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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 13 November 1985, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. DE PINIES (Spain)

later: Mr. OYOUE (Vice-President) (Gabon)

United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year
plenary meetings devoted to policies and programmes relating to
youth in accordance with resolution 39/22 of 23 November 1984)

- International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace: report of the Third Committee [89]
- Policies and programmes relating to youth: report of the Third Committee [95]

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR
(PLENARY MEETINGS DEVOTED TO POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO
YOUTH IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 39/22 OF 23 NOVEMBER 1984)

AGENDA ITEMS 89 AND 95

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE (A/40/855)

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE (A/40/856)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): As representatives will recall, the Assembly decided at its 3rd plenary meeting, held on 20 September 1985, that this series of plenary meetings should be designated as the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year. In that connection, I wish to note that the Assembly decided at its 53rd plenary meeting, held on 30 October 1985, that in view of the great number of speakers wishing to address the Assembly on this item, morning plenary meetings should start at 10 a.m. instead of 10.30 a.m.

As President of the General Assembly at its fortieth session, it is my pleasure to declare open the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year. I wish now to make a brief statement on this solemn occasion.

There is no doubt that 1985 is a memorable year in the history of the United Nations, for it is the year of both the International Youth Year and the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. Both events give us the opportunity once again to rededicate ourselves to the ideals of multilateralism and international co-operation in a world at peace, to reiterate our commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and to stress again our recognition of the valuable role that youth can play in the task of forging the future of mankind.

The proclamation of 1985 as the International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace, has provided the international community with both a challenge

(The President)

and an important opportunity to improve the situation of young people throughout the world. It is reassuring to note that the international community - States Members, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and youth organizations - has made a positive collective response to this challenge and has taken a series of initiatives aimed at finding the most effective possible solutions.

Questions relating to youth are at present of concern to the international community. There has been a global awakening to the problems faced by young people. In the framework of the preparation for and observation of the International Youth Year, the world community has adopted many initiatives and carried out numerous activities. This has succeeded in rallying public interest and general support. The great variety of national, regional and international activities carried out throughout the world in connection with the International Youth Year shows the universal will to improve the situation of youth and to enable it to play the important role that falls to it in the modern world and in the world's advance on the road of progress.

The International Year has shown us a new way of approaching the question of youth. It has helped us see young people not as a problem social group, but as creative, aware members of society, contributing to its workings. Let us take this opportunity to infuse ourselves with the magic of youth and the rich potential it displays in its breadth of vision, its healthy capacity for calling into question accepted norms and values, and its energy and will to carry out positive transformations throughout the world.

The commemoration of the International Year have certainly contributed to strengthening the cause of the well-being of youth. But in addition, the International Youth Year has given us the opportunity to undertake more concerted

(The President)

programmes of action in favour of youth. This has been a year of implementing specific projects, programmes and policies, which should long continue.

Meeting here today, we may contemplate with satisfaction the achievements of the International Youth Year. As we review the vast experience accumulated during the International Year, we note that there has been consensus on a joint world strategy on youth. Member States appear to evince the firm political will and determination to do more for young people. We have seen the establishment of national committees for the International Year; these have been active in the planning, implementation and co-ordination of activities relevant to youth. We welcome that plethora of information, understanding and dedication to the questions and aspirations of youth. That abundance makes us richer today than we were at the beginning of the International Youth Year. That augurs well for the future.

Finally, we should be proud that the international community has recognized that the questions placed in the foreground by this International Year are of universal scope, and that their solution will depend upon even closer co-operation and collective action aimed at ensuring genuine participation, development and peace.

While considerable progress has been made, much remains to be done. How much is achieved, of course, will ultimately depend on activities on the national level. But even so, there remains a broad scope for international action as well. The United Nations system should continue to strive for effective participation in development by young people. It should continue to work actively to improve the lines of communication between the United Nations, young people, and youth organizations. It should renew its resolve to work to achieve a lasting improvement in the situation of young people throughout the world. To that end, the United Nations system should initiate action to support the activities already undertaken on the regional and national level.

(The President)

While the commemorative activities of the International Youth Year are drawing to a close, the spirit and strategy of the Year remain, and should be maintained. Let us support that noble cause; let us consolidate our fruitful efforts and increase our commitment; let us show future generations that we were equal to our obligations; let us bequeath to youth the foundations for a future of hope and satisfied aspirations: because sometimes we are too concerned in our countries about the abundance or scarcity of material resources, forgetting that the main resource for the future of our peoples is actually youth.

I call now upon the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL (interpretation from Spanish): Just a few weeks ago, in this Hall, we celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. It is, I believe, not a mere coincidence that the same year which marked that event is also International Youth Year. The anniversary provided an occasion to survey the world's immediate past and present from the vantage point of experience. The Youth Year has offered an opportunity to focus attention on the aspirations which should shape the world's future. The two perspectives complement each other.

(The Secretary-General)

The youth situation around the world embraces a whole spectrum of our current concerns, political or economic, social or ethical. The purpose of designating a year the International Youth Year was to generate a widespread awareness of this situation. It was based on the conviction that the young cannot be regarded as a peripheral element in human society. As it is they who will inherit the world, there is no major issue, whether it be of peace, of development or of human rights, in which they are not directly involved.

