



NORWAY

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ADDRESS BY

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PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY

IN THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON

22 SEPTEMBER 1986

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Mr. President,

Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Mr. President, upon your election to the high office as President of the 41st session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that the work at this General Assembly will benefit from your experience and knowledge.

At the beginning of this General Assembly, the future of East-West relations is a central concern in all corners of the globe.

The future of East/West relations encompasses the decisive questions of our times: war or peace, disarmament or continued arms race, peaceful cooperation or confrontation, mutual confidence or distrust. The East/West relationship largely determines the international climate and sets limits to what can be achieved also in other areas which are in urgent need of attention such as the North/South relationship and the global challenges of development, environment, trade and finance. These are questions of fundamental importance to the future of mankind and which we cannot afford to go on neglecting. Also for this

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reason we need a new beginning in East/West relations which can liberate energies and resources.

Achievements that have already been made must be carefully guarded, such as the ABM treaty, that plays a vital role and needs to be strengthened.

The Geneva negotiations are of fundamental importance to the future of East/West relations. They must give the answer to the key question whether it will be possible to turn the tide of the arms race. Without real progress in the field of disarmament and arms control, our efforts towards dialogue and cooperation in other areas will be seriously limited.

So far, we have not seen tangible results in the form of any decisive progress in arms negotiations. From the Norwegian side we have wholeheartedly endorsed the broad aim of the Geneva negotiations which should be conducted with a view to "...preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth by limiting and reducing nuclear arms and strengthening strategic stability ..."

This very promising result of last years summit between President Reagan and Secretary General Gorbachev is an agreement on broad objectives that it is essential to retain.

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Mr. President,

The Helsinki process now sorely needed a vitamin injection and new impetus to become a positive, dynamic factor in East/West relations. The news today of a breakthrough at the Stockholm Conference is not only an important achievement, but also has a potential for further progress. If we experience an improved atmosphere in the vital area of arms control and disarmament, it could mark a historic moment.

In Stockholm, a new generation of confidence- and security-building measures have been adopted, and major concessions have been given - concessions that will lead to reduced risks, greater openness and predictability all over Europe.

But we need higher aspirations. Regularity in the political dialogue at the highest level between the superpowers is an imperative for stability and predictability in East/West relations. Pending questions that hamper a new summit now urgently need solutions, to pave the way for new agreements in Geneva.

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Mr. President,

The work undertaken in multilateral disarmament fora is also of crucial importance, both as an expression of world public concern and for negotiating global disarmament agreements. The nuclear test ban issue remains a vital question. Efforts here should be further intensified. It is our hope that this session of the General Assembly will contribute to expedite the work of the Conference on Disarmament in order to reach agreement on a comprehensive test ban.

It still has not been possible to reach agreement on a treaty banning chemical weapons, although important progress has been made. Recent use of these abhorrent weapons underline the need to eradicate them once and for all.

As we work towards an end to the arms race on Earth, we must at the same time seek to prevent a spread of the arms race into outer space. It is our firm belief that space must be reserved for peaceful purposes exclusively. We fully support the efforts towards this end in the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament.

The irrationality of the arms race is most amply demonstrated by the global imbalance between the resources spent

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on armaments and what is devoted to development. This fundamental problem should indeed be a matter of concern for the entire world community. Norway therefore supports the idea of holding the UN conference on disarmament and development as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

Last year the 40th Anniversary of the United Nations was solemnly commemorated in this Assembly Hall. Political leaders from all over the world were here to pay tribute to the Organization. It was seen as an expression of support for multilateralism as a basic concept and working method in international affairs.

Past experience has shown that there is no alternative to global cooperation in the striving for peace and security, for economic and social development and for the protection of human rights.

Mr. President,

In spite of the many pledges made in this Hall last year it is a fact that the political and economic problems on the agenda of the United Nations persist, and there has over the last

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year hardly been any progress on major issues before the Organization. In addition to this, the United Nations itself has for some time experienced severe financial problems caused by significant withholdings of assessed contributions on the part of several Member States. These withholdings, together with the lack of budgetary discipline threaten to seriously undermine the viability of the United Nations.

