



**14th McDOUGALL
MEMORIAL
LECTURE**

His Excellency

Alan García Pérez

President of the Republic of Peru

Rome

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of the United Nations**

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Mr Chairman,
Mr Director-General,
Honourable Ministers and Distinguished Delegates,

My country is honoured to be invited by the Council of FAO, and its distinguished Director-General, Edouard Saouma, to deliver this McDougall Memorial Lecture on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Organization.

Many distinguished speakers have delivered this lecture from this podium: the Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi; the Prime Minister of Austria, Bruno Kreisky; the President of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda. Notwithstanding their different points of view, the spirit they expressed was the same - humanity's determination and desire to overcome its difficulties and rectify its mistakes.

Scourged by hunger, debt and the threat of nuclear war, our world is full of paradoxes and contrasts. At one extreme, lie the industrialized countries, where average per caput income is as much as ten

thousand dollars a year, and where people consume more than 3 400 calories a day. At the other extreme are nearly 2 500 million inhabitants of the developing world whose incomes barely amount to 300 dollars a year.

Linking these two extremes is a single system, a single economic order, whose injustice has been repeatedly condemned without, however, very much being done to remedy it. The exchange of raw materials for technology is growing increasingly unfair, with more and more tons of fish meal or sugar being needed to purchase just one tractor.

The external debt is a blatant means of extracting and transferring resources; this year the figure was 970 000 million dollars, and many countries devoted more than 50 percent of their 1984 export revenues to servicing it. Through the industry of death and sophisticated arms, the sale of which divides the

poor countries by intrigues, we have transferred thousands of millions of dollars to the rich countries.

This has been said many times before. What I want to do now is to point out the glaring contradiction between institutions in this system of international relations. On the one hand there is FAO, fighting against hunger and to give the poorest countries access to development technologies. On the other hand there is the International Monetary Fund, whose conditions and policies for stabilization have worsened our countries' problems, with dramatic consequences.

The International Monetary Fund is an institution in which nations are not, as here, sovereign equals, but are valued for the size of their contributions and the strength of their currency. In my country, the conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund forced us to apply mistaken economic policies which

constricted demand, reduced credit and public spending, and brought about a decline in production and employment and a drop in incomes and deterioration in nutrition, which hit the poor hardest of all.

I am here now because we have decided to adopt a different approach. We have abandoned the prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund and are now resolutely following the path marked out for us by FAO - rescuing the rural world as a source of well-being and nutrition. We are now planning to expand production, increase consumption, facilitate access to credit, and promote productive public spending.

Of the two alternatives - the International Monetary Fund and FAO - we have chosen the latter. The duty of our Governments is not to repay the external debt or accept conditions which restrict our development. The duty of our Governments is a Christian and human one: to combat hunger and stand up for justice, since everything can be sacrificed save the inalienable right to life.

That is why, Distinguished Delegates, we have formed a government which is both nationalist and democratic - nationalist with respect to the external debt, so as to protect our domestic market and restore its prosperity, and democratic in order to eradicate inequalities and construct an economic model with the basic aim of feeding the population, both now and in the future.

Our all-important objective now is to obtain solidarity and justice under a New Economic Order and achieve the objectives of the World Food Conference, which more than a decade ago resolved to abolish malnutrition. But we shall do this, not by asking for charity or begging for alms, but by calling for a fairer system in which the value of the work of poor nations and their equal sovereignty are recognized. The world needs a new basis for trade and the distribution of wealth. A new monetary system is required in which the dollar is no longer the sole universal currency, turning us into the tools of one single country.

Hunger is a universal problem which must be combatted by strengthening the aims of the Food Aid Convention, the International Emergency Food Reserve and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. This is why we support the initiative of the Director-General, Edouard Saouma, a great fighter against the scourge of hunger, and undertake to participate in the World Food Security Compact which is to be discussed by this Assembly.

But the world's poor cannot wait, nor can the African countries which so concern us today, nor the other countries in the Third World where want and malnutrition are rife.

This struggle has the support of all peoples, but we also need to strengthen democracy everywhere as a weapon against hunger and injustice. This is our primary duty.

Democracy must be the expression of the people; but in poor countries it also plays the role of an authentic historical conscience. Our countries are not only victims of injustice, indebtedness and violence; political domination has deprived our people of a sense of geographical identity. In other words, their awareness of their reality is ambiguous and alienating. This false vision has produced technological and food consumption models which have linked neither with geography nor with social history.

