

United Nations

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records\*



COPY:  
DO NOT REMOVE  
FROM ROOM  
L-201 (WYBRO)

THIRD COMMITTEE

17th meeting

held on

Thursday, 21 October 1982

at 10.30 a.m.

New York

## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil)

### CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 77: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE  
(continued)

AGENDA ITEM 81: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 82: QUESTION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 83: WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGING (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 89: WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS (continued)

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

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

Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.3/37/SR.17  
23 October 1982

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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

AGENDA ITEM 77: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE  
(continued) (A/37/348 and Add.1 and 2, A/37/237)

AGENDA ITEM 81: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH (continued) (A/37/401)

AGENDA ITEM 82: QUESTION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED (continued) (A/37/408,  
A/37/435, A/C.3/37/4)

AGENDA ITEM 83: WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGING (continued) (A/CONF.113/31; A/C.3/37/4)

AGENDA ITEM 89: WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS (continued)  
(A/37/169, A/37/351 and Corr.1, Add.1 and 2)

1. Mr. ERDON (Hungary) said his country believed that the International Youth Year should not be an isolated event but rather an integral part of ongoing policies and initiatives on behalf of youth at the national, regional and international levels. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, much effort was still required to ensure the success of IYY. To a large extent, that depended on the activities of the individual States Members of the United Nations, whose social systems, level of development and circumstances differed considerably. Consequently, resolutions on the concrete programme of activities for IYY could provide only a general framework for the actions to be taken. It was his country's belief that special emphasis should be placed on activities at the national level.

2. The problems of unemployment, delinquency and the right to work, although serious questions in many countries, either did not arise in Hungary or were far less serious there than elsewhere, including developed countries. A particularly important element affecting participation by Hungarian youth in the life of society and respect for the rights and obligations of youth in respect of society was the law on youth adopted by the National Assembly in 1971. In evaluating the impact and effect of that law ten years after its adoption, the Government had stated that its provisions were still valid and needed no amendment. In addition, the convening of the youth parliaments every five years was an important factor in youth policy and offered young people, members of the Government and leaders in the country's political, economic and cultural life an occasion to discuss individual, collective and general problems closely affecting the situation of youth.

3. Hungarian youth participated actively in efforts for peace and disarmament. Recently, a seminar had been held at Budapest under the joint auspices of the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the European Ecumenical Youth Council, which, in reviewing the current international situation, had emphasized the contribution which various youth organizations could make to the establishment of an atmosphere of confidence, the maintenance of peace and the strengthening of the process of

(Mr. Erdon, Hungary)

détente and disarmament. In reflecting the identical positions of the two organizations, the seminar had emphasized the importance of the education of youth for peace. His delegation was convinced of the need to give proper attention to that aspect of national and international action by youth in the present circumstances of tension and conflict throughout the world.

4. Lines of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations constituted an essential prerequisite for the effective organization of IYY. In Hungary, young people and their organizations closely followed United Nations activities relating to youth. Their sources of information were the non-governmental organizations, direct contact with various departments and agencies of the United Nations and information regularly provided by Hungarian governmental authorities on the activities of world youth organizations. His delegation believed that special importance should be given to the role played by international non-governmental youth organizations which already had solid traditions of co-operation with the United Nations. The relations existing between the United Nations and youth organizations by virtue of the Geneva informal meetings were essential and should be strengthened and further developed.

5. United Nations information activities were also an important means of maintaining lines of communication and should be improved. The youth information bulletin published in several languages could play its proper role if additional efforts were made to broaden its sources of information and thus enrich its substantive aspects.

6. Finally, with regard to the recommendation for establishing national co-ordination committees for IYY, specific measures to organize national and international activities would be taken by the Hungarian Government in good time, for IYY was a major event with long-term implications for the entire gamut of youth policy at the international level. It was very important that the number of governmental and social organizations participating in the preparations for IYY should be as large as possible, and that situation should be reflected in the composition of the national co-ordination committees.

7. Mr. ALGHANIM (Saudi Arabia) said that his Government had always taken an active interest in disabled persons and had adopted measures to improve the standard of living of such persons both inside and outside the Kingdom. It believed that disabled persons should be full partners in society and had therefore established centres for vocational rehabilitation and homes for them. Each ministry within the Kingdom endeavoured to improve the conditions of the disabled, and a regional bureau for the blind had been established by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. Saudi Arabia was guided in its efforts along those lines by the belief that blind people had been deprived of sight but not insight. Kuwait, Jordan and Yemen were also co-operating with Saudi Arabia and issued several publications in braille.

