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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 88: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE
(continued) (A/36/3/Add.20; A/36/620; A/36/490)

- (a) WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/36/564)
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AGENDA ITEM 89: STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
(A/36/63, A/36/295 and Add.1)

1. Mrs. SHAH NAWAZ (Pakistan) said that the Secretary-General's report (A/36/564) on the action taken to implement the measures called for at the Copenhagen Conference clearly indicated that Member States were being guided by the conclusions of the Conference and were making genuine efforts for the achievement of the objectives set out in the Action Programme. Her delegation had found it extremely useful to share with other delegations their experiences in their endeavours to obtain equal status for women in every sphere of activity. Although each nation must tackle the problem in its own special way, in view of its peculiar circumstances, her delegation had benefited greatly from the statements made by other representatives on the experience in their respective countries.

2. Pakistan, as a developing country, faced many disadvantages but had the good fortune of being blessed with a dynamic force, that of Islam, a religion of the overwhelming majority of the people. Islam regarded women as equal participants in the social order and conferred upon them such rights as those of property, inheritance and so on. Distortions in tradition and custom of later years had only now begun to disappear with the crumbling of colonial, neo-colonial and imperialistic legacies. The concept of the role of women in an Islamic society was witnessing a resurgence and had greatly facilitated the efforts of the Islamic nations, including Pakistan, for the early attainment of equality of women.

3. Since Pakistan was an Islamic state, its Constitution fully reflected the enunciations on the rights of women contained in the Islamic religion. For example, article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan stated that there should be no discrimination on the basis of sex. Article 34 stated that steps must be taken to ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of national life. Article 35 enjoined upon the State the responsibility of protecting marriage, the family, the mother and the child. Article 37 ensured other benefits for women in general and

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(Mrs. Shah Nawaz, Pakistan)

for those who worked in particular. Article 38 required the State to secure the well-being of the people irrespective of sex, creed or race.

4. Women in Pakistan enjoyed political rights on equal terms with men. Consistent with religious enunciations and constitutional provisions, the Government of Pakistan was doing everything possible, within its limited resources, to improve the status of women in the country. Until recently those efforts had been reflected in constitutional provisions and legislative actions. However, the emphasis had now shifted to operational and institutional measures for the advancement of women. With a view to ensuring the achievement of those objectives, the Government of Pakistan had established in 1979 within the Federal Secretariat a Women's Division, which functioned directly under the President of Pakistan. During the period 1979-1980, the Women's Division had sponsored a national programme consisting of projects in various fields of activities such as skill development, nutrition, health education, adult education and employment. The Women's Division was now evolving new programmes which included day-care centres, working women's hostels and training institutes.

5. Since Pakistan was primarily an agricultural country with almost 80 per cent of the population living in rural areas, the Government had undertaken special measures to improve the status of rural women. In the field of health care, a National Basic Services Cell had been created to oversee the implementation of the various programmes. In the sphere of education the national policy and its implementation programmes were aimed at achieving universal enrolment of girls at the elementary education level by 1992. Already, the enrolment levels of women in all categories of education had witnessed a sharp increase.

6. Although much still remained to be done, the Government of Pakistan was conscious of the problems and recognized that women and men, as equals, must play a vital role in the struggle for equitable economic development and for the establishment of a truly just and democratic social order, as embodied in the teachings of Islam.

7. The guidelines adopted at the Copenhagen Conference had enabled the Government of Pakistan to identify the major problems in that field and to seek practical solutions to resolve them. During the second half of the Decade, the Government of Pakistan intended to take full advantage of the infrastructure which had been involved during the first half of the Decade.

8. At the international level, her delegation welcomed the appointment of Mrs. Dunja Pasticci-Ferencic as Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. Pakistan attached special importance to the Institute because it would serve to carry forward the immense work which still remained to be done for the economic, social and cultural development of women. It would like to echo the sentiments expressed by many other delegations with regard to the financing of the Centre through voluntary contributions and expressed the hope that those in a position to do so might consider making generous contributions so that the goals of the Centre could be realized. Pakistan had already announced that in 1982 it would contribute 50,000 rupees to the Institute and 100,000 rupees to the United Nations Decade for Women.

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(Mrs. Shah Nawaz, Pakistan)

9. With regard to the Voluntary Fund for the Decade, her delegation believed that a decision must be taken very quickly on the location of the Fund and its possible integration with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in order to ensure the continuity of its activities.

10. Her delegation noted with satisfaction that the requisite number of ratifications had been received for the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Her delegation had voted in favour of resolution 34/180 by which the Convention had been adopted, and, consequently, supported the goals and objectives set forth in it, but some provisions of that Convention must be considered in accordance with its religious beliefs and its legislation, which was based on the Islamic Sharia.

11. In resolution 35/135, the General Assembly had drawn the attention of the international community to the effect that a large majority of the refugees and displaced persons in the world were women and children. She expressed her solidarity with those refugees and reminded the Committee of the presence of approximately 2.3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan, many of them women and children. Although the Government of Pakistan was doing everything possible, with the assistance of the international community and the United Nations organizations, to create suitable conditions for those refugees, it remained the duty and the obligation of the international community to create conditions of peace and security in order to prevent the flow of refugees in general and, in that particular case, create conditions that would enable the inhabitants of Afghanistan who had been deprived of their homes to return to their country in conditions of peace, security and honour.

12. Mrs. RADIC (Yugoslavia) said that the consistent stand of Yugoslavia, which was that of the non-aligned countries and other developing countries, was that there was a close interdependence between the role of women and over-all social development, understood as an integral economic and social process designed to mobilize all the material and human resources of each country and the world community. Accordingly, related issues must not be dealt with in isolation from the strategic questions of general development.

13. Insufficient participation of women in development was a serious obstacle to the social and economic development of countries. It went without saying that efforts towards executing the International Development Strategy and establishing the new international economic order were of the utmost importance for the advancement of women. The orientation of the non-aligned countries and other developing countries towards a policy of collective economic autonomy was important for women, because that strategy provided for measures in all areas of those countries' mutual co-operation, in order to guarantee the participation of women in development. There was no doubt that the future activities of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women would contribute to the implementation of that common stand of the developing countries.

14. In the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/36/564, on the implementation of the measures called for by the Copenhagen Conference, note was

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(Mrs. Radic, Yugoslavia)

made of the various efforts which had been undertaken within the United Nations system to formulate concrete proposals and adopt measures to ensure the faster implementation of the Programme of Action for the second half of the Decade. It was necessary to make new efforts to establish the necessary co-ordination within the system in operational activities and in the preparation of the 1985 World Conference.

15. Her delegation recognized the informative value of the document entitled "Financial and technical support activities of relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system" (A/36/485). However, in order to achieve the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 35/137, it would also be useful to assess the impact on women of the regular activities of the Organization and the participation of women in those activities.