This, Mr Chairman, is the main theme which I should like to develop in this lecture. In this assembly, much has been heard about hunger, famine and human suffering. We recognize that these are serious subjects, but on this occasion I should like to speak of food in a different sense, placing it in its cultural and historical context. I should like to show how democracy can be understood through food and how it can be built with food as its objective, not just in response to famine but as a conscious part of national liberation.

This, Mr Chairman, is what we are doing to regain a real awareness of our country's geography.

Over the centuries Peru, once the base of an empire founded on agriculture, has forgotten its mountainous terrain, its altitude, its mountain ranges and its native crops, and begun to consume foreign foods grown on plains which do not exist in my country, thus falsifying its view of itself. We have seen how this situation has worsened over the last decades. Every country has an awareness of its geography which enables it to dominate it technologically - an awareness of its ability to exploit geographical reality. The European conquest dissociated the Peruvians from their geography, orienting them toward the consumption of foreign foods and resources and alienating them from their real situation.

Over the last few decades, agricultural production in my country has declined. Yield per hectare has

fallen, while food imports have increased considerably. The huge consumption of foreign food products has caused the country's technical conditions and social organization to be forgotten. As a result, the people have lost faith in their ability to control their own geographical environment. Food imports are not just a foreign exchange problem; they also make a country lose touch with its sense of its own history and geography. The mass consumption of wheat, which comes from another geographical area, another ecological system, and does not grow in Peru, ended the usefulness of the Andes, the mountains and the technical instruments for dominating them, the old language, the conceptual structure, family relations, and any kind of political or religious awareness. Peruvians have come to accept scarcity and poverty as an inevitable fact of life, and the peasants, without moving from their land, are exiled from their own history.

Yet less than 500 years ago the agrarian civilization of the Incas provided sufficient food for a population as large as or even larger than the present one, because the Incas accepted Peru's geography and dominated it technologically. Five centuries ago, like today, Andean civilization covered a great ecological variety, resembling more than half the climates in the world. Its geography was very similar to that of Nepal, Ethiopia, parts of China and India, but very different from that of Australia, the USA and Argentina. The great complexity of ecological levels and climates was dominated by the old Inca civilization through technical works aimed at simplification. Aware of the country's rugged and mountainous geography, the Incas dominated it by growing their crops on terraces stretching far up the slopes.

While other civilizations on plains and plateaux replaced the plough with the tractor, which is useful on flat land, Peru relied on different technical

instruments: the terraces, known as "andenes", and on human organization too, because the complexity of ecology and climates made collective work essential. There was thus a clear identification of society with the land, and a feeling of security and political continuity. But the European invasion in the 16th century broke this relationship between the people and the land. The conquistadores came from countries with a different geography, countries with plains and plateaux, and did not understand Peru's different geography. They imposed a vision which did not correspond to this geography and a different historical understanding of space and time. The Andean axis and the capital of Cuzco were replaced by lands nearer the sea. People's identification with farming gave way to mining, because Peru ceased to be an agricultural country and became merely a mining satellite of mercantile Europe. And the traumatic conquest placed the conquering European group over the conquered society, so that the agriculture of the old society became an activity associated with the

beaten, the defeated. The Andes were no longer the historical and economic centre, but became the home of those who had lost the battle.

I have frequently said in my country that the underlying motivation of the peasants who abandon their land in the Andes to go to the city is the desire to escape from the centuries of living as a conquered race. The conquest gave rise to a false vision of Peru, which treated the country as though it consisted of lowlands and plateaux when in fact it is mountainous, a country made for terracing, for growing potato and maize, which constitute our contribution to human history. Peru gradually became converted into a country consuming wheat, a crop requiring large stretches of lowland which do not exist in my country.

Little by little millions of hectares of terraces were abandoned; the roads which linked the agricultural zones of Peru were forgotten, the population

shrank and society retreated before geography. The land no longer provided the people with an identity; it was just a deposit for the vanquished or the tool of social domination in the feudalism that then arose.

For almost five centuries Peru has ceased to identify itself with the land. Like almost everyone else, we have had an agrarian reform, but a juridical reform concerned solely with title deeds, which has maintained the domination of the town over the countryside, the marginalization of the Andes that began with the Conquest, and the growing trend toward importing food. Society continues to be divorced from its physical basis.

The great Indira Ghandi once quoted from this same rostrum a Hindu hymn which says: "All the creatures that live on the earth are born from food, live on food and when they die they return to food."

I might paraphrase this by saying: "Societies are born from food, live on food and build up their awareness of time and space through the food they consume, which is the expression of their technical capacity to dominate their geography."

