



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ZADOR (Hungary)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

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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. VESIKULA (Fiji) reiterated his delegation's view that the economic and social factors of development were inseparable. It was lack of resources, not of awareness, which made problems such as hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, disease

(Mr. Vesikula, Fiji)

and lack of sanitation hard to overcome and developing countries faced with those problems were forced to establish priorities. To overcome resource constraints help was needed from the world community.

2. Poverty, hunger, disease and natural catastrophes continued to plague large sectors of mankind. Hopes for the establishment of a new international economic order were giving way to despair. Progress, especially in the developing countries, was at a standstill. As a result, the third world faced the grave danger of economic recolonization.

3. Small island and other developing countries like his own were extremely hard hit. The Prime Minister of Fiji, addressing the General Assembly during the commemoration of the Organization's fortieth anniversary, had called for greater attention in the United Nations to the plight of small and isolated States, which now constituted almost one third of the Organization's membership.

4. His country attached primary importance to education as a factor in enhancing development potential and was exerting great effort to improve the quality of education at all levels and to relate it to manpower needs, bearing in mind also opportunities for youth. Health education reflected the need for better family planning and attention to the problems of drugs and alcohol abuse. His Government was also striving to meet the needs of disadvantaged sectors of the community, and would continue to assist the work of voluntary and non-governmental organizations in that undertaking.

5. For developing countries State intervention was often not a matter of choice but of necessity, the only question being one of degree and priority in the promotion of social progress. State intervention served also to protect the weaker sections of the community. But it had to involve popular participation; in his country, people were encouraged to take part in the social development work of local councils, committees, trade unions, non-governmental and voluntary organizations and in national economic meetings.

6. Mr. ZHANG Yishan (China) said that document A/40/714 provided a valuable analysis of the problems, as well as an outline of proposed priorities, on the question of aging and would contribute to further implementation of the Plan of Action. His Government had adopted measures for such implementation. In 1982 it had established a national commission to co-ordinate efforts, including those aimed at promoting and protecting the rights and interests of the aged under the law; the commission had recently formulated a long-term plan on the subject.

7. Pursuant to the country's Constitution, elderly citizens were entitled to material help from the State and society; State, collectives and family all helped in supporting the aged. Employees of government institutions, enterprises and non-profit organizations were entitled to retirement pensions; the State cared for urban-area elderly citizens having no family to support them; in rural areas, care was the responsibility of collectives and families. Some 3,240,000 aged persons

(Mr. Zhang Yishan, China)

were now being supported by rural collectives throughout the country, and over 800,000 peasants benefited from pension schemes. The Government helped the elderly to go on contributing to the nation's modernization, enabling them to pass on their knowledge and experience and thus continue to serve society. There were 30 universities for the aged; in addition, there were special schools, periodicals, sports, clubs and homes. China was also engaged in research and international co-operation on the question of aging.

8. In implementing the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, China gave increasing attention to the employment of the disabled, of whom there were some 20 million. The efforts of the State and society were combined for that purpose. There were numerous workshops sponsored by government and private welfare agencies. Regulations stipulated that disabled persons should constitute 35 per cent of production personnel in such establishments, which were exempt from income tax. Moreover, a national welfare fund, established in 1984, had already greatly benefited the disabled. His country was pleased to see that the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons, which had funded many beneficial projects, was listed at the pledging conference for United Nations development activities. His Government would do its best to contribute to the Trust Fund and hoped that more countries would do likewise.

9. Despite the progress made, much remained to be done in order to achieve the goals set forth in the World Programme of Action. To that end, his delegation requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts and hoped he would give special attention to the expert conference referred to in General Assembly resolution 39/26 which was to evaluate progress at the mid-point of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. It hoped too that international organizations would participate more actively in related activities.

10. The Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders had adopted the Milan Plan of Action, which reflected the views, shared by his country, that development helped to reduce crime and that public awareness and participation was an important factor in crime prevention and control. The Congress had also adopted the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice ("The Beijing rules"), which should help in dealing with juvenile delinquency more equitably and reducing its impact on society.

