drug control activities may be seen as having a role in the promotion of a range of human rights and in safeguarding their enjoyment.

Before concluding, Mr. Chairman, may I return briefly to the theme of "holding the line", safeguarding what has already been gained. In the particular areas of crime prevention and drug control there is an urgent need to act to uphold the standards that have been set and implement policies in accordance with the priorities that have been adopted. Real support is needed as measured by the willingness to use political capital as well as to allocate additional financial resources and skilled personnel to the task.

As the world is getting smaller, by which I mean that our various national and local actions have more often than before a global dimension, for us to act, to manage our affairs in an orderly way, calls for convergence on a set of common rules. Necessity has forced us to face up to the challenge on agreeing on what such rules should be.

In crime and drug-trafficking, we increasingly confront a structured enemy, rapidly organizing internationally. To face down such an enemy the community of nations must act on the basis of compatible rules, global standards. In this area, universality in human rights seems to be indispensable.

In both, United Nations International Drug Control Programme and its crime prevention and criminal justice programme, a heavy emphasis is placed on the rendering, on request, of practical assistance to governments wishing to increase the professionalism of persons involved in all sectors of criminal justice and rehabilitation services. This increased professionalism is designated, inter alia, to foster increased protection of human rights.

Indeed, the recently created Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which held only its 2nd meeting this year, has mandated that the bulk of the Secretariat resources are to be devoted to the provision of such assistance. Assistance has been made available in such disparate areas as international cooperation in the fight against organized crime, the treatment of victims, codes of conduct for law enforcement agencies, principles on the independence of the judiciary and on the role of lawyers and prosecutors, juvenile justice and the protection of victims of crime.

The political evolution of the international community has taken a major step forward with the end of the cold war. But while crossing the threshold into a new era, the world is going through a period of transition, a no man's land full of dangers and temptations. This period of transition is inevitably having unexpected side effects, especially with regard to the issue of human rights. Thus, the global need for practical measures to safeguard human rights has in no way diminished. In this light, this Conference takes place at a very appropriate moment in time as the international community is increasingly looking to the United Nations as the proper vehicle to carry it across the no man's land. And thus, we must increase the momentum.

Thank you.

[Change of President]

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

Thank you for your extremely important statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Dawa Tsering, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

**TSERING, Dawa (Bhutan):**

*Keywords:* BHUTAN - SOVEREIGNTY - DEVELOPMENT - SELF-DETERMINATION -  
TERRORISM - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - GOVERNMENT POLICY - BUDDHISM

Madame President,

I would like to express our deep gratitude to the President of this Conference, Foreign Minister Alois Mock, and through him to the government and people of Austria for the gracious hospitality extended to my delegation and for the excellent arrangements made for this meeting. I would also like to express our sincere appreciation for the notable contributions made to this Conference by Secretary-General Ibrahim Fall and the distinguished Chairperson of the Preparatory Conference Halima Warzazi.

It is a great privilege for my country to participate in the second World Conference on Human Rights. As an ancient country, which is new on the international scene, Bhutan is keen to catch up with the rest of the international community in the observance of human rights in all its forms and manifestations.

We fully subscribe to the view that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. In this regard, I may mention that Bhutan is a tiny kingdom located in a remote corner of the eastern Himalayas in Asia which has, over a period of thirteen centuries, evolved in isolation a unique philosophy, culture, legal system and way of life, which is different from that of the rest of the world. We are the last remaining bastion of the Mahayana Buddhist civilization, which once held sway over the greater part of the Himalayan region. Religion occupies pride of place in our lives with monasteries, temples and prayer flags dotting the landscape proclaiming the message of love and compassion. Our spiritual beliefs, based on nonviolence, respect for all living beings, tolerance and universal brotherhood, have enabled us to create a Shangrila on this planet with a pristine and unspoiled natural environment rich in biodiversity. Our traditional social system is based on respect for authority, elders and parents and gives precedence to community interests over that of the individual.

We have no apologies to offer for having a set of traditions and values, which differ fundamentally from that of the West. It is because of these values that we have managed to survive as a sovereign, independent nation throughout history. As we move into the 21st century, we shall progressively adopt all human rights and fundamental freedoms, which will enhance the wellbeing of our people and ensure the survival of our nation.

Madame President,

The principle of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of states as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations cannot be overemphasized. The Jakarta Non-Aligned Summit in its Final Document declared:

All nations have the right to freely establish their own political and economic systems and institutions on the basis of respect for the principles of national sovereignty, self-determination and non-interference in the internal affairs of others.

My delegation is of the considered view that human rights should never be used as an instrument of political pressure as long as the present system of nation-states continue.

The right to development is an inalienable human right. Without this right, most third world countries will not be able to break out of the cycle of grinding poverty in which they find themselves at the present juncture of history. Without development, human rights will remain a mirage for more than one-fifth of the world's population who now live below the poverty level. For too long we have treated human beings as mere objects of development, whose voices have counted for nothing. The human person must always remain the central subject and the main participant and beneficiary of development. In our view, the developed countries who have taken a lead in promoting human rights must simultaneously help to create a favorable economic environment at the international level for the realization of the right to development. Unless they do so, the gap between the rich and poor nations will continue to widen and the full range of human rights will forever remain an ideal for the majority of the world's people.

The inalienable right to self-determination is as valid today as it was during the colonial era. As laid down in both the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, it is by virtue of this right that all people freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development. While we believe that the denial of this right is a grave violation of human rights, it must be stressed that this right is only applicable to people under alien or colonial domination and foreign occupation and that it should not be used to undermine the territorial integrity, national sovereignty and political independence of states.

Madame President,

One of the most pernicious obstacles to the enjoyment of human rights is terrorism. It threatens the territorial integrity and security of states and destabilizes legitimately constituted governments. The international community must, therefore, unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. As His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, said in his address at the Seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka in April:

Even a small country like Bhutan, which has traditionally been a haven of peace and tranquility, has not been spared the depredations of terrorists who have been trying to subvert our country for the past two years. The spate of violence and destruction unleashed by them has seriously disrupted the process of development and growth in Bhutan. Were it not for the large-scale destruction of schools, health centres and other social infrastructure by terrorists in our southern districts, Bhutan

would be in a position to achieve universal primary education and health coverage long before the year 2000.

Madame President,

In addressing the relationship between development, democracy and human rights, allow me to mention our efforts to achieve sustainable development, strengthen democracy and promote human rights.

We have always followed a pragmatic and cautious policy of development and have tried to learn from the mistakes of others. We have sought to blend tradition with modernity so that the traditions and values, which have imparted strength and resilience to our society down the ages, are not sacrificed in the rush for material advancement. The preservation of our environment was given high priority long before the Brundtland Report saw the light of day, with the result that nearly 64 percent of our country is still covered with forests and wild-life sanctuaries and nature parks occupy 20 percent of our total land area. Tourism is severely restricted so that the culture and environment of our country is not harmed. The net result is that Bhutan has one of the best natural environments in the world today and is being increasingly recognized as an environmental role model by the international community. In a relatively short span of three decades since we embarked on the road to modernization, substantial progress has been achieved in improving the quality of life of our people in all respects including the area of human rights.

Bhutan is a traditional Buddhist monarchy, which is highly democratic in practice. Participatory development with the people having an important say in all decision-making has been the hallmark of Bhutanese society. The fact that Bhutan was never a colony has enabled us to preserve our traditional democratic institutions, particularly at the grass-roots level. Bhutanese society has always been remarkably open, tolerant, equitable, and just. The late King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, was a great reformer and innovator who made significant contributions to the democratization of Bhutan by establishing a number of civil institutions like the National Assembly and the Royal Advisory Council. This process of democratization has been continued unabated by the present monarch who has completely decentralized the administration and given the people a powerful say in all matters affecting their lives. An independent judicial system guarantees the rule of law with everyone, big and small, being completely equal before the law. The experience of a developing country like Bhutan clearly shows that it is not essential to have a western style of government to realize the real fruits of democracy.

Madame President,

We are fully committed to promoting and protecting the human rights of all sections of our society including women, children, the disabled and the elderly. We are a nation where Buddhism is a living tradition so many of the basic human rights are already an intrinsic part of our value system. In the years ahead, we are determined to ensure that our people enjoy all human rights, which will enrich their lives and enable them to live with freedom from want and fear. In achieving this goal, we hope we can count on the understanding and cooperation of the international community including intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Thank you, Madame President.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

Thank you, Your Excellency for that important statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Ludwig Sondashi, Minister of Legal Affairs of Zambia. You have the floor.

SONDASHI, Ludwig (Zambia):

*Keywords:* UN. Centre for Human Rights - ZAMBIA - WOMEN - CHILDREN - PEACE - INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Madame President,

Allow me to begin by expressing my delegation's pleasure and satisfaction in seeing you presiding over this important second World Conference on Human Rights. We are confident that under your very able leadership this Conference will come to a successful conclusion.

I cannot proceed without putting on record my delegation's gratitude to the government and people of Austria for the kind hospitality they have extended to us since our arrival in this beautiful and historic city, Vienna. This, coupled with excellent administrative arrangements, is a clear testimony to the Austrian government's commitment to ensure the smooth running of this Conference.

Madame President,

A lot has happened in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Notable success has been recorded in promoting awareness at the national, regional and global levels. The United Nations has in keeping with its Charter provisions played a central role in these efforts. Its work in standard setting is commendable.

The mandate of the Centre for Human Rights has expanded over the years and the demand for its services continues to grow. There is still room, however, to enhance the role of the Centre for Human Rights so that apart from providing advisory services, technical assistance and electoral assistance, other activities can be covered by the Centre in cooperation with the United Nations system. It is important and logical, therefore, that the Centre be provided with sufficient human, material and financial resources to enable it to carry out its activities effectively.

Madame President,

This is the second time that the international community has come together in a World Conference to consider the subject of human rights, the first having been the 1968 World Conference held in Teheran. My delegation views this occasion as not only a time to take stock of past achievements but more importantly as a time when we should address the obstacles that continue to impede the realization of universal respect for protection and promotion of human rights. As we deliberate on a global agenda for human rights for 1990s and beyond, let us not lose sight of the need to identify solutions to these obstacles.