8. Ten per cent of the world population was disabled, and his delegation wondered just what had been done on their behalf. Positive measures had to be taken to

/...

(Mr. Alghanim, Saudi Arabia)

assist them and would be facilitated by greater co-operation and co-ordination among nations both within and outside the United Nations system. Governments, especially those of developing countries, should strive to raise the standard of living of disabled persons. He had participated actively in the Vienna session of the Advisory Committee and had helped to draft several of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/351 and Corr.1, Add.1 and 2). Those recommendations were for long-term strategies to aid disabled persons, and his delegation believed that they would find full support within the Third Committee.

9. The International Year of Disabled Persons had been no different than any other year, and nothing constructive had been accomplished. His delegation believed that the international community must serve and aid the millions of the disabled and that Governments should assume more responsibility on their behalf. His own Government was doing a great deal, but then it was only one Government. There were some points in the Secretary-General's report that deserved support because the plight of the disabled did not end with their International Year. In other words, assistance to disabled persons should be a continuing long-term effort.

10. Mr. POLOWCZYK (Poland) said that the projected population of young people in the world would be 1,180,000 by the year 2000. That represented a tremendous potential in human and intellectual resources which could hardly be discounted in any consideration of the world social situation and the future of mankind. Far too many young people throughout the world spent their best years fighting for freedom and independence and had little opportunity to develop their skills or to exercise one of the basic human rights, the right to work. Young people played a vital role in the struggle for peace, national independence and self-determination and against racism, racial discrimination, apartheid and foreign domination. Youth also made an important contribution to the implementation of the new international economic order, based on equality and justice.

11. In terms of the age of its population, Poland was a young country, with more than 50 per cent of its people below the age of 30. For that reason, the problems of youth were at the centre of attention of his country's authorities, and a number of positive accomplishments had been achieved in that regard. Much, however, still remained to be done, particularly in ensuring for youth a well-deserved and responsible place in the forefront of national efforts being made in the active process of socialist renewal in all areas of the country's life. On the recommendation of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party, an intergovernmental Committee for the Problems of Youth had recently been established in Poland and would function as a permanent governmental organ in the form of a ministry of and for youth.

12. Society was duty-bound to create adequate conditions for young people so that they might realize their genuine aspirations. On the other hand, youth was responsible before society for society's future, and the younger generation must assume the duties incumbent upon it in the ongoing struggle of all progressive forces for peace, détente and disarmament. Young people also had very definite

/...

(Mr. Polowczyk, Poland)

duties both in terms of developing their personal talents so as to be able to contribute to their society's progress and in terms of enhancing the well-being and happiness of the family, the basic unit of society. Few major problems could be solved without the support and assistance of youth. It was for that reason that the eagerness and intellectual fervour of the younger generation should find a creative outlet in participation in community life and in youth organizations that were expected to be constructive partners in a broad dialogue on problems of paramount national importance.

13. The observance of IYY should not be seen as an isolated event. In Poland, it was viewed as part of an ongoing process of animated dialogue and openness and as a productive contribution of young people for the benefit of the individual and society. The activities of IYY should be focused on the national level, with international activities being regarded mainly as supportive. Regardless of the spectacular nature of IYY at the international level, the effects and durability of programmes at the country level were what really mattered. His country therefore felt that the existing international machinery provided a sufficient framework for the preparation and implementation of the IYY programme. Establishing a new and costly mechanism for that purpose, or as a follow-up of IYY, would be inappropriate.

14. In conclusion, his delegation hoped that the further preparations for the International Youth Year, and the observance of the Year itself, would help to overcome the existing political, economic, social and other divisions haunting the international scene. The natural optimism, imagination and creativity of young people were the best instruments for meeting contemporary challenges.

15. Mr. VOICU (Romania) said his delegation was pleased to note that some of the suggestions and proposals made by his country in the General Assembly and in the replies requested of it by the Secretary-General had been included in the Secretary-General's report on the subject of aging. As early as 1974, on the occasion of the World Population Conference held at Bucharest, his country had stressed the need to convene a World Assembly on Aging in order to consider the issues directly connected with that vast demographic group which represented a valuable human resource in both economic and social terms and to serve as a means for passing on to younger generations the cultural heritage of mankind. In that spirit, Romania had sponsored General Assembly resolution 36/20, in which proper emphasis was given to the fact that the International Plan of Action on Aging should respond to the social and economic requirements of that population category and should meet the specific needs of the aging while paying special attention to the situation in developing countries and, above all, in the least developed ones.

16. It was gratifying to note that the World Assembly on Aging had endorsed the suggestion that the goals of the International Plan of Action for Aging should be adapted to the aims of the new international economic order as well as to the guidelines of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

/...