16. With regard to the measures adopted in Yugoslavia with regard to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women, she mentioned that the report of the Copenhagen World Conference had been forwarded to the competent organs and organizations of the country for information and consideration. The Executive Council of Yugoslavia had requested all federal organs and organizations to prepare, within their fields of activity, programmes and measures for the implementation of the Programme of Action.

17. In the first half of the decade, the Parliament of Yugoslavia had adopted a resolution on the basic activities for the promotion of the socio-economic role of and status of women in the country. That resolution had played a major role in the implementation of the goals of the Decade. The measures to be adopted in the future at the national level included, inter alia, activities relating to employment, participation in the system of education, protection of maternity, family planning, social care for children, housing, participation in decision-making and analysis of the attitudes of the mass media.

18. She was particularly pleased to inform the Committee that the Government of Yugoslavia had ratified on 1 October 1981 the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, thus joining 30 other countries which had ratified or acceded to that important international instrument. She wished to stress in that context that, in Yugoslavia, that ratification would not create any need to introduce adjustments or additions to the existing legislation, because, in some areas, the legislative provisions in force went even further than those in the Convention.

19. She reiterated her Government's high appreciation of the achievements of the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women and its conviction of the importance of providing continued financial resources both to the Voluntary Fund and to the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. Her delegation was also convinced that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs would succeed in finding the most propitious way of ensuring the continuation of the activities of the Fund.

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20. Mrs. SAVOEDA (Benin) recalled that, at the International Conference on Women held in Mexico on 19 June to 2 July 1975, emphasis had been placed on the necessity of achieving the maximum participation of women together with men in all areas of activity in the political and economic life of countries, and it had been recommended that Heads of States or Government should create adequate conditions for the formulation of national strategies so that women would have the same rights as men and enjoy equality of opportunity and responsibility. In the People's Republic of Benin, the conviction that the integral progress of peoples struggling for national liberation and economic development was linked with the active participation of women in political, economic, and socio-cultural life predated the Mexico Conference. In Benin, women had always participated in the political and economic activities of national life and had participated in the liberation of "Dahomey" before it became the People's Republic of Benin. That had been the origin of the "Amazons", or women fighters whose contribution to the national liberation struggle had been clearly appreciable during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. With the revolution of 26 October 1972, the condition of women in Benin had undergone great transformations, at the beginning of a new stage in the struggle of the Benin people, which was characterized by the total elimination of the policy of oppression and exploitation of man by man in all forms.

21. At the national level, the People's Revolution Party of Benin and the National Executive Council had created the necessary conditions for ensuring equality of rights, opportunities and responsibilities for men and women in the politico-economic and socio-cultural fields. Currently, children and adolescents of both sexes had equal opportunities in the sphere of education, vocational training and access to employment. With the co-operation of UNESCO, a study had been carried out on the causes of girls' dropping out from school, and measures had been adopted to reduce the number of such cases and have the girls concerned continue their training.

22. At the political level, Beninese women participated alongside men in the State and Party decision-making process, and some women held high-ranking positions. In both rural and urban areas, Beninese women, who were traditionally business-oriented, participated in the economic life of the country, particularly through their appreciable contribution to the tertiary sector. Women also participated, albeit to a lesser extent, in the agricultural activities of the primary sector and in industrial and crafts enterprises in the secondary sector.

23. In spite of that situation, which was inherent in her country's customs, the political and administrative authorities had endorsed the political, economic, social, cultural and legal equality of men and women in articles 124 to 126 of the country's basic law.

24. However, despite all those efforts and despite the efforts of the international community, difficulties remained to be overcome. Her delegation welcomed any measures directed towards the more rapid realization of equal opportunities for women and towards their full integration in national life, particularly measures directed towards solving the problems of the least privileged women in rural areas, of those living under the system of apartheid in southern Africa and of the Palestinian women.

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(Mrs. Savoeda, Benin)

25. As to the draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination, her delegation felt that that document deserved special attention and hoped that improvements would be made in the text thereof so that it could be adopted by consensus.

26. Her delegation had noted the activities conducted in the context of projects financed by the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and expressed appreciation to all the Governments that had contributed to the Fund; she expressed the hope that Governments would make additional contributions so that the Fund could effectively meet the needs of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

27. Mrs. H'MIDOUCHE (Ivory Coast) pointed out that, at the bloodiest moments in the struggle for independence, the women of her country had done something that would go down in the history of the Ivory Coast: they had stormed the Bassam prison in 1948 to demand the release of their husbands, fathers and friends imprisoned there.

28. Even at the dawn of independence, the Association of Women of the Ivory Coast had emerged as a section of the Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast. The Association had elaborated and executed many projects for both rural and urban women, and had built maternity facilities and women's education centres.

29. The celebration of the International Women's Year in 1975 had been decisive for the advancement of women in the Ivory Coast. That same year, the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Félix Houphouët Boigny, had established the Ministry for the Status of Women and had appointed a woman to direct it.

30. She expressed the hope that, with the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on 3 September 1981, women would finally conclude their struggle for equality. In that connexion, she indicated that the Ivory Coast had pledged to ratify the Convention.

31. Clearly, if the advancement of women and their participation in economic life was to be ensured, they must not be excluded from the mainstream. Women must realize that, intellectually, they were the equals of men, just as men must realize that women, too, were capable of reasoning in an analytical manner and of evaluating problems.

32. Mrs. TALLAWY (Egypt) said that, having examined the various reports submitted under the agenda items concerning women, her delegation wished to point out that, in section II of document A/36/564, the United Nations Secretariat had requested all Governments to prepare a brief statement on the most important steps they had taken to implement the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women and that that request constituted the 1980-1981 biennial round of the United Nations Integrated Reporting System on the Status of Women. Her delegation believed that, after the World Conference held in Copenhagen, the

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(Ms. Tallawy, Egypt)

35. Secretariat should have taken further steps to draw attention to the need to implement the Programme of Action.

36. She also expressed the hope that the Expert Group Meeting on Women and the International Development Strategy and the expert group meeting on technical and organizational aspects of policy formulation and planning for women's effective mobilization in development, which were mentioned in paragraphs 29 and 31 of Document A/36/564, would make a positive contribution to laying the proper bases for the important topic of women and development. The choice of experts in the fields to be discussed at the two meetings was not an easy task, since their viewpoints would reflect the practical problems faced by women in the developing countries.

37. Moreover, Egypt wished to reiterate its support for the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and hoped that its activities would be continued beyond the end of the Decade. Although Egypt supported the idea of decentralization, the decision on the future location of the Fund should be based on practical considerations and, in any case, should ensure that the Fund's activities were not adversely affected by the decision taken.

38. Egypt also supported the establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, because it hoped that, in future, the Institute would make a greater contribution to the cause of women, with special emphasis on women's contribution to development.

39. In addition, she welcomed the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in September 1981. Egypt had ratified the Convention in September 1981 and had also ratified the Convention on the Political Rights of Women.