My delegation considers this World Conference as yet another step towards the achievement of international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and freedoms for all as provided for under the Charter of the United Nations and other international human rights instruments. This Conference will succeed to that end to the extent that it incorporates the concerns and aspirations of its diverse membership. In that regard the inputs from the various regional and preparatory meetings as well as the inputs made by the non-governmental organizations are of vital importance. In the case of our region, Africa, the Tunis Declaration adopted by the African Regional Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference on Human Rights last November elaborates Africa's convictions and expectations. We note the efforts made to harmonize the views of the different regions by the Fourth and final Preparatory Committee for the World Conference at its session held in Geneva.

We are encouraged that the protection and promotion of human rights has become a priority on the international agenda. We should build on this achievement by ensuring that all categories of human rights are protected and respected.

The principles of the indivisibility and interrelationship of human rights should be upheld. In that regard we support the view that civil and political rights should not be divorced from economic, social and cultural rights. My delegation would like to see greater attention paid to this issue particularly in the Commission on Human Rights.

Madame President,

The call for democratization and economic liberalization as well as human rights observance has been embraced by many countries including my own. The peaceful transition from one party to multiparty democracy governance experienced by Zambia in 1991 is one example of some success story of the democratic process taking place on the African continent.

In our quest to address and provide an effective framework of remedies to redress human rights grievances and possible violations, a Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights was appointed in April this year. The Commission's task is among others to investigate possible human rights violations during the period of one-party rule in Zambia and also to cover the period following the rebirth of multipartyism. The Commission has also been mandated to come up with recommendations on effective safeguard measures to prevent possible human rights violations by law enforcing agents and on strengthening the existing mechanisms of protecting the rights of prisoners and persons under detention.

The Zambian government's commitment to upholding human rights, the rule of law and transparent governance is manifest by Zambia's ratification of practically all of the international human rights instruments. Constitutional amendment to provide for non-discrimination based on sex has been effected and is now in force thereby making sexual discrimination unconstitutional. Furthermore, efforts are being made to translate various other international human rights instruments into domestic legislation.

Despite our efforts towards the implementation of international human rights instruments, experience has taught us that democracy must be sustained by a capacity to meet the basic needs of the people and to provide to them that it is a viable alternative to dictatorship. In reality, however, economic assistance to emerging democratic countries and the developing countries has not always been forthcoming and has in some cases dwindled. Worse still, the stringent recommended structural adjustment programmes and harsh lending conditions make it impossible for developing countries to effectively provide for and ensure the enjoyment of their people's basic social and economic rights. In this regard, vulnerable groups such as women and children are the most affected and require particular mention.

In order to realize the objectives of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women there is need for more resources to be made available through international cooperation. The international community should establish an enabling environment, which will assist developing countries obtain economic capacity to provide for basic economic and social services for their peoples. The need for more equitable economic relations cannot be over emphasized.

National governments should complement international cooperation by adopting measures for wide dissemination of information on women and children's rights and, indeed, other human rights.

Madame President,

Peace is a vital ingredient to the full enjoyment of human rights and, indeed, to development. Only in conditions of peace would human rights standards be fully promoted and protected. The international community has over the years witnessed untold suffering, misery and human rights violations in countries that have been embroiled in violence. Huge refugee flows and internal displacements have resulted from these conflicts. One has to look at the effects of long-standing problems in Angola,

Somalia, Liberia and some areas of the former Yugoslavia such as Bosnia and Herzegovina to appreciate the gravity of the problem. Mechanisms should be devised to ensure a coordinated approach among states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant humanitarian organizations in providing humanitarian assistance to affected peoples in areas of conflict.

Finally, Madame President, my delegation recognizes the important role which non-governmental organizations play in international efforts to protect and promote human rights. The work of non-governmental organizations is complementary to that of governments and intergovernmental organizations. This partnership should, therefore, be encouraged and strengthened through closer cooperation and consultation.

I thank you.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank His Excellency for his important message to this Conference. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdoukarimou Seini, Secretary of State for Cooperation of Niger. You have the floor, Your Excellency.

**SEINI, Abdoukarimou (Niger)**, spoke in French:

*Keywords:* NIGER - GOVERNMENT POLICY - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING - PRISONS

Ladies and gentlemen, Your Excellencies, Madame President,

I am particularly pleased to extend to you the warmest congratulations of the delegation of Niger on your election as the President of the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights.

It goes without saying that we also wish to congratulate all the other distinguished members of the Bureau.

I am convinced that under your leadership our work will be as successful as expected by the international community and I should also like to assure you of the full and complete contribution my delegation intends to make.

Madame President,

The World Conference on Human Rights is taking place at a historic juncture in world's developments. We may state without any risk of being wrong that never in the history of our planet the major political changes that took place also brought with them the search for greater freedom and justice.

The wind of a democratization blowing across all of the continents has called on the international community.

Recent major changes of our times have sufficiently shown to the entire world that human rights violations are no longer to be seen as specific to any one continent or any one country.

Niger that has just emerged from a long period of emergency has resolutely and irreversibly taken the path of setting up an authentic state of law.

This determination, enshrined in the adoption of a constitution guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms and in the establishment of democratically elected institutions, aims also to link the right to development to the right to life and to the freedom.



It is on this basis that the political bodies in my country decided, despite difficult economic conditions in Niger, to do everything to consolidate the rule of law, which is an essential condition for development.

Also, in the Declaration of General Policy adopted by the National Assembly on 22 May last, Prime Minister Mahamadou Issoufou said:

A new page in history of our country, which our people are asking us to write, must be a page of all deep political, economic and social transformations, for which they have been hoped for so long. We have to rapidly, through specific actions, bring answers to the major challenges that our people are facing. This is both a duty and a demand.

He added:

We live today in a monopolar world marked by a significant advance in the defense of human rights and democracy, but, unfortunately, marked also by tremendous disparities between nations.

The convening by the United Nations of this World Conference, demonstrates, if necessary, that the international community's awareness of a disconcerting reality.

Indeed, the existence of an entire body of legal standards, which has become known as the international human rights law, has not prevented massive and intolerable violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms either in traditional or in more subtle forms.

At the heart of the delicate questions on our agenda and for which we would not achieve our goal if a consensus is not reached in Vienna, is in reality the search for establishment of an international order based in particular on the following:

- the universality of human rights and cultural and regional particularities;
- the role of states in the promotion and protection of human rights;
- human rights, democracy and the right to development;
- rights of women, children and vulnerable groups;
- social discrimination; ethnic and religious discrimination; apartheid;
- the right to self-determination;
- administration of justice;
- national institutions, governmental and non-governmental, for promotion and protection of human rights;
- codification and ratification of conventions, covenants and treaties in the field of human rights;
- improvement of international and regional mechanisms for human rights protection;
- human rights education;
- implementation of the follow-up for this Conference.

Madame President,

The importance of the points I have just indicated, their complexity and sensitivity emerged very clearly during the preparatory meeting for this Conference.

Indeed, the draft final document resulting from the work of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights highlights the particular context of the acceleration of the history of international relations, in particular, its responsibility vis-a-vis the right to development and combating extreme poverty.

We do not wish to hide things, it is illusory to think about promoting civil and political rights if the elementary right to life, education or simple survival is not guaranteed.

It is for this reason that we must take a pragmatic approach to the question. It is a question of promoting concrete, pragmatic ideas and solidarity, which the international community intends to implement through a realistic and feasible action plan.

An appropriate machinery for monitoring and follow-up should be set up, without which no assessment of the commitments made will ever be possible.

Madame President,

Allow me to revert to the subject of Niger because our presence here among the distinguished delegates of this Conference is a testimony to our firm attachment to universal values and principles of human rights.

It is for this reason that we wish to inform the international opinion and the distinguished representatives of friendly countries assembled here that after the adoption of the Constitution of the Third Republic by referendum, after the first and second rounds of presidential elections and after setting up the government and the National Assembly, Niger has moved into a new era, one in which the political powers respect the freedoms of citizens and are scrupulous in guaranteeing the full enjoyment of their rights.

Along the same lines we should like to stress that the government attaches importance to the adoption of the family code that will guarantee all rights and freedoms of women and children.

The concern to take into account the harmonious development of all regions and all social strata has led to a creation of the Ministry on Administrative Reform and Decentralization.

The option of decentralization will allow to give the populations the decision-making power through local elected officials that they themselves will have freely chosen, thus allowing to guarantee their effective participation in development activities and also to take into account their real concerns.

Madame President,

In Niger there are no political prisoners today, and the prison population in 35 civil prisons and penal camps comprises common law prisoners only. Penitentiaries are in the overwhelming majority of cases were constructed before the independence of the country. These buildings are cramped and dilapidated. The convicts are imprisoned together with suspects, the minors – together with adults and one can imagine the harmful consequences of this promiscuity, in particular, bad influence, mistreatment of the weakest.

There are no modern-type structures for training or productive activity in any of the penitentiary establishments.

The Ministry of Justice responsible for human rights does not have the resources to allow prisoners to enjoy their rights.

However, projects have been developed and I would like to make an appeal to the United Nations and to the international community to assist us in ensuring progress in human rights in Niger by bringing support to the democratization process and to human rights.

Madame President,

I should like to repeat that my country is available to contribute to the full extent of its possibilities to a consensus on the questions on our agenda.

In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of Niger, to express the hope that the World Conference on Human Rights will constitute decisive stage by which the international community will resolutely and jointly commit itself to redefining an international system of justice, solidarity, peace and brotherhood, which will allow all nations of the world and all races of humanity to achieve their rights.

This Conference is a unique opportunity to ensure the primacy of universality of human rights. Let's seize it.

I thank you.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency for that important statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Shabib Lazim Al-Maliki, Minister of Justice of Iraq. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

**AL-MALIKI, Shabib Lazim (Iraq)**, spoke in Arabic:

*Keywords:* CULTURAL PLURALISM - SELF-DETERMINATION - SOVEREIGNTY - DEVELOPMENT - PALESTINIANS - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - IRAQ - SANCTIONS

Madame Chairperson,

Allow me to express our most genuine felicitations on the election of the President of this Conference. I am confident that his experience and knowledge will help our Conference to achieve its desired objectives on the issues of human rights. I also wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express gratitude to the government and people of Austria for the hosting and admirable organization of this Conference.

