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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ZAWAWI (Malaysia)

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(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

1. Mr. ALMUKHANI (Oman), speaking on agenda item 89, said that his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the situation of youth in the 1980s (A/40/64) and wholeheartedly endorsed its recommendations. He recalled that, in Oman, 1983 had been proclaimed Youth Year in order to emphasize the importance of

(Mr. Almukhani, Oman)

the part played by young people in the development process and to encourage them to shoulder their full responsibilities in regard to nation-building.

2. Nineteen eighty-four had been a turning-point in the life of young people in Oman; everything they needed to develop their abilities and express themselves had been made available to them. They were regarded as the keystone in all development projects. Hundreds of schools had been built, new courses had been organized and thousands of students were sent abroad every year to complete their university studies. Nineteen eighty-five would see the inauguration of the Sultan Kabous University, which would include five scientific faculties as a beginning and an institute of Islamic studies. A large sports complex had recently been inaugurated to allow young Omanis to engage in exercise and practise their favourite sports.

3. The Government of Oman was aware of the need to promote interchanges among young people from all countries in order to strengthen the ties between peoples. As part of that programme an Omani school ship had recently paid a friendship visit to the countries of the Gulf Council of Co-operation and the Scandinavian countries. The same vessel would visit New York in 1986 to commemorate the voyage of the Omani ship "Sultanate" to the port of New York in 1840.

4. The celebration of International Youth Year in 1985 jointly with the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations showed young people that the international community was aware of their problems and should encourage them to serve their countries and all mankind effectively.

5. The national committee set up in connection with the celebration of International Youth Year had engaged in a number of activities, including the organization of literary and artistic competitions in August 1985. A pamphlet on those activities was to be published. Tree-planting campaigns had been organized throughout the country and a campaign for the beautification of towns and villages had been launched.

6. Conscious of the importance of education based on moral values, in particular love of country, the Government of Oman sought to orient young peoples' activities in such a way as to arm them against destructive ideas that ran counter to the beliefs and authentic values of Omani society. Prompted by its faith in those values, Oman would support the draft resolution on International Youth Year (A/C.3/40/L.3) and hoped it would be adopted by consensus.

7. Mr. DAMM (Chile) said that, although United Nations work in the social field did not make the front page, it was nevertheless that work which would stand most to the Organization's credit in world opinion in future years because it was those activities above all which gave meaning to the slogan "The United Nations for a better world".

8. In the social field, one of the Chilean Government's main objectives had been and continued to be the elimination of extreme poverty and the achievement of equal

(Mr. Damm, Chile)

opportunity for all. To attain those goals, the Chilean Government had allocated in recent years more than 65 per cent of the national budget to the social sector. Chilean policy emphasized assistance to the most disadvantaged sectors of the population. The system of family allowances had been unified and extended to all those who had not formerly been entitled to it.

9. Despite the damage caused by the earthquake that struck the country in March 1985 - 21 hospitals were seriously damaged and more than 3,200 beds made unusable - Chile had made great progress in health. The infant mortality rate had been reduced to under 20 per thousand live births. Malnutrition in children under 6 had fallen to 8.4 per cent; the maternal mortality rate had been reduced to 0.35 per thousand live births, and, in 1984, 97 per cent of women received medical attention during confinement. Lastly, the new law on health which would come into force on 1 January 1986 guaranteed the poorest sectors equal access to the health services and free medical care.

10. Seventeen per cent of the budget was devoted to education, which had enabled Chile to reach a literacy level of 96 per cent in 1984.

11. In the field of aging, an area to which Chile attributed great importance, voluntary services played a primary role. The Corporación nacional de protección a la ancianidad (National Society for the Protection of the Elderly) cared for more than 33,000 elderly persons every year.

12. Despite the admirable work done under the International Plan of Action on Aging, there was throughout the world a general lessening of respect for the elderly. Chile therefore appealed for the launching, under the auspices of the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, of a world-wide campaign to promote such respect.