40. Those were two of the most recent developments relating to the status of women in her country, in addition to the recent adoption by the competent authorities of legislation establishing a special quota for seats in Parliament and on local councils.

41. Questions concerning human rights had been examined in the context of the struggle between East and West, and that situation should not be allowed to continue. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, all countries shared responsibility for promoting human rights. Therefore, the East and the West, the developed and the developing countries, should all seek to rectify that situation.

42. Miss KHAPARDE (India) said that since the observance of International Women's Year six years earlier considerable progress had been made, particularly in creating awareness among Governments and peoples of the need for improving the status of women and increasingly integrating women in development. India remained firmly committed to those objectives.

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(Miss Khaparde, India)

40. Efforts to ensure the equality of women in India were rooted in the best traditions of its culture and further strengthened by the participation of women on an equal footing with men in the struggle for independence. Therefore, it was not surprising that India's Constitution, proclaimed more than 30 years earlier, provided for equal rights for women in all spheres.

41. India's problem was not so much that of guaranteeing equality of rights for women as it was that of guaranteeing women the full and effective enjoyment of those rights. Efforts were being made to achieve that objective as part of the country's over-all development. Thus in the sixth five-year plan 1980-1985 a chapter on women and development was included for the first time. The plan viewed the family as a unit of development, giving special attention to women. The economic emancipation of the family, with specific emphasis on women, would constitute one of the major operational aspects of the poverty alleviation strategy. The plan included specific targets in the education, health and employment sectors.

42. She was pleased to note from the report of the Secretary-General on the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, in document A/36/646, that during the past year there had been a continued growth of activities supported by the Fund's resources. It was clear from the numerous projects submitted to the Voluntary Fund that there was a growing awareness of its existence and willingness to utilize its assistance.

43. However, the resources of the Fund were not keeping pace with the requirements now being generated in the field. That constraint was becoming evident at the very time when the Fund had made arrangements with organizations such as UNDP, UNICEF and the regional commissions for developing projects at the country and regional levels. If the Fund was to continue to play the role envisaged for it at the time of its establishment, it must have adequate resources. India had increased its contribution to \$20,000 at the Pledging Conference because it believed that the activities being undertaken by the Fund were most constructive and should be continued beyond the end of the Decade for Women. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would decide to continue the Fund's activities beyond the end of the Decade.

44. There was also the question of the location of the Fund. India felt that that was essentially an administrative question within the jurisdiction of the Secretary-General. India's normal inclination in such matters was to be guided by the advice of the Secretary-General, which in the present instance appeared to favour relocating the Fund in Vienna, but one complicating factor was that a number of delegations, including some of the most generous contributors to the Fund, did not share the view that it should be relocated. Moreover, the question of future contributions to the Fund had been linked to the question of its relocation.

45. Efforts should be made to find a solution that would be acceptable to all parties and would ensure the continuance of the Fund's activities in the most efficient manner possible. India, for its part, hoped that a solution could be found.

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(Miss Khaparde, India)

46. In conclusion, she said that India was pleased to note from document A/36/295 and Add.1 that 83 countries had signed or ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It hoped that the Convention would be signed or ratified by other Member States in the near future.

47. Mr. ERDŐS (Hungary) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women (A/36/564) and the statement of Mrs. Shahani, Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, had set forth the whole range of activities of the United Nations system for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade. Nevertheless, if the objectives fixed by the World Conference were to be fully realized States would have to adopt far-reaching measures at the national level.

48. In Hungary efforts had been made to publicize the Programme of Action through the communications media. In addition, the National Council of Hungarian Women had prepared special publications on the Conference and had participated, together with other non-governmental organizations, in the World Women's Congress held at Prague in October 1981.

49. In Hungary 80 per cent of the women of working age were employed; moreover, women accounted for 45 per cent of the active population. Women had access to education on an equal footing with men, in both secondary schools and universities. Their participation in public life was also considerable: 30 per cent of the deputies to the Parliament and 30 per cent of the country's civil service were women.

50. Hungary was among the first 10 countries to sign the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. His delegation was pleased that the Convention had entered into force, and expressed the hope that it would soon be a legal instrument of truly universal dimensions. Hungary also fully supported the proposal to elaborate a declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security. It was to be hoped that consideration of the draft could be concluded so that the General Assembly could solemnly proclaim such a declaration, for peace was obviously the most important prerequisite for the full emancipation of women.

51. The declaration had been criticized primarily on the ground that it would be better to meet women's basic needs before the declaration was proclaimed. To that argument he would reply that such a declaration would provide an appropriate framework for the solution of specific problems. Another argument was that a number of questions which would be mentioned in the declaration had already been reflected in other documents and resolutions of the United Nations. He wondered if those who supported that position considered that the conventions on racial discrimination, apartheid, employment, education and so forth were a duplication of what was provided for in other international instruments of the United Nations of a more general character.

52. It was also argued that there was no justification for drawing a distinction between men and women. That argument seemed to ignore the fact that in reality

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(Mr. Erdős, Hungary)

there were considerable differences between the situation of men and that of women. To disregard the difficulties encountered by women in the history of their struggle for emancipation and to close one's eyes to the obstacles which still stood in their path was to demonstrate a woeful lack of understanding of the problems of women in the modern world.

53. Many countries, such as Hungary, had until quite recently been dominated by a feudal mentality which prevailed thanks to the existence of a system that perpetuated differences based on sex. The proclamation of merely theoretical equality would be meaningless, and unless specific and concrete measures were introduced it would serve no other purpose than to conceal the absence of political will, and would deprive women of the means of securing their advancement.

54. Lastly, the opponents of the draft Declaration argued that it did not pay sufficient attention to human rights and fundamental freedoms. As the aim was to produce an acceptable text, it should be possible to arrive at an agreement among delegations, and Hungary hoped that more proposals aimed at improving the draft rather than undermining it would be received. In its view, the advantage of such a declaration would be that it would relate the cause of equality for women to efforts to solve the political, economic, social and other problems of the world. It was on the solution of those pressing problems and the building of a peaceful world that the realization of equality between men and women depended.

55. Mrs. ASSE (Guinea) observed that development was an historic undertaking which demanded the responsible and collective participation of all social forces, which were both its agents and its beneficiaries. In those circumstances, the integration of women into the development process meant that women would exercise a number of rights and duties, the result of which was social development in which women found their own personal balance and played their appropriate part. Since the exclusion of any social force from that process destroyed the harmony that development aimed to achieve, socio-economic development plans must give priority to the integration of women into the development process.

56. Guinea had welcomed enthusiastically the United Nations Decade for Women, as it had other United Nations events, in the belief that the emancipation of women was a vital prerequisite for the social and human advancement of the nation as a whole.

57. When Guinea had become independent, a Guinea Women's Revolutionary Union had been created whose main function was to steadily raise women's consciousness and promote their responsible participation in the national development effort. A Ministry of Social Affairs had also been established which devoted itself primarily to implementing social legislation, reaffirming women's rights and protecting mothers and children. Civil service regulations, labour legislation and social security laws also treated men and women as equals before the law.