Madame Chairperson,

We have decided to summarize our statement and answer to your call but would like to ask for the full text to be consigned in the reports of the Conference, and in so doing we are following the example of many colleagues.

Madame Chairperson,

Iraq's belief in the principles of human rights emanates from its very history and culture of which the fundamental cornerstone is the tolerance, Islamic Sharia or jurisprudence. It is, therefore, only natural that these principles and rights be part of Iraq's national policy.

This fact has been explicitly shown by Iraq's accession to most of the international agreements and covenants related to human rights. The peoples of the world saw in those covenants and declarations a chance to achieve their aspirations to liberty, justice and peace. In this respect the fair-minded observer cannot but agree that the positive developments, which occurred during that time in the fields of human rights, as reflected in the wide-scale recognition of these rights and in the consolidation of that recognition by legal provisions in many international declarations, conventions and agreements, were, unfortunately, not accompanied on the level of real implementation by serious and genuine efforts to help creating the right environment for implementing the declared legal provisions in accordance with the conditions prevailing in the various countries, conditions which differ to a large extent, according to the cultural background, the facts of progress and the features of development in each country.

Quite the opposite, the concept of human rights has become an effective weapon in the hands of the countries possessing such means of influence and pressure that others do not possess, means that have

been employed to achieve selfish political goals and interests rather than to achieve the common objectives and interests of the international community. These objectives cannot be defined or reached except through international consensus, which itself is defined by the common denominator of the political and economic direction of states.

If the negative factors characterizing the era of conflicts between the two camps are known to all and the effects of those factors still exist, then we can say that the present era is characterized by the unipolar hegemony of one camp over the international arena. This has produced consequences no less detrimental than those of the earlier era to the issues of human rights and the methods to address them, particularly, through the attempt to impose certain systems, values and criteria upon all countries of the world without taking into consideration historical backgrounds and national choices.

Therefore, the course of dialogue and cooperation is the only course that can lead to the creation of the right environment for the implementation of whatever is agreed upon. Otherwise, we cannot emerge from that whirlpool of conflict resulting from policies of hegemony and coercion.

Madame Chairperson,

While the international community has the right to be proud of the achievements made in the field of human rights particularly in the codification of principles and objectives, there remain many fields that still require special attention for various factors and reasons. Some of the factors and reasons relate to the major developments and changes, which have taken place in the international community and which have given rise to new issues and challenges that need to be confronted such as the spread of xenophobia, discrimination against foreigners in countries that claim to be at the forefront of those respecting human rights.

We have also witnessed the emergence of problems of discrimination against women in many fields and the question of the rights of weak minorities.

Most worrying, perhaps, especially to the developing countries is the noticeable neglect and indifference shown to the human rights recognized by the international community in the form of principles and declarations such as the right to self-determination, respect of the sovereignty, independence and territorial and national integrity of states and their right to development. It was expected of the international community to move forward towards strengthening and reaffirming these rights as basis and pillars upon which to build the international relations rather than an area of suspicion and accusation.

In this respect, one must point to the necessity of taking into account the differences in concepts between one state and another, a fact which often generates accusations exchanged about violations of human rights when in fact there is no difference about the belief or rather in the belief in these rights and the importance of respecting them.

Issues of human rights are used as the political weapon to destabilize the political systems and violate the sovereignty of certain states particularly developing countries. We must, therefore, insist on the provisions contained in international covenants, which stress the reciprocal and integral relationship between economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights.

As far as the developing countries are concerned, they have a basic need for their economic, social and cultural developments to be supported in a manner that contributes to the establishment of institutions that will guarantee the civil and political rights of their citizens.

We would like to stress, above all, the right to development as an inalienable right and part and parcel of human rights, which must be achieved through international cooperation.

Proceeding from the realities of our culture we view development as being a broad concept based on the achievement of civil and political rights as well as economic and social rights. What ensures that the development process is placed within the right framework is respect of the cultural identity of nations and peoples in addition to being consciously aware of the interrelationship between development, democracy and human rights.

We must stress here that the use of foreign aid as a means to exert pressure upon developing countries, to interfere in their internal affairs and influence their national political choices or to impede their process of development under the pretext of protecting human rights is a policy both objectionable and doomed to failure, which leads us to speak of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of peoples.

The call has recently risen for this principle to be broken and for the establishment of the right to interfere. That constitutes a grave development threatening the very foundations of modern international relations.

We must also point to the rights of self-determination that constitutes one of the fundamental principles of international law and represents an inalienable right of peoples under occupation or subjected to foreign imperious domination. Non-compliance with this principle constitutes a grave violation of human rights. This right is connected with fundamental element, which prohibits its use as a means to fragment countries particularly developing countries. Any discussion of the right to self-determination brings to the floor the question of the right of the Palestinian people to establishing its own independent state on its homeland.

We also demand together with the rest of the international community that an immediate end to be put to the grave violations of human rights in the occupied Arab territories by the Zionist entity, violations rejected by all the principles and conventions for which we are gathered here at this Conference.

We also wish to voice our concern over all forms of violations of human rights including racial discrimination and racism, imperialism and foreign aggression, the revival of neo-Nazis, state terrorism, ethnic cleansing. We stress the need for effective international measures to be taken in order to guarantee compliance with the canons of human rights and ensure legal protection for the people subjected to foreign domination.

In this respect, we must, finally, recall the importance of taking into account the particularities of nations and peoples and their specific cultural, religious and social backgrounds when discussing the issues of human rights. It is particularly important to refrain from imposing strange or alien principles upon peoples under the pretext of the universality and comprehensiveness of human rights.

Madame Chairperson,

Countries attach special attention to the activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights and its mechanisms. In this respect, I wish to point out that the fundamental basis for ensuring the effectiveness of this activity will be the agreed conviction in its viability and importance for the legitimate interests of the countries concerned, particularly the developing countries, otherwise we would be politicizing the UN mechanisms. We believe that an agreement to be reached here in the United Nations is essential. Such an agreement can only proceed through dialogue and conviction and not through political or military pressures.

If there is a need for establishing such a new mechanism then the integrity and the objectivity of such a mechanism is essential as well as its belief in the noble principles of human rights. It should definitely refrain from adopting any double standards in approaching human rights.

Madame Chairperson,

It is obvious that all the peoples of the world, however different their systems and cultures are, have agreed on the conviction and the dignity of human beings and their basic rights. The most important of them is the right to life that is also linked to the right to food and medicine. This is also reaffirmed, and the principles are declared in the UN Charter and all the covenants.

What my country is being subjected to is an example of the violation of human rights. The Iraqi people are still subjected to an embargo, which represents practically a war and an aggression. The continued imposition of this blockade constitutes a violation of the universality of human rights, a suppression of all Iraqi human rights, a flagrant abuse of the use of power and the crime of genocide against an entire people. The Iraqi people today are suffering from shortages of food, medicine and medical requirements. The blockade has caused thousands of women and children to die. As regards to children, they have been suffering the severest impact and child mortality has become a daily affair. I shall give you but one example, the mortality figure amongst children under five years of age for the whole of 1991 was 712 as compared to the figure of 15,884 children who died in the same age group during only the first four months of 1993.

Some influential Member States of the Security Council, defenders of human rights, have not found it enough to inflict the destruction on the civil and economic infrastructures of Iraq. Imposing the blockade against its people they have stretched their hostile policies. Using human rights slogans, they produced claims of great violations of human rights in Iraq in order to create pretexts for interference in Iraq's internal affairs and destabilize it. We refer here to the policy pursued by certain influential powers in the Security Council on the efforts made by the government of Iraq in order to solve the Kurdish question. In summer 1991, an agreement was reached with the Kurdish political parties but these was interfered in a direct manner and prevented the agreement from being signed.

Where then are human rights?

Iraq calls upon the international community to live up to its humanitarian responsibilities by putting an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people. This is the responsibility that has to be assumed away from political objectives existing behind the continued imposition of the blockade.

Madame Chairperson,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Iraq's hope for success to guarantee peace and security for the entire international community.

Thank you.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank His Excellency for that statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Ambassador Marcelo Fernandez de Cordoba, Head of the delegation of Ecuador at this World Conference. Excellency, you have the floor.

**FERNANDEZ DE CORDOBA, Marcelo (Ecuador)**, spoke in Spanish; text is edited based on the English interpretation:

*Keywords:* ECUADOR - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES – RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT – INTERNATIONAL TRADE - ENVIRONMENT - CHILDREN - WOMEN – SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - YUGOSLAVIA - INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

Madame President,

I am especially honored to express to you, on behalf of the Ecuadorian delegation, my congratulations for your nomination as President of this World Conference as well as to your colleagues. Your leadership will allow the debates and conversations that take place in this forum to reach conclusions and determinations of vital importance for the implementation, observance, promotion and protection of human rights in this world so disturbed by recent events.

I also appreciate in all its magnitude the contribution and cooperation provided by the Austrian government for the organization and the success that we all wish for this Conference.

Ecuador has actively participated in the preparatory process of the World Conference and has maintained a position shared by the countries of Latin America and Caribbean as reflected in the declaration of the regional meeting of Latin American and the Caribbean countries, which took place in San José in Costa Rica last January as a preparatory for this Conference.

Ecuador has reiterated its support for the United Nations initiatives concerning promotion and strengthening of the cause of human rights.

Human rights in their diverse forms: civil, political, economic, social, cultural, are indivisible and interdependent and must be given the same kind of attention and priority.

The respect of human rights goes beyond national borders; when the ethical values that are violated anywhere in the world, this fact should be condemned with equal energy, and solutions must be sought to achieve their restoration. Not only do human rights violations offend their victims but rather the entire international community.

The protection of human rights involves all nations, and their violation must mobilize the action of the international community so that situations of this type can be totally eliminated.

Ecuador considers that the human being is the centre of international life and no state can violate human rights with impunity. The fundamental freedoms have the character of universal values and must be protected by the international community.

Ecuador attributes to human rights a value superior to that attributed to international legislation and considers that this theory should be the basis of all national and international policies of the states.

My country has implemented the regulations contained in the declarations and covenants on civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and has supported all resolutions of the world Organization and the Organization of American States in defense of these rights.