For this reason, Mr Chairman, the democracy we want in Peru is not an urban democracy, not a bureaucratic and administrative democracy. Peru wants a historic re-encounter with the land, through national affirmation of our food and our geography.

From the beginning of this century Peru has been following the path laid down for it by the Conquest. It has followed the cycles of the world capitalist economy. Like other peripheral countries, Peru exported agricultural raw materials such as cotton and sugar, but these were produced by a new agriculture, located near the sea, different from Andean agriculture. The economy of the Andes continued to be marginalized.

With the Second World War Peru began a process of industrialization and urbanization which isolated the peasants, particularly those in the Andean region, even more. Industrialization in Peru from 1945 on has been centralized and urban; it has concentrated on processing food and milling foreign wheat and thus has increased the mass consumption of external commodities, which replaced the national food. The industrialization begun three decades ago has completed Peru's conversion into an importing country, installing big mills and beginning almost total replacement of our own foods.

Between 1970 and 1983 alone, domestic per caput production of maize fell from 45 to 31 kg; that of potatoes, which originate from Peru, dropped from 140 to 60 kg. But during the same period per caput importation of wheat rose from 35 to 52 kg and that of maize from 1 to 24 kg.

The process of industrialization impoverished the Andean peasants even more, accentuated migration, and implanted in the peasants arriving in the city a feeling of insecurity with regard to food and technological capacity; and since the land is linked to people's self-awareness, the migrants also lost their self-respect. The generosity of the land was replaced by the hostility of the urban environment, and the idea of society as a community was replaced by individualism as a response to the hostile surroundings.

Since 1970, the oil crisis and the end of the expansion in world economy have led to protectionism in the richer countries. The multinational corporations have been replaced by banks as a means of drawing off the surplus. In my country industry has been affected by the opening up of the market, since imports are financed by greater indebtedness; and in recent years marginalization and destitution have grown worse.

Peru has been, then, successively an exporting country, a country in the process of urban industrialization, and a debtor country, retaining throughout the same kind of link with world capitalism: the affirmation of urban life, administrative procedures and importation, and continual depression of agriculture.

There are therefore deep contradictions in the structure of my country: excessive centralization in the towns, and particularly the capital; a very high concentration of incomes; and great imbalance between industry and administration on the one hand and an increasingly depressed agriculture on the other. This produces a vicious circle: agriculture produces less and less because of food imports, the peasants therefore grow ever poorer, and industry in turn grows weaker because it lacks a market for its products.

In these circumstances a process of historical transformation is essential in order to attain social justice and affirm the possibility of harmonious economic development. This process cannot consist of reactivating the vicious circle we have inherited: if we limit ourselves to reactivating the urban and industrial structure, we shall continue to be condemned to import commodities. We want to achieve a much more far-reaching transformation, inspired by the autochthonous food model, because only in this way will there be a revolution on all fronts: national autonomy, justice and social redemption.

The first objective of a nationalist revolution must be to recover historical awareness, rediscover forgotten realities and agricultural space-time dimensions: in other words, to recognize ecological variety, accept terraced farming, recognize the value of native products and community organization, and once more see the Andes, which are the historical axis of Peru, as an area useful to human beings.

This is the essence of the historical reaffirmation we are seeking: to identify society with the land again, restore a sense of security and leave behind the tendency to flee from reality which characterizes many sectors at present.

For this transformation to be possible, we must affirm our right to an autonomous existence, our right to work and to defend our industry from the liberal opening up of markets, our right to plan the economy and to direct resources toward a historical model linked with food, agriculture and fisheries.

Because of this we have decided to limit drastically the resources previously allocated to payment of the external debt, in particular to commercial banks. We maintain that this debt is unjust, that it originates from unequal trade, is accentuated by usurious interest rates and aggravated by protectionism which lowers the prices of our commodities and blocks trade.

History shows that the attempt to maintain financial relations through a "carousel" of new loans leads only to a worse situation.

We deplore the fact that the economically stronger countries do not understand the need to find a political solution to this problem.

We deplore the fact that the many talks and meetings have not yet led the debtor nations to agree on action. We believe in joint action and solidarity, but not in inertia. We also believe in national decisions, and therefore reject the idea of continuing to contract debts in order to pay previous ones. We reaffirm our decision to allot 10 percent of exports, that is to say, only one out of every ten dollars of our export earnings, to servicing the debt. At this moment when hundreds of millions of people in Africa, Asia and Latin America are waiting in vain for food, when poverty and violence loom over our societies, the banks can wait: the poor have waited long enough for reason and justice.

