

just how shocking the problem is when it is pointed out that in 1986 and 1987 the money these countries needed to service their debt was a billion dollars more than the amount they received from the International Monetary Fund. Moreover, the austerity programmes imposed on the debtor countries solve nothing, they only put a brake on human and economic development. If one takes into account the lower commodity prices on the world market and the fall in Africa's export revenues in recent years, it is clear that the debt problem will not solve itself. Moreover the development of various substitute products might make the situation even more difficult for Third World exporters. Stephen Lewis criticized the Group of Seven for having failed to take any positive action to alleviate this problem. He said that the US \$100 billion owed to the West by the twenty-two poorest countries could be written off without making any significant difference to the lending countries.

Mr. Lewis deplored the fact that the great majority of Western countries have not yet accepted the recommendations of the Pearson Report, which--twenty years earlier--urged donor countries to devote 0.7 percent of their Gross National Product to development assistance. Indeed, the United States has even reduced its aid to Africa south of the Sahara; in 1985 this had amounted to US \$1.3 billion, while in the current year it had fallen to US \$600 million. Canada and the West must make every effort to prevent Africa sinking to levels of even greater misery in the 21st century.

Protecting the environment is the other great challenge which faces humanity and there are two aspects to this: on the one hand pollution must be reduced in the industrialized countries, and on the other, the poorer ones must be able to develop their economies without damaging the ecological balance. Mr. Lewis praised the work done by the United Nations which has resulted in the Brundtland Report on Development and the Environment.

This report accepts two main principles--the need for sustainable development and the acceptance of earth, sea and air as our common inheritance. It provides the necessary basis for a worldwide policy on the environment.

The third objective of any global policy designed to promote peace and security must be to link disarmament with development. Mr. Lewis reminded his audience that if both North and South were to reduce what they spend on arms, enormous resources