

Mr. Javier PÉREZ DE CUÉLLAR, (Secretary-General of the United Nations) (interpretation from French): Mr. President of the Republic, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, history, of which we are both the witnesses and the architects, proceeds at an uneven pace. Sometimes it slows down, holding developments back and freezing situations that are totally opposed to the aspirations of peoples. Sometimes it speeds up, cutting through obstacles and releasing energies. It is then marked by events which remain engraved in human memory.

The Summit which France, faithful to its age-old European vocation, is hosting today in its historic capital - this Summit which brings together so many Heads of State or Government, notably those of the whole of Europe at long last reconciled, is undoubtedly a great European and world event. Those who are privileged to take part cannot but feel surprised and proud. Permit me, therefore, Mr. President, to thank you for having invited me to attend and for granting me the honour of addressing this gathering, which will certainly go down in the annals of history.

There is, to my knowledge, no precedent for the group of nations assembled here spread so widely across the earth's surface and drawn together not by one overpowering military force, or by one powerful military leader, but by the commonality of the interests of its various peoples. We are here to fill the vacuum created by the obsolescence of hostile military alliances, not by rival nationalisms, but by a practical model of inter-State security and co-operation. And we may hope that in time this development will have a far reaching influence on attitudes and policies in the rest of the world.

The United Nations is gratified to note that the Declaration contained in the first part of the Helsinki Final Act is in conformity with and based upon the purposes and principles set forth in its own Charter, and expresses the common will of the CSCE States to act in application of these principles in all they do.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar

The United Nations Charter in turn recognizes the role and importance of arrangements concluded on a less than worldwide basis, primarily for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Indeed the Charter expressly encourages them to spare no effort to achieve the peaceful settlement of disputes before referring them to the Security Council. It goes without saying that this interplay between the United Nations and regional arrangements in no way impairs the powers of the Security Council, in particular the need for Council authorization for enforcement action. Provision is thus made both in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Declaration contained in the Helsinki Final Act for fruitful interaction and co-operation.

In this context, there is one aspect of the process that you are now setting in motion which seems to me particularly positive. The fact that, following the peaceful changes that have taken place, Europe does not now yield to the temptation to withdraw upon itself or to regard itself as the privileged sheltered part of the larger Eurasian land mass.

In the first place, the CSCE process itself is transcontinental. Secondly, in today's interdependent world, major developments in one region inevitably have repercussions in other regions, and this is as true of Europe as it is of other continents.

We are all bound to one another, and detachment from the crises and from political, economic and social insecurity in other parts of the world is a luxury no longer permitted to you. Furthermore, the situation evolving in Europe and the policies initiated here cannot fail to have considerable impact upon the world economy, accelerating or delaying economic growth in developing countries.

In the new Europe being shaped by the CSCE process I perceive major opportunities for co-operation the United Nations on matters of common and urgent concern to both. These include the prevention and settlement of

disputes affecting international peace and security, agreements on arms limitation and disarmament, the consolidation of a universal human rights regime, world economic development, the protection of the environment, and finally action to combat social scourges such as illicit drug trafficking, crime and infectious diseases on an international scale.

Peace is and will remain the common aim of the United Nations and of the CSCE process. Besides your geographical proximity to and economic interaction with areas of grave and dangerous tension, like the Near and Middle East, account must also be taken of another factor, that of historic ties. The genesis of many disputes in other continents can be traced to actions and circumstances going back to the colonial period. The end of colonialism and of the East-West polarity in no way reduces the obligation to participate actively in the efforts of the United Nations to settle those disputes. Moreover, four of the five permanent members of the Security Council are signatories of the Helsinki Final Act. Their special responsibility for the maintenance of peace cannot be limited to one region or be governed exclusively by the interests of that region alone.

In the circumstances of today, there is unfortunately no region where the possibility of new disputes requiring action by the United Nations can be ruled out, given the various ethnic and historical roots that make up the richness and the diversity of Europe. I think it wise that the CSCE participants are already contemplating the establishment of a regional Conflict Prevention Centre. I would, however, emphasize that Europe, like the other regions of our world community can count on the United Nations to provide without delay all the assistance it is capable of lending in the resolution of disputes of all kinds.

There is, in fact, in Europe itself a dispute which I cannot fail to mention here. I refer to that relating to Cyprus. The aim of the United Nations is to help the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities preserve the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus within a bicomunal and bizonal federation. The persistence of this problem, despite my continuous efforts, is incongruous with the attention given to and the drive towards peace-making demonstrated elsewhere at this time. I am sure you will agree that it is the responsibility of your region to render all possible support to the efforts for a peaceful and definitive settlement of this question now twenty seven years old.

One of the hallmarks of the CSCE process has been the constructive spirit at work in the design of a whole series of measures to build confidence and security among European countries. Such measures, which were once thought to be peripheral to real security needs, are now seen to have paved the way for arms reduction in Europe by fostering a more open and more stable climate. Today in Paris you are in the process of building impressively upon the repertoire of existing practices, most notably going well beyond the accomplishments of the 1986 Stockholm Accords. I note with particular pleasure the decision by the CSCE participants to expand their information exchange into the area of military expenditures and to adopt the reporting format standardized by the United Nations for this purpose. This is a concrete example of how guidelines developed at the global level can be applied regionally.

I warmly welcome the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces which shows that the reduction of conventional weapons, far from being a Utopian goal, can be carried out in a co-operative and stabilising fashion. That instrument will I trust, be followed by agreements placing limits on the transfer of conventional arms to other regions, thereby providing a valuable inspiration and guide for future actions of other States elsewhere. We must not forget, your Excellencies, recent experience.

The process started by the CSCE has also been exemplary in giving full importance to the human dimension. The agreement of the participating States to a wide range of human rights obligations shows that, there too, your work and the work of the United Nations converge. Our human rights standards are your human rights standards. In establishing those standards, the United Nations has provided specific and objective criteria by which peoples can judge the practices of their governments and the political system of their societies. An awareness of these standards has greatly contributed to the spread of democracy in Europe, and I am convinced that this carries considerable promise for the whole international community, because the consciousness that has found expression in Europe may well bring about political transformations in other regions of the world.

However, we cannot be unmindful of the fact that, while democracy is a necessary condition for the recognition of basic human rights, it is not in itself sufficient to ensure the actual enjoyment of those rights. Indeed, genuine political democracy has little chance of survival and stability is likely to prove very elusive if it is not accompanied by social justice. Such justice, if it is to be consolidated needs the help and support of those who rightly encourage it, although too often they abandon it just after it has been brought about.

The CSCE community enjoys a large percentage of the world's productive capacity, of its advanced technology and of its capital wealth, which are all essential elements in overcoming the poverty and social upheavals that lie at the roots of many disputes and conflicts in other regions. The leaders assembled here today will all, I am sure, recognize that the great achievements in their countries carry with them an increased responsibility for the peace and well-being of the global community and for strengthening the multilateral institutions that serve it. The arc of developed nations that now stretches across our northern hemisphere must not stop at a line dividing North from South; it must continue and form a circle within which North and South can jointly prosper. I am a man of the South and I can tell you that the North will continue to be seated on a throne of clay so long as the South does not enjoy a minimum of well-being.

This brings out the importance of the economic issues to the concerns of your countries. Beyond the larger question of promoting development around the globe, there are economic issues of the deepest interest to the CSCE where the knowledge accumulated by the United Nations system can prove to be most useful. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, of which you are all members, has over the long years of the cold war done great service in bridging the divisions of Europe. In the new European setting, thought might be given to holding meetings of the Commission at ministerial level in order to strengthen its authority and increase its effectiveness. In a similar context, I would mention the important role played by UNESCO, following the Helsinki process, in activities in the field of education, science and culture. I hope that the potential and experience of that body will be drawn upon in promoting pan-European and scientific and cultural exchanges.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar

In all these fields I envision a relationship between the United Nations and the CSCE process which will be more than a matter of form or bureaucratic procedure, but which will relate to substance. I am firmly convinced that in due course appropriate arrangements can be devised to ensure that fruitful interaction.

Mr. President of the Republic, Your Excellencies, the world in which we live is, as you well know, a world where conflict is still rampant and where poverty persists on a frightening and dangerous scale. At this very moment we are faced with a very difficult and threatening situation in a region that is all too close to Europe. Only a shared commitment by all Members of the United Nations, only solidarity in the defence of peace, justice and collective security, only co-operative endeavour to solve economic, social and humanitarian problems can secure the better world for which all humanity yearns. The very possibility of global peace now made practical by advances in civilization invites us to a unity of effort and allegiance that transcends all regional affiliations.

For centuries political aspirations around the globe were governed by ideas and institutions that originated in Europe. In the twentieth century your continent has been the scene of the two most murderous wars ever fought on this planet. Now Europe may well have found the means of ensuring lasting peace. The means are in essence simple: solidarity, co-operation, openness and respect for human rights. I am convinced that these means are also accessible to nations in other regions too. Encouraging those nations to employ them, through example and assistance, should, in my view, be our ultimate goal.

Mr. President of the Republic, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, in the final analysis, if the example you have set by establishing security and co-operation in Europe on a solid foundation does assume a truly planetary dimension, you will then have written one of the most inspiring chapters in the human story.

Thank you.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.