58. With free compulsory education and guaranteed employment, an increasing number of young women were studying in university institutes and vocational training schools and women now exercised responsible professions which enabled them to

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(Mrs. Asse, Guinea)

develop their personality to the full. In the past, in the aftermath of colonialism, women had been unable to attend school. In order to afford housewives the same opportunities for self-fulfilment, the Government had created women's training centres which were true centres of apprenticeship and training for the new woman. The extension of the revolutionary process to rural areas had also permitted the establishment of district agricultural farms, communal agrarian farms and horticultural co-operatives which enabled women to make a major contribution to production.

59. The proclamation of the United Nations Decade for Women had reflected the conviction of the international community that women's integration into the developing process had an international dimension. Hence the need for the World Plan of Action to contain measures to restore fully women's human dignity. On the question of universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which had a direct bearing on the advancement of women, co-operation must be established to permit exchanges of experience and the adoption of a global approach to matters of common interest.

60. None the less, her delegation believed that no development process could be visualized without the maintenance of peace at world level. In the present-day world, which was one shadowed by increasing violence and where economic injustice constantly widened the gap between rich societies and poor nations and the arms race mobilized vast resources at the expense of development, the struggle of the women of the world demanded the elimination of the scourges of colonialism, neo-colonialism, war and social injustice.

61. Her delegation endorsed the conclusions of the Declaration of the World Congress of Women held at Prague on the theme "Equality, National Independence and Peace". That theme was an eloquent symbol of women's high sense of responsibility as workers, wives and mothers in their firm determination to be the architects of progress and universal peace.

62. Mrs. NGUYEN BINH THANH (Viet Nam) expressed surprise that some members of the Third Committee should claim that the Copenhagen Conference had strayed from its objectives as a result of "political polemics". Such claims were merely a pretext for preventing the Commission from adopting the draft Declaration contained in document A/36/476. What were those members trying to achieve? Were they trying to promote the equality of women by restricting women to their age-old functions of housewife and mother and leaving men to take the decisions? Women's position in the world and their place in society were of course indissolubly linked with the economic, political and social situation of the peoples to which they belonged. The struggle for women's emancipation and equality and for their integration into the development process therefore formed part of their peoples' struggle for national independence.

63. It was thanks to women's active and courageous participation in the liberation struggles waged by the peoples of Europe against nazism and by the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America against imperialist and racist régimes that women had won

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(Mrs. Nguyen Binh Thanh, Viet Nam)

the role and the place that they now occupied in society. In Viet Nam, the participation of millions of women of all ages and social classes in the Vietnamese people's struggle against its oppressors had been one of the determining factors in its final victory. Since the founding of the Republic of Viet Nam, the Government had guaranteed women the same political, economic, social and cultural rights as men.

64. With regard to the role of women in the struggle for international peace and security, her delegation believed that women could not remain indifferent and resign themselves to seeing their children's lives threatened by war, perhaps even nuclear catastrophe. Women could not remain indifferent to the squandering of over \$500 billion a year on the arms race while millions of people, including women and children, went hungry and lacked medical care and education. Vietnamese women were well aware that the path to the development, equality and advancement of women lay in peace and national independence. They therefore endorsed the appeal which various Governments and international organizations had made to women to participate actively in all movements against war and the arms race and in defence of peace and the strengthening of international security. The draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security expressed that profound aspiration of the women of the world.

65. Her delegation believed that the draft Declaration, of which it was a sponsor, made a valuable contribution towards strengthening the role of women in all of society's activities and their full integration into the development process on an equal footing with men. It hoped therefore that the Third Committee would adopt the draft Declaration as a laudable contribution towards the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace.

66. Miss DEENA (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization) said that she would like to draw the Committee's attention to the complicated nature of the status of Palestinian women and suggest some measures within the scope of the agenda item that would be beneficial to Palestinian women and true to the spirit of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Copenhagen in 1980, and the Meeting of High-Level Experts of Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries Concerned with the Role of Women in Development, held in Havana in 1981.

67. The liberation of Palestine was a necessary condition for the achievement of complete equality by Palestinian women. Because of the injustices perpetrated by the Zionist entity, women had become radicalized, and were questioning all types of oppression. Palestinian women had never abandoned the struggle to achieve their personal rights and their collective well-being.

68. The women who had suffered through the tragedy of 1948 had created charitable institutions to provide material assistance to the victims. After the invasion of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, various women's organizations had been established which had had to wait four years for permission to function. In Lebanon, where the General Union of Palestinian Women freely carried out its activities, women were beginning to see the fruits of their efforts, since they enjoyed the same rights as men, they were respected and they had responsibilities.

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(Miss Teena, PLO)

A woman sat on the Central Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and women held 30 seats in the Palestine National Congress, the PLO legislature-in-exile.

69. Women would never be emancipated if they could not be educated. Yet every effort of Palestinian women to become educated was countered by the policy of the Israeli authorities. Within the Zionist entity, only 2,000 out of 570,000 Palestinians were in universities, and only very few of those were women. In the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the educational situation was still worse.

70. The most difficult problem for Palestinian women was the discrimination they faced as workers. In an era when more and more women were seeking a fulfilling life outside the home, only 14.2 per cent of all Arab women in Israel worked outside of the home. In the West Bank and the Gaza Strip the opposite was true. In Gaza, 60 per cent of the heads of household were women, who had to work to feed their families. That made for an incredible exploitation of the Palestinian work force, since the Israelis owned the means of production and paid the women who were forced to work as migrant labourers in Israel one third of what Israeli women earned. Israeli women had paid vacations and the Palestinians did not. Palestinian women were forbidden to join unions, which were the only organizations providing health insurance, maternity leave and vacations.

71. According to the Israelis, women had the same rights as men, but only so that they could be arrested and tortured. They had the same rights as men to be attacked when they staged peaceful demonstrations to protest the inhumane conditions in which their sons and daughters were living. Thousands of women had been arrested, tried and condemned to sentences ranging from four days to life. In many cases the charges had no basis at all in reality. All Palestinian women were heroic in their resistance and deserved assistance within the framework of the United Nations Decade for Women. Such assistance could take the form of a defence fund for women detained by the Israelis, family support, improved sanitation, or training of nurses and midwives. Other goals could be to work for the free functioning of the educational institutions in the West Bank and an increase in the number of Arab women in Israeli universities, and for fair labour codes.

72. Mr. KHMEL (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) observed that the United Nations Decade for Women had begun on a solid legal basis and with some exemplary goals; the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Copenhagen, had adopted the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women (1981-1985), and on 3 September 1981 the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 34/180) had entered into force, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic having been one of the first countries to sign and ratify it.

