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The adoption of the Agenda for Development by the General Assembly is a milestone in our collective search for a meaningful global partnership for development. That the membership could reach agreement on so complex a matter, is testimony to the seriousness with which States view the issue, and to the dynamics of consensus-building in fostering a global partnership. Member States should act to implement the Agenda for Development in a coordinated manner, by creating dynamic structures capable of successful delivery.

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The global partnership for sustainable development will be enhanced through the transfer of essential and environmentally sound technologies to developing States on preferential and concessional terms. The financial resources and mechanisms necessary for the implementation of Agenda 21 inadequate. Developed countries should honour their commitment to raise Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows to the United Nations' target of 0.7% of GDP. Those few countries which have achieved this objective are commended.

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The fifty-first Session of the General Assembly also witnessed the conclusion of the work of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System. Its notable recommendations regarding the strengthening of the role and functions of the General Assembly, attest to the importance which we as Member States attach to this body as the supreme political organ of the Organisation.

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South Africa is concerned that intra-state conflicts in Africa continue to pose a threat to the continent's stability. These conflicts lead to loss of life and economic hardships and are a major stumbling block on the road towards peace and development.

It is a matter of concern that conflicts in Africa persist despite the commendable efforts of the OAU and other African leaders in conflict resolution. We therefore urge parties to the conflict in the Republic of Congo to observe the cease-fire agreement and make all efforts to ensure that the interim measures for the holding of national elections in 1998 are instituted.

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South Africa has followed the unfolding developments in the Middle East with cautious optimism. South Africa, and indeed the international community welcomed the signing of the Oslo accord by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and the Israeli government and applauded it as representing a positive step towards the full realisation of the long-awaited comprehensive and just settlement in the Region.

But the decision of the Government of Israel to construct new Jewish settlements in Jabal Abu Gheinn has given rise to tensions and generated a crisis situation which has reignited conflict in the region. We all know that this decision is a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and the relevant resolutions of this august body. It is no doubt an attempt to change the legal status of Jerusalem and pre-empt the final status negotiations.

The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, is a prerequisite for achieving a durable and comprehensive peace. The prevalence of peace and stability in the region requires the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967.

South Africa welcomes the Secretary-General's latest initiatives currently underway to seek a long and lasting solution to the question of Cyprus. We urge all parties to make concerted efforts to work with the Secretary-General and his good offices towards an overall comprehensive settlement to this question which has been on the agenda of the United Nations for more than thirty years. South Africa attaches great importance to preventive diplomacy as a means of forestalling the possibility of conflict. We commend the report of the Special Committee on Peace-Keeping Operations because it provides us with measures aimed at strengthening the role of the UN in peace-keeping.

We also welcome the report of the 1997 Session on Peace-Keeping Operations and urge the committee to address the question of the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters and the further development of UN Standby Arrangements.

South Africa believes that progress on disarmament issues will create a world free of war. The end of the Cold War heralded a period of progress in disarmament and non-proliferation as was evidenced by the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. However, the re-emergence of maximalist positions in the disarmament debate retards global disarmament, as demonstrated by the disappointing progress made at Conference on Disarmament this year. Despite the consensual adoption of a mandate for the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, one of the essential elements for complete nuclear disarmament, little progress has been made.

Nevertheless, South Africa is encouraged by the large number of States which have committed themselves to the complete

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The South African Government puts a high premium on the promotion and protection of human rights as a cornerstone of its foreign policy. As we approach the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Year of Human Rights, we reaffirm our commitment to the pre-eminent values of basic human dignity, values which we have fought for and for which we must continue to fight. Our people deserve no less.

In this context, my delegation supports the recommendation to convene a world conference on Racism and Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related Intolerance.

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STATEMENT BY MINISTER ALFRED B. NZO TO THE 52ND SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY: 22 SEPTEMBER 1997

EMBARGO: 17H00 NEW YORK TIME

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Mr President,

South Africa welcomes your election as the 52nd President of the General Assembly. In congratulating you we do so having experienced at first hand your skills and role as Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid. We also express our appreciation to Ambassador Ismail Razali, for his tireless work as President of the 51st Session.

May I also congratulate H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan on his election as the 7th Secretary-General. The zeal which the Secretary-General has displayed in addressing, through his reform proposals, the difficulties confronting this organisation is impressive.

The Secretaryâ\200\224General's reform programme is one which in many respects complements the intergovernmental process regarding the revitalisation of the Organisation.

The General Assembly is well aware of the need to reform the United Nations. The process of reform should produce a revitalised organisation capable of addressing humanity's vital issues of peace and security. Central to the process of modernisation of the United Nations is the restructuring of the Security Council to redress existing imbalances and transform it into a transparent organ accountable to the broader membership of the organisation.

South Africa fully supports the Nonâ\200\224Aligned Movement's position that there should be no partial or selective expansion in the membership of the Security Council, to the detriment of developing countries.

The reaffirmation by the Harare Summit of the Organisation for African Unity, of Africa's claim for two permanent and five non-permanent seats with the same powers and prerogatives enjoyed by the current permanent members, in an expanded Security Council is consistent with the Charter principle of equitable geographical representation. If the Security Council is to fulfil the role of the custodian of international peace and security envisaged for it in the Charter, it must be perceived to be fully legitimate by states and peoples.

South Africa is therefore of the view that a limited expansion of only five or six new Security Council seats will not fulfil the crucial requirement of transforming the Security Council into a representative organ.

Central to the Security Council reform process, is the question of the veto which has been a focal point in our deliberations for the last three and a half years. Indeed the democratisation of the Council hinges on the veto being either eliminated or extended to the new permanent members. Accordingly, the issue of

We encourage the promotion and sustainable management of the global environment to ensure a higher quality of life for all. The objective of sustainable development should be the integration of environmental, economic and social policies in order to meet basic human needs and manage the environment on a sustainable basis.

The disappointing lack of consensus at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the Environment held in June 1997 leaves considerable follow-up action to be undertaken in order to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 21.

In this respect, the role and importance of UNEP as one of the leading UN bodies in the field of environment should be strengthened.

We commend the decision to convene a Special Session on Drugs to effectively deal with the illicit production, sale, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The Special Session will offer memberâ\200\224states an opportunity to join their efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

South Africa strongly favours the early establishment of a permanent, independent and effective international criminal court. An opportunity now exists to establish the court before the turn of the century. We must, therefore, redouble our efforts during the forthcoming sessions of the Preparatory Committee to ensure that the diplomatic conference in Rome can complete its work successfully.

Mr President,

It is imperative that all Member States continue to fully support the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. To this end, my Government, in collaboration with the 'Parliamentarians for Global Action', recently hosted an international workshop on securing State cooperation and compliance with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Its purpose was to review cooperation with the Rwanda Tribunal and encourage the enactment of domestic legislation by Member States thus ensuring that those accused of acts of genocide are swiftly brought to trial.

My Government welcomes efforts to elaborate a draft convention to define terrorism. It is our belief that acts of terrorism must be clearly distinguished from national liberation struggles in pursuit of the right to subjected to foreign or colonial domination.

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I would like to take this opportunity to announce to this Assembly that on 20 August 1997, the South African Cabinet approved ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. South Africa, a country with considerable maritime interests, will, for its part, continue to play a meaningful and constructive role in the governance of the world's oceans.

The continuing financial crisis of the Organisation is of great concern to my delegation. We fully support the Secretary-General's commitment to ending the long and persistent near-bankruptcy of the Organisation. Mr President, it behoves Member States to discharge their treaty obligations by paying their contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

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