

PARKVEIEN 45

Prime Minister

Gro Harlem Brundtland

SPEECH AT DINNER HONOURING THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATION, HIS EXCELLENCY JAVIER PEREZ DE CUELLAR, 9 JANUARY 1989.

MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL,
EXCELLENCIES,
DEAR GUESTS,

"EVERY GREAT ACTION IS EXTREME WHEN IT IS UNDERTAKEN. ONLY AFTER IT HAS BEEN DONE DOES IT SEEM POSSIBLE TO THOSE MADE OF MORE COMMON STUFF". YOURSELF, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, AND THE OCCASION FOR YOUR VISIT BRING BACK THESE WORDS OF THE GREAT FRENCH WRITER STENDHAL.

FOR NORWAY, WHICH AS A MATTER OF POLICY AND CONVICTION ALWAYS HAS SUPPORTED THE UNITED NATIONS, A VISIT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IS TRULY A MAJOR EVENT. THE FACT THAT YOU, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, ARE HERE WITH US FOR THE FOURTH TIME IN SIX SHORT MONTHS IS UNIQUE AND HISTORIC. IT IS A SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR ALL OF US WHO ARE STRONGLY COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE OF THE WORLD ORGANIZATION.

I DOUBT IF ANY SECRETARY-GENERAL HAS HAD CLOSER RELATIONS TO THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT. THERE IS A POSSIBLE EXCEPTION, THOUGH FOR MR. TRYGVE LIE.

THE NOBEL PEACE PRICE IS SO WELL DESERVED BY THE YOUTH IN THE BLUE BERETS, BY THE PEACE ORGANIZATION AND BY YOURSELF AND YOUR STAFF. AFTER MANY DIFFICULT YEARS FOR MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY, PATIENCE AND HARD WORK IS PAYING DIVIDEND.

PEACE IS A DAILY, A WEEKLY, A MONTHLY PROCESS, GRADUALLY CHANGING OPINIONS, SLOWLY ERODING OLD BARRIERS, QUIETLY BUILDING NEW STRUCTURES.

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT ONLY ONE YEAR AGO THAT THE REGIONAL CONFLICTS IN AFGHANISTAN, IRAN-IRAQ, ANGOLA, NAMIBIA, KAMPUCHEA AND WESTERN SAHARA ALL WOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE?

WE ALL HAVE A CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPORT THE UNITED NATIONS AND INDEED ITS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS NOW THAT THEY ARE CHARGED WITH MORE RESPONSIBILITIES THAN EVER. PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS ARE VITAL. ALL COUNTRIES MUST CONTRIBUTE ACCORDING TO THEIR ABILITIES AND THEIR OBLIGATIONS.

THE MOST RECENT BREAKTHROUGH WAS THE AGREEMENT ON THE INDEPENDENCE OF NAMIBIA. WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO FULFILLING OUR COMMITMENT FROM 1978 TO SEND 50 CIVILIAN OBSERVERS TO THE ELECTION PROCESS IN NAMIBIA. STILL, HOWEVER, THERE ARE OBSTACLES THAT MUST BE OVERCOME. THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT WILL APPEAL TO THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO AGREE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS TRANSITION ADVISORY GROUP. LET US REMIND THEM ABOUT THE WORDS OF THOMAS FULLER WHO 250 YEARS AGO STATED THAT "HE WHO GIVES HIS HEART WILL NOT DENY HIS MONEY".

FOR TOO LONG HAS THE UNITED NATIONS BEEN HAUNTED BY FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES. ON 4 JANUARY, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, NORWAY PAID ITS FULL ASSESSED CONTRIBUTION FOR THE YEAR 1989. WE APPEAL TO ALL MEMBER STATES TO EXPEDITIOUSLY MEET THEIR FINANCIAL OBLIGATION SO THAT THE UNITED NATIONS CAN EFFECTIVELY SERVE AS A TRUE CONSCIENCE AND CATALYST IN MOVING THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS FORWARD.

THE MAIN BATTLE WATING TO BE WON IS THE BATTLE AGAINST POVERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION. GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROGRESS REQUIRES BOLD STEPS INVOLVING DEBT, FINANCE, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

THE MORAL DIMENSION OF HUMAN SURVIVAL IS MORE THAN AN OPTION WE CAN TAKE OR LEAVE. IF WE FAIL TO DEVELOP AND SUSTAIN A SYSTEM OF

WORLD ORDER THAT RESPONDS TO THAT ETHIC WE WILL ASSUREDLY END UP WITH SOME ULTIMATE CRISIS. YOU, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, AS THE WORLDS NUMBER ONE CIVIL SERVANT HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH THE ENORMOUS RESPONSIBILITY OF LEADING US IN THIS PROCESS. WE PAY TRIBUTE TO YOU FOR YOUR REMARKABLE SUCCESSES. WE ALSO ASSURE YOU OF OUR THE STAUNCH SUPPORT AS YOU PERFORM THE DUTIES OF YOUR HIGH OFFICE.

IN CONCLUDING LET US RECALL MAHATMA GANDHI WHO WAS ONCE ASKED WHAT HE THOUGHT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION. HE REFLECTED FOR A WHILE AND THEN ANSWERED CAUTIOUSLY: "I THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA". FIFTY YEARS LATER, IT IS BECOMING CLEAR THAT A FINAL JUDGEMENT ON OUR CIVILIZATION IS GOING TO DEPEND ON HOW WE RESPOND TO THE WIDER CHALLENGES OF MAKING HUMAN SOCIETY A CIVILIZED STATE.

AS YOU, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, SAID IN YOUR NOBEL LECTURE EARLIER TODAY, "THE KEY QUESTION WILL BE THE EXTENT TO WHICH COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY AND INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY CAN BE EXERCISED AND RESPECTED".

I PROPOSE A TOAST TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, TO THE BLUE BERETS, AND TO THEIR VITAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION.