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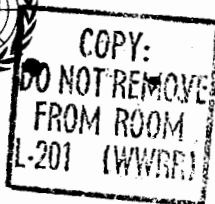
THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

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THIRD COMMITTEE  
28th meeting  
held on  
Monday, 31 October 1983  
at 6 p.m.  
New York

~~UN LIBRARY COLLECTION~~ 28th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. CHAVANAVIRAJ (Thailand)

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4 November 1983

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The meeting was called to order at 6.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 84: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/460 and Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 85: WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION (continued)

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 37/54 (continued) (A/C.3/38/4)
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- (c) POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN DEVELOPMENT AND IN THE REALIZATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/338 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

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AGENDA ITEM 90: WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/506)

1. Mr. KAMARA (Sierra Leone), speaking on agenda items 84 and 89, said that the peoples of the world were facing challenges and crises of confidence in themselves and in their ability to unite in solving their common problems. Those and other problems persisted because they were not being met with a common determination by all nations and all groups of the population. His country was committed to the idea of co-operative effort within and outside the United Nations to promote the effective and useful exchange of information on all aspects of youth. It believed in the important contribution youth could make to the development process and therefore supported the International Youth Year, in particular the themes of participation, development and peace. He was pleased to note the progress in the preparations as reported in document A/38/460.

2. The situation reported in 1982 regarding the role played by youth in the development of his country had remained much the same. Young people had continued to organize freely in a determined, co-operative effort to contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of their country. They had formed themselves into development associations which undertook vital development projects through self-help, including the construction of community and health centres, schools, bridges and roads and increasing agricultural production so as to improve food supplies for their communities. The joint efforts of young men and women,

(Mr. Kamara, Sierra Leone)

often from different clans and ethnic groups, had enhanced youth participation in the development of their particular communities and of the country as a whole, thus increasing mutual understanding and helping to maintain peace. Youth associations had also provided useful bodies through which the Government could channel material support to people at the grass-roots level to alleviate illiteracy, hunger and disease.

3. His Government considered that the question of the aging and the elderly should be viewed in the light of the interdependence of social groups in all communities, which in Sierra Leone was the product of a cultural pattern that accorded recognition, responsibility and respect to the older generation. Old people had a patriarchal role in the family, the ethnic group and the community as a whole; that was especially true in respect of youth. Old people were the custodians of the community's culture, epitomizing respect for truth, harmony and community values. Far from being a neglected and solitary group, they represented a vital focus. In his country the merit of youth was often measured in terms of their assistance to and concern for the older members of the community to which they belonged.

4. Although, therefore, his country was ready to co-operate with the United Nations and the specialized agencies, with other intergovernmental organizations and with non-governmental organizations in global efforts to deal with the problems of the elderly and the aged, his Government was strongly of the opinion that the country's traditional values should be maintained and strengthened. Like other developing countries, Sierra Leone was faced with enormous economic and social problems and was not at present in a position to maintain the level of contact and provide the necessary resources for implementing ideas for support to the elderly and aged. It hoped to direct its attention to that area in the near future but considered it prudent for the time being to protect and preserve its traditional methods of caring for them within the community.

5. Mr. DEMBELE (Mali) said that with the worsening situation, particularly for youth, efforts should be redoubled to ensure that the activities undertaken during the International Youth Year demonstrated the joint determination that youth should continue to play their due role in the process of development and the establishment of peace. His delegation had therefore studied the Secretary-General's report in document A/38/460 and Add.1 with particular interest. Young people in Mali continued to be firmly committed to self-development and the preservation and enrichment of their culture and were intensifying their participation in the task of national construction and the establishment of a new international order of peace and justice.

6. With regard to the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, his delegation welcomed the project under the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons concerning support for innovative approaches to integrated activities for disabled persons in rural areas in Mali. His Government respected human dignity and, despite its limited financial means, had embarked on a long-term policy for social and economic training of disabled

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(Mr. Dembele, Mali)

persons. While maintaining its efforts in the area of preventive medicine to eradicate disabling diseases, it was rehabilitating disabled persons and reintegrating them into society. In October 1973 an experimental class for young blind children had been opened, through the Mali association for the blind, with a view to enabling those children to have access to culture and employment and to play their part as citizens. Thanks to the tenacity, courage and faith of the promoters, the small experimental class had resulted in the establishment of the National Institute for Blind Youth which had subsequently become the Mali Institute for the Blind. The Institute provided special education through a dual system of residential and day courses; intellectual development was fostered, and blind children were able to mingle with sighted children, to the benefit of both categories.

