INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS, INTERNATIONAL LAW AND NEGOTIATION

Protocol

Intro

At the outset I would like to thank Professor Eghosa E Osaghae, Director General, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs for giving me the opportunity to address this distinguished audience. This lecture is a part of the program being done by the NIIA and the Peace Building Development Consult (PBDC) hosting the Foreign Policy School.

The Topic given to me is "**International Organisations, International Law and Negotiations**". I shall cover this lecture in the following parts: -

- I shall start by covering the broad meaning of the term "International Organisations", including legal requirements.

- Thereafter I shall cover the various types of International Organisations, their major benefits and challenges, taking the case of the UN Security Council as an example.

- In the section on International Law, we shall look at the definition, origin and sources of International Law as also some alternate views on the same.

- In the third segment, I shall discuss the concept of Negotiation and its applicability and relevance at the international stage.

- Finally, I shall conclude with some recommendations on these issues.

Coming to Part I that is International Organisations,

An international Organisation, also known as an intergovernmental Organisation or an international institution, is an Organisation that is established by a treaty, or is an instrument governed by international law and possessing its own legal personality, such as the United Nations, the World Health Organisation, Save the Children International etc. International organisations are composed of primarily member states, but may also include other entities, such as other international organisations, firms, and non-governmental organisations. Additionally, entities (including states) may hold observer status. An alternative definition is that an international Organisation is a stable set of norms and rules meant to govern the behaviour of states and other actors in the international system. Notable examples include the United Nations (UN), Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Bank for International Settlements (BIS), Council of Europe (COE), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL).

International Organisations are sometimes referred to as intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), to clarify the distinction from international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), which are not controlled by any government, or NGOs, that operate internationally. These include international non-profit organisations such as the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, International Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières, as well as lobby groups that represent the interests of multinational corporations.

IGOs are established by a treaty that acts as a charter creating the group. Treaties are formed when lawful representatives (governments) of several states go through a ratification process, providing the IGO with an international legal personality. Intergovernmental organisations are an important aspect of public international law.

In general, an International Organisation can be defined as "an association or union of nations established or recognised by them for the purpose of realizing a common end". IGOs in a legal sense should be distinguished from simple groupings or coalitions of states, such as the G7, G20 or the Quad. Such groups or associations have not been founded by a constituent document and exist only as task groups. Intergovernmental organisations must also be distinguished from treaties. Many treaties, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement, or the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade before the establishment of the World Trade Organisation, do not establish an independent secretariat and instead rely on the parties for their administration, for example by setting up a joint committee. Other treaties have established an administrative apparatus which was not deemed to have been granted binding legal authority. The broader concept wherein relations among three or more states are organised according to certain principles they hold in common is multilateralism.

Intergovernmental organisations differ in function, membership, and membership criteria. They have various goals and scopes, often outlined in the treaty or charter. Some IGOs developed to fulfil a need for a neutral forum for debate or negotiation to resolve disputes. Others developed to carry out mutual interests with unified aims to preserve peace through conflict resolution and better international relations, promote international cooperation on matters such as environmental protection, to promote human rights, to promote social development (education, health care), to render humanitarian aid, and to economic development. Some are more general in scope (the United Nations) while others may have subject-specific missions (such as INTERPOL or the International Telecommunication Union and other standards organisations).

The first and oldest international organisation, established employing a treaty, and creating a permanent secretariat, with a global membership, was the International Telecommunication Union, founded in 1865. The first general international Organisation, addressing a variety of issues, was the League of Nations, founded on 10 January 1920 with a principal mission of maintaining world peace after World War I. The United Nations followed this model after World War II, and the charter was signed on 26 June 1945, in San Francisco, at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on International Organisation, and came into force on 24 October 1945.

Common types of IGOs International Organisations can broadly be classified as, firstly-

Worldwide or global organisations These are generally open to nations worldwide, as long as certain criteria are met. This category includes the United Nations (UN) and its specialized agencies, the World Health Organisation, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It also includes globally operating intergovernmental organisations that are not an agency of the UN, including for example, the Hague Conference on Private International Law, a globally operating intergovernmental Organisation based in The Hague and The International Criminal Court that adjudicates crimes defined under the Rome Statute.

Cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, or historical organisations These are open to members based on some cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, or historical link. Examples include the Commonwealth of Nations, Arab League, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, Community of Portuguese Language Countries, International Organisation of Turkic Culture, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Economic organisations These are based on macro-economic policy goals with some being dedicated to free trade and reduction of trade barriers, e.g. World Trade Organisation, International Monetary Fund. Others are focused on international development. International cartels, such as OPEC, also exist. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was founded as an economic-policy-focused organisation. An example of a recently formed economic IGO is the Bank of the South.

Educational organisations These organisations are centred around tertiary-level study. EUCLID University was chartered as a university and umbrella Organisation dedicated to sustainable development in signatory countries; United Nations University researches pressing global problems that are the concern of the United Nations, its Peoples and Member States.

Health and Population Organisations These organisations are based on common perceived health and population goals. These are formed to address those challenges collectively, for example the intergovernmental partnership for population and development Partners in Population and Development.

Regional organisations These organisations are open to members from a particular continent or other specific region of the world. This category includes the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), European Union (EU), African Union (AU), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) etc.

Benefits and Challenges Having seen the various types of International Organisations, let us take a look at some of the benefits and challenges of these:-

Major Benefits

- International Organisations take different forms: international, regional, groups of like-minded countries or institutions sharing common issues and priorities. They underpin collective action in different ways, including through developing and managing common rules through a wide variety of international instruments. Compared to other approaches to co-operation on rules, such as bilateral agreements between countries, International Organisations provide for an opportunity to co-operate on a larger scale.

- They offer platforms for continuous dialogue on and anticipation of new issues; help establish a common language; facilitate the comparability of approaches and practices; develop international legal and policy instruments; and offer resolution mechanisms in case of disputes.

- The work of International Organisations has led to important global achievements. In today's globalised economy, cross-border issues are becoming increasingly complex and challenging. Multi-dimensional, transnational policy issues include tackling climate change and other environmental problems, managing health threats such as pandemics and antimicrobial resistance, fighting tax evasion and avoidance, strengthening financial market and economic stability, underpinning fair trade, and addressing the impacts of new technologies that erase distances and borders, among others.

- Consistency in rules among countries also helps reduce costs and improve the conditions for cross-border transactions. Even when domestic solutions are more appropriate, concerted action can help gather essential information and share practices. The world of International Organisations is rich and varied, engaging in normative activities that differ in scope, reach and status.

Challenges International Organisations share many features in their rule-making practices, operational modalities, as well as in the challenges, the most important ones are: -

- One of the biggest challenges that these organisations face is the issue of remaining relevant, efficient and transparent. Most of the older organisations like the United Nations, World bank can do better to represent the realities of the present day and age.

- Another major challenge is overcoming individual interests and priorities in the decision-making process. Most of the International Organisations become stagnant and lose their relevance when nations are unable to overcome individual interests for the overall common good.

- The variety in International Organisations is matched by the broad range of normative instruments they develop. These rules form the critical pillars of an effective global governance system. However, the multiplicity of instruments

may be difficult to navigate for users, including the policy makers and legislators that may have to implement them in their own jurisdictions.

- With more and more nations joining these organisations, the sheer number of viewpoints and interests makes it difficult to reach a consensus on issues involving conflicting interests. Thus, size of these organisations itself becomes a challenge which leads to ineffectiveness.

- Many international organisations lack the power to have a meaningful impact in the international political and economic system. Most IGOs rely on member states to execute their mandates, which include tasks such as peacekeeping and making, and as a result, their success is largely determined by the member states' will to cooperate and contribute resources to their course.

- Another challenge that international organisations face relates to funding. International organisations are funded through contributions from member states, and this sometimes leads to the donor state trying to influence the decision-making process of these organisations for their benefit.

- Most International Organisations source their staff for secretariats from host nations. These secretariats that are constituted by diplomats or officials seconded from national missions is vulnerable to undue pressures, influence and manipulation by their home governments.

Example of UN Security Council

Nearly eight decades after its creation, the Security Council retains the same five permanent members (P5)—China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Since 1945, however, major players like India, Brazil, Nigeria and South Africa have emerged, to say nothing of Japan and Germany. Even as the UN's overall membership has nearly quadrupled (from fifty-one to 197 member states, the council's composition has expanded only once, in 1965, when the addition of four elected seats grew the council from eleven to fifteen members.

