



**Chairman:** Miss Maria GROZA (Romania).

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mrs. Barish (Costa Rica),  
Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

**Note by the Secretary-General on documentation  
(Conference Room Paper/MAIN COMMITTEES/1)**

1. Mr. LUTEM (Secretary of the Committee) read out a note from the Secretary-General (Conference Room Paper/MAIN COMMITTEES/1) in which it was suggested that, as part of the continuing effort to limit documentation, the procedure for announcing sponsors of draft resolutions or amendments should be changed so that, instead of publishing addenda to the original document, the names of new sponsors would be announced in a statement to be included in the summary record and the report of the Committee concerned would indicate the names of Member States which had joined the original sponsors.

**AGENDA ITEM 55**

**Youth, its education in the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, its problems and needs, and its participation in national development: report of the Secretary-General (continued) (A/7921 and Add.1, A/8003, chap. IX, sect. K; A/C.3/L.1764, A/C.3/L.1766)**

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

2. Mr. LAURENT (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that although FAO was concerned mainly with the agricultural sector, it was well aware of the close interaction between the rural and the urban worlds and therefore its youth activities were oriented toward youth in general, which it recognized to be one of the pillars of progress and the most important human resource in the development equation.

3. Respect for human rights could be inculcated in young people through teaching or it could be awakened in them in specific situations, such as those which were experienced by the young technicians of FAO each time they came in contact with cultures and bodies of tradition that were alien to them. In such cases, guided by the professional ethics of the international civil servant and the counsel of senior specialists, they developed systematically that deeply-felt appreciation of different human values which was a prerequisite for the success of any assistance activity and was the basis of every effort to "help others help themselves". On the basis of that concept, FAO had formulated, as a corollary to the Indicative World Plan for

Agricultural Development, a youth promotion programme which involved a new strategy better adapted to the dynamic attitude shown by youth in recent years. The strategy was the outcome of a series of joint FAO-UNESCO-ILO-UNICEF conferences, the Young World Assembly at Rome in 1965, which had approved a manifesto on youth, and the Young World Food and Development Programme held at Toronto in 1967, which had paved the way for a comprehensive master plan. More recently, a group of consultants had been set up, in accordance with the wishes of member States, to provide guidance for executive staff of the organization in the formulation of youth programmes; the group was made up of young people representing the governmental and non-governmental sectors.

4. In any analysis of the participation of youth in development it was necessary to bear in mind certain attitudes that were common to the younger generation. In the first place, young people were showing a desire to make their lives more meaningful by participating actively in development efforts. That desire might be satisfied by inviting young people to participate in deliberations on questions that were of crucial importance to humanity, as FAO had done on the occasion of the Second World Food Congress, held at the Hague in June 1970, or by organizing study trips that would enable young people to acquaint themselves at first hand with development projects and to meet with political and economic leaders, as had been done at both the national and the international levels.

5. Young people also wished to have closer contact with citizens of other countries; that desire might be met through volunteer work on international development projects. FAO, which had often led the way in that regard, had in recent years had the services of hundreds of volunteers who had backed up the work of its field staff working on integrated rural development, forestry and fishery projects.

6. Finally, today's youth had firm ideals of peace and was convinced of the need for mutual assistance; few mechanisms met those aspirations more effectively than did the national committees of the world-wide Freedom from Hunger Campaign. Those auxiliary bodies of the national programming agencies made it possible to ensure a useful and balanced exchange of financial, material and technological contributions from prosperous countries and of technical and moral contributions from less advanced countries.

7. Initiatives of the kind he had mentioned were viewed by FAO as functional elements of its work in relation to youth, which took the form primarily of training programmes for young people in pre-vocational, vocational,

technical and administrative disciplines, training in home economics for young women in rural areas, and dissemination of information on development projects undertaken by youth groups for the benefit of youth. Furthermore, all its activities along those lines underscored FAO's desire to co-operate with Governments, with the United Nations Secretariat and with other specialized agencies in the elaboration of formulas for satisfying the aspirations of young people and facilitating their full integration into the development process.

*Miss Groza (Romania) took the Chair.*

8. Mr. CSATORDAY (Hungary) said he was convinced that, in problems relating to youth as a group, the primary factor was a social one, although he recognized that disagreements did arise between the generations as a result of their different experiences of life. While he rejected the theory of a permanent generation gap, which attempted to substitute a confrontation between the generations for the class struggle, he acknowledged that there were real problems involved in the succession of one generation by another.