13. Under the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, Chile had made its goal the complete rehabilitation of disabled persons and to that end had adopted a policy encompassing all aspects of the individual, whether physical, mental, social, cultural, economic or occupational. Following the proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly in 1981 of the International Year of Disabled Persons, Chile had set up a special commission with the task of stepping up action concerning the disabled and creating greater public awareness of the problems they faced. Two aspects were highlighted: the need for society to accept and assimilate disabled persons and the need for the disabled to play their full part in society.

14. The Chilean delegation, which had had the honour of providing a Vice-President for the United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders held in Milan, Italy, welcomed the important results that meeting had achieved, in particular the "Guiding Principles for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Context of Development and a New International Economic Order", the "Milan Plan of Action" and the "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the

(Mr. Damm, Chile)

Administration of Juvenile Justice". The Congress had also highlighted the growing need for international co-operation in the prevention and control of crime and drew attention to the important part played by the United Nations in that field.

15. Mrs. ZAFAR (Bangladesh) said that the 1985 Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/1985/2/Rev.1), issued at a time when the world was celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, contained some very disturbing information. Most of the developing countries had been seriously affected by the recent economic crisis, particularly by the adverse terms of international trade, protectionist trade policies, outflow of capital, high interest rates and volatile foreign exchange markets. The lack of effective measures to correct the existing inequities was widening the gap between developed and developing countries.

16. The report stated that "the last few years have witnessed increasing use of what have been variously called adjustment or austerity measures to correct imbalances in the economy leading to external disequilibrium and to adjust to adverse change in the external environment". As a result, investment in vital social sectors such as health, education, population, housing, nutrition and other aspects of social welfare had declined or stagnated. Concerned by that unfortunate trend, the Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 had at their meeting in New York in October reaffirmed the importance of development in social sectors as an integral part of economic development and underscored the need to strengthen efforts aimed at vulnerable social groups.

17. The grim statistical facts contained in the 1985 report emphasized the imperative need to implement the objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. Those objectives, to be attained by the year 2000, included the elimination of hunger and malnutrition, health for all, availability of safe water and adequate sanitation, appropriate population policies and reduction of the infant mortality rate, attainment of a life expectancy of 60 years, universal primary school enrolment, achievement of full employment and equal participation by women in all sectors of development. If those objectives seemed unattainable, it was not for want of resources, but because existing resources were misdirected. According to the report, there were about 29 million people in 1983 serving in the regular armed forces throughout the world. Total global military spending in 1984 was likely to be in excess of \$800 billion. That meant that the world was spending on average over \$130 per person for military purposes. The report also noted that the cost of a single new nuclear submarine equalled the annual education budgets of 23 developing countries with a total of 160 million school-age children.

18. The Report on the World Social Situation was prepared every three years. The Bangladesh delegation felt that that practice should be maintained so that any special measures indicated by the report, particularly in areas where lack of progress demanded a change of strategy, could be taken before it was too late.

19. Mrs. SEDDOH (Togo) drew attention to one of the most striking paradoxes of the present time, the existence of areas of poverty and deprivation in an age when man had accumulated a sizeable store of technical knowledge and expertise that ought to allow him to remedy the ills, such as hunger, malnutrition, endemic diseases and illiteracy, suffered by a large proportion of his fellows. The fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations provided an ideal opportunity for reflection on the causes of that paradox and on ways to deal with it.

20. The 1985 Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/1985/2/Rev.1) showed that social conditions throughout the world continued to deteriorate, particularly in the developing countries. There were three reasons for that deterioration. Firstly, the wealth produced throughout the world was not shared equally between countries. That inequality was perpetuated by a pernicious international economic system that continued to impoverish the poorest and enrich the wealthiest. That unjust system had generated an unprecedented international economic crisis that was continuing to produce disastrous effects, particularly in Africa. Furthermore, the enormous burden of external debt prevented financial resources from being invested in developing countries, thus impeding their economic recovery and improvement of the living standards of their peoples.

21. The second reason was the unequal distribution of income within countries, which resulted, particularly in developing countries, in a disparity between the levels of development in urban and rural areas.

22. The third reason was that insufficient emphasis had been placed during the past two decades on the social aspects of development, since planners had set growth or production targets without ascertaining what impact they would actually have on the living standards of the population concerned.

