

if we wish effective arms-limitation and disarmament agreements. Advances in military technology often complicate efforts to find the technical and military basis for agreement and satisfactory means of verifying commitments. Agreements must promote or be compatible with the security interests of participating states. Disarmament negotiations are unlikely to succeed unless political conditions are conducive to progress.

But this is no argument for inaction in this Assembly. It is no argument for accepting the present and totally unsatisfactory rate of progress in achieving disarmament measures. The General Assembly must continue as the forum of international concern and as a spur to action in the field of disarmament.

Peace-keeping and the Middle East

If our anxiety about the prospects for progress in disarmament continues unrelieved, we can draw some comfort from the recent movement towards peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

No one who has the interests of world security at heart can fail to be encouraged by the statesmanlike conduct of the leaders of Egypt and Israel, which produced the new interim agreement on the Sinai. We also recognize the dedication of the American Secretary of State, whose tireless efforts have once again contributed towards a positive result. It is a fragile beginning to be sure. By itself, it does little to settle the underlying issues; and they must be resolved if peace and security are to come to the Middle East. But we see in the agreement grounds for hope. We see it as the first stage in a series of interlocking negotiations and agreements that would involve all the parties to the dispute and embrace all the fundamental issues, difficult though this will be. The end would be a just settlement that would enable the destructive passions of the past to be overcome and permit all peoples in the area to live as neighbours in peace and security.

For all those concerned about United Nations peace-keeping there is another reason for drawing satisfaction from the Sinai agreement.

Peace-keeping is one of the few useful instruments that the international community has developed to help promote peaceful solutions to disputes. It is designed to assist the parties to a dispute to draw back from conflict when they recognize that this is in their best interests and to help create circumstances in which their differences can be settled by negotiation.

But all too often peace-keeping reduces the incentive of the dispu-