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21st meeting  
held on  
Friday, 16 October 1981  
at 10.30 a.m.  
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. O'DONOVAN (Ireland)

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29 October 1981

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/36/215 and Add. 1; A/C.3/36/L.15)

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

1. Mr. JHA (Nepal), speaking on agenda items 76 and 77, said that the three distinct, yet closely related, themes of the International Youth Year, participation, development and peace, required a comprehensive integrated approach to the economic, social and cultural area that concerned youth. The basic thrust of the Year's activities should be at the national and local levels rather than at the international level. Accordingly, the guidelines for the programme of measures and activities should be treated in an integrated manner.

2. Since young people were the most valuable resource of any country, Nepal's youth policies and programmes were based on the premise that an investment in young people was an investment in the country's future. Nepal attached great importance to the programmes for young people both in and out of school. In recognition of their role in society, the Constitution of Nepal had made provisions for six class organizations with a view to integrating and utilizing the united strength of the various classes for the development of the nation.

(Mr. Jha, Nepal)

3. In line with the decisions of the United Nations, Nepal had also established a sub-committee to co-ordinate youth activities at the national level and to oversee the welfare of the youth of the country and had worked out a detailed short-term and long-term programme of youth activities. The establishment of that sub-committee had greatly helped to attain the lofty objectives contained in the proclamation of International Youth Year.

4. The youth of Nepal was committed to contributing to national development. The country's university education programme aimed at developing a sense of belonging and participation among young men and women in the national development process. Under the programme, young people were involved in health, education, family planning welfare work, literacy programmes, agricultural extension, improvement of villages, water supply, social conservation and reforestation and research. Similarly, Nepal's sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-1985) gave serious consideration to youth participation in national development and constituted another major step forward in integrating youth in programmes for utilizing all the human, physical and scientific resources of the country.

5. His country attached great importance to physical education and sports exchanges among young people as a means of fostering better understanding between individuals and people, and appreciated the activities of UNESCO in education and sports. The concept of life-long education and sports for all was a noble idea which should be seen in an interdisciplinary context and as an over-all preparation for life. Nepal had sports exchange programmes with many countries and young Nepalese actively participated in various international games. Physical education and sports were given due importance in all educational institutions. Physical culture and sports were organized and promoted in the country by the National Council of Nepal. His delegation wholly endorsed the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 31 of document A/36/409.

6. The very act of dedicating a year to youth constituted a major step in promoting the interests of all young people. By selecting 1985 for the celebration of the International Youth Year, the General Assembly had made it possible to take a medium-term and long-term approach which could further increase its significance. He supported the three-phase programme strategy for the period 1981-85 proposed by the Secretary-General and fully agreed that 1985 should be an occasion not only for the celebration but also for an evaluation of the initial plan of action. The strategy proposed by the Secretary-General should be implemented and the report of the Advisory Committee should be adopted promptly by all Governments.

7. As the success of the International Youth Year depended on the successful implementation of the programme strategy at the national level, it was imperative to establish a national priority identifying youth as the future of society and responding to their aspirations. That entailed active participation of youth in policy- and decision-making. The establishment of the national committees should follow the formation of a regional committee, which should meet as soon as possible to find ways of assisting the implementation of programmes. Suitable provisions should also be made for evaluating activities and ensuring adequate follow-up. Consideration should also be given to a decade and plan of action for world youth during a General Assembly discussion of the question after the conclusion of the International Year.

8. His delegation joined in the appeal for the establishment of a voluntary fund to meet the costs of the programme for the Year. The use of funds should be related to specific projects and priority should be accorded to the needs of the least developed countries for the implementation of their national programmes.

9. His delegation recognized the importance of effective channels of communication to the involvement of youth in United Nations activities and noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in the implementation of guidelines on channels of communication between the United Nations and youth organizations. His delegation appreciated the role of the United Nations system in providing assistance to national and international youth organizations to establish channels of communication among youth organizations and carry out various activities relating to youth. He supported the series of measures recommended by the Advisory Committee to strengthen channels of communication as well as the additional guideline proposals contained in paragraph 29 of document A/36/427.

10. He expressed his delegation's confidence that the preparation and observance of International Youth Year would contribute to the reaffirmation of the goals of the new international economic order and the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. Celebrating the Year would disseminate among youth the ideals of peace and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, human solidarity and understanding among peoples and balanced development.

11. Mr. FOLIVI (Togo) said that more than half the population of his country was under 25 and that their number would double by the year 2000. His delegation therefore attached great importance to agenda items 76 and 77. He fully endorsed the appeal launched by the international community for young people to participate in the development of their country and play a prominent role in modern life.



(Mr. Folivi, Togo)

12. His country, one of the first to approve and support the idea of the International Youth Year, was working out a programme of measures and activities to mark that year. The Togolese authorities had followed attentively the first discussions of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year and were prepared to accept any suggestions which might help achieve the aims of the year.

13. Youth was no longer considered in isolation from society. Indeed, it was almost a commonplace to link the major problems of the world with those facing young people. Widespread infringement of human rights, the rear-guard action of colonialism, the inadequacy of the world economic system and the violence used in international relations all threatened the future of the world's youth. Thousands of students from Namibia and South Africa had been forced out of their country as a result of the policies of the Pretoria régime, while in the Middle East, the denial to young Palestinians of the right to their own country was an important factor in the troubles in the region. The spectre of famine and the unequal distribution of the world's riches jeopardized the survival of young people. He therefore endorsed the view of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year that the problems of young people were those of society as a whole and their needs and aspirations must be identified and satisfied as an integral part of the general policies and strategies for economic and social development.