At the heart of the problem is the United Nations (UN) Security Council's necessary expansion to take into consideration the changed world realities. In December 1992, the General Assembly created an open-ended working group to review equitable representation on the council. More than three decades later, the body continues to meet, with no tangible results. In October 2008, the UN formally authorized intergovernmental negotiations on the "question of equitable representation and increase in the membership of the Security Council." After fifteen years of discussions, the diplomatic impasse persists.

The veto with the P5 countries many a times result is frequent council paralysis, exacerbated by deepening geopolitical rivalry between various blocs. Restoring the council's effectiveness and legitimacy, critics contend, requires updating its composition and decision-making rules to better reflect ongoing shifts in global power and emerging centres of moral authority. Unfortunately, UN members are divided over the shape of any reform, not least whether it should focus on enhancing the council's capability or its representativeness.

International Law

Coming to the next part of the lecture, let us now take a look at the evolution of International Law.

International law, also known as public international law and the law of nations, is the set of guidelines, norms, and standards usually forming the default behaviour between states. If we look at the literal meaning, inter means between which per say is outside of sovereign territories and is thus isn't a law but rather a common-practice between states. It establishes normative guidelines and a common conceptual framework for states across a broad range of domains, including war and diplomacy, economic relations, and human rights. International law differs from state-based domestic legal systems in being primarily, though not exclusively, applicable to states, rather than to individuals, and operates largely through consent, since there is no universally accepted authority to enforce it upon sovereign states, because it is non-territorial, thus is not sovereign. States may choose to not abide by international law, and even to breach a treaty, but such violations, particularly of peremptory norms, can be met with disapproval by others and in some cases coercive action ranging from diplomatic and economic sanctions to war.

With origins tracing back to antiquity, states have a long history of negotiating interstate agreements. An initial framework was conceptualised by the Ancient Romans and this idea has been used by various academics to establish the modern concept of international law. The sources of international law include international custom which is general state practice accepted as law, treaties, and general principles of law recognised by most national legal systems. Although international law may also be reflected in international comity, the practices adopted by states to maintain good relations and mutual recognition, such traditions are not legally binding. The relationship and interaction between a national legal system and international law is complex and variable. National law may become international law when treaties permit national jurisdiction to supranational tribunals such as the European Court of Human Rights or the International Criminal Court. Treaties such as the Geneva Conventions require national law to conform to treaty provisions. National laws or constitutions may also provide for the implementation or integration of international legal obligations into domestic law.

The modern term "international law" was originally coined by Jeremy Bentham in his 1789 book Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation to replace the older law of nations, a direct translation of the late medieval concepts of ‘Jus Gentium’ which is Latin for ‘Law of Nations'. The definition of international law has been long debated with some referring specifically to relationships between states, which has been criticised for its narrow scope, and others as "a law between sovereign and equal states based on the common consent of these states". The later definition has largely been adopted by international legal scholars.

There is a distinction between public and private international law; the latter is concerned with whether national courts can claim jurisdiction over cases with a foreign element and the application of foreign judgements in domestic law, whereas public international law covers rules with an international origin. The difference between the

two areas of law has been debated as scholars disagree about the nature of their relationship. Some scholars believe "private international law", must be governed by the principles of public international law but other academics view them as separate bodies of law. Another term, transnational law, is sometimes used to refer to a body of both national and international rules that transcend the nation state, although some academics emphasise that it is distinct from either type of law. It is broadly defined as "all law which regulates actions or events that transcend national frontiers".

A more recent concept is supranational law, which was described in a 1969 paper as "a relatively new word in the vocabulary of politics". Systems of supranational law arise when nations explicitly cede their right to make decisions to this system's judiciary and legislature, which then have the right to make laws that are directly effective in each member state. This has been described as "a level of international integration beyond mere inter-governmental, yet still short of a federal system". The most common example of a supranational system is the European Union.

Sources of International Law

The sources of international law applied by the community of nations are listed in Article 38(1) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, which is considered authoritative in this regard. These categories are, in order, international treaties, customary international law, general legal principles and judicial decisions and the teachings of prominent legal scholars as "a subsidiary means for the determination of rules of law". It was originally considered that the arrangement of the sources sequentially would suggest an implicit hierarchy of sources; however, the statute does not provide for a hierarchy and other academics have argued that therefore the sources must be equivalent.

