

economies; it is now clearer that such trade is a relatively minor cause of the need for restructuring in developed economies. There is very interesting work currently being done on the possibilities and limits of "massive transfers".

At the more political level we have been able to overcome some of the false obstacles to successful dialogue which arose from the different general perspectives of developed and developing countries. We can see this in the broad acceptance that some old and time-consuming disagreements over the concept of interdependence — where the North stressed interdependence between geographic regions and the South stressed interdependence between issues — were really based on false assumptions. I mention an abstract example of this type because the language or the rhetoric of the dialogue can be an important determinant of its course. Perhaps the most telling case was when Mr. Kissinger called, in May 1975, for "an end to the theatrical debate over whether we are seeking a new order or improving the old one...", and accepted the need for the dialogue between oil producers and consumers to include "the general issue of the relationship between developed and developing countries". This declaration on abstract issues marked a significant shift in American policy and had an evident effect on the climate of dialogue.

Progress in defining issues and problems can also be seen in the ability of North and South to pass a large number of resolutions by consensus at virtually all international meetings. The effect of such resolutions is often not direct or immediate, but they serve a useful purpose in clearing intellectual and ideological underbrush and setting directions for debate on more concrete measures.

Of course, the North-South dialogue in its various forms has not proceeded smoothly. There have been areas of relative success and others of relative failure. The general climate has altered from time to time. I think, for example, that the climate in the early to mid-70s was particularly marked by rhetoric and confrontation, that there was a clear improvement before and after the UNCTAD IV Conference in Nairobi in 1976, and that there has been a certain deterioration in the past year or so. In my reading of the factors influencing the chances for success or failure of a conference, I give special importance to the negotiating tactics of the Group of 77, to the extent to which each meeting is focused on a manageable number of issues, and to the determination of all sides to reach an agreement. Because of its importance, I should like to pause on this question of negotiating tactics.

#### Group of 77's approach to negotiations

The Group of 77, now comprising some 117 countries or two-thirds of the UN's membership, is made up of a collection of countries that are economically, culturally and ideologically very diverse. Because of this diversity — and especially the tensions between oil-importing and oil-exporting countries — some observers have been inclined to view the 77 as artificial and ultimately transitory. Personally, I think we are misleading ourselves if we believe the 77 as a negotiating unit will disappear from the North-South dialogue in the foreseeable future. The developing countries feel strong elements of commonality — arising from their traditional history as the poor countries of the world, whatever their present circumstances — and they believe that their collective unity is a requirement for successful bargaining with the North. What worries me is that, as the tensions within the Group increase, it will have more and