14. The chief of State of his country had given priority to the problems facing young people and Togo had a programme aimed at satisfying their aspirations and at integrating them into the nation.

15. It was continuing its work in the field of education and training. The University of Benin had been established to give all young people the same opportunities and to provide them with a suitable setting for the exchange of ideas. Schools had been built throughout the country, even in the most remote areas. The national education project, designed to remove the disparities between urban and rural areas and to make education universally accessible, had expanded dramatically. His country had one of the highest rates of school attendance in Africa and would spare no effort to provide schooling for all. The 1976 education reform was aimed at improving education and linking it more closely with social and economic realities. Despite the many difficulties, the results remained encouraging. Students in his country were also given the opportunity to study abroad and the University of Benin was open to foreign students. There were youth exchange programmes with many countries.

16. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the International Youth Year would encourage young people from different countries to come together as part of the co-operation between industrialized countries and developing countries.

17. Mr. MATTHEWSON (United Kingdom), speaking on agenda items 80, 84 and 90, said that the World Assembly on Aging would provide an invaluable opportunity for a practical discussion of the challenge and opportunities which old age presented and paid a tribute to the Government of Austria for agreeing to be host to the Assembly.

18. Although the growth in elderly populations was a world-wide phenomenon - in the United Kingdom itself, between 1970 and 1979, there had been a 25 per cent rise in the number of people aged 85 or over - it should be recognized that the circumstances of the growing number of elderly people varied markedly between countries, as a result of different economic systems, different levels of development and different cultural traditions. Since those differences could not be ignored in the search for global initiatives, the primary responsibility for initiatives in relation to the Assembly must rest with national Governments. The United Kingdom therefore welcomed the invitation extended to Member States to prepare national reports analysing the main issues, both humanitarian and developmental, confronting States at the national and regional levels.

19. His Government had already made clear its particular interest in the humanitarian issues involved. In March 1981, his Government had published a major policy document entitled "Growing Older" to review the serious social and economic challenges posed by the trend towards a larger elderly population. That document concluded that the main aim of the United Kingdom's national policies should be to enable elderly people to live independent lives in their own homes wherever possible. Against that background, it had reviewed income and retirement, housing and arrangements for care and support where those were required. It called for a more positive approach by all concerned to the subject of retirement and greater recognition that it could be a time for opportunity.

20. Preparations in the United Kingdom for the World Assembly were well under way. A national advisory committee had been established to co-ordinate preparations and to act as a focal point of contact with the Secretariat. The Committee's five members represented the principal national voluntary organizations concerned with the well-being of elderly people. That reflected his Government's recognition of the important role of non-governmental organizations in the field. His Government also recognized the important contribution which families, friends and neighbours, as well as private, voluntary and religious organizations could make and were making to support and care for the elderly. Only an informed effort by the community as a whole would ensure that the challenges and the opportunities presented by the growing number of aging people were adequately met.

21. With regard to regional preparations for the World Assembly, a technical meeting of Western European experts had taken place in Frankfurt in June 1981 and an intergovernmental regional policy meeting would be held in Vienna in January 1982, in which his Government intended to play a full part.

(Mr. Matthewson, United Kingdom)

22. Turning to agenda item 90, he said that his Government attached great importance to the work of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control. He did, however, wish to make some comments aimed at strengthening the work of the Committee. It was the belief of his Government that, since the Committee met once every two years, it was vital that it should have a realistic programme of work and that its tasks were pursued according to agreed priorities. That was the only way for the Committee to make progress on the many items suggested for further study by the Caracas Congress. He hoped that when the Committee next met, in January 1982, there could be broad agreement about objectives. He urged that a more realistic and practical programme of work should be drawn up for the Committee and should include preparations for the next quinquennial congress. He welcomed the recent strengthening of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch and believed that it should now be better placed to carry forward proposals for action which were agreed at the Caracas Congress and endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session. He drew attention to two of the tasks recommended for the Committee by the Caracas Congress: the development of a model agreement for the transfer of offenders and a study on the victims of crime. As both subjects had strong humanitarian as well as practical implications and were likely to provide the basis for a wide measure of agreement on points of principle and practice, his delegation commended them for the work of the Committee.

23. Mr. CEAUSESCU (Rumania) said that as Chairman of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, he was pleased to point out that all the recommendations contained in the specific programme of measures and activities for International Youth Year had been adopted in the Advisory Committee by consensus. The fact naturally increased the political and practical value of the programme by offering assurances that it would be implemented. The programme was action-oriented and underscored the current situation of the younger generation and major international problems with respect to co-operation in the field of youth. Its message emphasized the need to intensify the concerns of states, political organizations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations with a view to solving the specific problems confronting youth in the political, economic and social fields. The programme strongly emphasized the need to combat violence, criminality and terrorism which arose among young people in many countries and gave special importance to the direct and responsible participation of youth in the decision-making process in society. The programme also included a number of recommendations aimed at intensifying efforts for education of the younger generation in the humanist ideals of peace, friendship, co-operation and respect among peoples.



24. The positive outcome of the first session of the Advisory Committee was the result of active contribution and spirit of understanding and co-operation among all members of the Committee. He hoped that the same constructive spirit would characterize the consideration of the programme in the General Assembly with a view to its adoption in the form proposed by the Advisory Committee.