(Mr. Voicu, Romania)

17. There was an important political aspect that should be emphasized in connection with the question of the aging, namely, the imperative need to put an end to oppression, colonialism, racism and racial discrimination, apartheid, outside aggression and every kind of foreign domination in order to establish lasting peace and security, promote development and the new international economic order, and deepen human solidarity.

18. Among the essential provisions of the International Plan of Action, his delegation saw particular merit in those concerning the contribution of the elderly and the aged to the development of society, the call to Governments and non-governmental organizations to provide and encourage the protection of the aging, and the idea that involuntary discrimination on grounds of age should be eliminated and mutual support among the generations stimulated.

19. It was obvious that responsibility for the formulation and implementation of all programmes relating to the elderly and the aging lay with each country. Governments should be encouraged to draw up medical, social and welfare programmes embodying general principles and specific goals designed to satisfy the specific needs of the elderly and the aged. To that end, WHO should be asked to intensify its efforts for the establishment of regional centres for training and specialization in gerontology and geriatrics for medical personnel in developing countries. Governments should be invited to take appropriate steps for epidemiological studies concerning the health records and pathological conditions of the elderly and the aged.

20. The implementation of the Plan implied that the problems of medical and social protection of the aging should be raised by Member States to the level of State policy and should be made a matter of international co-operation. At the international level, it would be useful for meetings, seminars, symposia and scientifically oriented gatherings to be organized, in co-operation with WHO and the ILO, to deal with the specific problems of the aging.

21. His delegation hoped that the results achieved by the World Assembly on Aging would represent an important step in promoting international co-operation to protect the elderly and aging in all countries and to meet adequately their specific needs.

22. Mrs. THIRITH (Democratic Kampuchea) said that the proclamation of 1985 as International Youth Year demonstrated the international community's readiness to consider youth as an important factor of society. Her Government had always acknowledged the primary importance of youth in nation-building and had consistently worked to imbue Kampuchean youth with a sacred love for their homeland and with the universal virtues of brotherhood, justice and love of independence and peace.

23. Since December 1978, however, her country had been the victim of aggression by the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, which had attempted to annihilate the

/...

(Mrs. Thirith, Democratic Kampuchea)

Kampuchean people both physically and morally. Some 2.5 million Kampucheans had been massacred by conventional weapons, biochemical weapons and induced famine. Kampuchean youth was the primary target of the Vietnamese aggressors precisely because of the important role of young people in the building of the nation. Many young Khmer people had been massacred, while thousands of others had been sent to Viet Nam, where their cultural identity would be permanently erased. Those who survived were impressed into the Vietnamese army to fight against their own people. Those who refused were imprisoned and tortured to death.

24. As to the elderly, few had survived the Vietnamese massacres. Because of their age, they had been unable to escape the initial violent attacks on villages; moreover, they were the most vulnerable to biochemical weapons and the famine perpetrated by the Hanoi authorities. The massacre of Kampuchean elderly by the Vietnamese aggressors constituted a great national loss, since the elderly constituted the link which united the younger generation to the past. Without their survival, the Khmer culture was threatened with extinction. For that reason, her Government had provided elderly survivors with tender care and respect, and had sent a delegation to attend the World Assembly on Aging.

25. The Vietnamese aggression had increased the number of disabled persons in her country. Nevertheless, her Government had done its utmost to integrate the disabled fully into Kampuchean society. Her Government had welcomed enthusiastically the proclamation of the year 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons and had designated 30 July 1981 as the National Day of Disabled Persons.

26. However, the solution of the problems of the disabled in Democratic Kampuchea required much greater efforts. Her Government appealed to the international community to help solve the problem of the increasing number of war-disabled and the sorry plight of the youth and the elderly of her country by working with Democratic Kampuchea for the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 34/22, 35/6 and 36/5, and for the unconditional and total withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops, administrative agents and settlers from Kampuchea.

27. Mr. McDONALD (United States of America) noted that one of the purposes of the World Assembly on Aging had been to consider what steps might be taken to solve the problems and benefit from the opportunities created by rapid increase in the world's aging population. Throughout history, the elderly had constituted an invaluable, though sometimes unrecognized, social and economic resource. The world was currently faced with the challenge of devising ways to tap that resource for the benefit of society as a whole. In so doing, the primary objective should be to enable the elderly to remain productive members of society for as long as possible in a co-operative and caring environment.