11. More United Nations representatives and experts, particularly from the developing countries, should take part in the work of the bodies dealing with crime prevention and criminal justice, in which some progress had already been made. In order to be more effective and broader in scope, United Nations standards concerning criminal justice must take into account the different legal systems of the Member States.

12. His Government would continue to support United Nations activities in the fields of aging, the disabled and crime prevention.

13. Mr. BRAUN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the International Plan of Action on Aging, adopted at the World Assembly on Aging, reflected a growing awareness that the question of aging was important to developed and developing countries alike. The question must be dealt with in a broad socio-economic context, so as to provide the elderly with independence and a share in community activity; to that end his Government was complying fully with the provisions of the Plan of Action.

14. The overall results of the First Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging (E/1985/6) revealed, inter alia, a growing awareness of the need for advanced planning to deal with the impact of the increasing numbers of old people. His delegation welcomed the work of the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs on the subject. The exchange of information and experience at the national, regional and international levels was important; in particular, regional exchanges would help to focus on the problems of the elderly within a common culture. His Government sincerely hoped that third world development projects for the elderly would be financed through the United Nations Trust Fund for Aging; further details from the Secretariat about the Fund would surely increase confidence in the latter and make Governments more willing to increase their pledges. His Government could not support any attempt to plan or create a new organization within the United Nations system to deal with the question of aging; existing institutions, particularly within the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, should be used for the purpose.

15. World public opinion had become aware of disabled persons' problems to an extent which only the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, the International Year of the Disabled and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons had made possible. Articles 157 and 158 of the World Programme of Action stressed the need for material help to the disabled in the third world and urged the Secretary-General to seek new ways to initiate the necessary follow-up measures. If the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs was to fulfil its mandate, a reallocation of resources was required; priorities must therefore be established.

16. Each year the Government of the Federal Republic gave considerable financial support to projects in developing countries aimed at preventing disability and at training and rehabilitating the disabled; it urged all industrialized nations to earmark funds for those purposes. The United Nations Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons was an important instrument which, as shown in the Secretary-General's report (A/40/728), had contributed to the World Programme of Action, complementing other resources; it had fostered co-operation among United Nations bodies, Governments and organizations. The Fund's continuation was essential to the success of the World Programme of Action. His delegation supported the Fund's terms of reference proposed by the Secretary-General. It was important that the Fund should emphasize catalytic and innovative approaches relating to issues identified in the Programme of Action and should support activities concerning new and emerging aspects of disability, including field project implementation. The question of renaming the Fund should be discussed at the Assembly's forty-second session, at the mid-point of the Decade.

17. Mr. OLZVOY (Mongolia) said that in recent years, there had been a worsening of the economic and social situation in many parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries. The hope that the United States economy would be capable of pulling both the industrialized and developing countries out of crisis had proven to be a dream. The imperialist Powers had used every means of political and economic pressure to expand their neo-colonialist exploitation of developing nations and had sought to create conditions conducive to the penetration of foreign capital into the economies of those countries. By monopolizing a growing amount of financial and material resources of other countries, the United States was directly or indirectly enlisting them in its gigantic military programme. The arms race, whipped up by imperialist circles, increased the danger of a nuclear war and threatened the very existence of mankind.

18. In the United States, so-called "Reaganomics" had resulted in severe cutbacks in social benefits for the majority of the population while maximizing the profits of big businesses. The list of unresolved social questions included high unemployment, a growing number of homeless persons and chronic illiteracy. In Mongolia, by contrast, the root causes of such social evils as unemployment, poverty, homelessness, illiteracy and exploitation of man by man had been eradicated as a result of Mongolia's non-capitalist development. The policy of the Mongolian Government not only corresponded to the primary interests of all strata of the population, but was also directed towards ensuring the equitable and just distribution of national wealth among all members of society.