25. Today, young people everywhere entered the world arena as a strong force for progress, democracy and peace. Fully aware that they were confronted with problems which endangered the very existence of mankind, young people desired to put an end to the arms race so that there would be no more areas of tension which could generate conflicts leading to the destruction of human civilization, and above all, to participate directly in shaping the future in which they would have to live and work.

26. In Rumania, favorable conditions had been established for participation of young people in the process of development, political and social life and the management of affairs of state. In all the great achievements of socialist Rumania, young people, together with others, were contributing energetically and enthusiastically to giving effect to the multilateral development programme and reaching even greater heights in material and spiritual development.

27. With regard to the specific measures and activities for International Youth Year, youth organizations in Rumania had taken an active interest in the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee and had welcomed the programme contained in its report. In September 1981, the Rumanian National Committee for the Preparation of International Youth Year had been established; it comprised representatives of young people from various fields of activity and representatives of governmental agencies and organizations concerned with youth. Furthermore, in 1982, within the framework of preparations for the Year, a seminar on the theme "Youth in the 1980s" would be organized in Rumania under the aegis of UNESCO.

28. With respect to physical education and sports exchanges among youth, his delegation wished to recall that the Universiade, the greatest multisports gathering in 1982, had been held at Bucharest. These University Summer World Games had made a remarkable contribution to the cause of peace, understanding and co-operation among peoples. His delegation was confident that the discussions in the Third Committee would lead to the identification of new ways and practical means to improve, broaden and diversify co-operation in the field of youth.



(Mr. Ceausescu, Rumania)

29. The General Assembly had a special role to play in recognizing the ever-growing importance of international co-operation among youth. A practical approach to the problems of the younger generation at the level of governments, the United Nations and its specialized agencies presupposed sustained efforts which should not end with International Youth Year. On the contrary, the Year could and should represent the beginning of a new stage in joint efforts by all states and agencies within the United Nations system to solve the major problems of youth and to ensure their active participation in the solution of international problems. His delegation was sure that in approving the specific programme of measures and activities for International Youth Year, the General Assembly would be taking a giant step for international co-operation aimed at meeting the aspirations of young people throughout the world who rightly expected a substantial contribution from the United Nations in achieving their legitimate ideals of peace, understanding and progress.

30. Miss WEBSTER (Ireland), speaking on agenda items 76 and 77, said that those two items were particularly relevant for her delegation because the population of her country was, to an unusual degree by European standards, made up of young people and was, in fact, the most rapidly growing population in Europe. Her Government attached the highest priority to the evolution of comprehensive, flexible youth policies which reflected the ideals and aspirations of the young people themselves. For that reason, her Government's policies, covering a wide range of practical matters relevant to young people, were drawn up after the closest consultation with voluntary organizations.

31. The success of national youth policies and programmes required recognition of the immediate developmental problems and careful planning to overcome them. The foremost of those developmental problems, the urgency of which clearly was recognized by both developed and developing countries, was that of unemployment among young people. Her Government had initiated a number of youth employment and training schemes which would be co-ordinated by the Youth Employment Agency and had recently introduced the Youth Enterprise scheme which, by providing the necessary technical advice and financial assistance, would enable young people with viable business proposals to set up their own enterprises. Those schemes were designed to ensure that no young person was left without some combination of training and work in the crucial months following the completion of full-time education so that young people would be spared the demoralizing effects of unemployment while at the same time acquiring the skills and knowledge which would enhance their prospects of finding employment.

32. The International Youth Year would be a most useful contribution to local, regional and international efforts to promote the active participation of youth in the development of society. For that reason, Ireland, as a member of the Advisory Committee, had sought to play an active role in the preparation for the Year. At the national level, work had already begun on a comprehensive programme of activities for the Year and certain priorities had been identified including, besides youth employment, education, health, recreation and social activities. Her Government hoped to stimulate the interest of youth and ensure its participation in those and other activities not only by means of an information campaign through the mass media but also by direct involvement of young people in specific projects such as art and essay competition. In that way it was hoped to give young people a sense of personal involvement and participation in International Youth Year and, by bringing them together in common endeavors such as seminars, workshops and community projects, to encourage them to expand their base of participation, both in their local communities and in the management of institutions directly concerned with their growth and development.

33. In designating 1985 as International Youth Year, the General Assembly had focused the attention of the world on the situation of young people everywhere. It was already quite clear that most countries had given serious thought to the question of national schemes and programs which took account of the specific interests and needs of young people. The inherent idealism and enthusiasm of young people would ensure that those interests were not confined to purely personal or local preoccupations but would extend to an appreciation of the ideals and aspirations of young people everywhere, thereby strengthening the bonds of friendship and understanding between nations.

34. Mrs. AKAMATSU (Japan) said that until recently, most people had thought that the problems of the elderly and aging were peculiar to developed countries, and as a result there had been a tendency to overlook them in international forums devoted to social issues. Although the fact of aging and the point in life at which aging commenced varied from country to country, the reality of aging was the same everywhere, regardless of whether it manifested itself at age 45 or 75. Accordingly, all nations should be able to agree on the necessity of devising measures to improve the lives and well-being of the elderly. Japan looked forward to the United Nations becoming more active in that area and, in particular, to the convening of the World Assembly on Aging.

