

Mr. President, although our efforts these past few weeks have necessarily been directed toward a search for lasting solutions to the critical political issues which beset the international community, we must not permit our preoccupation with these problems to divert our attention from the need for increasing cooperation in pursuit of the economic and other objectives of the Charter. It has been suggested that the political problems with which we are confronted are so serious that useful initiatives in other fields should not be attempted. However, it is the belief of my Delegation that, as the members of the international community demonstrate their ability and willingness to cooperate in finding constructive solutions in the political field, so our capacity and our responsibility for finding better and more dynamic methods for strengthening the international economic fabric are enhanced.

I believe also that we should consider the best methods for assisting the countries of the Middle East to restore their normal economic life following the present crisis and to make plans for continuing economic progress and growth. The United Nations should ensure that any political settlements in the Middle East crisis take account of the need for solution of the pressing economic problems of that area.

I believe also that the United Nations should continue to improve and strengthen the programmes which have been initiated to assist the economic development of the underdeveloped countries. To this end, my Delegation will propose in the Second Committee that the United Nations undertake a study of existing programmes of bilateral and multilateral economic aid in the expectation that such a study will result in better understanding of the scope and nature of the problems still to be resolved. This suggestion will be designed to promote, through an exchange of information, coordination of the economic aid programmes which are now being conducted under the United Nations' umbrella or outside it. A better understanding of the scope of existing programmes and of the experience acquired in implementing them would undoubtedly pave the way to more informed and realistic consideration of SUNFED and other programmes which will be under consideration.

In conclusion, may I say that although we may find this session somewhat frightening and discouraging, it has nevertheless accomplished useful work. Our concrete realizations as yet are few, but we do see the hope of progress which could change for the better the great experiment of this Assembly in international cooperation. We have all learned a great deal in the past few weeks, and the experience should make us wiser in the future.