General principles of law have been defined in the Statute as "general principles of law recognised by civilized nations" but there is no academic consensus about what is included within this scope. They are considered to be derived from both national and international legal systems, although including the latter category has led to debate about potential cross-over with international customary law. The relationship of general principles to treaties or custom has generally been considered to be "filling the gaps" although there is still no conclusion about their exact relationship in the absence of a hierarchy.

Alternative views

Some scholars believe that due to the principle of “par in parem non habet imperium”, which is Latin for 'equals have no sovereignty over each other', the "so-called" international law, lacks sovereign power and is thus unenforceable. They believe that it is not really law at all, but "positive morality", consisting of "opinions and sentiments, more ethical than legal in nature." Hans Morgenthau, the German-American jurist known for his theory of realism, believed international law to be the weakest and most primitive system of law enforcement; he likened its decentralised nature to the law that prevails in preliterate tribal societies. He believed that monopoly on violence is what makes domestic law enforceable; but between nations, there are multiple competing sources of force. The confusion created by treaty laws, which resemble private contracts between persons, is mitigated only by the relatively small

number of states. He asserted that no state may be compelled to submit a dispute to an international tribunal, making laws unenforceable and voluntary. International law is also un-policed, lacking agencies for enforcement. He cites a 1947 US opinion poll in which 75% of respondents wanted "international police to maintain world peace", but only 13% wanted that force to exceed the US armed forces. Later surveys have produced similar contradictory results in most of the nations worldwide.

International Law, The G 20 Example

In the recently concluded G 20, the New Delhi Leaders Declaration was finalised and ratified by all members despite difference in views on complex issues like the Ukraine Conflict. India demonstrated its Diplomatic prowess and re-emphasised International Law to finalise the wordings of the declaration.

The declaration stated -

“We call on all states to uphold the principles of international law including territorial integrity and sovereignty, international humanitarian law, and the multilateral system that safeguards peace and stability. The peaceful resolution of conflicts, and efforts to address crises as well as diplomacy and dialogue are critical. We will unite in our endeavour to address the adverse impact of the war on the global economy and welcome all relevant and constructive initiatives that support a comprehensive, just, and durable peace in Ukraine that will uphold all the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter for the promotion of peaceful, friendly, and good neighbourly relations among nations in the spirit of ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’.

Negotiation

The last part of the lecture is the concept of Negotiation in terms of International relations: -

At the outset, it is important to define the term "negotiation" and to distinguish between the obligation to negotiate and other closely related but significantly different legal obligations. The term "negotiation" can be defined as:-

“A process in which explicit proposals are put forward ostensibly for the purpose of reaching agreement on an exchange or on the realization of a common interest where conflicting interests are present”.

This view of negotiation directs attention to the more formal process of state interaction and excludes "tacit bargaining” or other behaviour that regulates conflict. It also excludes other forms of dispute settlement, such as conciliation, mediation, inquiry, arbitration, reference to international or regional organisations, or judicial settlement, because such procedures require some sort of agreement between the disputing parties which presupposes prior arrangements or negotiations.

Behind this formal definition of negotiation, however, it is necessary to distinguish two different, and contrasting, subjective views of the negotiation process itself. According to one conception, the process of negotiation is a part of the process of continuous contention and struggle between the sovereign states involved. Thus, until the negotiations result in a binding international agreement, the negotiating states

have assumed no legal obligations. Their sovereign right to complete freedom of action remains intact. According to the opposing view, the process of negotiation is a cooperative undertaking by states to resolve a mutual problem in the common interest within the context of an interdependent community. This latter view supports extending obligations to the pre-negotiation and negotiation phases, while the former view strongly believes in the legal freedom of states to act as they wish until they actually undertake binding legal obligations.

Decision to Negotiate

The most important and most difficult decision in the process of international negotiation may very well be the threshold decision of states to enter into negotiations in the first place. Once the will to resolve a dispute through negotiation is present on the part of national leaders, agreement on procedures and substance, while usually protracted and arduous, is likely to follow. At the very least, agreement becomes a real possibility since the mutual decision to negotiate already represents a public commitment to the cooperative resolution or management of the dispute. Even if negotiation does not produce agreement, it does afford the disputing parties the opportunity to lessen tensions and to learn more about each other's interests, positions, personalities, and problems.

