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For Correspondents

Following is the text of the address of the Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Max van der Stoel, in the general debate in the XXXI General Assembly of the United Nations on Tuesday, September 28, 1976.

Mr. van der Stoel, who at present is President of the Council of Ministers of the European Community, dedicated part of his address to express the views of the Council.

Mr. President,

It is a privilege, on behalf of the government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to congratulate you most warmly on your election as President of this General Assembly. Your eminent qualities, your long experience in the United Nations and the many important services which you have rendered to the organization are well-known.

The seventh special session of the General Assembly was a manifestation of goodwill and harmony leading to consensus through negotiations. It re-affirmed the unique potential of the United Nations for co-operation. Although the subsequent regular session of the General Assembly yielded positive results, it was overshadowed by a number of decisions which have contributed to a deterioration of the political climate in the General Assembly and also in some of the specialized agencies.

I feel bound to sound a serious warning on the dangers which would threaten the United Nations if countries whose support is indispensable, were to be alienated from the organization. The strong and powerful countries could possibly tend to themselves, but the weaker and less privileged nations could not. They are most in need of the protection and support of a strong United Nations. They would have few alternatives if an effective world organization were to founder. It is high time that all of us make an effort to stop these dangerous tendencies towards disintegration.

But what are the underlying causes of these tendencies? The Secretary-General is pointing to one of them in the introduction to his annual report, when he rightly underlines that the north-south relationship has virtually replaced east-west problems in the debates of the General Assembly.

I should now like to address you as president of the council of ministers of the European Community and as president of European Political Co-operation.

In today's world the European Community is a living political and economic reality. Our Union has yet to be completed, but we are determined to unite. We naturally realize that the further unification of Europe - whose variety of culture has proved so vital and fruitful - will be a complex process, but we know that we are intent upon a project of fundamental importance. The radical reorganization of one part of the world community of nations will have an effect - in my view a beneficial one - on the whole of that community. The Europe we are building is one in which material welfare will rest upon social justice, one which will be democratic and soon have its own freely elected parliament, a Europe which must be outward looking to the whole world.

As it develops, our internal policy, based on steady growth, social justice and democracy, must also make its contribution to growth, justice and freedom elsewhere in the world, to a close and productive relationship with countries outside the Communities and in particular with the developing countries.

Structural changes in the world economy are a necessary condition for improvement of the social and economic situation of millions of people throughout the world. In view of its own economic, financial, technological strength and capabilities, the Community which has already proved to be one of the most dynamic factors of the world economy, recognizes the need for increasingly coherent policies for development co-operation based on generally agreed objectives and policy measures. It is with this objective in mind that, for example, the Community applies and continues to improve its generalized system of preferences for developing countries.

during the seventh special session the countries of the european community showed their readiness unitedly to make a positive contribution toward the building of a more just and equitable international economic order. today, i wish to reiterate that pledge on behalf of the nine members and our will to carry out the commitments that we undertook at that special session, the negotiations that took place at u n c t a d i v and those continuing at the paris north-south dialogue are ample proof that, while there seems enough common ground for real progress, wide divergences of opinion remain on important issues. the members of the european community, while following the path of conciliation and dialogue, are determined to spare no effort to implement the pledges we gave last year in new york and now recently in nairobi and to make a success of the paris dialogue.

let me assure you, mr. president, there will be no retraction of previous promises. on the contrary the members of the community, recognizing the interests of the world economy as whole, remain committed to a structural improvement of the position of the developing countries in the world economy, taking particular account of the urgent problems of those countries most in need. it is in this spirit that we will approach the forthcoming negotiations and discussions which will take place in conformity with the relevant resolutions as adopted at u n c t a d i v. moreover, the participating countries at the paris conference on international economic co-operation are back at the negotiating table and it is our sincere hope that all efforts will be made for a successful conclusion of the ministerial meeting in december. for its part, the european community is determined to contribute to a concrete outcome of the paris conference. in paris we speak with one voice, our joint participation reflects the increasing involvement of the european community and its increasing weight in the north-south relationship.

