

Salem urges Third World cooperation

SALEM Ahmed Salem, President of the UN General Assembly and Tanzania's permanent representative in the world body, yesterday called for Third World cooperation to minimise dependence on great powers.

They should support each other, feel and share each other's problems to diffuse tensions which, he said, have been created as a result of big-power rivalry.

In an interview in Abu Dhabi, Mr Salem commended the resolutions adopted by the Islamic Conference held in Islamabad recently and said "they are important because they represent a collective position of about 40 Islamic countries."

He said the present situation in Afghanistan was casting a negative effect on other problems of the Third World countries.

"I believe this situation has side tracked a number of crucial questions, such as the Middle East problem, southern Africa and many other issues. Secondly, the competition of military build-up between super-powers in this part of the world will adversely affect efforts for disarmament, accelerate the arms race and threaten East-West detente, thereby increasing tensions in the world."

The General Assembly President referred to the recent session of the Assembly and said among the most prominent of its achievements were those concerning promotion of international co-operation, mainly the revival of the North-South dialogue. Politically, too, a number of positive decisions were taken concerning the Middle East problem, the Palestine issue in particular, southern Africa and promotion of international security.

Mr Salem expressed appreciation of the "positive and constructive role played by the United Arab Emirates" in the Assembly.

"The UAE was and is still playing an important role in Arab, African and international issues" he said.

He will meet His Highness Shaikh Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah, Lt-General Khalifa bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid Abdullah and senior government officials to get first-hand information of the UAE's position regarding problems in the region.

He said: "Being an African, my talks with senior officials in this country will cover Arab-African cooperation in various political, economic and cultural fields."

Mr Salem will leave for Qatar on Monday. He will then fly into Dubai for a short stopover on his way back to Tanzania. He has already had talks with the leaders of Oman and Kuwait.—WAM