19. With respect to the report of the Secretary-General on national experience in promoting the co-operative movement (A/40/78), his delegation believed that the Secretariat should continue its endeavors in that field and try to have future reports better reflect the experience of countries with different social systems on a more balanced basis. In that connection, he wished to note that the socialist countries had made significant achievements in the field of agricultural and other co-operatives.

20. Finally, he wished to draw attention to the joint declaration of socialist countries on the situation in the ILO contained in document A/40/342, calling on that Organisation to concentrate its efforts on major social problems.

21. Miss AL-TURAIHI (Iraq) said that the 1985 report on the world social situation (E/CN.5/1985/2/Rev.1) indicated that poverty and backwardness remained the two major obstacles to social progress. The persistent imbalances and contradictions in the world economy demonstrated that the economic crisis was not merely a cyclical phenomenon but a manifestation of deep-rooted structural defects. The economic crisis in the developed countries was causing stagnant or falling growth rates in the developing countries. In order to avoid another world recession, there must be a sustained recovery so that the developing countries could resume their development efforts.

22. The economic situation in Africa had further deteriorated under the double impact of the unfavourable world economic situation and the continued drought and desertification. Current trends, if not reversed, could further aggravate the

(Miss Al-Turaihi, Iraq)

situation, thereby jeopardizing the economic and social infrastructure of the African countries and hindering their recovery and continued development. Her delegation expressed its full support for the efforts of the African countries to overcome the long- and short-term effects of the crisis.

23. Solutions could not be found to such problems without a restructuring of international economic relations and the establishment of a new international economic order that would ensure sustained growth for the world economy. Without such economic reform social change would be impossible.

24. There was most assuredly a link between disarmament and development, and her delegation supported international efforts to halt the arms race and released resources for development purposes. The problem of the escalating nuclear arms race remained unsolved despite mounting opposition. The proposed deployment of weapons of mass destruction in outer space aroused fears for the future of the planet. Nuclear war could not be limited since any nuclear eruption would create a chain reaction and unleash entire nuclear-weapon arsenals.

25. The question of the diffusion of technology was also addressed in the report. Although modern technology had achieved in a few decades more than had previously been achieved over thousands of years, it had also had unwelcome side effects, such as new diseases and social ills. The industrial revolution had been accompanied by the emergence of new values and patterns of behaviour, but it was questionable whether they had brought mankind happiness. The many-faceted issues raised in the report on that question deserved careful study.

26. Among the conflicts mentioned in chapter II of the report, on conflicts and militarism, was the war between Iran and Iraq. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq had already given details of the conflict and of the party responsible for its continuance and escalation in his statements to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth and fortieth sessions. The report referred to the peaceful settlement of disputes as laid down in the Charter and stated that the principle had often been ignored, Security Council resolutions increasingly being met with defiance. Iraq, however, had accepted all of the relevant Security Council resolutions and had expressed its readiness to solve the conflict by peaceful means. President Saddam Hussein had addressed a letter to the Iranian people on 14 June 1985 calling for a comprehensive, just and honourable settlement based on the United Nations Charter and the norms of international law.

27. The production and export of crude oil had undoubtedly played a fundamental role in Iraq's development. Many had thought that a drop in oil production because of the war would paralyse most of the country's economic activities. The available data indicated, however, that most of those activities had continued undisturbed, and most sectors of the economy including the social services sector had shown satisfactory rates of growth.

28. The July 1968 revolution had brought about radical changes in Iraq directly connected with socialist transformation and the adoption of a central planning



(Miss Al-Turaihi, Iraq)

model for economic and social activities. Education at all levels had become free of charge in 1974, and the campaign for the eradication of illiteracy had been successful in raising the productivity of the work-force.