By signing, last January, the Declaration of San José, Ecuador endorsed all its statements, affirmations, considerations and proposals therein.

My country, Madame President, has done its best to improve its legislation in such a way that the human rights of all its populations are respected.

Ecuador's indigenous population has played a determining role in constituting the Ecuadorian nation both historically and demographically.

The government of Ecuador recognizes that indigenous groups have the right to their own culture and to land as private property as do all other citizens.

The government has tried to create an equilibrium between the different indigenous and settler communities, and between all of them and the unity of Ecuadorian society, which is multicultural and multi-racial. In any case, it considers that the recognition of such plurality should not and cannot affect the historic and legal unity of the Ecuadorian state.

My country, Madame President, considers that the right to development is of vital importance within the indivisibility of human rights. The respect of human rights is closely related to the right of all peoples to seek their material and spiritual development and to the obligation to create sustained conditions that facilitate this progress and advancement.

The situation of extreme poverty in which the peoples of Latin America and the southern hemisphere in general are living cannot pass unnoticed. We must create the necessary conditions for the full realization of the human being as such in all his activities.

We believe that the peoples that have reached a high level of development should feel themselves obliged to unite their efforts and increase their support of the less developed nations. Conditions must be created for free trade and all kinds of barriers that prevent basic products and raw materials on which our countries depend for their survival from reaching industrialized countries must be eliminated.

We must create awareness of the need to encourage and apply policies that allow an authentic and increasingly free international trade.

We must protect the environment because this is where people develop. Therefore, it is necessary that the developed countries provide access to technology to countries that have not yet developed it, because what happens in one part of the world does not only affect that region but rather the entire planet. We must all contribute to the conservation, protection and reestablishment of the integrity of an ecosystem in which we can reach a better quality of life and where human rights can be fully enjoyed.

If we want to extend human rights to all people, we must recognize and take into consideration the abandonment in which millions of children are living all over the world, left to their fate on the streets, subjected to subhuman work, exposed to degrading, immoral, arbitrary practices, violence and drug addiction. We must adopt policies to overcome this situation.

Ecuador considers that if the basic human needs of children were met, many of the violations of their rights could be partially prevented, lives would be saved, and the children would be lifted out of the misery in which they find themselves.

Ecuador, as the first Latin American country and the third in the world to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child, calls upon the international community to ratify this instrument as soon as possible. Furthermore, our country calls upon all states to develop and implement their national plans for action for children and to provide resources in order to achieve the goals of the plan of action of the World Summit for Children.

The rights and responsibilities of the family must be recognized as a unit within the framework of the fundamental rights and gender equality.

Particular attention should be paid to the human rights of women. Equality between men and women must be effective. The principles so far established contain the guarantee of non-discrimination based on sex, but this is not enough, and, despite the legal and procedural achievements, it continues to be a discouraging fact that for the majority of women the enjoyment of human rights is still a long way off. Women continue to be exposed to discrimination and violence based on sex.

For all these reasons, it is necessary to strengthen the mechanisms that protect and enforce the observance of women's rights. It is essential and of high priority to create an appropriate and efficient mechanism to deal especially with the violation of women's rights. Ecuador supports the designation of a Special Rapporteur on violence against women as part of the pursuit of a solution that better responds to the differences in the human conditions of women and men and guarantees human rights and measures to promote and protect them.



Madame President,

Ecuador was a fellow participant in San José in Costa Rica of an initiative concerning the establishment of the post of a permanent United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, which would make it possible to overcome the shortcomings of the world Organization's human rights system and strengthen the programme for their protection.

Madame President,

We have to become aware of the fact that joint action by the international community will allow better observance and respect of human rights and the implementation of the appropriate mechanisms in the field of humanitarian law.

Ecuador supports any kind of measures taken in order to prevent and sanction massive violations of human rights.

My country looks with great concern and sorrow upon the bloody war that is destroying the peoples of the former Yugoslavia. It should be recommended to the United Nations Security Council to adopt measures to finally stop the war and its atrocities without dismissing the possibility of examining the evidence of gross violations of human rights and setting up a war crimes tribunal.

The Security Council must give priority to human rights problems on a permanent basis. The respect of human rights is an essential precondition for the maintenance of world peace and security.

On the other hand, human rights cannot be conceived as being at the margin of the democratic system. The state based on rule of law is indispensable for the total fulfilment of human rights.

Madame President,

We must promote greater awareness of human rights in our societies and use of various means to demand their respect in order for us to be able to look towards a more promising future in a more just world, free of discrimination and violence.

Let's make the 21st century one of full observance of human rights.

Thank you very much.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank His Excellency for his important statement. Now I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Keliopate Tavola, the Ambassador of Fiji. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

**TAVOLA, Keliopate (Fiji):**

*Keywords:* FIJI - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - DEVELOPMENT  
- CHILDREN - TREATIES - REGIONAL COOPERATION

Madame President, Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Firstly, I would like to thank the Secretary-General of this World Conference for the invitation extended to my country to be a participant here. I would also like to express my government's profound appreciation to the United Nations for its commendable efforts in organizing regional preparatory meetings including close liaisons with non-governmental organizations for this Conference.

Such purposeful commitment and single-minded pursuit to canvass a wide variety of views and, indeed, the enthusiastic participation in and support of countries for these preparatory meetings is a tribute to the spirit of international cooperation and concern existing within our family of nations.

Madame President,

We live in turbulent times. The international landscape paints a very gloomy and distressing picture. Yet, our coming together on this special occasion is in a way a celebration of renewed hope and vision that together we can find durable solutions for problems on human rights.

My country, of course, is still going through a political and economic development phase in which the government is obliged to hold consultations with all sectors of the community as the nation searches for an appropriate democratic model, which will embrace the vital component of indigenous rights as well as fully ensuring and protecting the rights of others.

The search for a genuine political compromise to the satisfaction of all is not easy and does require very careful handling. However, my government is persuaded that this Conference will provide invaluable insights and directions.

We believe that if we speak of human rights we should also speak of our responsibilities and our human duties to bring about respect for these rights or to create conditions and situations conducive to the respect of these rights.

My country and its people have these responsibilities. Since the military events of 1987, the people of Fiji have successfully returned the country to parliamentary democracy under a new constitution. This constitution, whilst it certainly can be improved like all constitutions, does contain provisions that guarantee all basic rights under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Furthermore, my government is committed to reviewing this constitution with the intention of improving its provisions to better reflect the changing aspirations and goals of our people.

Given the multi-religious and multicultural nature of our society, we believe that it is our human duty to constantly seek for compromises and convergences of interests between the various groups in the society, to balance out the economic interests and remove the staggering discrepancies in incomes and in standards of living so that we can move together forward, united, and with a shared destiny.

But we want to move cautiously ensuring full consultation along the way. The consultative process leading to the review of the constitution has now started. But the road is long and arduous! In the meantime, we have also started the deliberation process on the concept of a government of national unity. This may certainly hold the key to our future. However, whilst we are responsible for proposing the idea as a political option for the future of our country, we are also equally responsible for subjecting it to a thorough and a dispassionate analysis to ensure that we can appreciate all it entails and its full implications.

In this exercise, as I have already referred to, we are constantly reminded of the special interests of the indigenous people of the country and how best these interests can be translated to government pronouncements and policies so that these people do not end up alienated and underprivileged in their own land. The people of Fiji are responsible enough and duty-bound to recognize this special interest and are working hard with great foresight, tolerance and dignity to find solutions.

This year being the International Year for The World's Indigenous Peoples has brought home the importance of this special interest in our society. It has also brought home the concept of human rights as revolving around the collective consciousness and the community. Very often the perception of human rights revolving around individuals is so overwhelming and obtrusive. But this sadly and

unjustifiably ignores the collective nature of many societies in many developing countries that are deeply rooted in tradition and in a culture that has prevailed for many generations.

There are many forms of human rights. Human rights do not only mean civil and political rights as it is interpreted, rather narrowly, in some circles. They also mean social and economic rights, for example, the right to adequate food, clothing and housing; the right to work, to fair wages, to health and to education; the right to development; cultural rights, for example, the right to speak one's language or practice one's religion; and of course, all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But most basic of all is the right to life and security, which, unfortunately, is increasingly in danger in many war-torn parts of our globe.

All these rights are inter-related and are linked intricately and intimately. As a human being exists as a holistic entity so should his or her rights be treated as parts of a whole entity. They cannot be compartmentalized to allow certain parts to be accorded privilege vis-a-vis others. We believe, therefore, that it is a grave mistake and would cause great injustice to accord only civil and political rights recognition and prominence and ignore the others.

We are of the firm conviction that in ensuring human rights for all our citizens we must approach the issue in an integral manner but start with the most basic of all - the right to life and security, economic and social rights so that our citizens can have the means to access and enjoy their basic needs and, therefore, be able to have a reasonable standard of living. In other words, our citizens regardless of gender, race or creed have to be provided with the wherewithal to exercise their rights to development. For only when the citizens of a country have fulfilled their basic needs, when they have the security of their own housing and primary health care and when they have the rights to live in peace under rule of law, can they enjoy and use their civil liberties.

My country's approach to ensuring human rights, as I have just explained, will guarantee our citizens their right to life and peaceful existence in a multiracial setting, each group recognizing and respecting each other's religious and cultural identity including historical antecedents and all working to optimize the cross-fertilization of our cultural diversity and versatility.

History itself has prescribed this approach to be the right approach. The history of the various economies in the West have demonstrated that a country needs a good economic and social base before it acquires a reasonable level of democratization and respect for human rights. This economic base is one that has seen a high degree of transformation from a predominantly rural economy to a predominantly industrialized economy with an organized and trained urban work force and with citizens that have enjoyed universal suffrage.

It makes sense, therefore, that we learn from the lessons of history and to ensure that we provide the means for the fulfilment of economic and social rights for our respective citizens, for this will provide the impetus for the realization of other equally fundamental human rights.

To disregard history and to insist on human rights as a precondition for aid for developing countries that have not acquired the required level of industrialization and the degree of democratization is a folly of the highest order. It makes farcical the process of history, and it does great injustice to the independence, the aspirations and the dignity of the people in the developing countries.