The Norwegian Government is deeply committed to multilateralism and a strong United Nations; and the objective need of the world community is greater today than when it was created 41 years ago and the financial crisis is the manifestation of a fundamental crisis of credibility which has been festering for some time. There has been a widespread and deepening loss of confidence in the United Nations on the part of many member states and their publics, who believe that the Organization is not sufficiently effective in meeting its original objectives, or in serving the interests of its members.

Even the strongest champions of the United Nations, countries like Norway and many others must concede that these concerns have some validity. The political and economic issues on the agenda of the United Nations persist. Its budget is burdened by unnecessary duplication and overlapping of functions, and the budgetary process lacks the discipline required to evoke the full support of all member states.

The task of renewing the effectiveness of the United Nations is basically political in nature. It requires that member states manifest do the political will to place the financing of the organization on a viable basis, and provide the Secretary-General with a mandate and the support he needs to carry out the major Organization, staffing and budget changes which will reduce costs, improve effectiveness and restore confidence. At this 41st session we have a unique opportunity to do exactly this. It is an opportunity we must not miss.

We have before us the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts - the group of 18 - established last year by unanimous decision of the General Assembly to examine and suggest improvements in the Organization's administration and finances. The Norwegian Government fully supports these recommendations and urge the Assembly to approve them in their entirety.

These recommendations are only the beginning of a reform process in the United Nations, a process which will be painful and which will necessarily take time. It is essential that this transformation is allowed to take place in an orderly and responsible manner, and that member states cooperate closely with the Secretary General in the difficult task he faces in implementing these changes.

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Mr. President,

Earlier this year, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, attention was focused on the economic and social problems of one single continent. The Special Session on the critical economic situation in Africa, was an important element in the United Nations efforts to assist African countries in surmounting their grave economic and ecological crisis.

Based on the thorough preparations made by the Organization of African Unity and its member states, the Special Session adopted unanimously a programme of action for African economic recovery and development for 1986-1990.

We managed to set up a common point of reference, where the mutual commitments of Africa and the international community are elaborated. The consensus reached on this document must be seen as a notable achievement. However, the final evaluation of the session can only be made in the future. The follow-up action must be pursued energetically on the national, regional and international level.

We witness, with respect and admiration, the valiant efforts undertaken by African countries to initiate new economic policies. However, interdependence is today a living reality. The

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African countries will only succeed if the international community agree to complement these efforts with new and increased assistance.

Norway pledges its full and continued support to the African development efforts.

Mr. President,

One area where the United Nations has a special responsibility and where we do hope that the Organization may play a decisive role is the question of South Africa and Namibia.

The situation in South Africa has reached an explosive stage. The black majority is no longer willing to tolerate the aggressive apartheid system and is demanding the obvious right to be treated as equal citizens with full political rights. Instead of addressing these legitimate demands, the South African Government has once again resorted to the desperate means of declaring a state of emergency and detaining hundreds of apartheid opponents. This policy will only lead to prolonged suffering and bloodshed in South Africa.

The dramatic events should not make us forget that South Africa continues its illegal occupation of Namibia, in violation

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of Security Council resolution 435. This issue was dealt with extensively at last week's special session on Namibia and I would only like to repeat our demand to the South African Government to agree to the implementation of the UN plan for Namibia without any further delay.

The policy of trying to abolish apartheid through a dialogue with the South African Government has been tried repeatedly and without success. The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group draw the depressing conclusion in a recent report that the South African Government does not seem to be prepared for a genuine dialogue with the opposition and that outside pressure is essential for any prospect of peaceful change. My Government strongly supports these conclusions.

Some countries continue to argue against sanctions, on the grounds that sanctions will create increased suffering for the black population and cause economic difficulties for the neighbouring countries of South Africa. We do not underestimate these difficulties. But even though sanctions may cause hardships in the short run, representative black leaders argue that this is preferable to the prolonged suffering that apartheid implies. We think it is wise to listen to these leaders; in fact we feel it is an obligation to do so. The Norwegian Government therefore urges the Security Council to impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions

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against South Africa. We also propose that the UN prepares a contingency plan for assistance to South Africa's neighbours in the event of South African reprisals against these countries.