29. Before the outbreak of the war, Iraq had paid considerable attention to assistance to the developing countries. It had established the Iraqi Fund for External Development and through it had provided assistance that, by 1981 amounted to \$9.5 billion. Wartime conditions had, however, restricted the activities of the Fund. By its endeavours to bring about peace with Iran, Iraq was seeking not only to complete its own development and transformation but also to enhance its co-operation with other developing countries. Peace would, of course, also allow Iran to redeploy the resources released for development purposes.

30. Long-term social and economic changes in keeping with the country's political orientation were anticipated. The percentage of town dwellers, the number of doctors and the number of hospital beds were expected to increase. The Ministry of Health had drawn up a strategy for health up to the year 2000 and had begun to implement it. Studies and programmes were under way with a view to reducing infant mortality.

31. Iraq was determined to move forward and no obstacle would stand in its way. There was a constant interaction between the will of the masses and the political leadership and that leadership, which was itself drawn from the masses, strove to achieve the goals of the revolution on the basis of democratic principles.

32. A summary of Iraq's experience in achieving far-reaching social and economic changes for the purpose of social progress was contained in document A/40/65. The Arab Baath Socialist Party considered socialism necessary for the development of society, which could take place only with the widest possible participation of the people in the process of socialist transformation. Consequently, popular participation, an advanced form of democracy, had become one of the major principles of social and economic development.

33. Turning to agenda items 96 and 97, she noted that the Iraqi constitution had determined that the family was the basic unit of society. Iraqi social customs and traditions required that the elderly should be cared for. Technological change, was, however, accompanied by changes in behaviour and Iraq was in the process of changing from an agricultural to an industrial society. The question of aging deserved more attention and more of its aspects should be examined with a view to reminding States of their responsibilities towards an important segment of society.

34. Iraq had been active in implementing the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and a social welfare Act had been promulgated in 1980 requiring the State to establish special schools and service centres. Iraq had endeavoured to promote the full and equal participation of disabled persons and government departments were required to accept such persons for recruitment. The State provided pensions to the totally disabled.

(Miss Al-Turaihi, Iraq)

35. Too few meetings had been allocated to the agenda items under discussion in view of the fact that they dealt with so many different aspects of social development.

36. Mrs. TIRONA (Philippines) said that her delegation wished to reaffirm its abiding faith in the United Nations as mankind's hope for peace and security and the well-being of all peoples and nations. The report of the Secretary-General on the world social situation (E/CN.5/1985/2/Rev.1) reflected the evolution of the United Nations as a viable mechanism for international co-operation. The Philippines had continuously addressed, especially at the national level, most of the issues raised in the report. It had drawn a parallel between the United Nations ideology espoused in the report and its own ideology. As the President of her country had stated, the cornerstone of the democratic revolution was a systematic attack on the root causes of the rebellion of the poor. The creation of economic opportunities for the masses whose weaknesses derived from poverty lay at the heart of the programmes of the Government of the Philippines.

37. In pursuance of those programmes, the Philippines had relied basically on locally-produced raw materials reinforced by the use of advanced technology. Philippine ideology, deeply rooted in the concept of development based on social justice, was demonstrated by the highest possible priority being accorded to the poor in meeting nutritional needs, reducing illiteracy and expanding employment opportunities. In the context of egalitarianism, which was the hallmark of the democratic revolution in the Philippines, the Government continued to improve the delivery of social services to the people to meet health and welfare needs.

38. With respect to the foreign debt problem, the President of the Philippines had decided that, as a respectable member of the international community, the Philippines should continue to meet its international commitments through loan restructuring. Thus, the Philippines had agreed to a programme of adjustment with the International Monetary Fund and other financial institutions.

39. Popular participation in the Philippines was understood as participatory democracy, which was a principal attribute of development planning and directly involved the highest level of leadership as well as the grass roots. It was a form of democracy which sought to restore power to the people by involving them directly in decision-making on all issues that affected them.

40. Finally, the lessons that had been learned in 40 years of existence of the United Nations were twofold: development of self-reliance at the national level and strengthening of co-operation and understanding at the international level. Against that background, the United Nations would remain the only universal vehicle for achieving global survival and regeneration.