9. In order to form a complete picture of youth it was necessary, on the one hand, to consider, the basic features common to the whole youth sector and, on the other hand, to analyse separately the specific features of the various groups and even of young people individually, for the attitude and outlook of young people could not be separated from their role in the social structure, their situation, experience and individual needs, and the fact that some were still in school while others were already actively engaged in productive work. With regard to youth in general, it was natural that there should always be debates on that problem, since youth developed with the rest of society and their thinking and attitudes were determined by social changes and by their contributions to economic and social development. Also, education was a dynamic process and its nature varied according to the purpose of the teacher; what was more, the values according to which adults judged young people were undergoing constant change. It was therefore somewhat absurd, perhaps, to try to define youth in universal and categorical terms.

10. In Hungary, where there were 1,878,900 persons between the ages of fifteen and twenty-six, young people, both students and workers, constituted an integral part of society. In secondary schools, colleges and universities, as well as in the industrial, trade and agricultural sectors in which youth worked, the basic provision of the Hungarian Constitution that special attention should be paid to the development and education of youth and the protection of its interests was applied. On that basis, a new law was being drafted to guarantee the participation of youth in the elected government and social organs at the national and local levels and to ensure that due consideration was given to the views of youth in the preparation of measures affecting it.

11. In the case of Hungary, as well as in that of other countries, the contention that youth was opposed to all kinds of authority and favoured anarchy was not valid. Those who continually harped on the subject of the generation gap, i.e. the difference in the outlook of the

generations, were over-reacting to the fact that the role of modern youth could not be explained in terms of the usual change from one generation to another. Not only had the proportion of youth in society increased, but young people spent a much longer period in educational institutions, acquired far greater knowledge than earlier generations had, and reached biological maturity at an earlier age. In addition, while society demanded more and more from youth, young people also required more of society, their parents, their teachers and their leaders; they pursued revolutionary goals, definite programmes, clear perspectives and the possibility of more rapid advancement.

12. In contrast with the youth in capitalist countries, young people in socialist States did not reject the existing system, but accepted the ideology and policy of socialism, although, basing themselves on the achievements of the people's democratic system, they were frequently more vigorous than adults in their criticism of errors and their demands for better solutions. However, society shared their objectives, whilst requiring them, as a moral obligation, to be patriots and internationalists and to fulfil their duties with regard to national defence. There were still, of course, certain contradictions and shortcomings which gave rise to feelings of dissatisfaction, but the political, economic and social leaders of the country were resolutely fighting those ills, which did not derive from friction between generations but were to be expected in a fast-growing social and economic system. Therefore, the merits and mistakes of youth were not judged independently but were recognized as having their origin in the life of the society as a whole, and youth had its proportional role to play in the task of national betterment, which involved all society.

13. On the other hand, as the World Youth Assembly had clearly demonstrated, the youth movements of the West were objectively directed against the existing system, thus constituting an integral part of the class struggle and revealing an ever deepening crisis of capitalist society. In addition to the usual reasons for youth protests—insufficient educational facilities, racial discrimination or the lack of employment opportunities or security—there were in the case of the capitalist countries demands for peace, democracy and socialism, and condemnation of the system as a whole. The frustrations of young people were aggravated by the fact that in the Western world youth had no say with respect to the solution of major national problems.

14. Young people in the developing countries were faced with special problems resulting from the heritage of colonialism, ruthless oppression and exploitation. The youth of the third world was fully justified in demanding that the riches of which their countries had been robbed should be returned for the benefit of the newly independent nations. It was therefore not surprising that at the Belgrade seminar and at the World Youth Assembly the delegations from those countries had strongly condemned all neo-colonialist interference and supported the struggle of all peoples for freedom, independence and well-being and against racism and neo-nazism. Hungary, along with other socialist countries, unreservedly supported such demonstrations, which proved once again that the real gap was not between generations. In the Sharpeville massacre, in the South-East Asian war and in the persecution of Arab

refugees in the Middle East, young people and adults alike fell victims to violence and aggression. His delegation had noted with satisfaction that the reports of the Belgrade seminar and the World Youth Assembly did not reflect escapism or pious pacificism. On the contrary, their young authors, facing the monstrous dangers of the present world, advocated in those documents a programme of work and resolute struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, aggression, racism and other evils as a way of shaping a better future for mankind.