23. Her delegation saw three possible remedies to that situation. Internationally, a new, more just and equitable international economic order must be established, while nationally, policies to distribute income equitably, eliminate poverty and take into account the interests of all strata of society must be put into effect. Lastly, in future Governments must incorporate genuine social development policies into their economic development plans.

24. The following four essential goals must be achieved if a new more just international economic order was to be established: the fixing of prices for raw materials at a remunerative level; the removal of protectionist barriers in order to ensure that the products of developing countries had access to the markets of developed countries; equitable participation by the developing countries in the decision-making machinery of the international monetary and financial system; and efforts to find a satisfactory solution to the problem of the foreign debt of the developing countries. Those efforts must include the outright cancellation of the debt of the least developed countries, the partial cancellation of that of the other developing countries, and the rescheduling of the remainder over a fairly long period at reasonable interest rates.

(Mrs. Seddoh, Togo)

25. To arrive at an equitable distribution of income within countries, Governments must set the following objectives: the elimination of disparities in national income distribution; the allocation of more substantial resources to the social sector; an increase in prices to the producer in order to raise the standard of living of the rural population; the application of systematic policies for the protection of disadvantaged groups; and the introduction of integrated policies for youth.

26. Togo had acquired specific experience in the area of the third remedy, namely, the incorporation of social goals into national development plans. In its fourth five-year plan (1981-1985), the Government had emphasized local and participatory development programmes. Conceived by and for peasants with the aim of stabilizing the population in rural areas, the objective of the local and participatory development programme was to meet the needs of rural populations in the seven areas identified as priorities by the populations themselves, namely, village water supply, health, education, infrastructure, livestock production, crop production and the craft industry.

27. The local and participatory development programme was implemented by villagers who participated in it by providing free manpower and by non-governmental organizations which furnished technical assistance. The resources needed to finance the programme were fairly modest, often no more than 20 million CFA francs or about \$US 50,000. However, the Togolese Government needed outside assistance to supplement its own efforts and those of the villagers' associations. In order to obtain the funds needed to finance the 25 priority local and participatory development projects identified in the seven areas mentioned, the Government had submitted the projects to the Donors' Conference for the Development of Togo held at Lomé in June 1985. The encouraging reaction of Togo's financial partners and the commitments made on that occasion should make it possible to execute those projects, which were intended to raise the standard of living of Togo's rural populations and reduce the disparities between urban and rural areas.

28. Mrs. HÖRZ (German Democratic Republic), speaking on agenda item 98, said that her delegation had taken note with interest of the report of the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (A/CONF.121/22). The theme of the Congress, "Crime prevention for freedom, justice, peace and development", rightly reflected the international work done since the Sixth United Nations Congress on that question. The German Democratic Republic would have wished, however, that the idea that the safeguarding and maintenance of international peace was the central task of the times had been given greater emphasis in the elaboration of the various documents adopted by the Congress. That would have given them greater political weight. As for the resolutions, guidelines and other documents adopted on specific problems, her country saw them as a positive development but also as a potentially dangerous one. The success of international co-operation in the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders was not to be measured by the quantity of norms adopted but by the quality of their implementation. The moment had perhaps come for the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch to prepare a compilation of all norms existing in that field which would be of practical value for all States.

(Mrs. Hörz, German Democratic Republic)

29. It was rightly stated in paragraph 4 of the Milan Plan of Action that "crime prevention and criminal justice should be considered in the context of economic development, political systems, social and cultural values and social change, as well as in the context of the new international economic order". In the German Democratic Republic, strict respect for and the implementation of socialist law, legal security and justice on the basis of the Constitution were the principal concern of the State and all its citizens. In recent years, there had been a downward trend in the number of offences committed in the country, and the offences involved were generally minor ones. Certain crimes that were a common phenomena in many countries, for instance, organized crime, homicide and fatal drug abuse, were virtually unknown in the German Democratic Republic. That was a result of the profound changes that had taken place in the country after the defeat of fascism, the effects of which had included the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, the guarantee of the active participation of all citizens in social life, the extension of guarantees to all, particularly where access to jobs and education was concerned, and the development of a socialist way of life characterized by the development of new interpersonal relations such as mutual respect and support.