Peru's decision means that interests and debt payments will vary, but that a ceiling will be set. It is the answer of a poor country and a decision that will not be revoked.

The proposals made at the last meeting of the International Monetary Fund in Seoul to establish new lines of credit through other financing bodies are intended to avoid a financial crisis for the Fund, to maintain monetarism as the official theory and affirm the preeminence of an institution whose theories and conditions result in aggravating the problems from which our countries are suffering.

To maintain these positions, the North American Banks consider the value of Peru's debt to have deteriorated, and loans and disbursements have been detained by limitations and amendments. But these sanctions will not make us turn back. We feel that this is the price to be paid in order to recover our sovereignty, and the price of our people's food.

To affirm our right to fix a programme of economic transformation without foreign intervention, we have rejected the mediation of the International Monetary Fund, whose letters of intention are letters of renunciation of sovereignty, ordering us to open our frontiers, devalue our currency, raise interest rates and reduce State participation in social expenditure. We have opted for a completely different path: a sovereign model with substantial reduction of internal interest rates, stable exchange rates, regulated price control and reduction of the profit margins of the monopolies. As a proof of what our people can do without the tutelage of the international monetary system, inflation has been reduced in only two months from 11 to 3 percent a month.

Now that payments on the external debt have been reduced, the purchase of armaments and unnecessary imports limited and the State's participation in natural resources such as oil increased, the Government can channel more resources to the social services and to economic recovery, particularly agricultural production.

We are not going to sacrifice Peru's historical development and its people's food to the appetites and proposals of the International Bank.

The prices of our agricultural commodities, the prices of meat, milk, cotton, sugar, copper, silver and fish meal, are dropping daily as a result of the protectionist policies of the richer countries, which subsidize their domestic production in order to dominate the world export economy. They lower the prices of our raw materials and demand that we pay the banks punctually. What are we going to pay with? Why should we pay? We say that first comes the need to defend our natural wealth. We are not going to pay, as in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice", with the flesh and blood of our people; we are going to defend and retain within our country the surpluses and resources that the vicious structure of world economy directs abroad, and we are going to do it to affirm a historical and geographical consciousness of

what Peru was. A revolution is only the reconquest of one's own history. So when people ask us what we will do with the resources that we now keep within Peru, we reply that these resources will serve to build a new economic and social model that can be summarized as a democracy for food. For this reason it is of special significance for Peru to come to this anniversary of FAO.

First of all, we affirm that the fundamental basis of nationalism is the land. There is no such thing as theoretical nationalism: a nation is not, as in the old idealistic philosophy, a "thinking I"; a nation is technological capacity over geography and only recognition and awareness of this geography can enable us to produce the food that this geography can give us and break the vicious circle of imports which impoverish the peasants and condemn urban industry to an inadequate market.

We therefore believe in the obligation of our country and other countries to get their own land to produce

and put their own societies to work. It will take a long time, but we are going to replace the food products we consume today by those that Peru's land can produce.

Peru, whose contribution to history included cultivation of the first potatoes, which were later introduced into many other countries, has gone back to being an importer of potatoes; Peru, which, with the rest of Latin America, introduced maize into the human diet, now imports 40 percent of its maize; it imports dairy produce and fats, soybeans, and all its wheat, which is the staple food of the poor in Peru, since, as I mentioned above, mountainous terrain is not suitable for wheat.

We are also aware that the agricultural surpluses distributed throughout the world are distributed in a market where some countries, particularly the most powerful countries, hold a monopoly; these countries

take advantage of this situation to bring pressure to bear on our countries. Moreover, the agricultural surpluses which are sold to the rest of the world on favourable terms have an adverse effect on the agriculture of our country, keeping our people in ignorance of what Peru could produce, and impoverishing and discouraging Peruvian agriculture.

We do not aspire to self-sufficiency but rather to the development of indigenous crops like potato, maize and quinoa.

With the arrival of the European conquerors, some crops to which old Peru accorded a religious significance because of their high calorie and protein content, were banned for this very reason. We should like to recover this forgotten germ plasm, we should like to recall the long period when Peru held sway over its own geography; all of which was changed by the imposition of eating habits and import patterns which were not right for us. We therefore established, three months ago, a fund to support farm

prices, and took one decisive action: we reduced the interest rate on agricultural credit in the most depressed areas to one-fifth of what it was three months ago. This was one way of transferring to the countryside something that has, until now, been the privilege of the towns; agricultural interest rates of 108 or 110 percent have been reduced by the Sierra Andina del Peru to 19 percent and, in areas where violence is rife, to 10 percent, as a way of providing Government aid for these regions.