28. While the World Assembly had adopted an International Plan of Action addressing the problems and opportunities of an aging population, Governments and non-governmental organizations would have to translate its recommendations into policies and programmes for implementation. Those programmes would need to meet

(Mr. McDonald, United States)

the requirements of individual countries and cultures; nevertheless, for the first time, an internationally agreed-upon framework existed to facilitate that task.

29. Generally speaking, his Government had been very pleased with the outcome of the World Assembly. It had been disappointed that there had been no mention of the elimination of mandatory retirement in the Plan of Action, but had been pleased to note the strong recommendations in the area of preventive health care and the continuation of the World Assembly Trust Fund. He therefore proposed that the Third Committee should approve the Vienna Plan of Action without amendment and by consensus, and should refer it to the plenary Assembly with the recommendation that that body should do the same.

30. With regard to agenda item 82, he suggested that the Committee should take note of the documents prepared by the Secretariat on that item. His delegation had no objection to the designation by Member States of a special Day for the Aging. In the United States, the entire month of May was called Older Americans Month. His Government had contributed \$650,000 to the World Assembly Trust Fund and urged other Governments and private institutions to do their part.

31. His delegation urged the Secretariat to develop more specific criteria for the Fund, provided that they were consistent with paragraph 103 of the Plan of Action; following that, the Secretariat should begin disbursing funds for soundly conceived technical assistance projects in developing countries. He requested more up-to-date information on contributions to the Fund and expressed the hope that the Secretariat would actively seek additional funds for worthwhile projects.

32. He proposed that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should undertake a careful analysis of the 70 national reports prepared for the World Assembly on Aging and should submit to the General Assembly at its next session a document containing conclusions and recommendations drawn from those reports. He recommended that agenda items 82 and 83 should be merged so that there would be only one item on aging on the agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The combined item might be called "follow-up action on the World Assembly on Aging".

33. With regard to the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, he noted that the Government and people of the United States had been extraordinarily supportive of the goals of the International Year of Disabled Persons. In response to a presidential proclamation, an inter-agency committee of 45 federal organizations had been established. The agencies in question had carried out more than 300 new national projects during 1981, at a cost of more than \$150 million. Extensive press coverage had also been given to the accomplishments of disabled persons in the United States. A United States Council for IYDP had been established and had been highly successful in co-ordinating activities relating to the Year carried out in the private sector and the community and volunteer sector.

34. In order to sustain the momentum generated in 1981, the Government of the United States had proclaimed 1982 as National Year of Disabled Persons. During



(Mr. McDonald, United States)

those two years, the people of the United States had been sensitized to the concerns of the disabled, and the disabled themselves had become more active participants in society.

35. He noted the warm reception that had been given to document A/37/351/Add.1 by the President of the National Office on Disability, who had addressed the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session and who was himself disabled.

36. The United States Government favoured the Committee's adoption of the World Programme of Action without change and by consensus, and supported the draft resolution suggested by the Advisory Committee.

37. At the fourth meeting of the Advisory Committee, his delegation had questioned the usefulness of proclaiming 1983-1992 as the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. Since that meeting, however, disabled persons in the United States had expressed the feeling that a United Nations Decade might provide a framework for national groups to build on. Consequently, his delegation was prepared to support the idea of a decade on the understanding that no additional resources would be required from the regular budget. His delegation also endorsed the idea of a Day for the Disabled.

38. Mr. FERGUSON (Australia) said that he welcomed the reports by the Secretary-General on the progress being made towards a programme for the International Youth Year and on guidelines for improving communication between the United Nations and youth. His delegation supported the concept of an International Youth Year, and he pointed out that a National Youth Year secretariat had been established in Australia. That body was currently consulting with community groups to set up a National Co-ordinating Committee - in accordance with the Advisory Committee's guidelines - that would work with the Government in devising a national programme of action.

39. Since it was only at the national level that young people could fully participate in the Year, his delegation strongly supported the principle that IYY activities should be developed primarily at the national level. It was therefore pleased to note that the Advisory Committee had focused on national activities in its report. The development of any new international machinery or the holding of large-scale conferences was unnecessary. International funding for the Year should come from normal financial allocations, and maximum use should be made of resources existing within the United Nations system.

40. Just as States had a special responsibility for the welfare of the youth of the world, they should also take on a similar responsibility towards the elderly by encouraging them to participate fully in society and by assisting them in confronting their particular problems. Australia had actively participated in the World Assembly on Aging and had been particularly pleased that the discussions had focused on substantive issues of importance to the elderly without becoming embroiled in inappropriate political issues. His delegation endorsed the adoption of the Vienna International Plan of Action. Noting that the Plan of Action invited

(Mr. Ferguson, Australia)

States to designate a national Day for the aging in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/20, he pointed out that his Government had very recently observed a Senior Australian Week.