41. Mr. JATIVA (Ecuador) said that the 1985 report on the world social situation (E/CN.5/1985/2/Rev.1) showed the distressing economic situation confronting the poor nations of the world, particularly with respect to the serious problems of foreign debt, investment of financial resources by developed countries in

(Mr. Jativa, Ecuador)

developing countries and the growing protectionism against exports from the developing countries. While the developing countries had a responsibility for the mismanagement of their economies, the industrialized countries also bore some responsibility for the execution of ill-advised economic policies and both groups should together seek an effective and lasting solution through the restructuring of those policies.

42. His delegation believed, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ecuador had stated in the General Assembly, that Latin America's social, as well as its economic stability, and even the political outlook of its democratic régimes, constituted separate elements of the same basic problem, in which due account must be taken of the question of disarmament and the transfer of the resources, now being wasted in the arms race to the great task of development. His delegation hoped the Committee would soon have before it for consideration not only regular reports on the world social situation, but regular reports on the human rights situation throughout the world.

43. While Ecuador did not recognize as a right the term "popular participation", its Constitution and laws contained concrete expressions of that principle. Similarly, with respect to rural development, a specific objective of social participation, included in the general guidelines for the development plan for the period 1984-1988, was the promotion of broad and effective community participation in solving problems which affected it, especially with respect to women, youth, indigenous populations and co-operative organizations.

44. With respect to the statements made on aging, in particular the need, which Ecuador supported, for the effective implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging and the primary role of the United Nations Trust Fund for Aging, his delegation shared the concerns of others about the shrinking interest of the international community with respect to the noble cause of protecting that vulnerable sector of the population. Similarly, efforts should be redoubled to ensure implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons.

45. His delegation shared the view that the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders was a milestone in the implementation of practical and effective measures to promote international co-operation in the prevention of crime and the strengthening of the capacity of the international community to deal with crime. Of special significance to Ecuador was the detailed examination by the Congress of the problems and implications inherent in terrorism and drug trafficking. Terrorism constituted a weapon of political domination or destabilization and, drug trafficking was a key element in the physical and mental deterioration of individuals, particularly youth.

46. Miss ATTWOOD (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that the cluster of items on social matters represented a major challenge, that of working to realize the ideals of the Charter with regard to international

(Miss Attwood, United Kingdom)

co-operation for purposes of solving economic, social, cultural or humanitarian problems. In a narrower respect, however, delegations were faced with another challenge: that of an ever-widening range of topics to be mastered and debated, leading to the commissioning of an increasing number of studies and reports. There were several instances where an annual appearance on the General Assembly's agenda could in many respects delay concrete action to alleviate the problem concerned. The effort that went into ritualistic "studies" could better be translated into programmes of work. Moreover, another consequence of the proliferation of reports was that the system was overloaded and reports were often received too late to be studied in depth before they were to be discussed in the Committee.

47. Her Government was encouraged by the results of the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Her delegation felt, however, that a meeting of specialists convened to examine the technical aspects of the problem should not be used as a forum to pursue extraneous political points. She also noted that there could be an advantage in delaying the Eighth Congress until the work already done had been reviewed and clear guidelines and priorities for the future had been established. In that context, her delegation was particularly pleased with the adoption of the Milan Plan of Action, and it fully supported the suggestion in the Plan that the Secretary-General should, after full consultation with the experts on the subject, prepare a review of the work of the United Nations in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice. Her delegation requested that a report on that issue should be submitted to the next General Assembly, covering not only substantive questions but also the methods and practices of the United Nations in that area and including a detailed plan of action for the period up to the Eighth Congress, with financial implications and the purpose and expected outcome of each activity clearly set out. Consideration should also be given to the use made of independent experts and consultants and the role of regional and interregional preparatory meetings.