However, our nationalism is expressed not only in agriculture but also in fisheries. Instead of producing fish meal for foreign markets, we should be channelling our resources to feed our own people.

In this assembly, which is concerned with agriculture and fisheries, it is interesting to record that Peru was considered one of the major fishing countries in the world, and at one time we prided ourselves on being the leading country. However, our country is a comparatively small consumer of fish, whereas in

Japan per caput consumption per annum is over 60 kg, and in other Latin American countries which do not have these resources consumption is more than 20 kg. In Peru, at one time the leading fishing country in the world, average consumption per caput per annum is only 10 kg. In the last thirty years, out of every 100 tons of catches, only one was used for human consumption. The other 99 were sold off as fish meal, to fertilize European crops.

We have seen the uncontrolled establishment of excessively large factories to take away the fish resources of a hungry nation.

Here I should like to say, Mr Chairman, Mr Director-General, that, although for many years Peru's coastal waters have served European farming in the form of fish meal, despite the many millions of human beings suffering hunger, I am sure that the people of Peru will join me here in offering our vast resources in fish and industrial facilities now lying idle to assist the poor of this earth.

In the third place, nationalism in food is also an affirmation of democracy. Although democracy means equitable distribution of resources, democracy should start with the poorest, it should start with the marginalized peasants in the Andes. They are at the base of the social pyramid in Peru. We are also encouraging the production and consumption of potato, maize, quinoa and other commodities, because these crops are grown on plots belonging to the Andean communities, which are the poorest in Peru.

The transformation model we propose is based on food. Our nationalism, through the reconstitution of a consumer model, is democratic because it begins with the poorest peasant, and it is decentralist because it is focused on the land. Democracy cannot be the reproduction and supremacy of the urban model; democracy must recognize the social organizations that have stood the test of time, like the communities in Peru, and adapt the structures of the new

State to them. In the last three months, Peruvian Government services have established what we call "Andean micro-regions" to help the marginalized peasants. These are development planning and administrative units coordinated with economic agents and with the organized population. Until now, public food and health services have been the privilege of the urban, industrial and administrative sectors. Through this effort, through its micro-regions, the Government will reach the agrarian sector with its health, food and technology services.

If we come here to seek the solidarity of all nations, we must demonstrate our solidarity within Peru, between Peru's industry and cities and society as a whole. This is why we are rethinking the very concept of health care. It used to be the urban concept of health as hospital and curative care: now it should be preventive and primary care, vaccination and food throughout the agricultural regions.

By lowering interest on agricultural credit, supporting prices, subsidizing fertilizers and distributing the social services of health, education and technology, it is planned to spend on agriculture the hundreds of millions of dollars previously earmarked for paying our debt.

However, a revolutionary new aspect of life in our country is the economic recognition of the peasant community. The old community organization of Peru withstood the passage of time because of its social solidarity and because it was absolutely marginalized, and in thousands of communities, millions of Peruvians are the living proof of the old historical awareness and the forgotten time when the land belonged to the people.

The new State must recognize the peasant community as part of itself. To this end, we have allocated resources directly to the communities. The State has never been able to reach them, suspended as they are

at an altitude of four or five thousand metres. Now we shall reach them directly, by-passing bureaucratic and urban middlemen who would distort the Government's idea of linking up with the peasant communities.

However, just as the Peruvian Government is now proposing a nationalist and decentralized democracy through food, we are also trying through food to construct a homogeneous economy.

I mentioned a few moments ago that the economic sectors in Peru, the urban, industrial and administrative sectors, are sharply divorced from the marginal economy of agriculture. We therefore want to create a national consumer market, taking account of production and the well-being of peasant families in the national demand.

The entrepreneurs and industrialists in my country are aware that only the development of marginal

agriculture and the distribution of income among the peasants will strengthen the possibilities of development for urban industry, which is now in a state of crisis for lack of a market. For this reason, I repeat that, although the surplus commodities imported represent a subsidy for the urban population, because of their comparatively low price, they are in the last analysis a threat to the urban population since they hinder the growth of a consumer market among the peasants.

Just as, in the old African parable mentioned by President Kenneth Kaunda, the newly-arrived guest received food for the first few days and then was given a hoe, our country cannot live on cheap imports which jeopardize its future. Our countries should carve out their own future by increased agricultural production, since large-scale subsidies destroy their very structure.