35. Under the auspices of the WHO Association of Japan and other organizations, a symposium on aging had been held in Japan in 1981 as a preparatory international conference for the World Assembly

(Mrs. Akamatsu, Japan)

at the non-governmental level. In 1973, Japan had established the Headquarters for Co-ordinating Policy on the Elderly in the Prime Minister's Office with a view to co-ordinating the work being done by various governmental administrative bodies concerned with policies affecting the elderly and the aging.

36. As it had stated in the Advisory Committee, the delegation believed that the plan of action should serve solely to provide a set of broad guidelines for nations and that the specific measures which a country devised should be formulated as responses to the conditions obtaining in that country. Her delegation was satisfied with the draft conceptual framework of an international plan of action.

37. From ancient times, the Japanese people had held older people in great respect, valuing their judgment and wisdom. Indeed, that was a tradition prevalent throughout Asia. Japan observed a national holiday, 15 September, as a day of respect for the aged when the country expressed its appreciation to them for their contribution to society. The problems of aging could only become worse and the designation of a date to honour the elderly was just a first step, but an important one, towards recognition of the needs and problems of the older citizens of the world.

38. Mr. DUEHRING (German Democratic Republic) said that the young generation was the most precious property of any nation and the development of its creative powers, its earliest possible participation in the life of society and its education and training could only be ensured in an environment of peace. The German Democratic Republic was guided by these principles which were in keeping with the peace proposals of the Soviet Union and with the peace concept of its own Government, in its co-operation and preparations for International Youth Year.

39. While his delegation could subscribe to a number of views contained in the report (A36/215), it believed that other points should be accentuated. Any young person in the German Democratic Republic reading parts of the report on the situation of youth would be struck by the fact that they were not relevant to the situation of youth of the same age in the German Democratic Republic. The report spoke exclusively of social grievances in various countries and the activities and measures proposed were designed only to remedy those grievances. That was bound to give a one-sided and wrong picture of the problems of youth throughout the world. While unemployment was undoubtedly one of the most serious social problems of youth in some countries, it was a phenomenon alien to socialism.



(Mr. Duehring, German Democratic Republic)

40. On 28 January 1974, the German Democratic Republic had adopted an act on the participation of young people in the building of the advanced socialist society and on their universal promotion which enabled all young citizens to share actively and equally in the conduct of public affairs. Basic rights, especially political rights, the right to work and recreation and the right to education, had been realities in the German Democratic Republic for a long time. Young people participated in all aspects of the management of enterprises through the branches of their youth organizations and trade unions united in the Confederation of Free German Trade Union. More than 60,000 people were working as shop stewards. These few examples showed that the human development and the career of everyone in the German Democratic Republic were guaranteed. Terms such as fear of life, unemployment and life without a future were alien notions.

41. Document A/36/215 mentioned problems such as starvation, illiteracy and drug abuse without specifying their causes and setting forth appropriate ways of solving them. A practical approach to solving those problems would be the immediate limitation and cessation of the arms race, especially in the nuclear field. The huge sums that could be released should be diverted to peaceful uses; on that point, the interests of young people in the German Democratic Republic were similar to those of youth in other countries. Too little importance had been attached to that aspect in the proposals concerning International Youth Year and, more particularly, to the involvement of young people in that process.

42. History taught that there was no issue of greater importance than that of maintaining peace. Peace ensured the development of youth and, consequently, the future of any nation. War, on the other hand, always meant the annihilation of young people and no future for millions of human beings. That must be pointed out because aggressive imperialist forces were resorting to confrontation and the acceleration of the arms race. In that context, the German Democratic Republic supported the idea of elaborating a Charter of Rights and Duties of Youth. The Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples should be taken as a basis and developed further.

43. Young people in the German Democratic Republic had always used their broad relations and contacts to enhance international understanding, detente and peaceful co-operation among nations. Efforts for the preparation and observation of International Youth Year should be focused on educating young people in a spirit of solidarity with their contemporaries in countries where there was still colonialism and racism and where there were still regimes which ruled



(Mr. Duehring, German Democratic Republic)

by terrorizing and brutally oppressing their people. Between 1976 and 1980, young people in the German Democratic Republic had raised about 44 million marks for the anti-imperialist solidarity account and that money had been used to provide assistance to peoples in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

44. A central task of International Youth Year should be to involve all States in appropriate assistance to the developing countries in their efforts to eliminate the negative consequences for their youth caused by centuries-old colonial domination. To that end, all States should provide favourable conditions for the participation of youth in the development process.

45. Mr. MOERDOPO (Indonesia) said that there was no doubt that youth was the repository of the future of a nation and was a positive factor for social change. The younger generation should therefore be taught to recognize the national heritage and imbued with the sense of responsibility in fulfilling the national aspirations as worthy successors of the present generation. While the situation of youth varied from country to country, the increasing number of young people had a profound impact on economic growth and social progress. The establishment of national priorities in which youth was recognized as a pillar of future society, adequate response in their aspirations and a strategy designed to achieve maximum youth participation had become more necessary than ever.

46. Unemployment was perhaps the most critical economic and social problem among young people. It was estimated that already 300 million young people in the developing countries were in search of employment; in addition, there was a lack of adequate nutrition and medical care. Rural youth with limited opportunities had become increasingly restless elements of the society. Moreover, young people were particularly affected by racism, religious intolerance, class discrimination and lack of learning opportunities. Those problems had led to disenchantment and disillusionment. There was therefore an urgent need to respond positively to those problems and guide the younger generation into the future as responsible citizens, equipped to contribute meaningfully to the development of society.

