

of payments, and greatly accelerates the accumulation of debt. One could equally be emotional about it and note that the figures constitute a monumental economic calamity.

Without any inclination to moral preachiness, it is necessary to acknowledge that the root causes implicate us all. Whether it is misguided domestic policies, low rates of investment (particularly in agriculture), poor management, high interest rates, or stagnant world commodity trade, the breakdown in Africa's primary economic underpinnings has greatly added to the tragedy. The challenge for corrective action is to reverse the decline in total output, and to deal realistically (some would say courageously), with all these interlocking economic problems.

Our immediate goals in addressing the African crisis should be early recovery and the establishment of a foundation for longer-term development. Early recovery means amongst other things, taking advantage of the current good rains by providing tools and fertilizers, as well as increased food storage capacity. Longer-term development requires a co-ordinated response to bridge the transition from emergency to security. A number of useful suggestions have been made by various groups, including the International Development Research Centre in Canada, the Expert Summit Group on the African Emergency, and the Commonwealth. Perhaps I might highlight sensible and relevant measures:

- (a) improving and integrating the early warning systems of various multilateral agencies and African countries;
- (b) strengthening the response system for emergencies through better management, based on the hard lessons learned to date;
- (c) striving for truly effective co-operation between donors and development agencies on the one hand and the governments and peoples of Africa on the other;
- (d) integrating food aid with national food production policies;
- (e) utilizing resettlement packages, and other innovative direct assistance strategies to provide immediate assistance to those most in need.

The goals of helping Africa to better manage future emergencies and to reverse declining development are not difficult to state. To attain them, however, will require Herculean efforts and unprecedented resources over the long term. The international community knows its responsibilities; but when all is said and done, the major effort and resources must be found in Africa. No continent can live by aid alone. Which resources are we talking about? Quite simply: environmental, financial, policy and co-ordination. All of them exist indigenously, and must be exploited imaginatively. Let us examine them more fully for a moment.

- (1) Environmental resources obviously refer to soil, water, grasslands, and forests. This is the great inheritance of Africa and it is being devastated in the short term. The result? Desertification, increased severity of droughts, unplanned population movements, and lowered crop yields. The degradation of