30. Two out of the many documents adopted by the Congress were of particular importance to her country: the Guiding Principles for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Context of Development and a New International Economic Order, and the resolution on crime prevention in the context of development. Those two documents effectively linked crime prevention and the establishment of a new international economic order. By recognizing that link, States had given fresh impetus to the codification of the right to development as a human right.

31. Mr. YAKOVLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on agenda items 90 and 91, said that the social and economic changes brought about by the Soviet Union were tremendous, particularly when one considered the disastrous situation that had been inherited from the Czarist régime, namely, a backward economy heavily dominated by feudalism and a population three-quarters illiterate. Two world wars, of which the latter had left 20 million dead and millions more wounded and disabled, had ravaged the country. How many times had it been written in the West that it would take the Soviet Union 50 to 100 years to recover from the Fascist invasion? Yet the Soviets had put their economy back on its feet in a remarkably short time.

32. It was thanks to socialism that the Soviet Union had become a major economic Power and the difficulties which it had had to face had not prevented the country from solving its social problems in a radical and innovative manner. Today, Soviet citizens were proud to belong to a country where unemployment had ceased to exist over 50 years ago, where the right to work was enshrined in the Constitution and guaranteed by a set of social and economic measures, and where there was no budget deficit. They were also fortunate in the fact that real per capita income had doubled in 20 years, while prices for basic foodstuffs had remained stable. Over 2 million apartments were built in the Soviet Union each year and rents represented on average 3 per cent of the family budget. Since the Government's primary concern

(Mr. Yakovlev, USSR)

was the health and spiritual development of the population, education and medical care were provided free of charge.

33. Of course, the Soviet economy had its weaknesses and these were discussed openly in the press and on television and radio. The main goal that the Soviet people had now set for itself - that of accelerating economic and social progress - could be achieved only by focusing attention on the problems which remained to be solved.

34. The Soviet Union sympathized deeply with the developing countries with a recent colonial history, who were unable to extricate themselves from the world economic and financial crisis or free themselves from their situation of dependence. At the current anniversary session, numerous Heads of State of developing countries had condemned the free enterprise system which made the peoples of those countries shoulder the main burden of the economic and social crisis. His country denounced the attempts by certain imperialist circles to force the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America to abandon economic and social development planning methods, neglect the public sector and make further concessions to foreign interests. As the debate in the Third Committee had shown, the only way for developing countries to solve their serious economic and social problems was to strengthen their public sector, plan their economy and implement radical socio-economic changes in complete independence.

35. The world's social problems could not be solved by a policy which produced millions of unemployed, homeless, poverty stricken and destitute people. The market economy was incompatible with social development. Every State had the obligation to attempt, by all available means, to eliminate the social evils of unemployment, illiteracy, poverty and crime and to concern itself with the living conditions, health and well-being of its population.

36. Mankind's social progress depended on peace and the cessation of the nuclear arms race. In the view of his delegation, that was the basic conclusion of the 1985 Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/1985/2/Rev.1).

37. His delegation rejected the attempts made by certain delegations to distract the Third Committee from its consideration of the main obstacles to social progress. It believed that the Committee should give particular attention to the means of resolving the world's social problems and to the question of bringing about far-reaching socio-economic changes.

38. Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on agenda item 89, said that in a world climate characterized by political tension, an unjust international economic order, and unequal access to culture and education, young people faced serious obstacles. The proclamation of 1985 as International Youth Year offered an opportunity to draw the attention of the international community to the situation, needs and aspirations of young people and to encourage young people to work for peace, co-operation and the implementation of a new international economic order.

(Mr. Kittikhoun, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

39. In his country, revolutionary youth had participated actively in the protracted struggle of the Lao people against colonialism and imperialism and was currently contributing with efficiency and enthusiasm to the defence and reconstruction of the country.

40. At the international level, Lao youth had intensified its contacts with youth organizations from socialist and friendly countries and with other progressive organizations throughout the world struggling for peace, national independence and social progress. It was proud to have participated in the Twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students held at Moscow from 27 July to 3 August 1985. The presence at that Festival of thousands of young people, the personal representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and representatives of the specialized agencies as well as the expressions of support from many Heads of State, politicians and national liberation movements, had made that Festival a major international event.