41. While his delegation welcomed the report of the Advisory Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons and commended the Committee for its work, it believed that the World Programme of Action should take fully into account the circumstances of persons requiring long-term or permanent services to help them regain their independence. His delegation also regretted the absence of any reference in the report to indigenous or racial minorities. In some countries, including his own, such minorities sometimes had particular difficulties in obtaining access to services for the disabled. It was his hope that those groups would be taken into consideration by national programmes.

42. As disability affected all sectors of the population indiscriminately, his delegation supported the declaration of a United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons as a means of providing a framework for national programmes and the implementation and review of the World Programme of Action.

43. Mr. LILLO (Chile) said that his country's concern for those sectors of the population requiring special attention was reflected in its active participation in the Advisory Committee for International Youth Year and the World Assembly on Aging. His Government attributed great importance to the role that youth could play in national development, as was in fact being done in his own country, and it had endorsed a programme of measures and activities approved by the Advisory Committee for implementation prior to and during IYY.

44. He agreed with other speakers that the role of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should be strengthened. At the second session of the Advisory Committee, it had been agreed that the Centre, given adequate resources, should constitute the secretariat for IYY, so that new structures need not be established. His delegation was interested in the holding of meetings at the regional level as recommended in the report of the Advisory Committee. Such meetings would help to reinforce the work being done at the local and national levels in accordance with the situation in each country, and would be conducive to effectively co-ordinating future international efforts.

45. The Advisory Committee's report contained other interesting proposals, such as the draft declaration on the rights and responsibilities of youth, which should be the subject of comments by Governments. Those comments would then be considered by the Advisory Committee at its next session. His delegation had also noted with interest the report by the Secretary-General appearing in document A/37/237, and particularly the Secretary-General's observations and suggestions.

46. The problems and needs of the elderly were also a source of constant concern for his Government. The 52 per cent of his country's national budget allocated to social affairs was intended in part to induce the elderly to join in participatory activities and to provide them with adequate health protection, nutrition and other

(Mr. Lillo, Chile)

essential elements of life. The National Council on the Protection of the Elderly had made concerted efforts along those lines and had organized a Day of the Elderly, which had been held on 15 October 1982.

47. At the international level, Chile had actively participated in the World Assembly on Aging and in many of its preparatory activities. His delegation had taken particular note of the report of the World Assembly and the Plan of Action. The work undertaken by individual Governments in the light of the needs and problems of their elderly citizens would result in the effective implementation of the Plan of Action. However, the action of Governments was directed mainly to the achievement of objectives at the national level, so that action at the international level was mainly incumbent on the United Nations. Thus, for the Plan of Action to be successful, there would have to be adequate co-ordination between the various agencies responsible for its follow-up. At the same time, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should be strengthened so that it might continue to serve as a United Nations clearing-house for questions relating to the elderly and be able to function effectively in the full implementation of the Plan of Action.

48. His Government considered it particularly important for the World Assembly Trust Fund to be converted into a permanent fund. Its voluntary character should, however, be retained so that technical assistance programmes could be set up for the developing countries, thus ensuring the full application of the Plan of Action.

49. Mr. SLABY (Czechoslovakia) said that the Committee's increased attention to issues relating to youth was fully justified, for it was indisputable that youth represented the future of mankind and the future shape of society. Yet, the legal status and the financial and material security of youth in many parts of the world were not currently on a level commensurate with the level of economic and social development in the latter part of the twentieth century. That situation could not be attributed to any lack of interest on the part of young people, who were demonstrating a desire to overcome obstacles and to participate actively in solving current problems and eliminating socio-economic anachronisms.

50. The active involvement of young people in the movement against war, armaments and nuclear weapons, and their protest actions against unemployment, poverty, starvation, social insecurity and injustice, were indicative of the ills against which their criticism was directed. The overwhelming adoption of General Assembly resolution 36/29 offered hope that the solution to one of the basic problems of the younger generation, the effective realization of their right to education and employment, would become a world-wide issue. It was to be hoped that during the International Youth Year the international community would devote primary attention to those and other problems affecting the younger generation and requiring urgent solution.

51. Although the lives of the retiring generation had their roots in the past, that did not mean that the fate of the elderly and the aged had been sealed. The growing numbers of the elderly made it urgently necessary to devote maximum attention to their economic, social and medical problems in both developed and

/...

