



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. O'DONOVAN (Ireland)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 77: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH:

- (a) PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS EXCHANGES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
- (b) CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
- (c) CO-ORDINATION AND INFORMATION IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 78: NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ACHIEVING FAR-REACHING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 80: QUESTION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 84: WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGING: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 90: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza (Alcoa Building), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/215 and Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 77: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH (A/C.3/36/1)

- (a) PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS EXCHANGES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/409)
- (b) CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/427)
- (c) CO-ORDINATION AND INFORMATION IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/135)

AGENDA ITEM 78: NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ACHIEVING FAR-REACHING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/115)

AGENDA ITEM 80: QUESTION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/70)

AGENDA ITEM 84: WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGING: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/806 and Add.1; A/36/357, A/36/472)

AGENDA ITEM 90: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/442)

1. Mr. RIPERT (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs), referring to those agenda items relating to social development, women and development, and to the problems of the disabled, stated that for most men and women, the expectation from development policies and strategies was to have a more decent and meaningful life. The International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade stated that the ultimate aim of development was the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population on the basis of its full participation in the process of development and fair distribution of the benefits therefrom.

2. Unfortunately, the achievement of the economic and social objectives of the Strategy was hampered by the serious difficulties which the world economy continued to encounter. If current economic trends were not reversed, the virtual stagnation of industrial activity in the countries of the North, the slowing down of the expansion of world trade, increasing payments imbalances, the swelling ranks of the unemployed and high levels of inflation offered no prospect of spontaneous, vigorous economic recovery in the short- or even in the medium-term.

/...

(Mr. Ripert)

3. For the developing countries the situation was particularly disturbing, as indicated in the main reports published recently by the various bodies of the United Nations system. It was a time of an alarming erosion in international economic relations which took the form, inter alia, of new measures of protectionism and a return to more isolationist policies which failed to take sufficient account of the repercussions of decisions taken at the national level by some countries on their partners at the international level. That underlined the importance of an active resumption of the North-South dialogue which was essential in the light of the increasing independence of various economies, and even more crucial for the developing countries, most of which had to face serious imbalances, especially in their external payments.
4. The over-all growth of the energy-importing developing countries in 1980 had been especially disappointing. In addition, their per capita real income had actually declined, for the first time in many years, and would probably continue to do so in 1981.
5. According to the World Bank, more than 600 billion human beings would be competing for the earth's resources in the year 2000, and 600 to 850 million people would still live in poverty. The increasing incidence of poverty would have an immediate and direct impact on all the population groups concerned, but especially on particularly vulnerable groups such as women, young people and the aging. Economic growth was not in itself sufficient to deal with those issues, but it was equally true that absence of growth aggravated social problems. There was a need to give consideration to the human and social aspects of development as well as to its economic aspects, and it was in the context of the complex interrelation between growth and social progress that the issues had to be considered.
6. Human resources, not capital or material resources, ultimately constituted the wealth of nations. Measures relating to women, young people, the aging and the disabled were therefore of crucial significance to national development. It had also to be borne in mind that an essential component of the development effort was the provision of a secure and safe environment helped by the prevention of crime and the promotion of justice. Lastly, it was necessary to be aware that the measures for dealing with each specific social group were interrelated.
7. For statistical purposes, the term youth described the 15 to 24 age group. It was estimated that the world youth population would increase from some 750 million in 1975 to almost 1.2 billion in the year 2000, an increase of 60 per cent, whereas the increase in that sector of the population would be only 5 per cent in the developed countries during that period, while reaching 80 per cent in the developing countries. It was estimated that there were already 300 million young people in search of jobs in the developing countries alone, the

(Mr. Ripert)

majority of them often lacking adequate nutrition and medical care. For those reasons, the draft programme of activities for International Youth Year and the period leading up to it stressed that actions for youth should be an integral part of development efforts and urged that steps should be taken expeditiously to establish national co-ordination machinery to prepare adequately for the Year, and to formulate and implement innovative policies and programmes in all the various countries. Any guidelines that the Third Committee could provide on the course of the activities to be conducted by United Nations agencies in that connexion would be invaluable.

8. With respect to the elderly, he pointed out that in 1980 the proportion of people aged 65 years and over had been approximately 11 per cent of the total population of the developed countries: it would probably reach 13 per cent in those countries by the year 2000, and would continue to grow, thereafter. In the developing countries, the share was appreciably less. Standing at 4 per cent in 1980, it was expected to increase to 5 per cent by the year 2000, and then to climb very rapidly to reach 12 per cent by the year 2050. While it was true that the problem of the elderly was most acute in the industrialized countries, there was no doubt that it would be felt in the developing countries in the decades to come. The growing isolation of the elderly brought about by the breakdown of family structures, urbanization, industrialization and social mobility, together with the decline in their role and status, which was already noticeable in the industrialized countries, were trends which could equally well manifest themselves in the third world. The developing countries should therefore prepare to deal with that problem; the World Assembly on Aging to be held at Vienna in 1982 would obviously be timely.

9. In the area of women and development, he noted the intensification and expansion over the past year of activities at national, regional and international levels in implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women. The Second Committee would be reviewing a comprehensive outline on the role of women in development, together with reports on problems of women in the science and technology and rural development sectors. Furthermore, the proposed programme budget of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs had been drawn up to take full account of the directives given by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women and by the General Assembly. Among the notable achievements was the entry into force on 3 September 1981 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. It would undoubtedly be useful to consider practical means by which developing countries could be assisted in translating the principles of the Convention into national legislation and policies

/...