48. Her Government particularly welcomed the adoption of the resolution concerning terrorism, and it hoped that the work currently being undertaken on that subject by the Sixth Committee would culminate in the adoption of draft resolution A/C.6/40/L.3. Her Government was deeply concerned to avoid any duplication of effort on the subject of drug abuse and drug trafficking. Most, if not all of the agencies and branches of the United Nations had a contribution to make on that problem, but overall co-ordination should remain the responsibility of the drug agencies. As to the proposed declaration on victims, although the United Kingdom had some reservations over certain clauses it was on the whole pleased that attention had been given to the problem. Lastly, her delegation assumed that a full statement on the financial implications of the resolutions adopted or proposed at Milan would be made available.

49. Turning to the items concerning the aged and the disabled, she noted that the aim should be to integrate the aged and disabled fully into society for they had an important role to play and should be valued, not condemned under the label of "problem". The United Kingdom had been closely associated with the International Year of Disabled Persons and its follow-up activities as a member of the Advisory

(Miss Attwood, United Kingdom)

Committee which helped to draw up the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. The World Programme had been widely distributed to health authorities and voluntary organizations involved in the provision of services to disabled people in the United Kingdom. Two areas to which her Government attached particular importance were the prevention of disablement and the integration of disabled persons into the community. The United Kingdom had also introduced programmes to prevent disability, such as a campaign to increase immunity to rubella and the compulsory wearing of seat belts. Moreover, new legislation had come into force in 1985 to require all new buildings to be designed and built so that disabled persons could enter and move around freely, and a code of good practice on the employment of disabled persons had been launched.

50. With regard to the aged, she noted that in the United Kingdom the percentage of persons over 60 would rise from 20 per cent in 1980 to over 26 per cent by the year 2025. Her Government therefore supported the aims of the Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging. Her delegation had listened with great interest to the suggestion by the representative of the Dominican Republic that a new, separate institution was needed to deal with the problem of aging. However, in view of the fact that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs was well placed to implement programmes designed to help the aging under the Plan of Action, her delegation considered the Dominican Republic proposal to be premature.

51. Lastly, with regard to the report on the World Social Situation, the Secretariat was to be commended on its attempt to address the many facets of the question. However, it should be seen as an overview of all aspects of social development, as an excellent reference and as a resource for information about different approaches; it should not seek to recommend any one course of action. Her delegation fully supported the idea that it should be produced once every four years to ensure coincidence with sessions of the Commission for Social Development, whose task it was to analyse the document in detail.

52. With regard to the situation in the International Labour Organisation, she noted that the views of her delegation had been referred to in document A/40/489. The United Kingdom felt that the question should be followed through by the International Labour Organisation itself, and that the Committee was not the proper forum in which to discuss it.

53. Mr. VOICU (Romania) said that it was widely recognized that the World Assembly on Aging and the International Year of Disabled Persons had made a substantive contribution to the promotion of world-wide awareness of the practical importance and complexity of those issues and had generated momentum for increased action at national, regional and international levels. The documentation on item 96 proved that there had been some progress in the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging. Nevertheless, more persistent efforts at national and international levels were necessary to ensure the implementation of all the recommendations adopted by the World Assembly on Aging. His delegation believed that actions devoted to the elderly should correspond to national social and economic requirements, and that special attention should be paid to the situation

(Mr. Voicu, Romania)

of the elderly in developing countries. Moreover, taking into account the generally recognized importance of international co-operation in the field of aging, the United Nations should systematically evaluate developments in the implementation of the International Plan of Action, and the activities of the World Health Organization in the fields of gerontology and geriatrics should be encouraged and expanded.

54. His delegation noted with satisfaction that a number of meetings devoted to the International Youth Year had stressed the need to consolidate and expand inter-generational ties and had identified areas of collaboration between youth and the aging.

55. With regard to item 97, his delegation felt that it was necessary to strengthen international co-operation on matters relating to disability prevention and the rehabilitation of the disabled. He noted that the implementation of guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth, would have a positive impact on disabled youth.