In the fifth place, the Government's food policy follows an anti-crisis model. There are many causes of inflation in my country, in our countries: monopolistic prices, costly imports, but fundamentally the reduction in agricultural supply; the reduced productivity of our land is one of the basic causes of inflation. In Peru, one hectare produces on average 30 tons of potatoes, Peru being, as I have already mentioned, the country where this plant originated. With fertilizers and improved seeds, this hectare could double its yield in a very short time. In the same way, a hectare of maize could increase its yield by 50 percent.

When we are asked, "Why this preoccupation with agriculture?" we answer that the Government's limited resources have to be used in the economic sector where the capital yield per product is highest. A job in agriculture, or increased productivity, costs 30 to 40 times less than it would in industry or in Government service in my country. The rate of social and economic yield of agriculture is therefore far higher than that of other sectors.

I have tried to demonstrate that the food model proposed by the Peruvian Government is the basis of democracy. We want a nationalist and decentralized democracy, the constitution of an internal consumer market and an anti-crisis model for as long as inflation persists. However, it is also a participatory model in a society at present torn by violence. The world press and media describe my country as one in the grip of violence and subversion.

In recent years, the dramatic problem of terrorism and subversion has led to thousands of deaths. We reject totalitarian ideological inspiration and the justification of violence as a historical right. We shall meet subversive arms with the arms of the law and of democracy, fighting hard, but respecting law and human rights.

However, we understand why terrorism has chosen the most depressed areas in the country, trying to exploit the wretchedness and frustration of the peasants and hide behind the age-old organization of peasant communities, taking advantage of their organizing capacity.

In the United Nations General Assembly, I explained that this was why we limited our repayments of foreign debt, and called for a regional agreement in Latin America that millions of dollars should not continue to be spent on arms when they could be saving the forgotten peoples from their poverty and rehabilitating depressed regions, through direct allocation of resources, lowering of interest rates, encouraging the consumption of locally produced commodities, and the recognition of their social organization. By restoring to them the historical force of which they have been deprived, the Government will truly identify itself with society, and democracy will be imposed as an efficient development

model. The ideological struggle in Peru, as in all the poor countries of the world, is the struggle between violence, which has raised itself to the status of an ideology, and democracy, which has to prove its ability to solve social problems. I am fully confident that democracy will conquer violence; but it will have to conquer with the strength of justice and development for the most deprived sectors. Democracy must mean, above all, respect and defence of the most important human right, which is the right to bread.

This is, Mr Chairman and Honourable Delegates, the major historical purpose of our efforts to constitute a nationalist, democratic and popular Government; an effort to rebuild geographical and historical awareness; an effort to emancipate Peru historically; an effort, Honourable Delegates, to affirm nationalism, democracy, decentralism and the constitution of a sound economy that will survive the crisis; and an effort to win bread, which is peace and freedom.

I have therefore taken the liberty of giving you a brief account of the history of Peru, which could be that of any Latin American country; to illustrate, in homage to FAO on its Fortieth Anniversary, the model of food democracy that we are advocating, seeking to prove that food is not only a response to hunger but also a cultural symbol around which a revolution may be constructed.

The Peruvian Government, because it shares these great objectives with other nations, knows it is part of a broader movement of the poor peoples of the earth represented here. In this way my country identifies with the Non-aligned Movement and the countries of Africa now suffering from drought and famine. Honourable Delegates, among the many things you take away with you from this assembly, take the will, the resolve of Peru to recover its own history and face all obstacles; tell your peoples that the Peruvians stand by them in their struggle and in their hope.

Our Government's objective is the revendication of the right to life. Hunger is not a life sentence for humanity. God created the world with enough intelligence and resources for life. But the history of the human race and the egoism of the very powerful have distributed these resources badly, making us live in a paradoxical world.

We believe in God, we believe in our daily bread. And like the biblical prophet Isaiah, we never cease to hope that one day swords will be turned into ploughshares and spears into scythes. And no country will raise its sword against another, nor will men go forth to war. Then we shall convert today's arms into bread, and the bread will gradually be transformed into peace and justice, and it will not be, as now, our hunger that unites us, nor the hunger of others; we will be united by the hunger for God alone.

In the words of a Peruvian, an Andean poet, let me say that Peru today would like to knock on all doors, the doors of all nations, and ask for I know not whom, and bake him pieces of fresh bread, in the warmth of its heart.

Thank you.

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