(Mr. Slaby, Czechoslovakia)

developing countries. The results of the World Assembly on Aging justified the hope that the goal of providing economic and social security for the elderly and the aged would not remain a mere aspiration. However, the implementation of the wide range of recommendations was the responsibility of the individual States, which must incorporate the recommendations into their legal systems and translate them into measures that would effectively provide for all the important needs of the elderly. The people of Czechoslovakia took pride in the current state of care for the elderly in their country, which was on a level undreamed of in most other countries. It was based on the constitutionally guaranteed right to security in old age and was being carried out as an integral part of the development of society. Similarly, care for the disabled was based on the principle that the care provided was free of charge, long-term, systematic and universal.

52. The large number of projects being planned at different levels in connection with the International Year of Disabled Persons provided the assurance that the Year would exert a lasting influence in all countries and serve as an incentive for taking a systematic, comprehensive and enduring interest in disabled persons and undertaking efforts for their full incorporation in the life of the community on the same basis as everyone else.

53. Mr. VILLAGRA DELGADO (Argentina) said that the disabled, the young and the elderly had many problems in common which could be solved only through a greater degree of economic and social progress opening the way to greater participation by those groups in all areas of society.

54. Although young people were the future of society, they were also entitled to participate in the current activities of their communities. The increasing number of youth organizations throughout the world was a clear indication of their interest in such participation, which must have adequate channels of expression. National co-ordinating bodies should therefore be set up to encourage free expression by young people, avoid duplication of effort and help youth organizations to make contact with each other and with United Nations bodies. Since young people could also serve as an effective means for publicizing the genuine achievements of the United Nations, his delegation supported the efforts being made to publicize United Nations activities among young people. The suggestions made for activities at the national, regional and international levels during the International Youth Year were very valuable.

55. His delegation hoped that the Advisory Committee would continue to concentrate on the implementation of practical programmes to promote greater participation by young people in society and help solve their problems. The current world economic crisis with its devastating unemployment was a source of frustration to millions of young people throughout the world; all efforts made in the context of IYY would be in vain if such trends were not reversed.

56. The General Assembly, in resolution 213 (III), had taken note of the draft declaration of old-age rights submitted by his delegation. His country believed that the family was the basic nucleus of society, and in Argentina old people were an integral part of the family. It had long sought solutions to the specific

/...

(Mr. Villagra Delgado, Argentina)

problems of aging and therefore supported the report of the World Assembly on Aging. It believed in particular that the right of the elderly and the aged to leisure must be associated with the provision of opportunities to carry out socially useful activities after retirement.

57. His delegation hoped that the momentum created by the holding of the International Year of Disabled Persons would not be lost. It was very important for regional centres to be set up to co-ordinate United Nations activities in that field and thus contribute to the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. The observance of a world day of disabled persons would also help achieve that objective. The activities of the international community must be directed towards eliminating the situations and taboos which adversely affected the disabled, and the United Nations Secretariat should set an example by employing more disabled persons. The key to the problem was to provide opportunities to the disabled and thus make it possible for them to contribute effectively to society and live a full life.

58. The limited time allowed by the Secretariat for transmitting replies to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs on circular letters concerning the items under consideration had on a number of occasions made it impossible to meet the deadlines; his delegation hoped that that situation would be resolved.

59. It was important for national legislation to embody provisions relating to the special characteristics and needs of the young, the elderly and the disabled. Argentina had long ago incorporated provisions for those groups into its laws, and they were constantly revised and brought up to date in line with its policy of promoting the family as a whole. The separate promotion of the different elements of the family led to imbalances and tended to aggravate discrimination. At the world level, the old formula for international co-operation, as provided in the Charter, and the efforts being made to promote economic and social development, were the best means of achieving solutions.

60. Mrs. EMARA (Egypt) said that in general her delegation supported the recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year (A/37/348). The Egyptian authorities would study the draft declaration on the rights and responsibilities of youth and transmit their comments to the Secretary-General. Her delegation supported the proposal for holding five regional meetings in 1983, since that would enable young people to exchange expertise and co-ordinate efforts at the regional level. The suggested amendments to the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/237) were constructive and would enhance the clarity and precision of the report. In particular, they took into account the growing concern of young people concerning the danger of nuclear war, the growing arms race and the spending for military purposes of resources which could be used for development, and their denunciation of all armed aggression and racial discrimination.

(Mrs. Emara, Egypt)

61. Egypt welcomed the proclamation of 1985 as the International Youth Year and would contribute to all United Nations activities for young people, as in the past. It was particularly concerned about measures to improve channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations. Young people had an important role to play in all societies, especially in the developing world, and they must be allowed to participate in the activities of the International Youth Year and in the implementation of policies at all levels. Her country supported the activities of the United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and other institutions which had taken steps to improve the channels of communication with youth organizations, and it hoped that their efforts would be intensified in order to contribute to a two-way exchange of information between youth and the United Nations.