It also makes farcical the concept of the right to development. For, this right, or any other right for that matter, carries with it a sense of responsibility. The country whose citizens are to be accorded this right, certainly has its own responsibilities to create the environment necessary for its realization. Furthermore, it has to provide the ways and means that are possible given its resource constraints. For instance, a country has to ensure that it mobilizes all its human resources collectively and to benefit maximally from the specific skills and disciplines that are inherent in each of the components of the country's population. My country, for instance, is committed to the rights and interests of our women -

about 50 percent of Fiji's population. Whilst their basic rights are guaranteed under general rights for all citizens, their specific interests are also being pursued with vigor and foresight.

But apart from the responsibility of the country according the right to development to its citizens what is equally important is the responsibility of the more prosperous and developed countries in the international family of nations. Their responsibility is to render assistance to the country concerned so that it, too, can develop its economy to the extent necessary for its citizens to enjoy and use all their basic human rights. A reasonable level of enjoyment of these human rights is guaranteed when the level of poverty in that country is removed or reduced substantially.

By logical deduction, therefore, it is our responsibility, collectively and individually, to eradicate poverty in our respective economies, for this will remove a great obstacle to the full realization of our fundamental human rights.

My delegation, indeed, is aware of the existence of cases of overt authoritarian regimes that practice blatant violation of human rights. We certainly do not condone them, and we condemn these vile practices. For such cases, we believe that appropriate and selective global measures directed at an effective and a well-controlled arms embargo and freezing of the assets that provide the power base of the authoritarian regime are possible preventative measures. Moreover, aid is to be better targeted and effectively disbursed so that the innocent population in the country concerned do not suffer unnecessarily from the hands of the tyrant.

I would also like to especially emphasize that the most tragic victims caught in situations of conflict and poverty are the children. Right before our very eyes in the comforts of our individual homes, the international media bring to us the heartrending plight of millions of children hungry, diseased, suffering, dying. An immense number of them live in the Third World in the most appalling conditions. I am pleased to say that my government recently decided to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child as it recognizes that the protection of the child is the protection of our future. In this regard, my government applauds and supports the initiatives and dedicated work of UNICEF in the areas concerning the rights of the child.

I wish to conclude, Madame President, with the assertion that the Fiji government in full support of the work of the United Nations in the various areas of human rights associates itself with those delegations, which see the need for a regional human rights framework in the Asia-Pacific region. We see this as a crucial link between national institutions and the international community. We believe that problems of human rights at the national level can be effectively redressed through a regional mechanism because shared common circumstances and other factors unique to a particular region alone give rise to a reverent understanding of this issues. We, in Fiji, hope that this Conference will intently consider the proposal for a regional mechanism in the Asia-Pacific region.

Finally, Madame President, my delegation wishes to thank the government and the people of Austria for their great hospitality.

I thank you.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank His Excellency for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Clare, Minister of State and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

CLARE, Benjamin (Jamaica):

*Keywords:* INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - DEMOCRACY - DEVELOPMENT - DEVELOPMENT FINANCE - DISCRIMINATION - JAMAICA - GOVERNMENT POLICY -UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING

Madame President,

I would like to associate myself with the special personal tributes that were paid to you on your election as President of this most important Conference. My delegation would also like to express through you our sincere appreciation to the government and people of Austria for hosting this Conference in this historic and beautiful city of Vienna.

Madame President,

It is, indeed, opportune that this Conference is being held at this time, when despite great strides made in the promotion and protection of human rights over the years, rapid and profound changes across the world have diminished newfound hopes that respect for human rights could finally be ensured. Despite new and far-reaching measures and mechanisms for implementation established by the United Nations, despite the entrenchment of human rights provisions in national constitutions, scant regard for human rights and democratic freedoms still obtains in many countries. Jamaica is, therefore, of the view that this World Conference on Human Rights presents to the international community an opportunity to renew its commitment to those standards and aspirations, which are germane to the full realization of human rights and which reflects the commitment that heralded the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. As the Declaration itself states, all peoples and nations must strive to promote respect for these rights and freedoms through progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance.

We are here, Madame President, because we share the recognition that we wish to build societies that are capable of an acceptable standard of living for everyone; societies that provide the opportunity to all to participate economically, politically and socially; societies that are organized around the eternal principles of human rights and social justice.

The international community has dedicated specific years and decades to intensify the focus on particular human rights issues. These commemorative periods have generated significant programmes of action and the adoption of instruments, which have been followed at best by limited action. Jamaica is very pleased that this year is being hailed as the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples. We are one with all peoples who are a part of the pursuit of basic fundamental rights and freedoms of indigenous peoples. We celebrate the outstanding achievement of Mrs. Rigoberta Menchu, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1992, and an eminent citizen of our region who has relentlessly led the struggle for the recognition of the rights of all indigenous peoples and continues to work for this cause as an Ambassador of Goodwill for the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples. It is hoped that within this year and beyond much will be accomplished with regard to promoting and protecting respect for and observance of the human rights of indigenous peoples.

Madame President,

We come to this Conference, therefore, alert to the fact that despite deficiencies, fundamental instruments, systems and machinery already exist. What is now, therefore, necessary is for the world community to work towards eliminating the obstacles to their global utilization for guaranteeing full respect for the enjoyment of all human rights.

Madame President,

It has become fashionable to link democracy and respect for human rights. Yes, it is acknowledged that a democratic system of government enables and nourishes the full realization of human rights. However, as the global experience is indicating, once democratic government has been attained, states are unwilling having multilateral human rights protection systems employed with regard to their specific domestic problems. The principle of sovereignty, non-interference and self-determination places the primary responsibility on the state to provide adequate protection for the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all within its borders. Alleged abuses of human rights should not be used as a pretext for interference in matters, which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of states.

Madame President,

The international community should be made to realize that as democracy is consolidated, multilateral human rights promotion and protection systems must, nevertheless, retain their integrity. The preamble of the International Covenants on Human Rights states that:

In accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the idea of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want, can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights as well as his civil and political rights.

The fundamental challenge which the international community faces, therefore, is how to give increasing practical realization to these proclaimed human rights which are interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.

In reality, however, this indivisibility is more honored in the breach than in the observance and it is, therefore, of the greatest importance that strategies be devised to ensure that civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights go hand in hand. It is not enough to energize the international community on the righteousness of free and fair elections as the foundation for good government and the enjoyment of civil and political rights. This merely indicates that human rights are being seen only in terms of creating and maintaining democracy rather than encompassing economic, social and cultural rights of peoples. The truth is democracy cannot survive in conditions of poverty and neglect. Political progress and economic development are, therefore, inseparable. The government of Jamaica, therefore, considers it imperative that this Conference address issues of deprivation and neglect, which constitute a violation of the economic, social and cultural rights of peoples particularly the most vulnerable in the society.

Another paradox for democracies is that the increasing tendency to embrace principles of liberalization, deregulation and the free market as the preferred development model, does not necessarily ensure the right to development. The human rights dimension of such policies continues to be a matter of fundamental concern as human tragedies often result for the marginalized within our societies. The paradox of poverty in the midst of affluence is a stark reflection of man's inhumanity to man and constitutes a gross violation of human rights.

Madame President,

My government, therefore, is appealing in particular to the international financial institutions to carefully scrutinize their policies of development assistance and formulate conditionalities within a human rights framework, which serves to protect particularly the most vulnerable groups within our societies such as our women, children and disabled persons. My delegation hopes that this Conference will give further recognition to the rights of the disabled to participate actively in all aspects of society without discrimination and with full equal enjoyment of their human rights. The time has come for discarding to the "dust-bin" of history all forms of discrimination based on gender. Mankind's common heritage has been greatly enriched by the outstanding contribution and undeniable sacrifices made by women to society. This Conference must adopt strategies directed at removing the remaining

traces of discrimination against women. I am also appealing for the conscience of industrialized countries to be aroused to the need to provide a greater measure of economic and technological support to developing countries as a guarantee for the achievement of development, democracy, stability and peace. In granting this development assistance, however, the greatest caution must be exercised in ensuring that it not be used as a means of selectively pressuring or punishing a country for alleged human rights violations. I speak to this because of our concern as developing countries that there is a new trend for such assistance to be tied to democracy and to national human rights records. Development cooperation would not have served its full purpose if political considerations precluded it from benefiting those in the greatest need.

Madame President,

At the institutional level there still remains the need for the international community to recognize and promote the universal acceptance of human rights instruments. A number of states have only adhered to either one or the other of the two International Covenants, which are complementary and indivisible. In fact, racial hatred, ethnic disputes and internal strife of the kind, which have confronted us recently in such countries as the former Yugoslavia and in Somalia have flourished in an atmosphere of almost total disregard for human rights principles and democratic freedoms. It is this overt disregard of these principles, which makes room for such obscene practices as the so-called ethnic cleansing and the practice of rape as an instrument of policy against women as is the case in the former Yugoslavia.

Madame President,

In some parts of Europe, the rise of racism and xenophobia particularly against immigrants and refugees represents another major challenge for the international community to tackle. We should at this Conference examine these manifestations of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia in all regions of the world without exception and without partiality and take steps to redress these problems.

These issues speak particularly to the challenge facing the international community to find an appropriate way in which the core content of human rights be they civil, political or economic, cultural and social, may be more precisely defined and enforceable at the instance of the individual. It has been contended that certain categories of human rights violations are not quantifiable and cannot, therefore, form the basis of legal action before the courts.

How can the international and regional human rights machinery and mechanisms be strengthened and structured in order to respond and confront the challenges presented by the blatant violations of human rights of the kind that diminish the human dignity of the peoples of countries such as the former Yugoslavia and even our neighboring country of Haiti?

Madame President,

For Jamaica's part, though not unconscious of constructive criticisms which we receive, the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms is always at the forefront of our commitment to our international obligations as a signatory to all the major human rights treaties.

Time does not allow me to dwell on the many achievements that we have made. However, Madame President, permit me to name a few:

The year 1968 was designated Human Rights Year on the initiative of Jamaica;

We have recently initiated measures to review and strengthen our electoral system in order to provide an even more effective mechanism for free and fair elections;

Several Labour and Employment Acts are in place to protect the rights of workers;

The office of Ombudsman has been established to investigate injustices and complaints against public entities at the request of the individual citizens;

Several laws exist and policy initiatives have been taken to protect the rights of women and children and to ensure education and skills training;

Food aid and welfare programmes are being implemented in order to buffer the impact of economic austerity measures.