41. As the world celebrated International Youth Year and the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, young people the world over must be the advocates of peace, disarmament, freedom, justice, co-operation and understanding among peoples and thus prevent a revival of the two dangerous ideologies of nazism and fascism.

42. Mr. TAGAL (Malaysia) said that a number of activities had been undertaken successfully by his Government and the Malaysian Youth Council as part of International Youth Year, including a membership drive to increase the participation of young people, especially young people from the countryside, in young people's organizations, essay and poster competitions organized in co-operation with UNESCO and a work camp for young disabled people. Another initiative had been to encourage young people to donate blood as a community service. Regional activities, in particular a student exchange programme aimed at inculcating a sense of solidarity in Malaysian youth, had been organized in the context of ASEAN. In February 1985, Malaysia had been privileged to host the Asia Pacific Youth Forum.

43. The Guidelines for Further Planning and Suitable Follow-up in the Field of Youth, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/40/256), were particularly useful for developing countries such as Malaysia since they provided a degree of flexibility for accommodating the aspirations of young people. Most of those guidelines had been incorporated into national socio-economic development programmes, particularly in the field of higher education. Although Malaysia had six universities, established since its independence 28 years previously, thousands of young Malaysians were pursuing their higher education in several developed and developing countries. His Government was committed to ensuring that its young people had the opportunity for such study. Unfortunately in some developed countries, the cost of study for overseas students had become prohibitive and was even discriminatory. That short-sighted policy on the part of the countries involved worked against international understanding and co-operation among young people. It might be appropriate to mention that fact in the guidelines.

(Mr. Tagal, Malaysia)

44. His Government had a special interest in the problem of drug abuse among young people because Malaysia was a transit country for drugs. One of the measures taken by the Government in that area had been to establish rehabilitation centres.

45. His delegation welcomed the offer of the Austrian Government to host a symposium of youth experts in 1987. It was heartening to note that further efforts were being made to strengthen the channels of communication between the United Nations and youth, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/40/631). His delegation would be grateful if the Youth Information Bulletin could be made more accessible to Permanent Missions in New York.

46. His delegation congratulated the Italian Government on its resolutions on the struggle against illicit drug trafficking and international co-operation in drug abuse, which had been adopted at the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The Congress had recognized that drug abuse was a crime against humanity and that all efforts should be made to contain and eradicate that menace.

47. Mrs. ITO (Japan), speaking on agenda item 98, said that crime was not a new problem but that, with the introduction of new technology and global transportation and communications, it had taken new forms, such as terrorism, organized crime, drug abuse and economic crime, which affected the safety and lives of a growing number of innocent people. International co-operation was essential to stop those new phenomena.

48. Japan had hosted the Fourth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in 1970 and was not alone in hoping that the United Nations, which had been actively involved in that area since 1951, would assist countries in combating crime. The concern and the desire to co-operate shown by those countries explained the remarkable success of the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Milan, to which the consensus adoption of six major international instruments relating to the criminal justice system and 25 resolutions on terrorism, organized crime, drug abuse and crime victims attested. Japan particularly welcomed the adoption of instruments on which considerable work had already been done, namely, the "Guiding Principles for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Context of Development and a New International Economic Order", the "Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary", the "Agreement on the Transfer of Foreign Prisoners and Recommendations for the Treatment of Foreign Prisoners", the "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice" and the "Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Young Crime Victims and Abuses of Power". It would be desirable for countries, within their respective social, economic and legal systems, to take the necessary steps to give effect to those instruments. Her country also hoped that the energy and patience shown by all countries during the elaboration of those instruments would continue and that the next congress would be as successful as the Milan one.

(Mrs. Ito, Japan)

49. Aware of the importance of international co-operation in the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, in 1961 Japan had concluded an agreement with the United Nations establishing the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which was dedicated to research and to the training of experts in the field. The Institute engaged in activities relating to technical co-operation programmes for developing countries, including training courses and seminars for officials of criminal justice agencies. The National Police Agency had conducted international seminars on strengthening control of narcotics abuse and curbing drug-related crime and on methods of investigating transnational crime. Japan was committed to sharing with the international community the information, technical know-how and expertise it had acquired in the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders so that people everywhere might live in peace, justice and safety.