15. In conclusion, he said that in the view of his delegation, the young not only were entitled to demand a greater role in world affairs, but also should be more exacting with themselves and prepare themselves as adequately as possible for the complex responsibilities which they would have to assume in the future. For that reason, the United Nations family, particularly the Economic and Social Council, UNESCO, the ILO and FAO should pay more attention to the problems of youth. In doing so, however, they should not establish new bureaucratic units but should reorganize and fully utilize existing systems. All countries should take steps, including the adoption of special legislation, to guarantee youth better political, economic and cultural opportunities. At the same time, the anti-imperialist attitude of youth should be strengthened and its energy channelled into action against colonialism, racial discrimination, nazism, aggression and militarism, but it should also be stressed that defensive wars and wars of liberation were fully justified and legitimate. Lastly, his delegation supported the steps taken to enhance the mutual understanding of youth in all countries and thus to promote the aforementioned goals.

16. Mr. MAHMASSANI (Lebanon) observed that the generation gap was widening inexorably and was adding to the world's uncertainty as to its future. The rebellious attitude of today's youth was another indication that something was wrong with society. While the problem was more acute in the developed countries and the forms it took varied from one region to another, it was basically the same. As the Secretary-General had observed, young people were not content with the sluggishness of the institutions and the structures of political, economic and social life, and their impatience was fully understandable. It seemed obvious that society would have to adapt its priorities and allocate its resources in such a way as to take into account the demands of youth.

17. The demands of young people related to higher education on the one hand and society in general on the other. Universities were the institutions in which freedom was most genuinely felt and it was for that reason that young students considered that the freedoms of democracy outside the university were deceptive. The problem of the present generation was to use its freedom within the limits of what was reasonable, without destroying the universities. Attempts to convert academic centres into instruments for wrecking society could only be self-defeating. He was fully aware of the problems of the young people of today, but could not excuse arson, destruction and violence.

18. Much criticism had been leveled at the World Youth Assembly, but little had been said about the contribution which it had unquestionably made. Although the behaviour

of its participants had not been above criticism, it should be remembered that young people had their own ways of communicating and expressing their opinions and they could not be expected to behave like seasoned diplomats. The merit of the Assembly lay mainly in the fact that it had offered youth the world over an opportunity to meet and discuss common problems. The young people had shown that they were almost unanimously united against territorial occupation and aggression and in favour of justice and progress. The resolutions they had adopted contained important recommendations on items of interest to the whole international community, which should take advantage of the opportunity offered by the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations to make youth realize that it was deeply interested in its problems and needs and to urge it to be law-abiding and to respect institutions.

19. Mr. SHAFIE (Malaysia) said that the question of youth was extremely important to his country, in which more than 60 per cent of the population was under twenty-five years of age. Malaysia recognized that the human element, and in particular the physical and spiritual development of the young generation, was essential to national development. The Razak report on education of 1955 and the Rahman Talib report and Education Act of 1961 brought into focus the Government's concern that education should be a vehicle for economic progress and social integration. Education was compulsory in Malaysia up to the age of fifteen. From the first year of secondary school, pupils were allowed to choose courses that were best suited to their interests, ability and aptitudes. To facilitate their choice, they were offered vocational guidance and lately there had been a decided swing towards science. Efforts were also being made to imbue in young people a spirit of service to the nation and to open their eyes to their importance in shaping the national destiny. Malaysia now had twenty-five national youth organizations which pursued such aims and since 1954 about 11,000 young men and women had been trained at the National Youth Training Centre.

20. The creation of the National Youth Pioneer Corps and the National Development Corps represented another effort to develop the country's youthful resources. Young people who completed their training in those centres would then work in governmental and private development programmes in various sectors of the economy. In time, Malaysia would have a group of young people, who were disciplined and skilled, conscious of their role on the national scene, and involved in the shaping of the nation. Most of the youth programmes that were not directly related to education were the responsibility of the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports, created six years previously. Close co-operation was maintained between that Ministry and other ministries which also had special programmes for youth.

21. The Malaysian Government had not forgotten the role of its youth in the international sphere and had recently sponsored with UNICEF the national seminar on planning for children and youth, held at Kuala Lumpur from 28 July to 1 August 1970. At the seminar, ten recommendations had been made concerning the role of youth in national and international development; the Malaysian Government would consider them and, where appropriate, incorporate them in its development plans. His Government had also

made a financial contribution to the World Youth Assembly and would continue to support other international meetings of that type.

22. His delegation welcomed the efforts made by the United Nations and its specialized agencies in connexion with the subject under discussion and hoped to be able to co-operate in them whenever possible. What was needed at that stage was a concrete plan of action, which would enable young people all over the world to fulfil their aspirations and ideals.