73. The Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR guaranteed that women would participate on terms of equality with men in economic and social development and in managing the affairs of the State and of society. In the Ukraine, women enjoyed full rights with regard to employment and education; they took part in all important activities in the country; they enjoyed equality in the family as in society, and all of them

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(Mr. Khmel, Ukrainian SSR)

were free to work and study in an educational institution. The professional accomplishments of women had become more significant and the number of women working as production managers and scientists had risen considerably. Three out of every five persons working in the scientific field were women. It was easy for young women to enter professional and technical institutions, and half of the graduates of institutions of higher learning were women. There were 234 women deputies in the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, constituting 35.9 per cent of its total membership; there were also more than 250,000 women deputies in the local soviets, constituting 48.3 per cent of their total membership.

74. In the Ukrainian SSR the physiological and social differences of women, particularly with regard to maternity, were recognized; the law granted benefits to mothers, and limited or prohibited their employment in sectors of industry that might endanger their health or fertility. A network of 22,000 pre-school educational institutions caring for 2 million children made it easier for mothers to take part in social and political activities. The economic and social development plan of the Ukrainian SSR, adopted by the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, had opened new horizons for women; in 1981 a programme of special measures would come into effect, aimed at improving the situation of women, mothers, families and children.

75. The Ukrainian SSR owed its triumphs to the October Revolution and the establishment of a socialist society; initially, the Ukraine had had to overcome great difficulties and, consequently, it could understand the problems currently affecting women in many parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries. Those problems were caused by capitalist exploitation and the exploitation of some countries by others, which were manifested in colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination, to which should be added the arms race. For all those reasons, his delegation supported the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women, adopted by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women; the Programme of Action adopted by the Meeting of High-Level Experts of Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries Concerned with the Role of Women in Development, held in Havana from 25 to 27 May 1981 (document A/36/490); and the Appeal to Women of the World and the Declaration entitled "Equality, National Independence, Peace", adopted by the World Congress of Women, held in Prague from 8 to 13 October 1981 (document A/36/620).

76. His delegation gave its full support to the draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security, and was co-sponsoring draft resolution A/C.3/35/L.17.

77. The objections to the draft Declaration which had been voiced could not be taken very seriously; it had been argued that, as political problems were common to both men and women, there was no need to make distinctions on grounds of sex and that the draft Declaration contained provisions similar to those in the Programme

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(Mr. Khmel, Ukrainian SSR)

of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women. Such objections were rooted in tradition, which restricted the interests of women to the home, and in fear of women's potential. The interest of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security was illustrated by the fact that, partly as a result of the war, women outnumbered men in the Ukraine by 3.7 million, or 7.4 per cent; there were many widows who had lost their husbands in the war and many single women who had not been able to marry; they were well aware that there was no greater evil than war, which was also the cause of the sufferings of the women of South Africa, Palestine and countries struggling for their independence. It would take more than the specific measures referred to in documents A/36/485 and A/36/564 to solve the problems which affected hundreds of millions of women; his delegation therefore hoped that the draft Declaration would receive the full support which the objectives of equality, development and peace merited.

78. Mr. AL MADFAEI (United Arab Emirates) said it was the policy of his Government to encourage the education of women, since otherwise it would not be possible to promote their rights; to that end, it had established schools, universities and scientific institutions and had facilitated the formation of women's associations. The rights of women were guaranteed by the Constitution, which was based on the teachings of Islam and recognized the rights of women in marriage and in property and commercial transactions as well as the role played by women in society.

79. Two different approaches had been apparent in the debate; according to one, women were treated as separate entities while, according to the other, women were the equal partners with men in pursuit of common objectives. His delegation supported the second approach, although it had some reservations regarding the desire to consider women's problems without reference to the cultural context of each country.

80. In the United Arab Emirates, women had access to opportunities for employment and education, to health services and social services and to government institutions. The Ministry of Social Affairs afforded protection to the family and to women as mothers, widows and wives and had established an institute for the enhancement of the status of women.

81. The cause of women in South Africa could not be arbitrarily separated from that of the people to which they belonged, since the Pretoria régime violated the rights of the whole people; nor was it possible to guarantee the rights of Palestinian women as long as the right of their people to its own State was denied. The women of South Africa and Palestine were suffering under racist régimes which deprived them of their rights and subjected them to persecution, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment and torture. Likewise, in order for the women of developing countries to exercise their rights, it was necessary that those countries should solve the problem of their economic backwardness. His country supported all efforts by the United Nations in behalf of women.

82. Miss TUKAN (Jordan) commended the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Decade for Women for its coverage of the world-wide efforts and

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(Miss Tukan, Jordan)

activities to promote the status of women at the beginning of the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace.

83. Jordan had not only been inspired by the universal approach of the United Nations to the equality of women but had achieved great progress towards that goal. Women in Jordan now had equality of opportunity with men in all walks of life, including the Government, parliament, careers, public life and the educational opportunities which were a prerequisite of such equality.

84. There was widespread misunderstanding as to the role of women in the societies in Jordan's part of the world; she wished to explain that there were two planes of reality where the role of women in those societies was concerned. Historically and doctrinally, women were equal to men; according to the Islamic Shari'ah, the Arab woman was a human and legal person in her own right, entitled to enter independently into contractual relationships and to all the safeguards relating to matters of personal status, including marriage, divorce, repudiation, relationship, alimony, child custody, tutorship, guardianship, inheritance and other aspects of the law of personal status. However, those rights enshrined in the Islamic Shari'ah law had been abused and distorted by the pressure of social systems which had retrogressed during periods of decline. There had now been a new awakening of women, who were reasserting their inherent and inalienable rights to equality with men. But that was a developmental process which was inevitably slow, despite the substantial support it was receiving from the United Nations system. It was therefore erroneous in the extreme to assume that, because a society had not yet reached a certain state of development, there was in-built discrimination against women.

85. Under Islamic jurisprudence there were universally recognized vehicles for change in accordance with the natural changes of time, as well as social and economic factors. Those vehicles for change included consensus, which gave the community the right to interpret and reinterpret its laws, its social system and the role of women, among other things, in accordance with changing times and circumstances. There was therefore an almost unlimited mandate for lawmakers and society to achieve progress; in other words, there was nothing immutable or inherently unchangeable in those societies and in that cultural legacy. The important thing to remember was that, starting from the premise that men and women were essentially equal and had the same rights before the law, the developing world could enhance the role of women in society as it progressed in other walks of life.

86. Her delegation recognized the role of the Palestinian refugee women, and of the women under Israeli occupation for over 14 years, who had had to bear much of the brunt in the struggle against occupation, oppression, despoliation and the massive separation of families which had characterized the catastrophe of the Palestinian people. Through the efforts of those brave women, their children could claim to have one of the highest per capita levels of higher education in the world.

87. Her Government would find no difficulty with the process of preparing a draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of

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(Miss Tukan, Jordan)

International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination, since those evils were not simply hypothetical contingencies but hard realities which women had to confront on equal terms with men.