62. Her delegation agreed that it was essential to maintain the momentum of the International Year of Disabled Persons, and it considered it important for the General Assembly to adopt the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons as soon as possible. Egypt had set up a national committee on the disabled, which had prepared a long-term and a short-term programme for the disabled in order to facilitate their integration into society and their participation in all fields of activity. The programmes were also intended to relieve the disabled of some of their burdens so as to enable them to exercise their right to lead independent normal lives on the basis of equality with the rest of society and participate fully in public life in accordance with their wishes. The national committee had organized a national conference to consider the problems of the disabled in Egypt and to formulate measures to ensure their full participation in national life. In addition, special centres had been set up in major cities to help the disabled of the 1973 war.

63. At the World Assembly on Aging, her delegation had reiterated its full support for the International Plan of Action and called upon all States and both governmental and non-governmental organizations to give effect to the Plan at the local, regional and international levels so as to ensure economic and social security for an opportunity for them to participate in national development.

64. Mr. MATHEWSON (United Kingdom) said that, in the wake of the World Assembly on Aging and the International Year of Disabled Persons, it was an appropriate time for the General Assembly to take stock of the achievements in both fields and determine ways in which the United Nations could most productively continue its involvement. The World Assembly on Aging had provided a unique opportunity for exchanges of view on the implications of the dramatic and world-wide increase in the number of elderly people. A wealth of knowledge and experience had been represented among the participants. The endorsement of the International Plan of Action on Aging was a major achievement, and it remained for the General Assembly to take decisions on how best to implement it and follow it up.

65. His delegation was guided by three general principles: that the circumstances of elderly people varied markedly between countries; that the principal follow-up action should therefore be at the national and regional levels; and that, at the international level, it was better to improve the performance of existing mechanisms than to invent new ones. It fully supported the approach set forth in

/...

(Mr. Mathewson, United Kingdom)

paragraph 87 of the Programme of Action that each country should decide upon its own national strategy, targets and priorities. In consultation with public and voluntary agencies, his Government would be considering ways in which the recommendations of the Programme of Action could be followed through for the benefit of elderly people in the United Kingdom.

66. The International Year of Disabled Persons had generated great interest in the aspirations and problems of disabled people and had given them a chance to tell governments what they wanted and needed. It had become clear that disabled people felt they were excluded from full participation in the life of their communities and were not sufficiently understood by others. Disabled people were ordinary people who were often obliged to lead unnecessarily extraordinary lives. His delegation agreed that it was essential to preserve the momentum created by the Year. His Government, for its part, had shown its determination to pursue the aims of the Year in the longer term. It had recently produced a report entitled "IYDP and After" in which the special efforts represented by the Year were made part of a longer term strategy for bringing about the full participation and integration of disabled people. The strategy laid particular emphasis on the role of non-governmental organizations in providing services for the disabled.

67. His delegation, as a member of the Advisory Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons, supported the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, which it believed would effectively carry forward the goals of the International Year. It particularly welcomed the emphasis on the prevention of disability. At the previous session of the General Assembly, his delegation had submitted the Leeds Castle Declaration on the Prevention of Disablement, which itself was the product of a unique international seminar on the prevention of disability. It was encouraging that a number of United Nations agencies had taken up points which had been made in that Declaration.

68. His delegation believed that the World Assembly on Aging and the International Year of Disabled Persons had been successful because they had been exceptional occasions carefully prepared for over a period of time. It believed it essential, however, to maintain a highly selective approach to the designation of such occasions and to avoid their proliferation. It was therefore opposed to the proposals for a Decade of Disabled Persons and a world day of disabled persons and believed that the implementation of the Programme of Action as proposed by the Advisory Committee would make a far more effective contribution to the task of satisfying the aspirations and resolving the problems of the disabled.

69. Mrs. DRACHEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Soviet Union welcomed the United Nations concern about the broad range of problems affecting young people, and particularly their role in promoting peace, disarmament, international co-operation and understanding among peoples. Ever since the Great October Socialist Revolution and the Formation of the USSR, Soviet youth had been at the forefront of society, and it was they who were coping with the historic tasks of the building of communism. Soviet young people had unlimited opportunities for harmonious development and creative activity. Education at levels was free and there was no unemployment; young people were broadly involved in economic construction and in State and public affairs.

/...