(Mr. Ripert)

10. Technical assistance activities must be based on a comprehensive approach to problems and must conform to the priorities of Member States. In that connexion, he was certain that there would be a very broad consensus on the importance of the activities financed by the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and the need to expand them in the coming years. The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, which was responsible for co-ordinating United Nations activities relating to the participation of women in development, would continue to give priority to that aspect of its responsibilities.

11. The International Year of Disabled Persons had contributed, in a large measure, to increasing awareness of the problems of the disabled and to mobilizing efforts at the national, regional and international levels to alleviate those problems. Mention should be made, in that connexion, of the magnitude and range of initiatives taken by a large number of Member States in addition to the special efforts being made by the disabled themselves and by their organizations to secure their rightful place in society. The major task that lay ahead was to prepare an effective world plan of action which would serve as a comprehensive framework for measures to prevent disability and to ensure the integration of the disabled in society.

12. The Committee's agenda included an item on national experience in promoting the co-operative movement. Co-operatives had great potential as a means of bringing the benefits of development to all peoples - young, old, women and the disabled, in particular - and they were therefore essential to self-reliant growth. Therefore, in establishing the various programmes of action for special population groups, it would be useful to give careful consideration to the role co-operatives could play.

13. Crime resulted in a waste of resources that could have been devoted to development. The Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and the Caracas Declaration had placed crime prevention, criminal justice and the treatment of offenders in the context of development and had thus opened up new prospects in the field. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs was seeking to fulfil the mandate which the Sixth Congress had entrusted to it. As for the measures needed in that connexion, he pointed out that the criminal justice system must be made more responsive to changing social and economic conditions, and efforts must be directed towards preventing the development of new forms of criminality. The capacity to solve the problems created by crime should, moreover, be strengthened at the national and regional level, and efforts to establish or to improve international guidelines should also be pursued.

14. He drew attention to the fact that special trust funds had been set up to finance the preparation and in certain cases, the follow-up

/...

(Mr. Ripert)

of the international years and conferences organized by the United Nations. The Governments of Member States had contributed generously to those funds, and it was all the more important that they should continue to do so as the budgetary constraints of the United Nations enabled it to finance only a few important activities from its regular budget.

15. He expressed his gratitude to the various United Nations agencies which continued to contribute, and often to provide the necessary impetus, to the activities co-ordinated by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. In that connexion, he pointed out that the United Nations system, by itself, had neither the resources nor the expertise to help countries to solve the problems under consideration. What it could do - in particular through international years and conferences - was to draw attention to those problems, to arouse an interest in the implementation of far-reaching programmes and to promote international co-operation. He also paid a tribute to the non-governmental organizations, which had made an active and constructive contribution to various activities undertaken in the context of the International Year of Disabled Persons.

16. He noted that the Committee had before it a large number of extremely important questions and that its very heavy agenda did now allow it to give detailed consideration to all the substantive aspects of each issue. Consequently, he felt that the increasing requests for yearly reports did not always serve a useful purpose and that it would probably be better for progress reports to be more thorough and to cover longer periods.

17. The CHAIRMAN, referring to a comment made by the Under-Secretary-General concerning the number of agenda items to be considered by the Committee and the difficulty it had each year in giving due attention to each of the items allocated to it, pointed out that that problem had become obvious during the preparation of the programme of work. Accordingly, he suggested that members of the Committee should give it some thought during the current session.

18. Mr. VELLA (Malta) requested that the full text of the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General should be made available to delegations.

19. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the unofficial text of the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General would be circulated to delegations, and he requested that it should be given extremely detailed coverage in the summary record.

20. Mr. VOICU (Romania) agreed with the representative of Malta that it would be very useful to have the complete unofficial text of the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General immediately.

/...

21. The CHAIRMAN explained that the French and English texts would be distributed to delegations and that a very detailed account of the statement would be contained in the summary record in all languages.

22. Mr. YUSUF (Somalia) asked the Under-Secretary-General whether he understood the elderly to be persons over 65 years of age, in accordance with the definition adopted in the developed countries, or those who were older than the life expectancy which, for example, was 50 years of age in Somalia. If the latter was true, the proportion of elderly persons in the developing countries should be revised upwards. He asked whether the figure of 300 million young people currently unemployed in the developing countries, had been broken down by country and, if so, where the least-developed countries stood and whether a distinction had been made between the countries that had the necessary resources to solve that problem and those that did not.

23. Mr. RIPERT (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs), replying to the questions from the representative of Somalia, said that the figures he had cited referred to the statistical categories generally used, and the definition of those categories, particularly the definition of the elderly as persons over 65 years of age, was arbitrary; moreover, it had been recognized as such by the experts. Actually, that definition was devoid of meaning in countries where the life expectancy was below 65 years of age. Admittedly, therefore, the statistical and administrative categories defined in the North did not accurately reflect the situation in the South. It was to be hoped that the World Assembly on Aging would help to clarify that question. With regard to the statistics on young people in the least-developed countries, he would do some research into that question and convey the results to the representative of Somalia.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.