the community welcomes the entry into force of the acc-ec convention of lome last april. the importance of this convention - which relies upon a certain number of new ideas - is without precedent in relations between developing and developed countries. it concerns more than half a billion human beings. its objective is to establish and develop, in a spirit of friendship, economic relations between the community of the nine and more than 50 developing countries. furthermore, the importance of the convention of lome rests upon the fact that all its members are placed within an "equal partnership" on a basis of complete equality between partners. this implies a mutual most seriously and constructively consider the wishes of the a c p countries voiced at the first meeting of the acc-ec council of ministers at which i had the honour to represent the community.

finally, we welcome the increase in the number of participants in that convention: surinam, the comoros and the seychelles have all deposited their acts of accession. negotiations have begun with sao tome and principe, cape verde and with papua new guinea for their accession.

the nine also attach particular importance to the united nations. they have proved this so far by endeavouring to play an active and constructive role both individually and collectively. during the last few years, their co-operation has manifested itself repeatedly on this assembly in common statements and declarations of vote on behalf of the nine and by their votes being cast on the basis of a common or at least a co-ordinated position. we shall continue to use our joint influence and weight for the purpose of strengthening the united nations as the principal instrument for international security and co-operation.

the situation in southern africa remains a matter of deep concern. in rhodesia the acceptance of the anglo-u.s. proposals by mr. smith's cabinet represents a significant step forward. the nine express the hope that this will indeed prove to be a turning-point in the history of rhodesia. if all sides show good faith, with africans and europeans working together, the foundations could be laid for an independent zimbabwe which will then take its rightful place among the family of nations.

on february 23 of this year, the foreign ministers of the nine reaffirmed in a joint declaration their basic positions with regard to southern african issues. we condemn south africa's policy of apartheid and we advocate the right to self-determination and independence of the peoples of rhodesia and namibia. we respect the independence of all african states and their right to define their national policies in complete sovereignty and without foreign interference. our countries support actions by the organization of african unity promoting african co-operation. we are ready to co-operate with the african states and reject any action by whatever state aimed at establishing a zone of influence in africa.

until fundamental changes come about, there can be no peace in southern africa. therefore our countries welcome the present efforts to find peaceful solutions to the problems of the area. the nine remain willing to contribute to these efforts.

as regards namibia, the nine stated in their message to the secretary-general on namibia day that negotiations should take place with representatives of all political groups in that territory, including the swapo, in order to pave the way for namibia's independence in the near future. the united nations should, in our view, focus its own contribution to the solution of the question of namibia on the promotion of self-determination by the namibian people in a manner both democratic and peaceful.

our governments do not intend to recognize the transkei on the occasion of its purported independence. false solutions to the problems of apartheid in the republic of south africa, such as the establishment of homelands or bantustans as presently pursued by the south african government, promote rather than diminish racial discrimination. the popular upheaval and resistance to apartheid should have convinced the south african government that apartheid has no future and constitutes an unsupportable violation of human dignity. south africa is a multi-racial society in which all people, irrespective of their race of colour, should have the right to live peacefully together on the basis of equality. apartheid is in flagrant contradiction with this fundamental right and should be eliminated. as long it is practised, it will be resisted by those whose basic human rights are denied. the nine are unequivocal in their firm belief that justice and freedom for all should prevail in south africa.

in the middle east the tragic events in Lebanon have brought untold suffering to the inhabitants of that strife-torn country. the nine countries of the european community deplore the tragic bloodshed which has claimed and continues to claim so many victims. on a number of occasions members of the european community have shown their concern over the situation in Lebanon and have expressed the hope that all involved will do everything possible to bring this conflict to an end.

the nine are prepared to support all meaningful efforts of conciliation and welcome those which are in progress in the inter-arab context. they underline their continuing commitment to the independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. i should like to assure president sarkis, on his assumption of office as the new head of state of Lebanon, of the good will of the members of the european community in the fulfilment of the difficult tasks which lie ahead of him. with regard to the arab-israeli conflict the members of the european community are convinced that negotiations based on a minimum of consensus among all the parties concerned are essential for the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the middle east. in this respect they reiterate their continuing firm attachment to the resolutions 242 and 338 of the security council and to the principles which are the basis of their position and which i repeat :

- i. the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force.,
- ii. the need for israel to end the territorial occupation which it has maintained since the conflict of 1967.,
- iii. respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.,

iv. recognition that in the establishment of a just and lasting peace account must be taken of the legitimate rights of the palestinians.