56. As to crime prevention and criminal justice, his delegation noted the complementarity between some recommendations of the Milan Congress and the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth. The Congress had considered that success in the prevention of juvenile crime might be achieved by neutralizing the negative effects of unemployment, low standards of living, illiteracy, inadequate education and other manifestations of social injustice. Mention should also be made of the appeal addressed to all States to adopt multi-faceted and effective measures to limit opportunities for young people to use alcohol and narcotic substances as well as to protect young people from the adverse influence of the cult of violence, cruelty and amoral behaviour.

57. His delegation expressed the hope that, in keeping with resolution 19 of the Milan Congress, the Economic and Social Council would give full and serious consideration to the question of economic and social approaches to the prevention of juvenile crime in the general context of measures to combat and prevent crime.

58. Mrs. TAVARES de ALVAREZ (Dominican Republic) drew attention to a note sent by her delegation to the Chairman of the Committee in relation to agenda item 96, in which "the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic expressed its surprise that Mrs. Letitia Shehani, Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, in a statement made on 21 October at the seventeenth meeting of the Third Committee, had not only questioned the statements of Ambassador Távares de Alvarez, the representative of the delegation of the Dominican Republic to the Committee, but had dared to contradict the statements of a representative of a State Member of the United Nations. The Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations was fully prepared to submit to the Third Committee, to the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and to any interested delegation, the data which corroborated the statements of the Dominican Republic's representative".

59. Mrs. SHEHANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that she regretted that her statement had caused a misunderstanding. Her sole objective had been to provide clarification on the matter.
60. Mr. PERUGINA (Italy) said that organized criminality was becoming an increasingly international phenomenon. As had been noted in the Milan Plan of Action, crime even hampered political, economic, social and cultural development. It was therefore imperative that the international community should be given the necessary instruments to cope with it effectively. At the same time, action was required to deal with economic and social disparities and other factors which were the root causes of crime. Only through international solidarity, of which the United Nations was a principal symbol and instrument, could the problems of the future be effectively dealt with.
61. The Seventh Congress had taken major steps in several areas, such as drug trafficking, international organized crime, international terrorism and criminal justice information and statistics. Particularly significant was the recommendation contained in paragraph 4 (j) of the Milan Plan of Action, according to which it was imperative to initiate and strengthen the subregional, regional and interregional programmes of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice with the concurrence of concerned Member States. That challenge must be taken up by both Governments and the United Nations in order to achieve success in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.
62. Mr. DUGUAY (Canada) said that social justice was all too often sacrificed to political ambition or suffered under economic mismanagement. Moreover, social development depended on economic progress, and the benefits of that progress should be equally distributed among the population. Mixed economies like that of Canada, although far from perfect, were based on a balanced relationship among the State, industry, social groups and individuals. True social development could take place only if people worked towards it of their own free will and if human rights were fully respected. The Canadian Government encouraged citizens to participate in social development, an area in which non-governmental organizations could play a particularly important role.
63. Some delegations had brought up the question of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). His delegation considered that ILO, and in particular its Committee on Freedom of Association, did most valuable work, and that the question should, in any case, be referred to a more appropriate forum than the Third Committee.
64. A priority aspect of social development often overlooked was the role of the family. As the basic unit of society, the family encompassed many of the issues before the Committee. Multilateral institutions in the social sector should therefore continue to support the role of the family in society.
65. Turning to item 96, he said that the moral support provided by the United Nations gave vital encouragement to activities to improve the situation of the

(Mr. Duguay, Canada)

elderly. Programmes for the elderly should encourage self-reliance, while ensuring that help was provided for those who really needed it. The Canadian Government was planning to revise the country's pension system in order to ensure a fair and adequate pension for all. Two national conferences on aging had been held in 1966 and 1983 respectively, and the Canadian Government and non-governmental organizations had played an active role in the World Assembly on Aging.

66. Elderly people had impressive experience and knowledge which they could pass on through school programmes and in the business world. The Canadian "New Horizons" programme provided grants to expand further the services for the elderly provided by elderly people themselves.