7. As a developing country, Mali could not afford to keep its disabled persons in total idleness when they could be trained to be useful and thus to enjoy their fundamental rights as citizens in accordance with the United Nations Charter. For that reason the Government considered that it was essential to increase the flow of resources to the developing countries for prevention of disability, education and provision of equal opportunity for disabled people, and the necessary funds for carrying out the World Programme of Action.

8. Mr. FAROUQUE (Sri Lanka), speaking on agenda items 84 and 88, said that his delegation was confident that the activities described in the Secretary-General's report (A/38/339) would enable youth to make their own contribution to furthering the purposes of the United Nations Charter. His country would co-operate to the full in implementing the guidelines set out in the report for promoting youth participation in development and peace at national, regional and international levels. It noted with satisfaction the constructive contributions of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and of UNESCO in that field and welcomed UNESCO's intention to organize a World Congress on Youth in 1985.

9. In accordance with the fundamental principles of State policy enshrined in Sri Lanka's Constitution, the State was required to promote the interests of children and youth so as to ensure their full physical, mental, moral, religious and social development and to protect them from exploitation and discrimination. Accordingly, a Ministry of Youth Affairs and a National Youth Services Council had been set up to promote policies and programmes relating to youth as an integral part of economic and social development. A large number of youth organizations, at both national and local levels, were active in the youth services sector, in which many Government departments and religious and other voluntary organizations were also involved. Projects and activities covered a wide variety of fields, including spiritual development, training in leadership, social experience, vocational training, external and internal exchange and opportunities for direct participation in national development.

10. His Government would co-operate fully with the United Nations and all other international intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies to promote the ideas of peace and international understanding through the International Youth Year and was

(Mr. Farouque, Sri Lanka)

in the process of setting up the necessary machinery for the successful implementation of the objectives of the Year. In Sri Lanka young people formed a large proportion of the population, and his Government, despite its limited resources, regarded the International Youth Year programmes as among its highest priorities. The National Youth Services Council, which operated directly under the Minister of Youth Affairs, was co-ordinating and generating programmes and a special committee had been set up to prepare a declaration on youth policy, with the participation of the public. The National Youth Services Council was also active in publicity and fund raising for the International Youth Year. In that connection, his delegation joined the appeals made to the affluent nations to contribute generously to the Trust Fund for the International Youth Year.

11. Recognizing that youth unemployment and the lack of opportunity for a decent living with dignity and freedom were the most serious and explosive problems of the time, the Government had found it necessary to change the education system to facilitate youth participation in development. The National Youth Services Council had accordingly organized special educational training programmes and seminars on such topics as environmental pollution, drug abuse and tree-planting. It was also promoting a number of activities through youth clubs and was almost half way to its target of a youth club in every village by 1985.

12. Mr. MPOUEL BALA (United Republic of Cameroon) said that his Government accorded youth a special place in its policies, recognizing that, with their vitality, enthusiasm and new ideas, they represented the hope of the future. The young people of his country were often referred to as "the spearhead of the nation" and were assigned an important role in development. For the past 16 years a national youth festival had been held, during which the entire population had discussed the problems of youth and how they might be resolved. More recently a whole week had been devoted to youth, during which discussions had taken place as a basis for preparing youth for their responsibilities and for their integration into the development process. To that end young people needed, first and foremost, education and training and the Government was allocating a large part of the budget to the Ministry of Education. The educational system was designed to train young people at all levels to earn their living and to participate in the country's development.

13. Special preparations were being made for the International Youth Year and an inter-ministerial commission had been established in June to co-ordinate activities. His Government was convinced, however, that success depended on joint efforts with other countries at the regional and international levels. It endorsed the conclusions set forth in document A/38/339 and supported the action suggested in document A/38/460, in particular paragraphs 88, 89, 91 and 92.

14. In his delegation's opinion, international programmes for the International Youth Year should concentrate on peace, which was essential to enable psychological, intellectual and financial resources to be released for genuine development. The United Republic of Cameroon, as a developing country, reaffirmed its commitment to the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes and the

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(Mr. Mpouel Bala, United Republic of Cameroon)

non-use of force in international relations. It was the duty of the international community to prepare, for young people and the coming generations, a peaceful society whose future was not mortgaged. No one could honestly speak of development to young people while the resources which they should inherit were being used for destruction.

15. His Government regarded disabled persons as an integral part of society; they should be able to live as normally as possible and to take part in the development of the community in which they lived. To that end, the Government had established a special school for educating the blind and giving them special training in handicrafts, while the national centre for rehabilitation provided care for disabled persons and encouraged them to lead an active and productive life. Those institutions were operated with the assistance of friendly developed countries. His Government greatly appreciated such co-operation and urged that Governments should make regular contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons. It recognized that disabled persons were not incapable; in fact, precisely because of their physical disabilities, their other faculties were often more highly developed.

