

competence and may act in their personal capacity -- the expert committees dealing with scientific, and to some extent financial, subjects are a good illustration. Working groups of larger committees which are instructed to meet privately and without records are also useful means of accomplishing business quickly and, in some cases, effectively. One should not overlook, as well, the technique of holding private meetings of the Security Council, although it is usually preferable for the members of the Council to meet together privately as representatives and not formally as Council members. I think, too, that the idea of holding regular meetings of the Council to discuss general questions of concern to the Council because of its responsibilities under the Charter, rather than particular issues brought to its attention by member states, is worth exploring.

I should emphasize, as well, the role of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat in promoting agreement and in representing the common interests of the organization and its members. If the Secretariat is to introduce this element of balance and conciliation, it is essential that it remain independent and impartial.

Finally, the UN offers unique opportunities for communication and understanding between governments that might otherwise find it physically awkward or politically difficult to communicate. Working relations between delegations are usually continuous, informal and intensive. The individuals concerned become not only aware of the issues which are common to the international community as a whole but tend to look at these issues in terms of a common responsibility for finding ways and means of dealing with them. Charter principles and purposes, past experience and precedents, the leadership of the Secretary-General, the atmosphere of informality and the pressure of common problems -- all these elements tend to forge out of disparate resources the nexus of multilateral diplomacy.

#### General Assembly

The large increase in membership of the General Assembly over the past ten years has both widened and restricted the opportunities for multilateral diplomacy. It has widened them because there are far more contacts, discussions and meetings amongst 120 or more members than there could be between 70 or 80 members. Furthermore, the subjects on the agenda of the Assembly have become more varied, reflecting the particular interests and objectives of the new states. If the experience of the last 18 months can be considered evidence of a trend, the Assembly will be in session for longer periods. In addition to the regular sessions of the Assembly, we have had in the past year or so a special session, an emergency special session and a resumed session.

On the other hand, the opportunities for diplomacy have to some extent been restricted by the ease of achieving a two-thirds majority for resolutions which are supported by member states from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Until recent years, the voting rules usually implied that the sponsoring states had to take into account the views of other members and groups of members and to accept amendments before a vote was called on their resolutions. Now it is possible for resolutions on certain subjects, particularly resolutions relating to colonial issues and to issues of economic development, to be