47. In a very broad sense, the problems of youth reflected those of the particular society. They could be solved within over-all policies and strategies in the field of social and economic development. First, there was a need to prepare an agenda for national action with the understanding that youth should not be seen as a passive element but as a dynamic force in the development process. Social dysfunction would result if youth was denied the opportunity to participate in development and was not allowed to realize its potential.

48. In line with that approach, the Government of Indonesia had initiated a number of measures which recognized youth as the future source of manpower and as the human resource which could fulfil the nation's potential. A long-term strategy for training and education was required in order to overcome the practical problems which the younger generation would surely face. In the second Indonesian five-year plan beginning in 1974, education was one of the priorities. Vocational training and other aspects of practical training were an integral part of the educational system, the aim being to provide the environment for original and dynamic thinking. School drop-outs were given particular consideration in vocational training provided with the co-operation of the Departments of Manpower and Industry. In further recognition of the role of young people, encouragement was given for the nomination of candidates in the 21-35 age group, who were endorsed by various political organizations, for the general elections scheduled for 1982.

49. International Youth Year was an important milestone in the efforts of the international community to foster friendly relations among peoples and among young people in particular. In that connexion, his delegation commended the specific programme of measures and activities to be undertaken both prior and during the Year.

50. Mrs. MASMONDI (Tunisia) took the chair.

51. Mrs. SHELLI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the designation of 1985 as International Youth Year was the best indication of the international community's concern with youth. She stressed the necessity for the co-operation of all institutions concerned with youth and of Governments, the specialized agencies and international organizations.

52. Her country accorded great attention to youth, believing that young people were of great importance in the construction of human civilization. Young people in Libya were given free education and academic incentive grants, as well as all necessary vocational and technical training to ensure them job opportunities in accordance with their capacities. They also received free medical treatment. The State encouraged cultural meetings for young people and had opened cultural, social and sports clubs for youth. These measures extended to all sectors of the population. Particular importance was accorded to physical education and such activities as participation in the Olympic Games. Such activities fostered self-control, co-operation and mutual understanding.

53. Part of paragraph 8 of document A/36/215 would have applied to Libya before the revolution when girls tended to leave school at a very early age in rural areas and, upon leaving school, were married off. However, the country had made great strides since then in that regard: education was compulsory for all up to the preparatory stage, and vocational training centers had been opened for girls who were encouraged to take up handicrafts.

(Mrs. Shelli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

54. From paragraph 13 of the same document, it could be seen that youth programmes were closely related to the development process. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, as a developing country, had made great headway against illiteracy, and education had expanded considerably. It did not have the problem of the flight of rural youth to the cities. Even the young people who came to the cities for educational purposes maintained their ties with their families in rural areas.

55. Her delegation stressed the need to increase the number of young persons participating in the United Nations system; the need for concern with the situation of youth in the occupied areas in Palestine, Lebanon and southern Africa and for measures by the United Nations and the international community to improve their situation from the educational, social and health standpoints; the need to endeavour to give young people opportunities and encourage them to participate in the various areas of development and in national affairs; the need to give handicapped young people an opportunity for education, work and a secure life; the importance of international sports meetings for youth and the importance of publicity for such meetings in order to demonstrate the role of youth in society; and the need to encourage study and research exchanges, particularly among young people, on an international basis.

56. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had no special problems with regard to the aged. Old people were looked after by their families until their death, and those who had no families were provided with special care by the State. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya would shortly establish a home for old people which would be the first of its kind in north Africa.

57. The State paid retired persons one half of their wages and a monthly sum to unemployed old people. The State also helped unemployed old people who wished to work to find an occupation. Health care and medications were free.

58. In view of the fact that the number of old persons in the world was increasing, the World Assembly on Aging would provide an excellent opportunity for dealing with issues relating to the elderly and their problems and for finding solutions through an ongoing fruitful dialogue between Governments and among old people themselves at all national, regional or international levels.

59. Her delegation supported the proposals made in document A/36/472 regarding the World Assembly on Aging. In that document it was stated that old people in most parts of the world felt estranged from their families and sometimes lived apart from them. Such a situation did not exist, of course, in the Islamic society of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.



60. In conclusion, she emphasized the need to co-ordinate the programme for the World Assembly on Aging and the programmes for the elderly and the aged; the need to increase the number of homes for the aged to serve old persons having no families; the need to devise a programme for usefully occupying the spare time of old people; the need to encourage studies on the aged in every country for use by the World Assembly; and the need for attention and care for handicapped old persons.

61. The Libyan Arab Republic was fully prepared to participate in ensuring the success of the programmes of the International Year for the Aged.

62. Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), speaking on agenda item 78, said that the question under discussion was exceptionally important for the young independent States struggling with the difficult problems of accelerating their economic and social development. The task of achieving rapid economic development as an essential basis for increasing the living standards of the working people, eliminating illiteracy, unemployment, and solving other social problems, was complicated by the great difficulties caused by the capitalist world economic crisis. Developing countries encountered problems with marketing their produce owing to the reluctance of the leading capitalist countries to agree to the establishment of a just, mutually advantageous international economic order, currency disorders, and the economic backwardness and social distress inherited from the colonial era. For those countries, the task of choosing the correct strategy for social development could be lightened by studying and adapting to local conditions the historical experience of other countries, who had made or were making far-reaching social and economic changes which had ensured a high rate of economic and social development and a steady rise in the living standard of the working population. Experience of that kind was also important because it relied on the initiative and the creativity of the working people and showed the need to identify the main directions of economic and social change, as links in the whole chain of a country's development, and to take account of national characteristics. He warned, however, that exaggerated attention to particular national circumstances, leading to a disregard for the essential components of economic and social change as proved by historical experience would result in mistakes and slow down the development process.