16. Mr. SOERIAATMADJA (Indonesia) said that the deteriorating economic situation with which the developing countries had been faced during the past year had meant that some important social projects had had to be postponed because there were not the resources to finance them. His delegation believed that such situations could be met by promoting the co-operative movement, and that all available financial and human resources should be mobilized to that end. Each Government should provide direct material assistance and lead the co-operative movement in the right direction, but while assistance was necessary in the early stages of co-operative movements, too much protection might make them over-dependent on government support, so that co-operatives and Governments should work together to obviate that risk. The World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons had recognized that co-operatives could facilitate the integration of disabled persons into the work-force, while resolutions concerning the United Nations Decade for Women had recognized that co-operatives could promote increased participation by women in economic and social development. A number of developing countries had enacted legislation to encourage women to assume a more active role in co-operatives.

17. Indonesia had experienced the problems that arose from differences in levels of growth between various economic sectors, particularly the modern and traditional sectors. In addition, problems arising from rapid development and a concentration of economic activity in the hands of a small segment of society, the greater part of which lived in backward social and economic conditions, were hampering the development process. It was therefore important that a balance be struck between economic and social development. To that end, the Indonesian Government had played an active part in the development of co-operatives, mainly by creating an environment in which they could evolve and become effective organizations supporting the economic activities of the people, particularly small farmers, fishermen, artisans and so on. It was government policy to allow co-operatives to develop in accordance with the initiative of the people themselves. Government

(Mr. Soeriaatmadja, Indonesia)

assistance had taken the form of training for managers and employees, through loans, grants and expertise from abroad. Many foreign countries had shown great interest in the development of co-operatives in Indonesia and soft loans from abroad amounted to millions of United States dollars.

18. With regard to the problems of aging, the level of progress reached in Indonesia in social welfare, medical care and living conditions had increased life expectancy and therefore the question of aging had become an important aspect of national development. At the same time, a simultaneous decline in the birth rate and the mortality rate had necessitated adjustments in the national development plan, particularly as far as pension schemes, welfare services and the educational system were concerned. The application of those adjustment measures would impose a heavy burden on government finances if the demands of economic development and the rising claims of welfare for the aging were to be reconciled. Indonesia's problems in the matter of aging were similar to those of other developing countries and he therefore believed that consultation might lead to effective international co-operation; the problem of aging should also be considered during the World Population Conference to be held in Mexico in 1984. The Indonesian Government, despite its current financial difficulties, had met basic needs and provided housing, medical care, education and training for all its people, including the aging; it had also provided soft loans in an effort to enhance participation by the elderly in the development process.

19. It was essential that adequate financial support be provided for the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and he was in favour of continuing the Trust Fund with a view to maintaining the impetus towards achieving the objectives of the World Programme of Action.

20. Mr. RODRIQUES (Jamaica) said that the Secretary-General's report on the International Youth Year (A/38/460) showed that momentum was building; what was needed next was the adoption and implementation of policy, particularly by long-term policy, since the purposes for which international years had been declared were sometimes forgotten once the celebration of the year itself had passed. The Regional Plan of Action adopted by the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Youth Year had recognized that fact by stressing the importance of policies which could become permanently integrated into the daily life of countries and actually change the situation of youth.

21. The Secretary-General's report gave details of participation in preparations for the International Youth Year by representatives of the governmental, non-governmental and intergovernmental sectors. Every effort should be made to involve non-governmental organizations in national co-ordinating committees because they could best serve to strengthen communication between the United Nations and youth organizations. The Seminar on United Nations Internship and Fellowship Programmes held in Vienna in June 1983 had recommended the expansion and diversification of United Nations internships and fellowships to train young people, particularly from developing countries; he hoped the recommendations would be given due attention.

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(Mr. Rodrigues, Jamaica)

22. The Latin American Meeting to which he had already referred had formulated a regional plan of action which Jamaica regarded as the framework within which its national policies for youth could be formulated. In Jamaica, preparations for the International Youth Year were well under way. The National Co-ordinating Committee had been established with members from governmental and non-governmental organizations and other social interest groups, and was formulating Jamaica's national plan of action for the Year.

23. Youth programmes in Jamaica were designed to cater for urban and rural youth alike. One programme which had achieved much success was the Human Employment and Resource Training Programme (HEART), which trained young people in such skills as garment manufacture, building and agriculture. Over the next few years the HEART programme would establish nine new training institutions, each of which would train 500 boys and girls in one skill. A trust had been established to be responsible for financing and recruitment, and to co-ordinate the teaching, thus unifying the previously fragmented efforts to develop youth skills. Recruits were selected from all over the island, and the output of trained personnel would be much higher than at present; the building skills programme, for example, would train 7,000 young persons over a three-year period. As the programme expanded, trainees would be recruited from young people with no academic skills, so as to broaden the reach of the programme.