The critical importance of "getting to the table" has been recognised by both diplomats and scholars. A substantial body of non-legal literature, describing and analysing what has come to be called the "pre-negotiation" phase, has developed over the past decade. Similar systematic scrutiny, however, has not been devoted by legal scholars to the legal context in which the commitment to negotiate international disputes occurs, although some legal writing does exist which bears on particular aspects of the pre-negotiation process. One may well ask:

Are there rules of international law which require negotiations in certain situations? If so, what is the content of such rules?

Do these rules affect the decisions of national leaders to enter into international negotiations?

What are the possible consequences when national leaders fail to enter into negotiations when obliged to do so by customary or conventional international law?

This assumes even greater importance in today’s scenario on the world stage, where it has become imperative to examine these and related questions with the goal of calling to the attention of national leaders, and the practitioners of international diplomacy, the requirements of peaceful settlement of disputes and international cooperation through negotiation.

The usual outcome of successful international negotiations is the conclusion of a legally binding international agreement or treaty. The process of concluding a legally binding international agreement can be divided into several successive phases. The first phase is the pre-negotiation stage which transpires before a mutual commitment to negotiations has been made. The second phase is the process of the negotiations itself, during which the negotiating states engage in substantive discussions and

bargaining. The final phase is the period between the conclusion of negotiations and the entry into force of the recently negotiated obligations.

Once the agreement enters into force, it creates binding legal obligations for its parties. In that sense, the outcome of the negotiating process is fully protected by law: the parties are legally obligated to perform in good faith the obligations they have assumed and the legal consequences of non-compliance are prescribed. Modern international law also extends legal protection to the third phase of the negotiation process - the period between the conclusion of negotiations and the entry into force of the negotiated agreement. During this period, states which have signed an agreement or expressed their consent to be bound are obliged to refrain from acts which would defeat the object and purpose of the agreement. This requirement aims to prevent prospective parties to the agreement from undermining the benefits accorded by the agreement to other prospective parties.

Pre-Negotiation and The Decision to Negotiate

Since the development of a mutual commitment to the cooperative solution of an international problem occurs during the pre-negotiation phase, it is evident that this phase needs to be closely studied and analysed to learn what can be done to encourage parties to commit to negotiate. The decision to commit to a negotiated settlement, presents both substantive and psychological problems. Substantive problems involve such matters as conflicting strategic or economic interests. Psychological problems, on the other hand, involve attitudes, fears, preconceptions, suspicions, and distrusts of peoples and their leaders. It may be far more important to the successful negotiated settlement of an international problem to eliminate the psychological obstacles to settlement than to reach understandings on the general substantive bases of discussions. It is important to realize that psychological and substantive factors interact constantly during the pre-negotiation phase; progress or regress in one area contributes to corresponding movement in the other. Substantive progress in resolving disputes between states also leads to improvement in the psychological climate.

A major obstacle frequently preventing a state from engaging in international negotiations is the internal political situation of the state. The government may not be strong enough to undertake the resolution of an international dispute through negotiations or have the support needed to negotiate the particular position it favours. In order to enter into negotiations, a government must formulate a position that will command the necessary internal political support or undertake to develop the political support necessary for its position. There is continuous interaction between the domestic political situation with respect to support for the government's position toward negotiations and the government's actions at the international level. The politics of international negotiations can be described as a simultaneous "two-level game."

Every national leader appears at both game boards. Across the international table sits his foreign counterparts, and at his elbows sit diplomats and other international advisers. Around the domestic table behind him sit party and parliamentary figures, spokespersons for domestic agencies, representatives of key interest groups, and the leader's own political advisers.

In order to be successful in this multi-game environment, a national leader must "build a package, that will be acceptable to the other side as well as to key domestic constituencies. These same considerations also apply during the pre-negotiation phase. The principal goal of the pre-negotiation process is to remove both substantive and psychological obstacles to the mutual commitment of states to seek a cooperative, negotiated settlement to an international problem or dispute, while at the same time eliminate any domestic political obstacles to negotiations.

