

ing it wo
verthel
N to newly-independent states and to smaller states was
equently stressed. This debate may have contributed to
ie eventual addition of new members. Even the two
e develo
reas, the Holy See, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and San
problem
anno, although presently not members of the UN, sent
counthigh-level representatives to speak.

orld, of The dynamic and real achievements of the specialized
sing prgencies, particularly the WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR,
for a ere often used as illustrations. Many speakers gave strong
xpound support to UNICEF's new program to immunize all chil-
ren by the 1990s. A few, like Canada, spoke on the subject
l needt some length, stressing the usefulness of the UN system
he humr such activities. Other achievements were mentioned,
that earticularly in the areas of peacekeeping and human rights
consend the codification of international law. Many attributed
fter ma the UN a role in the fact that the world has not seen a
on wholbal conflagration or a nuclear conflict in forty years.
lost stressed the need to bring the arms race to a halt and
o achieve disarmament, but surprisingly perhaps, this was
ot one of the main themes of the debate.

In this debate, peace and security were broadly de-
ned. They included many economic, social and security
actors, not just the absence of war. Specific issues in this
real were not examined, with speakers for the most part
choing the Prime Minister of Ireland who said, "There is
ow a world order to which all feel obliged to pay at least
y the up-service and which in greater or lesser degree constrains
he action of States."

Ways to improve

There were several evaluations of the UN itself. Many
ecounted the large amount of positive work done by the

United Nations system but some went on to consider the
shortcomings. They called for more support to the UN, for
more authority to the Secretary-General, for more con-
sensus in the Security Council. They paid particular atten-
tion to the financial arrangements of the UN and lamented
the loss of revenue caused by States not paying their share
or by paying late. They collectively stressed the need to
make the organization more efficient and effective. But
many did not blame the United Nations itself for its short-
comings. On this Fortieth Anniversary there were calls
from many sides for countries to exert the "political will" to
allow the UN to function better, recognizing that the ulti-
mate blame for failure lay not with the organization but
with the Member States.

The biggest beneficiary of the fortieth anniversary
debate was the United Nations itself. Scores of media
personnel from every corner of the globe descended on the
General Assembly, creating an unprecedented profile for
the organization although many devoted their attention to
superficial problems like the traffic-jams created by too
many limousines. The gratuitously maligned image of the
UN may have reached its nadir and began in October 1985 a
long and much needed recovery.

At the commemoration of the UN's founding I doubt
that any new solutions were discovered for the most press-
ing problems of today. But the leaders of the world, forced
by their mere presence, *were* listening to each other. At
least for two weeks. Perhaps they also renewed their faith
to serve what the Secretary-General called, "the single,
collective constituency of the human race." □

YPRU