23. Miss MAKOLO (Democratic Republic of the Congo) first expressed concern at the fact that, in organizing its work, the Third Committee had altered the order of priority of items decided on by the General Assembly at the twenty-fourth session; in her view, that could constitute a dangerous precedent.

24. The question of youth was not a new one and had already been discussed in various United Nations organs. It would, however, be wrong to assume that the discussion had been exhaustive and that a clear picture had been formed of the needs and aspirations of modern youth. The problem was extremely complex and particularly difficult to analyse: to a greater or lesser extent, it concerned everyone without exception. It was a source of concern to parents, teachers and lastly to all who were called upon to lead or guide young people. The problem first arose in the home, when the children started gradually to become independent of their parents and to assert their personalities through opposition; the process continued at school and, naturally, extended to relations with society at large.

25. Realizing the importance of the problem, the United Nations had repeatedly drawn attention, through its various organs, to the need for young people to participate in national development, to be consulted about their problems and needs and to be educated in the ideals of peace, respect and understanding among peoples. Nevertheless, the extent of manifestations of "malaise" among modern youth, and the sheer immediacy of those manifestations justified a reconsideration of the problems of youth.

26. Modern youth considered that they were able to identify their own problems and even suggest solutions. They wanted to be the masters of their own future and to take the decisions which were to affect their lives. The object of their concern had ceased to be the satisfaction of their immediate needs. They wanted to participate at all levels in the decision-making process—both in decisions affecting themselves and their lives and in those concerning the national and international community.

27. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo was fully aware of the aspirations and needs of its young people and of the important contribution which they could make to the development of the country. It was therefore making every effort to educate them conscientiously, believing that it would thus integrate and involve them in national life, and was devoting a sizable part of its budget to education. Schooling, which was free of charge in primary and secondary educational establishments, provided young Congolese with a wide range of opportunities. With a view to mobilizing all the energies of youth in the

development effort, compulsory civic service had been introduced: all young Congolese who had completed their university studies were automatically recruited to serve their country. The Congo also had a Ministry of Youth, which co-ordinated and supervised youth activities.

28. In her delegation's view, youth should be educated in respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms primarily by example, in the family, the school and the society; the principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights could, however, also be taught systematically. The teaching programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo included a civic education course, to which great importance was attached.

29. The World Youth Assembly, held in 1970 at United Nations Headquarters, had been given a three-fold task—to evaluate the existing situation, to define the aspirations of youth for the 1970s and to evolve a strategy for the creation of new attitudes and new structures with a view to concerted action by youth. During the debates, it had been possible to observe the same differences arising between the young participants as between their elders—reflecting the political differences of the States from which they came—and the same intolerance regarding such questions as universality of representation and towards participants considered to be less representative than others. Nevertheless, the historic importance of the Assembly had to be recognized, since it was the first time that young people from all over the world had met to discuss their problems. It had proposed that the General Assembly should be invited to convene a youth meeting every two years. Her delegation, however, would prefer such meetings to be held at the regional or subregional level, to permit a more harmonious exchange of ideas and serve as a preparatory step towards gatherings of an international character. On the other hand, it thought that regional youth seminars, devoted to young people and their problems, should be encouraged. In addition, it thought that the creation of an international corps of volunteers for development—an experiment which had been successfully conducted as a form of bilateral aid—could provide an opportunity for the desired involvement of young people in development work. Before such a venture was undertaken, however, a careful study should be made of the question, to define the legal status of the young volunteers and their relationship to the United Nations and to the Member State in which they would be working.

30. In conclusion, she expressed the hope that the Committee would confine itself to making modest but specific proposals on the subject of youth. She was prepared to support any proposal designed to promote contacts among young people at the regional level and to enable them to participate in national development and regional co-operation.

31. Mr. AL-SHAWI (Iraq) said that the teachings and traditions of Islam and the works of the Stoics and of many great thinkers possibly led young people to believe that they were living in the best of all possible worlds. That mistaken impression was confirmed by the many declarations and instruments proclaiming lofty principles as a guide for political organization at the national and international levels. In theory at least, the world was represented

to the young as being almost perfect. When the young turned their eyes towards reality, however, they could not fail to see a world of sorrow and discrimination, in which man was constantly exploited by man and the forces of evil were destroying all sense of human dignity in the Middle East, in South-East Asia and in parts of Africa. It was therefore not surprising that they should be restless, cynical, frustrated and violent. It was not possible, in the world as it existed, to educate them fruitfully in respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Teaching was fruitful and significant only when it had practical consequences and a positive influence on human behaviour. The time had come for the Organization to act, to intervene and to put an end to that outrageous disparity between theory and practice, between what was proclaimed and taught and what actually happened in the world. Only then would the education of youth be successful. There could be no better illustration of that idea than the statement made by the United States representative, who for a moment had given the impression that he was referring to the golden age of Athens, when she had in fact been speaking of the United States in the second half of the twentieth century.