50. Mrs. De LIEGE (France), speaking on agenda item 98, said that safeguarding human freedom and dignity, domestic and international peace and respect for civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights depended on the extent to which the international community succeeded in coping with crime. Industrialization, urbanization, the concomitant migratory processes and the rending of the traditional social fabric fostered delinquency and petty crime, particularly in times of economic and social difficulty. Given that phenomenon, it was essential to prevent the alienation of the most disadvantaged. The development of communications and new technologies which altered the nature of international relations was accompanied by new forms of crime, such as international terrorism and the narcotics traffic, to which firm, novel, coherent responses were required that must be continually readjusted. At a time when, after the 1980 Caracas Congress and the 1985 Milan Congress, international co-operation was getting under way, it was appropriate to lay down principles and establish guidelines to ensure the success of such action. France had been pleased by the adoption by consensus of various instruments having that purpose and had endeavoured over the past five years to incorporate their leading ideas in its domestic situation by acting on three fronts, namely prevention, the criminal justice process and redress for victims.

51. In order to prevent crime, action must be taken on its causes, and particularly on social injustice. The concern for prevention was to be found in a number of the resolutions adopted at Milan. Action of such a kind was not necessarily incumbent only on the criminal justice system and neither was it only the responsibility of the police or the courts. Since an absence of security was a problem for all, it involved the mobilization of society as a whole and active solidarity with the most vulnerable. In 1983, France had established a national council for the prevention of crime, with counterpart councils in the departments and municipalities in which elected officials, associations and unions, in other words society as a whole, participated together with the various public offices. Such councils examined local problems and tried to solve them by concrete measures involving, for example, town planning and educational activities. The results had been very encouraging, since in some particularly difficult neighbourhoods everyday crime had gone down by 20 to 30 per cent.

(Mrs. De Liege, France)

52. While punishment was necessary when prevention failed, it should nevertheless be used with discretion and, as the Milan Plan of Action had reaffirmed, should respect the fundamental rights of the individual. Since prison was never a good solution, alternative formulas must be found. That had been acknowledged by the Milan Congress and it had adopted a resolution, sponsored by France among others, on the reduction of the prison population, alternatives to imprisonment, and social integration of offenders. France had endeavoured to take action to that end in 1983 by making it possible for a judge to sentence an offender to perform unpaid work for the benefit of the community.

53. France, which had abolished the death penalty in 1981, regretted that the debates on the resolution on safeguards guaranteeing the rights of those facing the death penalty had shown that its abolition was still a goal that would be difficult to achieve. It considered the resolutions on the minimum rules for the administration of juvenile justice and on the basic principles on the independence of the judiciary to be significant and interesting. France had abolished special courts, namely the Cour de Sûreté de l'Etat and the permanent military tribunals, as recommended by the latter resolution.

54. The text on redress for victims, originally sponsored by France among others and adopted by consensus, represented the most significant advance made by the Milan Congress. Of the almost 60 international instruments elaborated since 1948, none, with the exception of that on torture, had up to now concerned itself with the rights of victims. Since the Caracas Congress, which had addressed the question for the first time, the idea had gained ground, culminating in the adoption by consensus of a Declaration from which States would be able to draw inspiration in order, at last, to guarantee real rights to the victims of crime. In the first section of the Declaration, victims of crime were acknowledged to have well-defined rights with regard to procedure as well as to restitution by the perpetrators, compensation by the State and access to health and social services. The second section, the subject of intense debate at Milan, embodied the idea that there were victims of abuse of power who sometimes suffered considerable injury without, most often, any hope of the smallest degree of protection or redress. States were therefore called upon to see to it that, in future, such victims had access to justice, restitution or compensation and social assistance. Given the importance of the Declaration, her delegation hoped that it would be adopted separately by the General Assembly, as the Milan Congress had unanimously recommended.

55. A more balanced picture of justice had emerged from the Milan proceedings, a vision of criminal justice that was less systematically punitive, more healing and more concerned with social peace. Her delegation therefore fervently hoped that the Milan proceedings as a whole would be endorsed by the General Assembly and would be followed by effective measures of implementation in the greatest possible number of States.