24. A new agency known as the Self-Start Fund was to be launched as a private voluntary organization with an initial fund of \$J 14 million to provide loans for the purchase of equipment and raw materials for trainees in government programmes who wished to become self-employed. The HEART programme itself aimed at making the transition from school to work easier by matching training with job opportunities and the needs of the country.

25. With regard to the question of aging, he supported the Secretary-General's view that the Trust Fund for Aging had a dynamic role to play in the implementation of the Plan of Action, though as the report (A/38/470) pointed out, the Fund needed more contributions. Meanwhile, Jamaica's National Council for the Aging continued to support the Plan of Action.

26. He welcomed the proclamation of the period 1983-1992 as the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. Much could be done at the national and regional levels to integrate disabled persons into the development process. Jamaica, for example, was establishing a Caribbean regional centre to co-ordinate technical co-operation in services for disabled persons and was endeavouring to interest various governmental and non-governmental organizations in follow-up actions in support of the Centre. Jamaica also supported the view that the Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons should be continued.

27. Mr. JATIVA (Ecuador) said that in Ecuador, youth accounted for more than half the total population and the matter of youth participation in development was therefore of great interest. Education in Ecuador at all levels was free and absorbed 30 per cent of the regular budget of the State. In addition to providing



(Mr. Jativa, Ecuador)

general education, the schools tried to instil in young people permanent ideals of peace, liberty, justice and humanity. The proclamation by the General Assembly of the International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace would contribute to those ends and Ecuador would continue to co-operate in all aspects of the preliminary work. The necessary steps had been taken to establish the Ecuadorian National Committee for the Year and a whole series of conferences and seminars on the role of youth in a developing country was being organized.

28. In recent years, Ecuadorian youth of both sexes had played a full part in bringing about positive changes in the structure of society and in the restoration of democracy in Ecuador. They had shown their patriotism by the manner in which they had helped the victims of the recent natural disaster there.

29. The new democratic Government of Ecuador had therefore given particular importance to the devising of programmes and policies for youth and to participation by young people themselves in the making of the programmes.

30. On the regional level, Ecuador had supported the Venezuelan initiative for the establishment of the Latin American and Caribbean Youth Centre designed to assist the personal development of young people and their identification with the national effort. Ecuador had also been represented at the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Youth Year which had adopted a programme of action and long-term strategy for achieving the fullest integration and participation by the young people of the region. At a time of world crisis it was particularly important to give youth the opportunity of participating in the measures to solve the many problems which beset the world.

31. The celebration of the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981 had awakened people in Ecuador to the seriousness of the problem of disability and had given a fillip to the development of various special schools and rehabilitation and vocational training institutions to serve the disabled. Both public sector and private foundations had been involved, and thanks to their efforts Ecuador had an adequate infrastructure and flow of resources. The various projects initiated by the National Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons had continued after the Year had ended, and had become permanent programmes for the integration of the disabled into society. The National Committee had also drafted legislation to ensure that work on behalf of the disabled in educational, cultural, labour and social matters should normally be carried on through general institutions in those fields rather than by special centres. The legislation had come into force in August 1982. It covered all disabled persons without exception and was directed towards the three basic methods of action proposed in the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (resolution 37/52) namely, prevention, rehabilitation and the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons. It had defined measures to be taken on behalf of the disabled in the fields of education, genetic counselling, pregnancy and birth services, post-natal care, provision of pre-marriage and pre-conception requirements, early pregnancy detection and so on. In the field of prevention there was a complex of medical, social, educational and labour measures the object

(Mr. Jativa, Ecuador)

of which was to bring the functional abilities of disabled persons to the highest possible level. The State guaranteed the employment development of disabled persons in whatever field they entered, and gave them the protection and assistance necessary to ensure that by their own efforts they could play a part equivalent to that played by non-handicapped persons. The Ministry of Social Welfare was responsible for directing national rehabilitation policy and it co-ordinated the activities of all other institutions in that field.

32. Assistance had been given to special education for psycho-social rehabilitation and there were more than 25 centres caring for young persons with hearing, vision or cerebral disabilities. The National Council for Vocational Rehabilitation provided training in its own workshops or schools, in the national training service or in special workshops which it subsidized. The training continued until the disabled person had been placed in employment in his chosen field.

33. His Government's support of activities for the full participation of youth in society and the rehabilitation of disabled persons was based on the principle that there could be no economic development without social development and progress.

34. The SECRETARY announced that Bhutan, Congo, Democratic Yemen, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Malawi, Qatar and United Republic of Tanzania had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.12, Belgium and Philippines had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.14 and Cuba had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.3/38/L.15.

The meeting rose at 7.30 p.m.