67. As to item 97, he said that, despite the progress being made in connection with the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, much more needed to be done. The Canadian Government considered that the disabled should be given the means to develop their own solutions to their problems. Recommendations drawn up by the Canadian Parliament were being implemented in the context of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms banned discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability. The Canadian delegation to the Commission on Human Rights had supported the proposal to conduct a study on human rights and disability.

68. Mr. BUZO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), speaking on agenda items 96 and 97, said that the International Plan of Action on Aging and the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons had drawn world attention to the situation of the two groups concerned. His delegation supported the general conclusions of the Secretary-General's reports on the question of aging (A/40/728) and the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/40/714). The role of the United Nations was to promote the exchange of information on those issues among Member States and to work towards solving the major problems of the world, which affected everyone, including the elderly and the disabled. Future reports of the Secretary-General might include an account of national measures taken to implement the Plan and the Programme of Action. In some countries, the elderly and the disabled were provided for in the Constitution and in national development plans, while in others they depended on the work of private charities.

69. To take the example of regulations governing fitness to work and pensionable age, the policies in some developed countries varied with the economic situation. Workers often had to pay contributions for up to 40 years to qualify for a pension, which was difficult to achieve in an era of high unemployment.

70. In the Byelorussian SSR, however, the right to work and the right to material provision for the elderly and the disabled were enshrined in the Constitution. Male and female workers were required to pay contributions for 25 years and 20 years respectively in order to qualify for a pension. Workers in dangerous or unhealthy jobs and mothers of large families could retire early. All pensions and



(Mr. Buzo, Byelorussian SSR)

allowances were paid from a State fund made up of contributions from the workplace: no deductions were made from workers' salaries. Allowances were granted for all types of disability, whether partial or complete, and veterans of the Second World War were given special attention.

71. Although the elderly and the disabled were in particular need of medical care, many Western countries were cutting back medical services. In the Byelorussian SSR, free medical care was available to all, special care being provided for the elderly and the disabled which included prosthetic appliances, aids to mobility and supervised housing.

72. Other criteria, such as participation in public affairs, could be used to judge the position of the elderly and the disabled in a particular society. In some Western societies, free enterprise had led to social injustice. It was essential to guarantee the human rights of all groups in society, not merely the most powerful, and to end discrimination of any kind.

73. Miss KAZELA (Zambia), speaking on items 89 and 95, said that the International Youth Year had brought an increased awareness of the problems facing young people and the role they could play in development. Young people had the right to participate in national development plans and international co-operation programmes in fields which concerned them. In Zambia, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Youth League provided the machinery for youth participation at the policy-making level.

74. Despite Zambia's economic problems, its young people had participated in international and local activities in the context of the Year. National activities had included theatre festivals, sporting events, exhibitions, media coverage and a national youth day. Zambian young people had attended the Twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students, held at Moscow in July 1985.

75. The large proportion of young people among the population, many of them without marketable skills or work experience, caused many problems. In spite of limited financial resources, the Government and non-governmental organizations had set up projects to train young people and help them to form co-operatives at the community level. Some groups of young people, such as women and the disabled, were still disadvantaged and deserved more attention: youth policies should be revised to cover all young people without discrimination. In the rural sector, more jobs were needed in agriculture and small-scale projects, and young people should receive practical training which would help them find employment.

76. Young people should be at the forefront of efforts to promote peace and mutual understanding. Peace education should be focused on the eradication of prejudice, discrimination and apartheid. Young people should be made aware of the situation in South Africa and work towards the eradication of apartheid.

77. The United Nations should provide young people with more information on how best they could benefit from its advisory and technical co-operation services, especially in the least developed countries.

(Miss Kazela, Zambia)

78. Young people were an invaluable resource for development; it was essential to reach them while they were receptive to innovative approaches. The extent to which they participated in global issues would determine the quality of leadership of the future world.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.