56. Mr. CHAI (Democratic Kampuchea), speaking on agenda item 90, welcomed the fact that human rights had been chosen as the theme for the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and associated himself with the Organization's efforts to ensure their observance. He particularly wished to identify himself with the idea that popular participation was one of the factors promoting the achievement of all human rights.

57. The Kampuchean people, which had for six years been the victim of the atrocities and extortions of Vietnamese soldiers, would only regain its rights when Viet Nam had restored to it its sovereignty and dignity. In the meantime, the Kampuchean people, benefiting from the growing support of the international community, was firmly resisting the 200,000 Vietnamese soldiers occupying its territory. The Vietnamese troops had reacted by taking the refugee camps by storm, forcibly conscripting the refugees for their war of aggression. The divisions sent as reinforcements from Hanoi in anticipation of the coming offensive in the dry season were being directed, in particular, towards the refugee camps on the Khmer-Thai border. The international community must take action to prevent such a crime.

58. The heinous crimes committed by the Vietnamese occupation forces, recognized as such by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1985/12 adopted by an overwhelming majority on 27 February 1985, were taking place in the context of a large-scale operation to empty Kampuchean territory of its inhabitants in order to install Vietnamese settlers there. Those settlers, of whom there were already 800,000, were appropriating for themselves the best land and fishing areas, keeping for themselves the most lucrative areas of trade and occupying all posts of responsibility in the puppet administration, as could be seen from documents A/40/636, A/40/678 and A/40/750. As though such crimes were not enough, Viet Nam claimed, as its representative had stated on 11 October 1985, to be making enormous sacrifices in order to come to the assistance of the Khmer people. As victims of the same colonialism and, furthermore, as having been betrayed by a handful of leaders who had no hesitation in joining their voices to those of their masters, the people of Laos had the full sympathy and compassion of the Khmer people.

59. Mr. POLOWCZYK (Poland) said that the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations prompted reflection on the world social situation and on the prospects for the future. It must be noted, however, that the income gap, the growing debt of certain countries and the threat of total annihilation were accompanied by remarkable progress in other fields. In such circumstances it was not easy to provide an objective and precise assessment of frequently conflicting trends.

60. Regardless of their socio-economic systems, States seemed generally to agree that each of them had the right to development. Unfortunately, the idea that social advantages, whatever they were, were private matters for each individual, was also quite popular. In that context it was worth while to recall the lofty ideals of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, which in a concrete and detailed manner laid down the directions of world social progress.

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61. In the social field, great progress had been made in the past four years by the developing countries. In the socialist countries, universal education at all levels, free medical care, free or heavily subsidized access to culture and sports and the right to employment were essential elements of State policy.

62. Today it was hardly imaginable that economic progress could be achieved at the cost of ever-growing social needs and that those needs could be comprehended in a narrow sense, so that, for example, environmental protection, access to culture and higher education, full employment, crime control or care for the disabled could be seen as questions of secondary importance. Finally, there was a growing awareness that the most underprivileged population groups deserved particular care, and that no social group could be treated as inferior or bypassed by State policies.

63. Although far from complete, the list of problems identified in the Secretary-General's 1985 Report on the World Social Situation should provide a strong incentive for a revision of many of the present methods of international co-operation in social matters. Apart from traditional scourges, such as famine, undernourishment, unemployment and infant mortality, a growing number of new problems were emerging, such as environmental pollution, mass immigration, urban development and, above all, the danger arising from the arms race, which now threatened to spread into outer space. As the Report correctly pointed out, conflicts and militarism were among the major obstacles to social progress. Moreover, the enormous debt burden created an increasingly serious economic and financial deadlock for many countries. Forced to introduce fiscal austerity measures, inter alia by reducing expenditures in the social field, those countries faced a problem so serious that it could not be solved by separate actions. In that connection, the proposal made in the general debate by General Jaruzelski, Prime Minister of Poland, for the establishment under the aegis of the Secretary-General of an international debt and development research centre seemed to be very opportune.