Norway has repeatedly advocated comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa. I take this opportunity to urge those countries who still oppose sanctions to reassess their attitude.

Mr. President,

The absence of binding sanctions should not be used as a pretext for failing to act against apartheid. Measures by individual countries or groups of countries are also important, in order to signal disapproval of apartheid and express solidarity with those who work for changes in South Africa.

My Government believes that an effective oil embargo would be an important measure against South Africa. For this reason we were pleased to host a UN seminar on the oil embargo in Oslo in June this year as a preparation of the UN Conference on Sanctions against South Africa, held in Paris. The proposal to set up an international monitoring mechanism on the supply of oil to South Africa, was included in the final declaration of the Paris Conference and we hope that the Security Council would be

able to support this idea with a view to achieving an effective oil embargo against South Africa.

In addition to the measures contained in the Nordic Programme of Action, Norway has adopted a number of unilateral measures. My Government is now preparing a Bill on an economic boycott against South Africa, a Bill which is expected to be decided upon by the Norwegian Parliament this fall. In this way we want to make our contribution to bring about a South Africa with equal rights and opportunities for all. We also hope to inspire other countries follow suit, to increase the total international pressure against apartheid.

Time is running out for peaceful solutions. If apartheid is not abolished soon, the whole region of Southern Africa may explode in a bloody upheaval. I appeal to every nation to move forward in taking effective actions against apartheid.

Mr. President,

From this rostrum leaders of the world have rightly been warning against the threats to the survival of mankind caused by existing nuclear arsenals, regional conflicts and failures of the development process.

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Interdependence is becoming the dominant characteristic of the whole range of issues relating to development. It encompasses broad security concerns, environmental and ecological issues, economic and cultural relations. There is also the geographic dimension of interdependence, regionally and globally. The nuclear accident in Tchernobyl highlighted the awesome problems we will face across the borders in the event of a nuclear disaster occurring in any one country. The rapid population growth in many countries is creating migration patterns which strain both national and cross-national systems. In the trade and financial area we see the mutual dependence between creditors and debtors as well as the vital link between a non-protectionist trade regime and the ability of debtor countries to meet their debt obligations and generate the necessary resources for their own development.

This is really the essence of the North-South dialogue; how the growing interlinkages between issues and interdependence between nations create an increasing number of problems which transcends national systems, and require solutions of a global nature. The need for a global approach is clear. Such an approach does not mean that all problems have to be negotiated and solved simultaneously. What it means is that global perspectives must permeate all the processes and work we are engaged in, and that this work is becoming more and more urgent. Protection of the environment and development are essential and mutually re-

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inforcing goals. This requires that environmental considerations be built into development projects at the earliest possible stage. Otherwise they will neither be economically nor ecologically sustainable.

In recent years the world has become increasingly aware that the negligence of interactions between environment and development is already seriously threatening the ability of this planet to sustain life for present and future generations.

The threats of war and regional conflicts are the concern of us all, but so is also critical life support systems are at stake.

The World Commission on Environment and Development, which is going to report to the General Assembly next year, is convinced that these new imperatives can only be seriously addressed by defining the goals of economic activity in terms of sustainable development.

Sustainable development will require a recovery from the economic stagnation of recent years and a new era of growth in the world economy. But it cannot be a repetition of the non-sustainable development patterns of the past decades which resulted in the development crisis of the 1980s. A new era of

growth must be built on new patterns of development and a unification of ecology and economics.

Mr. President,

The earth is one, but the world of man is not. Mankind share a common origin and a common future. Shortsighted self-interest has misled the human race to over-exploitation of this troubled planet. We have heavily been overdrawing the account which nature opened to us. But the unsustainable trends can be rectified. We must formulate and adopt new strategies to secure a sustainable and common future.

Mr. President,

The opportunities are in fact there. Now it is time for us to act!

Thank you, Mr. President