32. He was unable to endorse some parts of the draft resolution submitted by the representative of Saudi Arabia (A/C.3/L.1766), despite his admiration for the author, and would be obliged to propose some amendments if the sponsor insisted on retaining the present text. His delegation would have no hesitation in endorsing the working paper containing suggestions for a resolution on youth and it wished to express its satisfaction at the conclusions of the seminar held at Belgrade in June 1970, and particularly recommendations 1, 4, 5, 9, 10 and 12 (see A/C.3/L.1764).

33. Mrs. RANA (Nepal) said that, in the message transmitted by the World Youth Assembly to the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, young people from more than 100 countries had expressed the desire that the United Nations and its Member States should intensify their efforts to ensure the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the elimination of racial discrimination and respect for the principles set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—a message of immense significance which merited thorough consideration.

34. The education of youth in respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms called for special attention, since those rights and freedoms were essential for the development of mankind. Much progress had been made in that direction during the present century, but it was a matter of deep regret that young people and others in South Africa, Namibia, Southern Rhodesia, Mozambique, Angola and other Non-Self-Governing Territories were being denied their basic human rights and subjected to constant torture and harassment by the racist and colonialist rulers, even though twenty-two years had passed since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

35. In her country, which had always supported the struggles of oppressed peoples for their independence and freedom, the Constitution guaranteed the human rights of all citizens, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or sex. Young people in schools and universities were taught

respect for human rights and great importance was attached to the participation of youth in national development. There were branches of the Nepal Youth Organization and the Nepal Women's Organization in all districts and villages and in the Panchayat, or national legislature, four and three seats respectively were reserved for youth and women's organizations. Young people were also associated in public administration at different levels and were actively engaged in harnessing natural resources for the reconstruction of the country.

36. Her delegation considered that the young people of the world should work for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and that their participation in that task was of immense importance, particularly now that the Second United Nations Development Decade was beginning. Youth should take an active part in efforts to bring about the rapid development of the developing countries and to narrow the existing gap between the latter and the developed countries.

37. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia), referring to the draft resolution submitted by his delegation at the 1741st meeting (A/C.3/L.1766), said that in the twenty-five years of its existence the United Nations had adopted many resolutions which had failed to achieve practical results. In that same period, youth had emerged as a decisive force and was demanding that active steps be taken to meet its legitimate desires and aspirations.

38. He pointed out that, in the preambular part of the draft resolution, the first paragraph had been taken almost word for word from the Charter of the United Nations, that the second paragraph merely noted what was provided in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that the fourth paragraph was simply a statement of fact and had been taken from the message transmitted by the World Youth Assembly to the United Nations General Assembly.

39. Turning to the operative part of the draft resolution, he said that armies should be made up of volunteers and that young people should on no account be coerced into joining the armed forces, not even to defend their country from aggression, since nobody should be forced to be involved in the act of killing. Unquestionably, it was adults between the ages of thirty-five and fifty who unleashed wars. For that very reason, it was they who should join the armed forces in order to give the youth of the world the opportunity to attain its full development. There were of course many young people who considered it a sacred duty to participate actively in the defence and protection of their country and they should certainly not be denied the opportunity of doing so. On the other hand, they should not be compelled to take part in acts of slaughter or aggression. Referring to operative paragraph 5, he emphasized the enormous influence that scientists could undoubtedly exercise in deciding whether there was to be war or peace. In connexion with paragraph 6, he pointed out that many countries had already established ministries or offices responsible for matters concerning youth and that such bodies could be of great help in narrowing the present generation gap.

40. Lastly, in operative paragraph 7 the Secretary-General was requested to circulate the resolution to youth organiza-

tions, Governments and scientific associations for their comments and to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session. It was thus made clear that the draft resolution was simply a recommendation and an exploratory measure designed to seek a better knowledge of the views of the bodies referred to in the paragraph and to

show the youth of the world that there was a genuine desire in the United Nations to lend them concrete and practical support.

*The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.*