63. Referring to the experience of his own country since the great October Socialist Revolution of 1917, he said that, in its earliest days, it had been faced with problems of social and economic underdevelopment similar to those currently affecting the developing nations. The situation in Byelorussia had been aggravated by the massive destruction caused by foreign intervention during the First World War and the civil war, and, only 20 years later, by Hitler's



(Mr. Ogurtsov,  
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)

invasion. His country had, however, managed to overcome those difficulties and achieve a high level of economic and social development. The basis of that success lay in the socialist transformation of the social and political structure, the essence of which was the establishment of common ownership of the means of production, the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, the application of the socialist principle of distributing the wealth created in society according to work, the creation of a free system of secondary and higher education and a free health service, the provision of housing and so for Socialist industrialization and the introduction of agricultural co-operatives were specific large-scale programmes designed to change the economic basis of the country. As a component part of the economic system of the Soviet Union, the Byelorussian SSR enjoyed the advantages stemming from specialization and co-operation, which guaranteed the most rational use of its manpower and material resources, supplies of energy resources and raw materials, technical and scientific development and a market for its products. In the difficult periods of its development, the Republic had been given a great deal of assistance in carrying out industrialization and rehabilitating its economy after the war.

64. In the Byelorussian SSR, every person was guaranteed work, unemployment being unknown since the beginning of the 1930's. Women also played an active role in social production. The new constitution of the Byelorussian SSR, adopted in 1978, stated that the main purpose of social production under socialism was to satisfy to the fullest extent the growing material and spiritual demands of the people. Socialism had been the driving force behind its social progress. In a short time Byelorussia had been transformed from a backward region with little industry and under-productive agriculture, marked by poverty, illness and illiteracy, into a country with a highly developed industry, highly mechanized collective agriculture, modern science and a high level of culture accessible to all the people.

65. Industry in the republic developed dynamically, the volume of industrial production doubling every seven years. During the tenth five-year plan, which had been successfully completed in 1980, the national income of the Republic grew by 28 per cent. In the same period, agricultural production in the public sector grew annually by 15 per cent. The Republic also had one of the highest ratios of doctors and hospital beds to population served in the world, as well as one of the highest average rates for female longevity.

66. The people of the Byelorussian SSR were now working on the eleventh five-year plan, covering the years 1981-1985. Its main objective was to increase the prosperity of the Soviet people by accelerating scientific and technical progress and moving towards intensive economic development and a more rational use of the country's productive capacity.

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Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)

67. He stressed that his country was well aware of the positive experience of other countries in that field. In that connexion, the report of the Secretary General on national experience in promoting the co-operative movement (A/36/115) was of great interest, although it did not generalize the experience of all countries in co-operative activity. Unfortunately, it should be pointed out that General Assembly and Economic and Social Council decisions on the holding of regional seminars on the subject had not been implemented, although such seminars would promote a more active exchange of experience of social and economic changes of different countries.

68. Mr. O'Donovan (Ireland) resumed the Chair.

69. Miss STREDEL (Venezuela), referring to agenda items 76 and 77, said that the General Assembly's decision to declare 1985 the International Youth Year reflected its interest in the role young people should play in the world and the obligation Member States had assumed to implement national policies to promote the active participation of young people in economic and social development and in the promotion of peace. As the programme of measures and activities indicates, only a profound understanding of future prospects could lead to the promotion of the best educational, professional and living conditions for young people and could ensure that the Year was a success.

70. In addition, preparations for the Year would help to draw attention to the needs and aspirations of young people, to initiate joint programmes of action for their benefit and to ensure their participation in efforts to solve important national, regional and international problems.

71. By the year 2000, there would be 1.18 billion young people in the world and the problems of unemployment and the rural exodus of young people to the large cities would become even more critical. Therefore, it was becoming increasingly urgent to adopt national programmes designed to alleviate these problems.

72. Since 1972, Venezuela had had a Ministry of Youth. Its original task of co-ordinating youth programmes had been coupled with that of establishing programmes on the basis of surveys of public opinion and of the needs felt by young people themselves. The Ministry of Youth pursued a policy of sustained action to ensure that the different categories of the population, including young people, who were crucial to the economic and social future of the country, participated in national life and in the national development process. To that end, the Ministry was developing programmes to help to establish or strengthen firms managed by young people and

(Miss Stredel, Venezuela)

youth co-operatives for the production, distribution and marketing of goods and services. Other programmes were directed towards overcoming the problems related to social and family maladjustment, promoting the participation of young people in cultural activities and increasing family participation in sports activities and recreation. The Ministry also organized forums to inform young people about the scientific and technological situation of the country.

73. In addition, the Ministry of Youth trained and organized young people in civil defence operations for natural or social emergencies and, with the support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, had initiated an international co-operation programme in that field. For example, Venezuelan civil defence experts from the Ministry of Youth provided assistance in technical and food-related problems to island countries in the Caribbean which were vulnerable to natural disasters. International courses in civil defence, conducted jointly by both Ministries, had been attended by delegates from most countries of the region. The purpose of those courses was to teach participants how to prepare for natural disasters so that both individuals and the population as a whole were exposed to the least possible risk.