64. While the fact that the 1985 Report gave more attention than previous ones to the problems of armaments and conflicts and to their impact on the world social situation, it was unfortunate, nevertheless, that a more positive approach had not been adopted in that connection. There should have been greater emphasis on the fact that disarmament was the essential prerequisite for social progress and development. Generally speaking, the factual elements in the 1985 Report still had priority over forecasts, which were particularly needed by diplomats and policy planners. Tendencies should have been outlined more boldly, particularly with respect to the distribution of national income, outlays on investments, the labour force and population resources.

65. With social problems acquiring increasing importance in the relations between countries, their solution required a joint effort on the part of the international community. Within the United Nations system, those problems were discussed by the Commission for Social Development, which met only eight days every other year. In the circumstances, that discussion must necessarily be superficial. Since the conclusions of the Commission directly affected the proceedings and decisions of

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the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in the field of social development, it seemed appropriate to the Polish delegation to invite the Economic and Social Council to consider, at its 1986 session, the advisability of convening the Commission for Social Development on an annual basis.

66. To judge by the 1985 Report, the world social situation was deteriorating. Neither the lofty ideals of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development nor the objectives of the Third United Nations Development Decade had been achieved. To meet that challenge, the United Nations had to undertake concerted action for the sake of international peace and development.

67. Mr. QASIM AMED (Afghanistan), speaking on agenda item 97, said that there were millions of disabled people in the world today. It was the responsibility of society to create conditions enabling them to live in dignity and fully to enjoy their rights. In that regard, the proclamation of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992) should further contribute to the prevention of disability and the rehabilitation of disabled persons.

68. In the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, a national commission led activities to implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. Composed of 21 members and headed by the Minister for Public Health, the Commission formulated policies to help the disabled and to oversee the implementation of various programmes for them. The measures taken in that area included the establishment of a centre for the rehabilitation of the physically handicapped. The country also had a school for the blind, a 115-bed eye hospital, houses for the old, the enfeebled and the mentally retarded. Additional plans were under way to expand the scope of protection activities on behalf of disabled persons.

69. Turning to agenda item 95, he said that International Youth Year had offered an opportunity to review youth policies and programmes and to adopt measures that would ensure their integration into the development process, a perfectly natural concern in view of the fact that in 1980 there had been 850 million people in the world between the ages of 15 and 24 and that their number was expected to exceed one billion by 1990. The conditions under which those young people lived and the problems they confronted depended first and foremost on the social systems of their countries and their levels of socio-economic development. Unfortunately, young people in many class-based societies were the victims of unemployment and drug addiction and suffered from the absence of free medical care, inadequate social security and injustice and many forms of discrimination.

70. His Government deemed it essential to preserve and strengthen peace, the only way to protect the rights and interests of young people. Youth must be encouraged to take part in the struggle for international peace and to halt the arms race. Immediately after the proclamation of the International Youth Year (1985), the Afghan National Committee for the International Youth Year had taken measures to commemorate the Year and propagate its objectives. In January 1975, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan had endorsed the formation of the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan, which had been playing a significant role in the

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implementation of the ideas of the year. The organization, whose members were young people aged 15 or older, had relations with 230 national and international youth organizations throughout the world. A member of the International Union of Students and the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the organization had participated in the World Youth Congress held under the patronage of the United Nations. In September 1980, under its aegis, an organization of pioneers, composed of children and young people aged 10 to 15, had been established in order to improve the education and protection of young people in that age group.

71. The Afghan Government devoted a large proportion of its budget to providing education for youth. Young people, like other segments of the society, enjoyed free school and university education. The same applied to medical services. The right to work for youth was guaranteed by a law adopted in 1983, the minimum age for employment, however, being 18. Child labour was prohibited. Young Afghans, who had the right to vote and to be elected, participated in the management of public affairs. Finally, they were taking an active part in the campaign for literacy in the country's various languages.

72. During the International Youth Year, the National Committee and the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan had initiated a campaign of information on the Year in various provinces, under the slogan "Participation, Development, Peace". Afghan youth had also taken an active part in the preparation of the twelfth world youth and students festival, which had been held in Moscow during the current year.

73. His country had constantly stressed the importance of the participation of young people in activities for development, peace, disarmament and social progress, and would continue to mobilize them in order to ensure the success of the International Youth Year.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.