(Mrs. Dracheva, USSR)

70. Young people throughout the world were deeply concerned about the future and whether the outlook was for peaceful construction and the improvement of living conditions or for senseless nuclear destruction. That would depend on how resolutely the peoples and the youth of the world opposed the course of intensifying the danger of nuclear catastrophe and worked on behalf of peace. Soviet youth supported all those who opposed the arms race being fostered by imperialism and they advocated the right of young people to a peaceful and happy future. In connection with the All-Union youth march for peace, over 13 million young people had signed messages addressed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and calling for a responsible dialogue to achieve disarmament. Soviet youth had also participated actively in the international march for peace in 1982.

71. The Soviet Union supported the observance of the International Youth Year and believed that there should be a unified approach to the themes of the Year, namely, participation, development and peace. In the difficult current international situation, the Year should help to stimulate the efforts of young people, above all in maintaining peace and averting a nuclear catastrophe, and in strengthening support for the struggle of peoples to eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, apartheid and all forms of foreign oppression.

72. Attention should also be given to expanding the contribution of young people to the economic and social development of their countries and the adoption of measures to ensure the rights of young people to employment, education, health care and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them. The socio-economic rights of young people were particularly important, since half the army of unemployed in the capitalist countries consisted of young people, and social programmes of vital concern to the young were being curtailed because of the arms race. It was quite clear that unemployment, lack of opportunity and uncertainty about the future undermined the moral and physical health of young people and led to such social evils of capitalist society as drug addiction and crime.

73. Her delegation hoped that the Year would contribute to the further development of international co-operation as a means of solving the problems of young people, especially through international non-governmental organizations and progressive international and national organizations. Efforts should be made to ensure that broadly-based international non-governmental organizations, such as the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Union of Students, the International Democratic Federation of Women and similar organizations, played their full part.

74. The policy and the programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies providing for co-operation with youth should be based on contact with representative youth organizations having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. The main channel of communication with young people should be the tried and tested annual informal meetings of international and regional non-governmental youth and student organizations at Geneva.



(Mrs. Dracheva, USSR)

75. The problems of young people could not be solved in isolation, outside the context of the development of society; they must be solved primarily at the national level and should constitute an inseparable part of national development plans.

76. In general, her delegation regarded the results of the second session of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year as favourable. In connection with the suggested amendments to the report of the Secretary-General on the International Youth Year (A/37/237), her delegation welcomed the reference to the need to combine the programmes of the International Youth Year with the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, and the reference to the importance of activities undertaken by youth organizations and students in favour of peace and disarmament.

77. Although her delegation, at the second session of the Advisory Committee, had not objected to the adoption of the recommendations on the administrative and organizational aspects of the International Youth Year, its decision not to do so had been based on the firm understanding that the implementation of those recommendations would have no additional financial implications for the United Nations regular budget. That applied in particular to the financing of regional preparatory meetings; the strengthening of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and the secretariats of the regional commissions; and the holding of regional meetings of experts. It appeared, however, that the document on administrative and financial implications prepared by the Secretariat (A/37/348/Add.1) had been formulated without regard for the understanding that had been reached. It unjustifiably envisaged expenditure which considerably exceeded the resources already made available for those purposes and then proposed that for the most part they should be met from the regular budget.

78. That document must be substantially revised, and any expenditure exceeding the resources already made available, if really needed, should be met by voluntary contributions or, if necessary, from resources released as a result of savings on other programmes and more specifically as a result of the curtailment of ineffective and obsolete programmes as provided in the relevant General Assembly resolutions. Efforts should be concentrated on making more effective use of the existing possibilities of the Secretariat and staff without any increase in staff or the establishment of any new machinery.

79. Her delegation was favourably impressed with the results of the World Assembly on Aging. Also the International Plan of Action on Aging was rightly based on the principle that countries should devise their own national plans and programmes on aging. Her delegation particularly welcomed the provisions of the Plan stressing that the situation of older people could be improved only under conditions of peace, security and a halt to the arms race; a rechanneling of resources spent for military purposes to the needs of economic and social development; the elimination of the remnants of colonialism, neo-colonialism, genocide, racism and various forms of discrimination against the aged; and the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis.

/...

(Mrs. Dracheva, USSR)

80. As to the recommendations on strengthening the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, her delegation believed that the efficiency of the existing staff of the Secretariat should be improved. It was opposed to the expansion of existing units and the creation of new units in the Secretariat that dealt with the problems of the aged.

81. The resolution entitled "Aging people in Lebanon", which condemned Israel's barbaric aggression in that country was of great significance.

82. Her delegation hoped that the decisions of the World Assembly on Aging would assist Governments in establishing State guarantees for the realization of the rights of the aged to employment, social security, medical services and housing.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.