Are there legal rules which are operative at this stage? If so, do they have the potential to play a significant part in the decision of national leaders to undertake negotiations? A study of the pre-negotiation phase discloses little, if any, reference to legal requirements to negotiate or to settle disputes by peaceful means as significant factors in the decisions of national leaders to enter into negotiations. On the whole we can isolate four major considerations involved in the decision of national leaders to commit to negotiations:

First is that the present situation no longer serves a party's interests.

Second is the substance of a fair settlement is available.

Third is leaders on the other side will be willing and politically able to negotiate such a settlement.

Fourth, a commitment to a negotiated settlement will require the balance of forces will permit a fair settlement.

The Obligation to Negotiate

Although an obligation to negotiate may be highly desirable, it appears that at present there is no general obligation imposed on states, applicable in all situations of dispute or disagreement, to enter into negotiations as a matter of customary or conventional international law. There are, however, two decisions of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which hold that states are obligated to negotiate in certain situations. The reasoning of the ICJ in those cases supports the general proposition that states are under an obligation to negotiate in disputes involving situations where each possesses legal rights which can only be defined in relation to the legal rights of the other. Thus, once it is determined that customary or conventional international law creates rights for more than one state with respect to a particular matter, then, in case of a dispute involving that matter, the states concerned are obliged to enter into negotiations to resolve their differences. In addition, once it is determined that an obligation to negotiate exists as a matter of customary or conventional international law, the content of that obligation may be determined by closely scrutinizing the nature of the substantive rights of the states involved.

Implementation of The Obligation to Negotiate

With respect to the obligation to negotiate, the most difficult issues arise in connection with the implementation of this obligation. Whether the source of the alleged obligation is conventional or customary international law, problems arise in determining:

- whether there exists an obligation to negotiate in a given factual situation;

- if an obligation to negotiate is found to exist, whether a breach of that obligation has occurred; and

- if a breach has occurred, what is an appropriate remedy for the aggrieved state.

Thus, the international negotiation process, viewed as a whole, is the principal vehicle for cooperation between states. Whether negotiation occurs within the context of established international structures, such as the U.N or is organised on an ad hoc basis to deal with particular problems, the interaction of states through negotiations concluding in binding international agreements represents the international community of states' regular way of conducting its business.

Not only has the subject matter of international negotiations and agreements expanded exponentially, but the way in which negotiations are structured and conducted has also changed greatly. The hallmarks of present-day negotiations are continuity and interrelatedness. Conference diplomacy and standing preparatory bodies, like the International Law Commission, are becoming increasingly important. Rather than each negotiation being a unique event to deal with a particular, discrete problem, modern day negotiations are characterized by their length, complexity, continuity, and inclusiveness. It is essential that the law of treaties evolve to reflect these changing realities.

The idea that states are under an obligation to negotiate, at least in those situations where the extent of their rights can only be defined by reference to the rights of other states, is both the pragmatic and logical consequence of the interdependence of states in the modem world and of the general recognition, by states, practitioners, and students of international relations of that interdependence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, some recommendations are as under:-

- ✓ There is a need for International Organisations to stay relevant. The need for a reform and expansion in membership of the Security Council is widely acknowledged so that it may acquire the legitimacy, authority and political and financial support necessary for the discharge of its expanding responsibilities.

- ✓ To ensure constructive leadership, much more attention must be paid to the selection process for the leadership positions of the major International organisations. The profile of an executive head predetermines in many respects the fortunes and impact of the organisation concerned.

- ✓ Increasingly, the case is being made for a stronger involvement and role by regional organizations, in line with Article 52 of the UN Charter, in situations requiring peacekeeping and conflict resolution. Recent moves in the Security Council to delegate responsibilities in peace-keeping matters to regional

organisations are a reflection of a general mood towards more decentralisation of the international system.

- ✓ While the world should be moving towards multi-centricism, the general thinking is still very much state-centric. But the course of events is no longer determined by governments alone, there are many more and significant players, especially non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and multinational organisations. Worldwide there are today some 18,000 non-governmental organisations and many more national and local ethnic, racial, religious, professional and other groups operating, each with a specific know-how and competence extending over the entire range of human concerns. The multilateral system should seek to integrate, collaborate and make constructive use of this enormous potential of non-state actors. Recent United Nations conferences, including the Rio Earth Summit and the World Conference on Human Rights, demonstrated the benefits for their creative and active participation.

Thank you for your patient listening.