I would like to emphasize that a solution of the conflict in the middle east will only be possible if the legitimate right of the palestinian people to give effective expression to its national identity, is translated into fact, for their part the countries of the european community are prepared to assist to the best of their ability and to the extent desired by the parties in the achievement of a settlement, and, as soon as the settlement is approved by all parties, to help in making it a reality.

in this context they would be prepared, as they have stated earlier, to consider participation in international guarantees for the implementation of a peace settlement.

cyprus is a problem of deep concern for the nine. it involves three countries associated with the european community. that is the reason why the nine have spared and will spare no effort to bring the parties concerned to the conference table and to advocate restraint to all sides. we are convinced that this problem can be solved solely through negotiations. our basic position that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the republic of cyprus should be maintained and safeguarded remains unchanged. the nine welcome and support the tireless efforts of the secretary-general and his representative on cyprus to assist the parties concerned in finding a solution to the conflict.

the nine are aware that peace, detente and human freedom are indivisible and inseparable, in the world and in europe. they acted together in negotiating the final act of helsinki on european security and co-operation and are striving together for the implementation of that act. it is too early to judge the follow-up of helsinki. I wish to state, however, on behalf of the nine that, if we are earnest in our quest for peace and security in europe, the final act must be implemented in its integrity, in all its interrelated component parts. it is in that spirit and in good faith that we approach the meeting to be convened in belgrade next year.

on behalf of the nine countries of the european communities I wish now to speak about a matter of deep concern to them: international terrorism and in particular the increasing frequency of acts of violence which endanger or take innocent human lives, particularly when such acts of violence take on international dimensions and can only be tackled effectively by international action. in this respect the taking of hostages constitutes one of the most heinous crimes against human life, liberty and the security of the human person as guaranteed in article 3 of the universal declaration of human rights, regardless of political ends, regardless of motives, regardless of the identity or affiliation of its perpetrators. the member states of the european communities, as they have stated most recently in their declaration of july 13, 1976, regard this inhuman method of taking hostages as absolutely unacceptable and they condemn it in the strongest possible terms.

without overlooking the fact that the solution of the issues underlying certain forms of international terrorism would undoubtedly contribute to the suppression of this evil, and without neglecting or impeding all the efforts being made to this effect, it nevertheless remains an illusion to assume that the problem of terrorism in its broad sense would be solved only by tackling any one underlying issue. furthermore, there are serious indications that we are confronted with a growing danger of a world-wide network of professional criminal terrorism ready to strike at any moment against any state and its citizens. in this unsettled world, new burning issues of conflict are bound to arise time and again, but international actions to stamp out terrorism cannot wait.

it must by now be clear that no country, no people, no government can hope to be spared from acts of terrorism, kidnapping and hijacking against its own citizens and interests, unless all countries agree on taking individually and jointly decisive action. none will be spared, unless all take action.

the failure to oppose insidious violence against the innocent, the defenceless and the unprotected is deeply regretted by our nine countries. we feel it is in the interest of all governments to take resolute action. we feel it is in the interest of all governments to co-operate in combating all acts of international terrorism. this assembly must live up to its responsibilities in this respect and should initiate appropriate measures.

in their declaration of july 13, the members of the european communities have given ample evidence of their willingness and determination to co-operate with other countries in setting up effective world-wide measures to eradicate and prevent international terrorism kidnapping and hijackings. we consider effective measures against the taking of hostages a matter of special urgency and i would like in this context to draw the attention of this assembly to the fact that my colleague, the minister of foreign affairs of the federal republic of germany, will submit an important and timely proposal on this issue. i invite this assembly to give this proposal due consideration and to take positive action.

it is our sincere wish, mr. president, that this thirty-first assembly may produce results commensurate with the expectations cherished by all our peoples, all over the world.

thank you mr. president.