88. Mrs. LORANGER (Canada) said that the Committee was considering a question which had already been too much discussed and would continue to be discussed for many years; for anyone who believed that the problems confronting women would cease to exist after 1985 were certainly mistaken, the magnitude of those problems being such that more time would be needed to solve them. There was no time to be lost; the goals were known, being set out in the Mexico and Copenhagen Programme of Action, in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and in the laws and regulations of many countries. Despite that, progress was meagre and slow because approaches and attitudes could not be changed by law so long as what was called systematic discrimination had not been eliminated.

89. Canada was continuing its efforts to that end; its national plan of action was being revised and updated to take account of the Programme of Action adopted by the Copenhagen Conference and it would try to include in the plan quantitative and qualitative criteria for evaluating the results and effects of the measures adopted. Moreover, the Copenhagen Programme of Action had been widely publicized through meetings organized by the Government and owing to the importance accorded to it by non-governmental organizations which were using it to induce various governmental authorities to take action.

90. The documents submitted by the Secretariat, unfortunately rather late in the day, summarized the results, which were at first sight impressive, of the measures taken by the United Nations system to implement the Programme of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women. However, much remained to be done, and it was essential that even during periods of budgetary austerity activities concerning women should continue to form part of the regular budget and not be treated as exceptional activities. The lack was often felt of an over-all approach which would make it possible to evaluate the effects of all the policies and programmes of individual organs with regard to women, for which the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs could play an important educative role.

91. Her Government had not yet made any contribution to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women because it preferred to direct its contributions to the central technical co-operation agencies such as UNDP or UNICEF, which were collaborating more and more closely with the Fund, to their mutual benefit. For that reason the Voluntary Fund could perform its functions more effectively if it continued to be administered from New York and not from Vienna, since it was in New York that the necessary specialist expertise was to be found.

92. There were serious problems in connexion with the draft declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security inasmuch as it had for several years been making the rounds from Committee to Committee without any tangible results. Obviously, everybody wanted women to be able to take part in strengthening peace and to live in a peaceful

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(Mrs. Loranger, Canada)

world. That was not the problem: it was the fact that the draft declaration was merely using women for ends which had nothing to do with their well-being; it was the same strategy that had been employed at Copenhagen. Men must struggle, just like women, for peace and the elimination of apartheid, racism and all the other ills which were constantly talked about in the United Nations, and both men and women suffered under apartheid, colonialism, discrimination or foreign occupation. It was also being said that the elimination of all those evils was a prerequisite for achieving complete equality of men and women throughout the world but there were many women who did not want to wait so long and who preferred that women should participate more and more actively in running the societies in which they lived, including the United Nations, so that they would truly be a part of the political decision-making process and thus contribute more effectively to maintaining peace. No new international instrument was necessary for that, since all the necessary measures were provided for in the programmes of action and in the Convention.

93. With regard to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, her delegation was glad that it had entered into force and that the number of ratifications was steadily increasing. Her Government had begun consultations with all the provinces of Canada, as its Constitution demanded, almost a year earlier and hoped that it would soon be able to ratify the Convention.

94. Mrs. IDER (Mongolia) said that the three objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women were of the utmost importance. Equality, development and peace were factors which embraced the struggle to achieve equality for women in society and their full participation in all fields of social life and in the movement for international peace and security.

95. The Copenhagen Conference, in which her country's delegation had taken an active part, had shown the close connexions between the Decade's three objectives; equality and development could not be attained without international peace and security, without the elimination of colonialism, apartheid and racism, or without a democratization of international economic relations. In order to achieve the objective of peace, it was essential to ban the arms race, a very important matter when imperialist and hegemonistic forces, especially in the United States of America, were threatening a nuclear holocaust. For all those reasons, her delegation believed that, given current conditions and in accordance with the principles of the Decade for Women, the adoption of the declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security was a matter of urgency.

96. In her own country, the full participation of women in economic and social life and in production and the building of socialism was guaranteed, as was shown by the high proportion of women participating in legislative bodies, economic activities, medicine, education, the engineering and technical sectors, the administration of justice and so on. In her country, women were guaranteed equal pay for equal work in addition to free medical services, opportunities for study and vocational training, maternal and child welfare through official agencies, special benefits for mothers of large families, paid maternity leave before and after confinement, free medicine for children and so on. A number of institutions and organizations also contributed to ensuring women's equality.

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(Mrs. Ider, Mongolia)

97. Her delegation joined with those who were supporting the transfer of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women to Vienna where the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs was situated, as that would lead to better co-ordination of their activities and the achievement of the objectives for which the Fund had been established.

98. Mr. MORATT (Israel) said that for the women of his country, and indeed for its people as a whole, the United Nations Decade for Women stood under a heavy cloud. Its beginnings had been promising: there had been general agreement on implementing a constructive programme of concrete steps to be taken towards achieving the full equality of women and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them. It had been clear that, in addition to introducing improvements in countries' legislation, it would be necessary to generate a change of mind and social attitudes on the roles of men and women, on the elimination of outworn prejudices and on the sharing of responsibilities in the home. There had been an atmosphere of good will, of understanding and of urgency, but that had been shattered when Arab and communist countries had decided to use the Decade for Women for their own political purposes by demanding the adoption of general and, at times, controversial political verbiage as their price for allowing the Mexico Conference to pursue its real objectives. That Conference had finally been reduced to its degrading all-time low with the comparison of Zionism with racism during a vicious exercise in name-calling and ritual incantation, to which the General Assembly, to its humiliation, had also been subjected later in the year. A similar thing had happened at the Copenhagen Conference but, thanks to the commendable efforts of some delegations, the real business of the Conference had not been totally excluded from the discussions.

99. His Government opposed the politicization of the Decade for Women, just as it had opposed the politicization of the specialized agencies. His country spurned the abuse of the Decade for Women and of its constructive goals for the injection of a vulgar smear against Zionism, which was the national liberation movement of the Jewish people.

100. In his country women continued to play an increasingly varied role in the society. Non-discrimination on the grounds of sex was enshrined in the Israel Declaration of Independence. The legal status of women had been firmly established in the Women's Equal Rights Law of 1951. Historically, women had always stood side by side with men in Israel, especially in the pioneering effort which had helped to develop his country and its society. In recent years the number and variety of employment opportunities open to women in Israel had increased considerably. Concurrently there had been an increase in kindergartens and day-care centres. As a result the percentage of women in Israel's work force had grown rapidly, and currently more than a third of all adult women under the age of 65 were employed outside the home.

101. A major literacy training and basic education programme for adult women had been initiated for thousands of new women immigrants who had not had that opportunity in their countries of origin. A special effort directed towards Arab-speaking

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(Mr. Moratt, Israel)

women had been initiated. Through a television programme in Arabic, Arab women were provided with information about maternal health and pregnancy, child health, general family health, psychological and social counselling and other aspects of life in the community. The women of Israel had also made a contribution at the international level: the Mount Carmel International Training Centre for Community Services offered continuing courses, seminars and training programmes from which more than 2,500 women from developing countries had benefited. The aim of the Centre was to train instructors who would, on their return to their home countries, train other women and thus contribute to the development of their nations.