Of major importance is the fact that a Constitutional Reform Committee is currently carrying out a revision of the Jamaican constitution with a view to in particular strengthening even further the provisions for the protection of human rights.

It is not an easy task, this attempt to build a world that can provide our citizens with even their basic human rights but it must be the objective of every state. We must leave this Conference with such strategies to achieve this objective.

Madame President,

My government wishes to propose to this Conference that we consider the following institutional and other measures in order to strengthen the promotion and protection of all human rights.

1. The need to streamline the UN machinery for the monitoring of human rights and reporting obligations of states. In this regard, we believe that priority should be placed on increasing the resources for the existing human rights machinery within the UN system. We are prepared to examine the possibility of establishing a post of High Commissioner for Human Rights provided that its constitution meets certain concerns. We would not support the post if it could be used as a pretext for unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of any country particularly on a basis which is selective and which sanctions abuse of small and weaker states by the more powerful.
2. The need to examine the possibility or feasibility of a single coordinated mechanism within the United Nations system having regard to the indivisibility of human rights. In this regard, it would be important to examine the need to have an appropriate complaints procedure before such an international body for all human rights and the extent to which it is necessary to design optional protocols to achieve this.
- 3 The need for the commitment by states to a minimum core content of the basic human rights be they civil, political or economic, social and cultural rights.
- 4 The need for the establishment of appropriate benchmarks which would enable governments to determine their human rights obligations.
- 5 The need for increased financial resources to the UN Centre for Human Rights and regional human rights commissions to strengthen their coordination and collaboration and their capacity to provide technical cooperation between the UN, regional and national institutions.
6. The need for periodic meetings between the UN agencies, the OAS and other regional organizations with high level representatives of the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the leading financial and development-oriented institutions to assess the impact of their policies on human rights and to coordinate actions and strategies for promoting the realization of human rights.
7. The need for states to accept their obligation of establishing and maintaining adequate measures to protect vulnerable sectors of their population particularly within the context of the free market system.

Madame President,



My delegation hopes that this Conference will not be just another forum for rhetoric but will yield very positive and substantive results indicating a clear plan of action and a way forward.

Finally, Madame President, we would wish that it be recognized and reflected in the final documents adopted by this Conference that an impartial approach to the application of human rights norms and standards is imperative.

I thank you.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank His Excellency, Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica for his important statement. I now give the floor to the Honorable Mr. P.T.C. Skelemani, Attorney-General of Botswana. Sir, you have the floor.

**SKELEMANI, Phandu T.C. (Botswana):**

*Keywords:* HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION - REGIONAL COOPERATION - JUDICIAL SYSTEM - DEMOCRACY - FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS - BOTSWANA

Madame President,

May I, through you, to the President of the Conference and through him to the people and the government of Austria express our sincere gratitude for their hospitality, for the good organization of this Conference and the obvious trouble they have taken to ensure that if in the end of this Conference we fail to achieve what we have come here to do, it is only us who could be blamed.

Madame President,

We are all now clearly aware of the reasons why the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights has been convened. All the speakers before me have touched on the pertinent issues.

One reason, however, for the convening of this Conference is worthy of being repeated. This gathering, Madame President, here in Vienna is a clear admission by all that we have not succeeded in our several endeavors to facilitate the complete realization of human rights for our people, the people of the world. I am not, Madame President, aware of any one country that can claim to have achieved for its people all the rights that those people undeniably are entitled to enjoy.

Despite our deficiencies as a family of nations, there is reason for us to look to the future with optimism but as long as we recognize the need to effect the necessary improvements and we also recognize that no nation is an island. The human race is but one and, for our part, we do believe that we ought always to try to act as one. Human rights are both universal and indivisible. The fact that we have achieved only some of these rights is no reason to believe that they should be categorized. What that is proof of is that in the past, and indeed as of now, we have failed to formulate balanced policies. Let me not be misunderstood, Madame President, such failure is not by any means an indication that the governments deliberately set out to deny their people certain rights. No, such failure, in my view, is an indication of the fact that the nations of the world have hitherto tried to act separately and, I dare say, in a very selfish manner.

Now, Madame President, because no nation is an island and because human rights are universal and indivisible, we ought to realize that we cannot enjoy maximum human rights if we are not our brothers' keepers. Now, to be your brothers' keeper does not mean of course that you dictate to him what he should do. Rather it means that you wish for him what you want for yourself. You are forthright with him but you do not carry diplomacy too far.

Madame President,

We all know that human rights are not locked up in any huge storeroom, and that the storeroom cannot be opened for everyone to get his fair share. We cannot, therefore, look to any one person for the keys to the storeroom for human rights. Human rights are God given; they are not a favor from any human being. So that my obligation, therefore, must be that I do nothing to deny someone else of these rights. This appears to me to be the basic rule, and it is because of our failure to observe this basic rule that we have, despite the adoption of so many international human rights instruments, failed in the quest for enjoyment by every one of the basic human rights.

Despite the fact that nature has provided ways of keeping the air and the water clean, we have managed for a very long time to pollute both to the detriment of everybody else. The air that we breathe, Madame President, belongs to everyone, and it is every one of us who must do all we can to keep it clean.

I firmly believe that the protection of human rights is the responsibility of the international community as a whole. This principle appears to be generally acceptable as applied to situations in Somalia and Bosnia, for example. Disagreement, however, arises when the principle is being applied to cases where the violation is not so gross or pronounced, yet the violation of human rights even in such cases is a reality. The question, therefore, is what is the way forward? Should the international community sit back and do nothing until people die or are killed in large numbers? Do we fold our arms and wait for total chaos before we act to restore basic human rights?

Madame President, I think that in our consideration of what it is that needs to be done we should seriously consider firmer methods of peacekeeping particularly the use of regional organizations. While we will continue to look to the United Nations to provide all manner of help, I think that we should try more and more to use regional organizations in both actual conflict resolution and preventive diplomacy. The reason, Madame President, is that I do believe that people from the same region usually have a better understanding of the problems in their area. What we must avoid, however, is to have unilateral action because you can never be sure whether such action has other designs other than the restoration of human rights.

It is also our belief, Madame President, that we will better secure the enjoyment of basic human rights by supporting developing countries in strengthening their judicial systems. The teaching of the concept of human rights and equality in our schools would be a very valuable contribution because we would be instilling in the minds of future generations the basics needed for securing the enjoyment of human rights. But that is looking at the long term we must also deal with the present. If our judiciary is flawed then we have a real problem. As we all know, the conflict between the individual and the state should ordinarily be resolved by the courts that must be free and independent. A lot would be gained, therefore, by strengthening the judiciary particularly in the developing countries. Such support, Madame President, from the international community would go a long way towards maintaining the rule of law without which many of our people may be denied, by default, some of their basic human rights.

Madame President, before I conclude I want to deal briefly with the issue of democracy, development and human rights or simply put - good governance. Many of us will protest that it is not proper to predicate bilateral or international assistance on a country's record of democracy or human rights. Many of us feel that the use of aid to force other nations to behave in a certain manner amounts to interference in the internal affairs of the country that needs help. Such use of aid is in all probability interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

But such protest appears to me to avoid the issue. The issue as far as the country that makes the donations is that the government that receives aid is denying its own people their legitimate human rights. So that even in a situation where the accusation is true, it seems reasonable to me that other channels of extending aid such as using NGOs ought to be explored. Indeed, alternative means of

channeling aid would ensure that the people who are in need of aid should not be denied that aid on account of human rights violations by their governments. Aid should reach the people because they need it. On the other hand, it appears to me to be quite unreasonable to expect other people to help you pursue policies they consider inimical to the enjoyment of basic human rights.

Madame President,

There is no real distinction between democracy, development and human rights. Both democracy and development are but a part of human rights. The point is that democracy has the propensity to facilitate development and, indeed, the enjoyment of human rights. This, Madame President, is the reason why some of us whilst accepting the indivisibility of human rights tend to believe that full democracy is one of those rights that a people must secure first in the long route to the enjoyment of human rights, without which the free spirit of the human being is stifled without the hope of change other than through violent means.

The international community must recognize and appreciate the role played by non-governmental organizations in the field of human rights. We do hope that the non-governmental organizations will be afforded the opportunity to make a contribution towards the outcome of this Conference. We recognize the NGOs as important partners in the development even if at times they may appear to some governments to be difficult.

Madame President,

May I with your permission give a very short exposé of the position in Botswana? We have as our basic law a constitution with a justiciable bill of rights enforceable before an independent judiciary. Now, despite this bill of rights and, indeed, freedoms, we are aware of the need to pay special attention to the special needs of certain groups in our society, for example, the children, the women and the disabled. The list can go on. We are grateful for the valuable contributions by our NGOs and we look forward to a fruitful cooperation between them and the government. It is the hope of my delegation, and I do believe that of others too, that the final declaration that will be adopted at the conclusion of our deliberations will be characterized by action-oriented approaches for promoting human rights for all well into the next century.

I thank you, Madame President.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank the distinguished Attorney-General of Botswana for his important statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Alberto Luna, Deputy Minister of Justice of Bolivia. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

**LUNA YANEZ, Alberto (Bolivia)**, spoke in Spanish; text is edited based on the English interpretation:

*Keywords:* BOLIVIA - GOVERNMENT POLICY - HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS - HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION – INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION - EXTREME POVERTY

Madame President,

On behalf of the government and people of Bolivia, I should like to express to the Secretary-General of the Conference Mr. Ibrahim Fall, to you Madame President and to the other elected officers as well as to the distinguished governmental delegates, representatives of non-governmental organizations and representatives of international organizations our most sincere support for the objectives of this World Conference on Human Rights. Likewise, we express our thanks to the people and government of Austria for the warm welcome they have given us on this occasion.

At this stage in the general debate, I would like to express the hope that these sessions will contribute effectively to finding formulas and joint actions, which will guarantee the protection and full observance of human rights in the world because it is deplorable to see what is happening in the international scene and the serious threats to the international peace and security.