74. At the international level, the Ministry of Youth had established contacts with the officials of similar bodies in other countries; experiences and knowledge about youth policies had been exchanged and agreement had been reached on the establishment of exchange programmes for groups of young people from those countries. That undertaking also offered an ideal opportunity for closer cultural exchanges.

75. Venezuela welcomed the fact that co-operation between the United Nations system and youth organizations had been expanded and reinforced, for that co-operation was essential to the success of the International Youth Year. Moreover, Venezuela felt that the mass media could make a fundamental contribution to the Year by providing information and publicity about the problems of young people.

76. Venezuela was gratified that, during the second session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sports held in Paris in 1981, several recommendations had been adopted, in particular, the resolution appealing to Member States to adopt measures to integrate physical education and sport in their programmes and policies relating to the International Youth Year (A/36/409, para. 23).

77. Her delegation noted with interest the comments the representatives of ILO and UNESCO had made at the first meeting of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year about the need to elaborate programmes of action on such important subjects as un-



employment , education and the quality of life of young people. Her delegation welcomed the interest Member States had shown in preparations for the Year and felt that the non-governmental and regional organizations were playing a very important role in these preparations.

78. In the context of the proposals for additional guidelines contained in document A/36/427, she requested that the Joint United Nations Information Committee, in co-operation with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, should also establish contacts with world youth organizations with a view to advising them on the production and circulation of United Nations publications which emphasized activities relating to the International Youth Year.

79. As the report of the Secretary-General indicated (A/36/215, para. 33 (e)), peace was essential to the future of young people and their enthusiasm and talent should be enlisted in the struggle to achieve self-determination, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, general and complete disarmament in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination.

80. She concluded by observing that, as a reflection of her delegation's interest in the items under consideration, it had co-sponsored the draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/36/L.15.

81. Mrs. EJEZIE (Sierra Leone), referring to the question of youth, outlined the ways in which young people in her country were encouraged to participate in the building of society, politically, socially and in practical terms. Her Government had experienced some difficulty in ensuring the appropriate recruitment of its many graduates of universities and technical institutes. It therefore welcomed the draft programme of Measures and Activities, which stressed that efforts to solve the problems of youth should be an integral part of development efforts and should be included in the framework of the third International Development Strategy. Her delegation also welcomed the guidelines for action at the national, regional and international levels; Sierra Leone would spare no effort in establishing the national machinery needed to prepare for the International Youth Year.

82. However, she sounded a note of caution: in formulating plans of action for the Year, it was important to allow young people themselves to decide what should be included.

83. Referring to the question of the elderly, she explained that it must be viewed from a different perspective in the African continent. Africa had an extended family system; old people were considered to be the heads of families and were greatly respected and cared for. Therefore, she suggested that Member States should be free to develop the national mechanisms which they felt would adequately take care of their elderly. Her delegation would welcome



(Mrs. Ejezie, Sierra Leone)

any resolutions to that end, and she expressed appreciation for the support the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and other specialized agencies had provided for the meetings held thus far on that subject.

84. In conclusion, she supported the view expressed by the representative of Malta that two additional sessions of the Advisory Committee for the World Assembly on Aging should be held in 1982 so as to ensure that adequate preparations were made for that event.

85. Mr. ADOSSAMA (International Labour Organization) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs for his very clear remarks concerning problems relating to the role of women, young people and the elderly in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. He also welcomed the close co-operation between the International Labour Office and the Under-Secretary-General and his colleagues, particularly in the common search for ways to ensure the effective and practical fulfilment of the social objectives of the strategy. The Director-General of the International Labour Organization had submitted the text of the Strategy to ILO Member States and to representatives of employer and worker organizations, also with a view to finding practical ways of implementing it. In that connexion, he informed the Committee that at the sixty-seventh session of the International Labour Conference, four important resolutions on the social aspects of the Strategy had been adopted: first, a resolution on the training of managers of public and private enterprises and the fostering of a spirit of initiative, especially in the developing countries; second, a resolution on ILO's role in the Strategy; third, a resolution on the economic and social consequences of disarmament; and fourth, a resolution on vocational training. All those resolutions underscored the importance of ensuring that all Governments and employer and worker organizations took into account the decisive role that women, young people and the elderly could play in the search for a peaceful solution to the economic and social problems confronting every country.

86. With regard to the International Youth Year, the World Assembly on Aging, International Women's Year and the draft Convention on the Rights of the Child, he informed the Committee that ILO had participated in the preparatory meetings for all those events.

87. In the field of youth, ILO had organized tripartite meetings between the Government, employers and workers in various parts of the world. Through these meetings, it sought to heighten national and international awareness of the problems of young people, and in particular of the need to provide them with jobs and to include them in the national economic and social development process. The creation

(Mr. Adossama,  
International Labour Organization)

of jobs for young people was one of the most serious problems for all Governments in both developed and developing countries. In fact, the future of young people in most countries looked bleak because of the world economic recession and continuing inflation, unemployment and underemployment. It was also essential to include young people in decision-making that concerned their future.

88. The International Labour Organization had adopted several conventions and recommendations on the protection of young people, for example, in connexion with night work, occupational accidents, pre-job and on-the-job training and equal pay.

89. The educational system must also be reformed to ensure that the vocational training of young people took into account the moral and spiritual ideals contained in the Charter, for those ideals could then guide young people in their future careers. Political, social and economic developments highlighted the need to ensure that the training of future generations stressed respect for human values, both in individual relations and in relations among peoples. The society of the future must also reflect the moral and spiritual values embodied in the ideals of the United Nations, and everyone, individually and collectively, must respect and apply these ideals in national and international relations.