102. Those were a few examples of what women and society could do in that field provided the efforts of the international community were not side-tracked by political interests and usurped to further extraneous purposes by those whose main interest was the destruction of one society, rather than the advancement of all. His delegation urged members of the Committee to put the Decade for Women back on its true course.

103. Mrs. QOANE (Lesotho) said the need to involve women in the development process had long been felt by her Government. In Lesotho, the rural sector constituted more than 80 per cent of the population, and each year more than 40 per cent of the adult male population were away from their homes and their country to seek employment in neighbouring States, while women, especially in the rural areas, shouldered all the tasks of socio-economic development. It was in recognition of that vital role of women as agents of development that her Government had felt the need to encourage rural women in organizing themselves into a permanent structure with a legal status. The national organization functioned through village committees, with operational sub-committees on such aspects of development as commerce, education, health, sports, culture and youth matters. Her Government had also established a Bureau of Women's Affairs, which was responsible for co-ordinating all matters relating to women's affairs.

104. With regard to the Secretary-General's report (A/36/564) on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 35/136, she said that it was regrettable that some Governments, including her own, had failed to respond in time to the requests contained in paragraphs 6 and 7 of that resolution. Many Governments were still examining ways and means of readjusting their policies in order to reflect clearly new guidelines for integrating women within their general socio-economic development structure.

105. Her delegation was satisfied with the efforts being undertaken within the United Nations system to advance the status and the rights of women. The activities of the United Nations Human Rights Division were a source of hope and satisfaction, as was the attention being given to the rights of migrant women and the families of migrant workers in the Commission on Human Rights. Her delegation was further encouraged by the work of the Commission with respect to the treatment of women in South Africa and Namibia, and urged the Commission to continue its work in that respect.

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(Mrs. Qoane, Lesotho)

106. Her delegation commended those organizations which had responded to the call for support of the Decade and it urged those that had not yet done so to consider contributing to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Decade for Women. Her delegation had noted with the utmost interest and appreciation the measures that had been undertaken to that end by the regional commissions, particularly the Economic Commission for Africa.

107. With respect to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, her delegation was greatly impressed not only by the number of projects the Fund had financed since its inception but also by the generous contributions which had been made by some Member States. It was noteworthy that the criteria for the use of the Fund had been to accord priority to the programmes and projects of the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries, with particular emphasis on village-level projects employing low-income women, especially in rural areas. Regarding the proposed transfer of the Fund to Vienna, although the proposal had some merit, her delegation was worried that such a transfer might be expensive and cause some inconvenience, especially for countries like hers which had no missions in Vienna and could not afford to establish them.

108. On the question of the proposed declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for international peace and security, her delegation agreed that the draft declaration needed careful consideration. It was deeply concerned that, in an age when mankind had triumphed over the forces of denigration, the greatest glory that it deprived itself of was the legacy of international peace and security. The task of securing international peace and security should therefore be a joint preoccupation of both men and women.

109. Some of the provisions of the draft declaration seemed very unrealistic. For example, article 4 states that "all forms of oppression and inhuman treatment of women on account of their advocacy of international peace and the rights of peoples to self-determination, such as massacre, imprisonment, torture, devastation of homes, and forced evacuation and reprisals shall be condemned as crimes against humanity and as gross violations of human rights". She felt bound to ask whether such provisions applied to the case of women alone. It would be highly unrealistic to suggest that "aggression, colonialism, all forms of racism and racial discrimination, apartheid, oppression, exploitation and fascism" claimed victims among women alone. It was well known that both men and women had fallen victim to those heinous crimes against humanity.

110. For her country, the establishment of a new international economic order was a national challenge which had defied discrimination on the basis of sex. Both men and women were looking forward equally anxiously to progress towards the establishment of that order. Her delegation agreed with article 2 of the draft declaration, which stated that "resources released as a result of effective measures of disarmament shall be used to promote economic and social development, to solve global problems of mankind, and to provide assistance to developing countries". Her delegation could not, however, associate itself with the final assertion that particular attention in that regard should be given to the advancement of women. National governments should retain the right to set up their

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(Mrs. Qoane, Lesotho)

own national priorities and not be tied up in any way directly or indirectly, as article 2 presupposed. Her delegation was gravely concerned at the apparent moves to dilute the importance of integrating women in development by injecting political concepts which were not confined to women alone.

111. Mrs. ARUNGU-OLENDE (Kenya) said that the effective implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace at Copenhagen in 1980 should be of great concern to the United Nations and Member States. The Programme was welcome, as were the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and all legal instruments introduced by the United Nations to facilitate the incorporation of women in development activities, but the effective implementation of the Programme and other international instruments would not be an easy task.

112. If her delegation sounded pessimistic, it was because of humankind's inability in the past to accept that women could participate equally in and contribute to the development process and the improvement of the world socio-cultural, political and economic situation and thus to world security and peace.

113. The need to integrate women in the development process could not be overstressed for obvious reasons, and a change of attitude towards women called for a change in certain retrogressive beliefs. Some changes could be effected if women and men were given equal educational opportunities from the start.

114. At the moment, not many women in the world were aware of what was being done for them, not only by the United Nations but also by their national or regional governmental and non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, before projects for rural and urban areas were formulated, it was important that women or their organizations should be consulted so that they could state their needs and participate in projects designed to ensure the equal development of both sexes.

115. As her delegation had stated previously in the Committee, her Government had continued to promote self-help programmes and projects in rural areas geared towards upgrading the standard of living of the people in those areas. Through such programmes, the Government had encouraged the full participation of women in the development process and the realization of their potential. Nevertheless, Kenya, like many developing nations, was still facing some basic socio-cultural problems on the road to the integration of women in the development process.

116. As an agricultural country, Kenya depended heavily on its produce. Thus, the assistance that the United Nations and FAO could provide and had furnished and the support that the International Fund for Agricultural Development could give were of critical importance to it. It appreciated the work done by the African Training and Research Centres for Women of the Social Development Division of the Economic Commission for Africa, and her delegation strongly recommended that consideration be given to the Centre's requests and its recommendations that it be converted into a division and be given additional budget posts.

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(Mrs. Arungu-Olende, Kenya)

117. As everyone knew, all of the Centre's projects were being funded from extrabudgetary resources. Her delegation appreciated the contributions made to the Centre by UNFPA, UNICEF, the Swedish International Development Agency, the Belgian Government, the United States Agency for International Development, the Netherlands Government and the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women. The Voluntary Fund had been established to support innovative and experimental activities similar to those being undertaken by the Centre, and had assisted a number of projects in several developing countries. Its future effective functioning remained a matter of great importance to Kenya, since it was one of the most important tools for the development of women. Its activities should not stop at the end of the Decade for Women; it should become a permanent fund, and the matter of its site should be given sufficient attention to remove the continuing uncertainty.