In my country, we, Bolivians, have made substantial progress in terms of human rights, an aspect fully recognized by the international community. Indeed, in Bolivia every one's rights are assured and guaranteed and so is their full enjoyment; there is profound recognition of the right to life, to free expression, whether that be in an oral or written form, to free initiative, to political freedom, religious freedom and the freedom of worship, there is no any forms of discrimination. All this is done within the institutional framework of the national constitution of the state, of the international treaties and conventions on human rights, to which we have acceded.

In the course of the current government's existence, we have taken decisive steps towards modernizing our state and its institutions. In this connection, we have improved our legal system with the promulgation of new legal instruments such as the law of a public ministry, which aims to ensure effective, responsible and fair public judiciary as an adequate representation of the state and of society as a whole; basically, trying to exercise a strong protection of the rights of the common citizen against possible abuses of public power.

In this same context, the organizational structure of the judiciary has been reformed to make effective its independence enshrined in the national constitution of the state and as one of the ways of guaranteeing full respect and implementation of the right to due judicial process.

We have also passed a law setting up a public defense system, which has become part of our state legal institutions, with the purpose of effectively avoiding the problems faced by many people who are not in a position to have access to legal defense in order to apply the law more equitably.

What I have just said indicates the major progress we have made on modernizing our state and its institutions because Bolivia considers that the best way of fully guaranteeing enjoyment of human rights for all is on the basis of fair and modern laws.

Bolivia is also of the opinion that the protection and defense of the environment is an integral part of the human rights of the individuals and their habitat, as a way of ensuring the right to life on earth, in the conviction that our territory is a major area of ecological importance. This is why we passed a law on the environment and an ecological decree, which prevent the irrational exploitation of our natural resources.

Madame President,

A strengthened democratic process, like the one Bolivia has been experiencing for 11 years, cannot be conceived if it had not been accompanied by social measures to compensate for the strategic economic adjustment policies. In this connection, the government of Bolivia has adopted specific programmes such as the Bolivian Social Strategy and the National Development Strategy as well as the Ten-Year Plan of Action for Children and Women.

We have also set up a social investment fund that is an indication to all the Bolivian people that social development is not only an urgent necessity but a way of investing in our human capital.

Likewise, the creation of the Social Investment Fund is nothing more than an example of how, for Bolivians, social development is not only an emergency but a true investment in human capital.

A strengthened democratic process like the one Bolivia has been experiencing for 11 years cannot be conceived if it had not been accompanied by social measures to compensate for the strategic economic adjustment policies. In this connection, the government of Bolivia has adopted specific programmes

such as the Bolivian Social Strategy and the National Development Strategy as well as the Ten-Year Plan of Action for Children and Women.

The problem of the Bolivian child, Madame President, is not easy to solve. However, the democratic system existing in our country and the political will of the government have allowed us to face this issue responsibly. In fact, Bolivia has been one of the first countries that has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the basis of Decree number 1152 passed on 14 May 1990; this commitment obliges the country to prepare reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

In order to provide effective legal protection, the Code on Minors has been enacted by Law number 1403 of 18 December 1992. This new legislation goes beyond the punitive approach of the previous law, it obeys universal principles, stipulates social policies oriented towards comprehensive prevention, care and protection of minors. Among its most important chapters are the issue of ill-treatment, child labor, problems related to the judicial system and national and international adoptions.

In 1989, the government of Bolivia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, enshrining the provisions of Article 6 of our state constitution, referring to the principle of fairness and equality expressed in the Bolivian social strategy of 1991, which attaches priority importance to this problem and the importance of social policies to overcome discrimination against women.

By Law of the Republic of 18 December 1992, the National Agency for Minors, Women and Family, ONAMFA, was created with the purpose to regulate, direct, monitor and supervise policies aimed to deal with these groups of the population.

All these actions are acknowledgement of the situation of discrimination against women as well as the need to develop actions at the levels of the state, family and society to combat domestic violence that is considered a violation of human rights; it is a widespread phenomenon in our country, which crosses all strata of the society. To this end, a set of proposals for legal reforms has been prepared for the national constitution, the criminal and family codes and all current legal bodies.

On the issue of the indigenous peoples, Madame President, we must proudly say that Bolivia is a nation made up of several indigenous peoples whose ancestors and traditions has contributed to the shaping our national identity. As an example, the President of the Republic, Jaime Paz Zamora, proposed to the Ibero-American community to create a fund for the development of the indigenous peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, and I am happy to say that the activities of the fund are already underway. In this connection, Bolivia has promulgated a law giving special rights to the indigenous peoples, such as allocation of geographic areas for their exclusive use and conservation. President Paz Zamora also took a position that is important on this issue when he urged the international community to show understanding about the traditional use of the coca leaf, which goes back over thousands of years and has absolutely nothing to do with the criminal use made of it by drug traffickers.

In line with the respect of human rights in Bolivia, in April we dealt a severe blow to the impunity. For the first time in the history of the country, the Supreme Court of Justice brought to trial and convicted the most abysmal military dictatorship, which violated the human rights of our people as no one else has ever done. The trial of the former regime dictator García Meza was carried out within the framework of absolute subjection to due judicial process provisions of our legislation. He has been sentenced to 30 years in prison without the right to pardon.

Although these results are encouraging, we are convinced that the exercise of human rights can only be guaranteed through the conscious participation by those who govern and those who are governed, for which it is necessary to implement policies for continuing education on human rights. Therefore, the Bolivian government, through a Supreme Decree has made, in homage to this Conference, the

teaching of human rights in all schools in the country compulsory. Likewise, by agreement signed with the Latin American Association for Human Rights, the Latin American Faculty for Human Rights was created in Bolivia with headquarters in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra and whose Board of Directors has the participation, among others, of personalities such as President Patricio Aylwin, Héctor Gros Espiell, Belisario Betancur, Rafael Caldera, Oscar Arias, César Gaviria and José Sarney.

Madame President,

It is an honor for me, as Deputy Minister for Justice, to announce that in Bolivia on 6 June the general elections for the President, Vice President and national representatives of our Parliament have been held. Through this democratic exercise, Bolivia has once again demonstrated its maturity and full attachment to this political system. As a result of the sovereign decision of the Bolivian people an opposition party will be taking over our government on the 6th of August this year.

This is how we see and witness the consolidation of Bolivian democracy, promoting consultation as the fundamental instrument of our political action. This is how Bolivia wants to embark upon the 21st century as a renewed nation in search of a better future and with peaceful coexistence between all.

This Conference takes place at a time when the cold war is over, when East-West confrontation has ended, which also coincides with the appearance of racist and religious movements, and where discrimination is spreading.

Human rights are being violated in more and more places such as what is happening in the territories of the former Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia. The conflict has been prolonged there without an effective solution being found to put an end to such unfortunate and reprehensible acts, which do not respect the men, women and children, the express standards of international humanitarian law are being barbarously violated, and which is a source of shame to the international community.

It is because of this appalling international situation that a response must be given to the cries and pains of so many people who today are being tortured and massacred by condemning the flagrant violations of human rights in different regions of the world and by demanding from the United Nations Organization the adoption of urgent and expeditious measures to put an end to all those situations that are causing pain, that threaten international peace and security.

It is clear that this important and qualified international meeting will further encourage the United Nations Organization to play major role in international relations as stipulated by the San Francisco Charter, in the sense that the Organization responsible for encouraging international cooperation as a way of finding solutions to international economic, social, cultural or humanitarian problems and in the development and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction for reasons of race, sex or religion.

This appeal to the United Nations Organization to redouble its efforts in favor of human dignity and human security is undoubtedly a challenge of great proportions, it is the plan for peace that the United Nations must put into practice.

We believe that recognition of fundamental rights does not stand for the fact that one is a national of a given state since they are based on the attributes of the individual, which is why they justify international protection, which must be complementary to that ensured in the national legislation of each state. The close relationship that exists between civil and political rights and other rights means that we must acknowledge human dignity as being the common basis of all these rights. This means that we must ensure permanent protection if all the rights are to be fully enjoyed and we cannot justify the violation of some rights on the basis that we are trying to get the implementation of the others.

We cannot, however, separate from this problem the acute and worrying problem of poverty, whether it is called extreme poverty or critical poverty, it still means human needs are not being met because if

human beings cannot satisfy their minimal needs, then they can hardly effectively and fully enjoy the civil and political rights either. These problems are typical of underdevelopment, and the vast majority of people on this planet are faced with those problems at the moment.

Madame President, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to reiterate to you that Bolivia joins the efforts made by all your governments and peoples in this common effort for the most urgent cause that we have to carry out immediately, the cause of protecting the human dignity.

Thank you.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank His Excellency, the Deputy Minister of Justice of Bolivia, for his statement. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Yves Yehouessi, Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs of Benin. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

**YEHOUESSI, Yves Donatien (Benin)**, spoke in French:

*Keywords:* RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - BENIN - GOVERNMENT POLICY - DEMOCRACY – RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT - HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Madame President,

The Republic of Benin speaking through me would like to join all the eminent personalities who preceded me on this rostrum in extending to you our sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the World Conference on Human Rights.

Not only do the perfect organization and harmonious operations of our work bring honor to this beautiful country and the city of Vienna but also to the international community as a whole.

Allow me also to pay a heartfelt tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations whose foresightedness was one of the determining elements in allowing this Conference to take place.

Indeed, Madame President, under the personal pressure of Dr. Pierre Boutros Boutros-Ghali enormous progress has been possible over the last few years in the search for a genuine international peace and a way of ensuring real harmony among nations, without which it would have been illusory to think of bringing together under the framework of the second World Conference on Human Rights all the nations of the world.

Finally, it is a pleasant duty to associate with these honorable merits the Secretary-General of the World Conference on Human Rights Dr. Ibrahima Fall whose personal efforts along with those of his co-workers have made it possible to, in fact, hold this Conference.

Madame President,

It is, thus, for the second time that the international community is meeting at the end of this century on focus on human beings, on the values underlying human existence and on human rights.

However natural and fundamental as they may appear today, these rights were torn away and conquered progressively at the price of sacrifice and suffering, which since Prometheus and Spartacus mark the fight of human beings for their total fulfilment. It is true that since the Teheran Conference in 1968, other meetings were held on this question and which led to the adoption of important

instruments, covenants, conventions or resolutions under the aegis of the United Nations or in a regional framework. However, the Vienna Conference quite clearly is of historic importance and significance.