90. With regard to the World Assembly on Aging, he pointed out that the International Labour Organization had always dealt with elderly workers with attention focused mainly on pensions, social security and job discrimination. The economic and social changes many countries had experienced in the 1960s had brought to light the special difficulties elderly workers faced, particularly with the introduction of new technology. Later, the difficulty they had in holding a job and the unemployment among a growing number of elderly workers had begun to attract Government attention. He stressed that the real difficulties of many elderly workers must be better understood and that a more dynamic plan of action must be developed for them. The plan of action could be based on the recommendation, adopted in 1980 by ILO States, which represented a code of good conduct towards elderly workers. A growing number of countries had recognized the need to help elderly workers to make the transition from work to retirement. However, the specific provisions adopted to that end varied considerably from country to country and, in general, covered a small number of workers.

91. Mr. NORDENFELT (Sweden), speaking on agenda item 90 on behalf of the five Nordic delegations, said that the Nordic Governments were firmly committed to working for the abolition of the death penalty. In the past five years, executions had been carried out in more than 60 countries, and in one particular country more than 1,000 persons had been executed in recent months. The Nordic countries therefore considered it more necessary than ever for the international community to deal with the matter.

(Mr. Nordenfelt, Sweden)

92. They were opposed to the death penalty, because they did not believe it was compatible with full respect for the right to life, without which all other rights became illusory; the death penalty also raised serious problems concerning the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Moreover, it was irreversible, and there were many examples of judicial mistakes. Studies also showed that, in many countries, the death penalty was more likely to be inflicted on the socially disadvantaged or on the racially oppressed. Unfortunately, capital punishment was also used as an instrument to eliminate political opponents.

93. For all these reasons, the Nordic Governments had welcomed the adoption by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of a resolution expressing concern over information submitted to it about the scale of executions in various parts of the world, particularly executions of political opponents and imprisoned or detained persons. The resolution had also expressed concern about the summary execution of persons who had subsequently been reported to have "disappeared". In addition, the Sub-Commission had decided to draw the attention of the Commission on Human Rights to the escalation of politically-motivated executions and to inform the latter of its view that that problem deserved urgent consideration. Lastly, the Sub-Commission had recommended that the Commission on Human Rights should request the Economic and Social Council to call upon Governments to abolish capital punishment for political offences.

94. By the same token, the Nordic delegations had fully supported General Assembly resolution 35/172 on arbitrary or summary executions. They also supported proposals concerning the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights concerning the abolition of capital punishment.

95. In resolution 2857 (XXVI), the General Assembly affirmed that, in order fully to guarantee the right to life, the main objective to be pursued was that of progressively restricting the number of offences for which capital punishment could be imposed, with a view to the desirability of abolishing that punishment in all countries.

96. The abolition of capital punishment would make a significant contribution to the strengthening of human rights in general. Although that goal could not be achieved immediately in all countries, he expressed the hope that agreement could be reached on ways to gradually coming closer to that objective which had been set by the General Assembly almost a decade previously but towards which little progress had thus far been made.

97. Mr. AILLOKE (Niger), referring to agenda items 76 and 78, said that his delegation attached particular importance to the International Youth Year and to the promotion of the co-operative



(Mr. Ailloke, Niger)

movement. Niger was in the process of acquiring the experience it needed to accelerate its economic and social development through broad public participation and consultations. To that end, a national commission had been established in 1979 to set up the structure for a development corporation. The commission's main objectives were, on the one hand, to define an appropriate framework for consistent and harmonious accelerated development and, on the other hand, to establish new institutions based on the effective participation of all categories of the population. Among the six sub-commissions set up for that purpose, one was responsible for the cooperative movement and another for the leadership activities of Samaria, the national movement of young people of Niger. The work of the six sub-commissions had already been endorsed by the Government, and the relevant report had been issued for discussion by the public. The Development Corporation would be founded on branches of Samaria and on the development co-operatives. The formation of those two components would start at the village level and would continue up through the towns and counties to the national level. The framework for consultation and participation thus established would enable all the people of Niger to participate in the decision-making process.

98. The International Youth Year would enable all Member States to recognize the need to ensure the participation of young people in national development. His Government was fully aware of the importance of including young people in the development process. Moreover, within the Samaria national youth movement, young people had also become aware of their role and had effectively participated in several national construction and public works projects, in sports and cultural activities and in the provision of public services.

99. The establishment of development co-operatives was surely the best way to ensure the complete development of the least-favoured elements of the community. In Niger, agricultural co-operatives were already in operation. Each co-operative was headed by a president who was responsible for implementing the decisions taken by the co-operative. At the end of each crop season, members of the co-operative met to assess their needs, for example, in terms of seeds and fertilizer, and to start planning for the next season. The National Office for Water and Agricultural Development, which was under the Ministry of Rural Development, dealt with rice production, helped to train farmers and provided the necessary machinery, implements and fertilizer, for which the farmers paid a fee. Clearly, the Development Corporation was becoming well established in Niger and, for that reason, his delegation attached particular importance to the discussion of agenda items 76 and 78,



100. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in view of requests he had received from delegations, the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions on agenda items 76, 77, 78, 80, 84 and 90 should be extended until Monday, 19 October at 6 p.m.

101. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.