118. Mrs. Masmoudi (Tunisia) took the Chair.

119. Mr. VOICU (Romania) said that the Romanian women's movement was deeply interested in the discussions being held in the United Nations and other international forums on the participation of women in strengthening international peace and security and the establishment of a new world order based on law, justice and equity. His delegation, which had actively participated in the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, stressed the importance it attached to the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women.

120. In many countries, there were serious inequalities and discrimination against women, and at its current session the General Assembly should recommend practical measures to be taken in the spirit and objectives of the Programme of Action. In that connexion, emphasis should be given to implementation of the provisions concerning the elimination of economic inequalities in the development process and the need to establish a new international economic order which would narrow the existing gap between the contribution of women to production and their remuneration.

121. In the political field, the Committee, when dealing in 1980 with the United Nations Decade for Women, had considered the question of formulating a declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, apartheid, all forms of racism and racial discrimination, foreign aggression, occupation and all forms of foreign domination. It was to be hoped that the relevant draft resolution would be adopted, since the struggle of the international women's movement was intimately connected with the struggle for peace and détente.

122. It was worth mentioning that the Romanian Front of Socialist Democracy and Unity had published an appeal for disarmament and peace in which all peoples of the world were urged to act firmly against the intensification of the arms race, for general disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, and for security, co-operation and peace throughout the world.

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(Mr. Voicu, Romania)

123. In the same spirit, representatives of the Romanian women's movement had expressed in various international forums the determination of Romanian women to act tirelessly, alongside progressive forces throughout the world, to achieve the fundamental right of all peoples to life, peace and freedom and to prevent, through concerted action by all peace-loving forces, the outbreak of a new war. Ensuring better material and spiritual living conditions and providing better opportunities for women required the establishment of new international relations based on strict observance of the principles of equal rights, national independence and sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and renunciation of the use or threat of force.

124. Intensified efforts at the current session were therefore necessary to complete and adopt the draft declaration. The recommendations of the World Conference must also be implemented as soon as possible, particularly the recommendation concerning the access of young girls to education, health and employment by ensuring the material conditions indispensable for the exercise of that fundamental right.

125. In that context, his delegation recalled paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 35/136 which requested the Secretary-General to consider appropriate measures to enable the Commission on the Status of Women to discharge the functions assigned to it for the implementation of the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year and the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women. The same paragraph also referred to the need to take immediate action to strengthen the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat at Vienna.

126. Finally, his delegation believed that the Committee should make a more substantial contribution to strengthening the role of the United Nations in promoting international co-operation for improving the status of women and trusted that the resolutions to be adopted on the subject would be tangible proof of the common resolve to take significant steps in that direction.

127. Mrs. BHUIYAN (Bangladesh) said that women from developed and developing nations no longer accepted the discrimination and inequities which they had suffered for centuries. The Government of Bangladesh attached great importance to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade for Women, and women could be said to be fully integrated in the mainstream of the country's productive activities. The Constitution of Bangladesh upheld the principle of equality between men and women and forbade discrimination against women. It also stipulated explicitly that women had equal rights with men in all spheres of State and public life. In 1978, a separate Ministry for Women's Affairs had been established to co-ordinate development activities with regard to women and children. At least 10 per cent of all available jobs had been reserved for women candidates.

128. In addition, a series of projects had been launched under the second five-year plan (1980-1985) to coincide with the objectives of the Plan of Action of the Decade for Women. Those projects emphasized the following aims: to ensure a

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(Mrs. Bhuiyan, Bangladesh)

proper atmosphere for women to participate in socio-economic activities; to expand educational opportunities for women for their emancipation and integration in socio-economic activities; to provide adequate facilities for non-formal and vocational education; to form women's associations for formulating policies and promoting activities for the over-all improvement of the status of women and for the training for uprooted women with a view to their social rehabilitation.

129. Two national women's organizations had also been set up in order to organize the activities of women at all levels, namely, the Bangladesh Women's Rehabilitation and Welfare Foundation and the Bangladesh National Federation of Women. The former had been established to rehabilitate women who had been affected by the liberation war and the latter, which had come into being in early 1976, had founded the National Women's Development Academy to carry out a number of vocational training, research and evaluation programmes.

130. However, in spite of those advances and the existence of constitutional rights, many women in Bangladesh were still not able to exercise their rights, because of the barriers put up by traditional society and the consequences of unemployment, poverty, illiteracy and ignorance. Even though much progress had been achieved since the proclamation by the United Nations of the Decade for Women, much more remained to be done in order to achieve the objectives of the Decade, namely equality, development and peace.

131. High priority must be given to improving the conditions of the most disadvantaged groups of women, particularly in the developing countries. The experience of the Decade had shown that its objectives could not be realized without an unequivocal commitment at the national, regional and global levels to the integration of women in all aspects of development. The attainment of that goal also depended to a considerable extent on the elimination of all sources of tension. As long as abhorrent policies of racism and racial discrimination were practised as political doctrines, as long as colonialism and foreign domination were recognized as acceptable norms of international behaviour, it would be impossible to achieve the desired objective.

132. In Bangladesh as in other countries of the third world, the basic problem was one of poverty, which was why the call for the elimination of discrimination against women was in effect a call for the establishment of a new economic and social order based on fair play and justice. Her delegation reiterated its support for the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and considered that the Fund should intensify its efforts to give special support to the women most in need.

133. In implementing the Programme of Action of the Second Half of the Decade, it should be borne in mind that human resources could not reach their full potential without integrated socio-economic development. The United Nations should continue to carry out a comprehensive review and appraisal of the progress made in implementing the 1975 Plan of Action and the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade. The Commission on the Status of Women and the Centre for

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(Mrs. Bhuiyan, Bangladesh)

Social Development had an important role to play in the implementation of those programmes. Her delegation supported the convening of another world conference on women in 1985 to review and appraise the achievements of the Decade. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of proclaiming a second decade for the period 1985 to 1995.

134. Mr. GORRE-NDIAYE (Gambia) said that women in the Gambia were shedding the stereotyped roles they had played in the past. More and more of them were demonstrating their ability to contribute actively to the development process.

135. Women were playing leading roles in education, commerce and health. They not only held key positions in government, but had also moved into technical fields. Two years before, a National Bureau for Women had been set up, under the aegis of the President's Office, to co-ordinate and monitor all women's programmes. His Government was committed to improving the status of women during the Decade for Women and would continue to guard against encroachments on any of the goals already attained.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

136. The CHAIRMAN said that the list of speakers on agenda item 83 would be closed on Friday, 13 November 1981, at 6 p.m. The deadline for submitting draft resolutions on agenda item 83 was Tuesday, 17 November 1981, at 6 p.m. Finally, the deadline for submitting draft resolutions on agenda items 12, 129 and 138 was Friday, 20 November 1981, at 6 p.m.

The meeting rose at 7.25 p.m.