Indeed, since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, in drafting of which, it should be remembered, nearly two-thirds of the humanity was not involved, this meeting here in Vienna is one where the numbers and the level of participants comes closest to the universalism so desired by the international community. The results of its work will be all the richer and more significant provided that the non-governmental organizations and indigenous populations who have been invited here are given the complete freedom to make their voices heard.

Madame President,

At a time when voices are rising timidly here and there to finally demand just reparations for the black slave trade that in terms of its magnitude will remain forever in history the most hideous and abominable crime ever perpetrated against the black race, at a time when laws are being erected today almost everywhere like ramparts to ensure that the starved hordes of those who have been colonized yesterday are kept out of islands of prosperity, at a time when the burden of international debt is causing groans, the states - and therefore populations - are suffering from inequitable trade rules that deny fair remuneration for their raw commodities and at a time where we see a recrudescence of xenophobia and racism virtually everywhere, we can but welcome the initiative of holding this World Conference on Human Rights, which can and must give us a new opportunity to sum up the progress that has been made to date, no matter how minor this progress may be, and to sincerely commit ourselves to translating into daily actions the resolutions that we should take to defend, to promote and to respect human rights.

Among the numerous questions that have been raised for more than a week now in the framework of this Conference, there are many that are of particular interest for the Republic of Benin.

First, there is the question of the universality of human rights. This is an essential principle, a cardinal principle that far from precluding the right of everyone and every people to diversity is the result of the common basis of all human beings regardless of race, sex, religion or culture. That is a principle that was enshrined by 1948 Declaration and ratified by virtually all Member States of the international community.

How then can we accept that, on the pretext of these particularities, attempts could be made to justify practices contrary to human dignity condemned by the international community that we believe cannot remain insensitive and passive to such violations? However, if one day it were to be codified, the right to interfere should, unlike what has in fact being the case in certain Third World countries recently, it should deal with all human rights violations no matter where they occur and no matter who perpetrates them. In this regard, some are of the view that the appointment of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights would strengthen the activities of the international community. However, his powers should be clearly defined taking into account the legitimate concern of states to ensure that their sovereignty is respected.

Benin for its part has no fear of such a body being created.

Indeed, since the historic National Conference of Active Forces of the Nation, which led to the arrival of a democratic regime considered as a model on the African continent, Benin's life has been totally transparent.

Putting an end to seventeen years of a military Marxist dictatorship marked by the negation of fundamental freedoms, arbitrary arrest, torture and other inhuman degrading treatment, the National Conference of Active Forces of the Nation has managed to meet the challenge of moving peacefully from a dictatorship to a pluralist democracy.



Today, the people of Benin enjoy all fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Charter of the United Nations and enshrined in the national constitution of which 34 articles out of its total 160 are devoted to questions of human rights.

The assessment mission to Cotonou in September of 1992 by the Human Rights Centre in Geneva witnessed on the spot the real human rights situation in Benin. After all these visits in the field and meetings with various administrations and non-governmental structures that are active in promoting and protecting human rights, the mission, while expressing its satisfaction given the present human rights situation in Benin, recommended increased assistance in order to complete the reforms presently underway.

Madame President,

A strengthening of democracy or, put more simply, the survival of democracy is impossible without a minimum of wellbeing. One of the obstacles to enriching democracy and hence to the development of human rights is the poverty in which most of our populations live.

Thus, the right to development, long ignored or trivialized, must henceforth be considered now as a priority right if not a sacred one. The right to development, which is nothing but the right to dignity and fulfilment, is not compatible with the subhuman condition in which millions of human beings languish above all in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. The right to development is both a human right and a peoples' right. The realization of the right to development necessitates the elimination of the present international economic order, unjust and unfair, in which two-thirds of humanity cannot meet their basic needs and in which over 600 million human beings live in absolute poverty.

The trilogy - human rights, democracy and development – cannot be ignored.

Madame President,

Training involving education and information is another way of ensuring more complete enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Indeed, knowledge of human rights is a precondition for their respect. The teaching of human rights and techniques for protecting human rights in order to ensure their defense and respect at the national and international levels is a duty not only of states and international organizations but also of schools, universities and of non-governmental organizations.

The moral and intellectual education of youth and adults in a humanist spirit of understanding of other peoples is likely to strengthen the chances for the effective exercise of human rights. As professor René Cassin said, “it is education that allows the human beings to become aware of what they are and what they can do.”

Education is far more than a simple right; it helps to acquire awareness of all other rights. Responding to the recommendations of the international Congress on Human Rights Education, the constitution of Benin makes mandatory the introduction of human rights teaching both at a university level, in military barracks and in other teaching sectors.

Madame President,

For many developing countries, the implementation of a policy for promotion and protection of human rights depends essentially on the solidarity that absolutely must exist among peoples and even on a change in the present economic order.

Under present circumstances, one may wonder whether the development assistance as understood by certain states is to be a means of exercising pressure in order to ensure that states that violate human rights do observe them.

An answer to this question is neither simple, nor easy. We would simply say, following in a wake of the eminent previous speakers, that development cooperation pursues its own objectives and is justified only insofar as it benefits the population that needs it the most.

Cooperation that is only to the benefit of those who hold power and a few privileged, unscrupulous people would be unjustified.

Madame President,

Before concluding my statement, I must recall that the question of human rights is of direct concern to all of us as both physical and legal entities, to the Heads of State and to the people responsible for international or non-governmental organizations, to the associations and to individuals, to the simple citizens in our respective countries and to people with certain responsibilities or certain authority. What is at stake is the dignity of the human being.

Given this need, it is important for nations to accept in an increasingly interdependent world to grant to our human and universal values some of their national sovereignty and a greater will for coexistence despite cultural, political, social and economic differences. This is the price. and it is at this price only that the world of the 21st century will be one that is more viable for human beings no matter where they live.

I thank you.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

I thank His Excellency, Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs of Benin for that statement. I now give the floor to Mr. Arthur Holbrook, Officer-in-Charge of the World Food Programme. You have the floor, Sir.

**HOLBROOK, Arthur (World Food Programme):**

*Keywords:* HUNGER - FOOD SECURITY - RIGHT TO FOOD - AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT - DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

Thank you, Madame President.

This intervention is made on behalf of Ms. Catherine Bertini, Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I need not emphasize how important the World Food Programme regards this Conference on Human Rights. The Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition adopted on 16 November 1974 by the World Food Conference, convened under General Assembly resolution 3180 of 17 December 1973 and endorsed by General Assembly resolution 3348 of 17 December 1974, recognizes that the elimination of hunger and malnutrition and the elimination of the causes that determine this situation are the common objectives of all nations. The wellbeing of all peoples of the world largely depends on the adequate production and distribution of food. This Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition has become an international instrument of the human rights charter. The primary roles of the World Food Programme are to provide food aid to low-income, food

deficit countries, to assist in the implementation of economic and social development projects and to meet the relief needs of victims of natural and other disasters.

In World Food Programme, we believe that the right for everybody to be adequately fed is one of the most basic human rights. WFP, as the food aid organization of the United Nations system, seeks to honor that right as a basic, inherent and common objective in all its activities.

The World Food Programme has been directly involved in addressing the right to food since it began operations in 1963, now exactly thirty years ago. The Programme is the principal international channel for the provision of relief food and a major supplier of food in support of development activities. In playing this dual role, WFP is the largest source in the United Nations system for the transfer of grant resources to developing countries. Its annual turnover, for example, in 1991 was 1.6 billion United States dollars. Priority is given to supporting low-income, food-deficit countries and poor people within them.

WFP's contribution to the right of food takes three main forms: assistance to development projects, emergency food operations and support to long-term refugee and displaced people situations. Development assistance is provided for projects executed by governments in developing countries that benefit poor people mainly in rural areas. About two-thirds has been provided for agricultural and rural development and one-third for human resources development. At the end of 1992, WFP was assisting over 258 development projects with a commitment of approximately 3 billion United States dollars. Over the life-time of these projects of three to five years each, an estimated 80 million people will receive WFP support. In 1992, it was estimated that 15 million people received food from WFP's assistance to development projects.

The ever-increasing frequency of large-scale natural and manmade disasters have come to dominate WFP's work. Over 60 percent of all WFP assistance now goes as relief compared to about one-third some twenty years ago. Some 27 million people, including 14 million refugees and displaced people, received WFP food relief in 1992.

WFP is aware, however, that other basic human rights must be satisfied. The Programme, therefore, supports various types of development projects. Mothers and their children are given access to primary health and nutrition services in supplementary feeding programmes. The children of poor families including girls are given access to education through school feeding programmes. Members of poor households especially women are enabled to attend training centres where meals are provided or family food rations distributed. Employment is provided to men and women in labor-intensive food-for-work programmes that create the infrastructure needed for agricultural and rural development as well as assets necessary for sustained employment and income generation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would not wish to divert your deliberations by inundating you with unwieldy statistics. I do, on the other hand, wish to emphasize to you WFP's profound commitment to the basic human right of all to food. While in this context we see one of our essential responsibilities as providing food relief to a burgeoning number of refugees, displaced people and to victims of natural disasters. Last year, such programmes accounted for 60 percent of our resources compared with only nine percent twenty years ago. Obviously, we would have preferred to pursue this fundamental human right –that is the right to food - through developmental projects.

In WFP's view, any constructive measures aimed at promoting human rights should take into account the following essential points;

- Human rights and the right to food are inextricably linked and, therefore, efforts to remove obstacles to the latter should be consciously integrated into broader programmes and activities to promote the former.

- Human rights should be pursued from the point of view of the individual as the central subject of development. In this connection, increasing attention should be paid to promoting human resources development as the bedrock of true self-reliance.
- In conclusion, I would say that governments should play the lead role in these efforts with the UN, other organizations and donor countries playing a facilitating or catalytic role.

Thank you, Madame President.

**ODIO BENITO, Elisabeth (President)**, spoke in Spanish:

Thank you very much, Mr. Holbrook for your statement. Since that was the last speaker I had on the list for this morning, I would now conclude the 15th session of this plenary meeting of the World Conference on Human Rights. We shall resume this afternoon at 1500 hours. The meeting stands adjourned.