The observance of the Year has set in motion a much-needed global review of the actions that are required at all levels to enhance the status of young women and men and to ensure their active participation in the efforts to strengthen peace, promote justice and accelerate progress around the globe.

(spoke in English)

It is only natural that the review should have brought out the diversity in the needs of young people corresponding to the differences of economic level between countries. In developing countries the outlook of youth as a whole is inevitably conditioned by the sombre fact that one out of four human beings is trapped in absolute poverty. Far too many of their generation perish prematurely, have inadequate educational opportunities or face the prospect of endless migration in search of jobs that do not exist. They come to cities with hope and live there in despair.

Unemployment remains a crucial concern of youth in most developing countries. The severity of financial constraints in many of these countries has reduced investment in health and education to below the levels of earlier years and there is doubt whether economic growth will be adequate to stabilize per capita income in the years ahead.

(The Secretary-General)

The youth situation in these countries is, therefore, mainly an aspect of underdevelopment and the principal issues it raises are central to the larger problem of eliminating poverty. However, it certainly emphasizes the need for greater attention to the human dimension of development through new policy approaches at the national, regional and international levels. Job opportunities for young people, for example, should be such as not to stunt their growth and self-fulfilment.

Other major concerns of youth are not necessarily confined to the disadvantaged areas of global society. It is a cause of anxiety for the young that the policies of today might severely limit the opportunities for tomorrow. The structures of production and consumption in the world of the future are being shaped to an appreciable extent by present decisions to allocate to military uses resources which could better have been invested in building the human and physical capital. Moreover, in the perception of the young, their education does not prepare them as well as it should for full participation in the development of their societies. As a result, not enough use is made of their energies and enthusiasm in the search for solutions to social problems, including the problem of adjustment to rapid technological change.

One of the most alarming problems in the world today in both developed and developing countries is that of illicit trafficking in, and abuse of, drugs. In my view, it presents as destructive a threat to present and coming generations as the plagues which swept many parts of the world in earlier ages. Unless it is controlled, its effect will be even more insidious and devastating. It is particularly tragic that a great proportion of those most seriously affected by this scourge are young people. The range and depth of the problem is a sad commentary on modern society. I have suggested that the time has come to undertake

(The Secretary-General)

a bold offensive against this menace. The observance of International Youth Year should lend further urgency to this suggestion.

Over and above all these concerns is the universal character of the aspirations of youth, which is apparent from assessments made during the Year. As the young themselves have voiced their anxieties and hopes, the point emerges with the utmost emphasis that peace and the future of young people are inseparable. The young are often the group that pays the highest price for international conflicts. They are the ones who, more than other sections of society, bear the most consequences of war. Even in the present conditions of peace the relentless arms race takes its toll and in too many instances results in the curtailing of vital programmes needed for the effective integration of youth in society.

(continued in French)

We would be well advised to reflect on the results of the research and activities undertaken in connection with the Year. The very fact of their number, which may be over 1 billion at the end of the century, entitles young people to be heard when they express their views on the great problems of society. At the present critical juncture the civilized world is striving to deal with the widespread poverty and social injustice that prevail in vast regions of the globe, with the succession of regional conflicts, with the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the stockpiling of conventional weapons, with the spreading pollution of our environment and with drug addiction. This may, therefore, be the first time in history that the need to enlist the openmindedness of youth in the service of reform and positive changes has been so keenly felt.

For young people can question everything, and they have the courage to say no when that is necessary. They are more receptive to new ideas, more sensitive to human suffering, more respectful of nature and more tolerant of national and

(The Secretary-General)

cultural peculiarities. They are, or ought to be, relatively free of the prejudices and phobias of the past. They have played a key role in stimulating world awareness of major problems, such as those of racial discrimination, and the danger that mankind may destroy itself by nuclear warfare. They must therefore participate fully in the action taken to solve these problems.

International Youth Year has been a truly collective enterprise which has made the whole world share the same outlooks and the same ideas. Its foundation was the specific programme of measures and activities to be undertaken prior to and during the International Youth Year prepared in 1981 by the Advisory Committee. The Governments of Member States have helped to work towards the objectives of the Year by organizing various events and activities and, in particular, by formulating policies and programmes for youth.

In this connection, I wish to pay a tribute to the national co-ordinating committees for the Year, which were established in 158 countries and whose co-operation has been extremely valuable. Our thanks also goes to the non-governmental organizations throughout the world which have made a decisive contribution to the Year's success.

(The Secretary-General)

The organizations of the United Nations system, for their part, have worked together in order to ensure that the targets which the Year set for itself were adhered to. Finally, and above all, mention must be made of the important role played by the young people themselves in mobilizing public opinion and Governments in furtherance of the objectives of the Year.

We are all very gratified, I am sure, to note the presence of many young people among the various delegations participating in this Conference. As young people throughout the world have emphasized, in the many messages and letters they have sent me, International Youth Year must be regarded as only a beginning. Accordingly, while this World Conference marks the end of the celebration, it is the start of the first stage of a long-term process. The activities in this field can be continued on the basis of the wise suggestions offered in the "Guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth", prepared by the Advisory Committee at its last session.

Our capacity to mobilize the solidarity required for ending the scourge of war and promoting development depends, for much of its success, on the involvement of youth in this enterprise. Youth is, in fact, both the essential link for bringing about international understanding and the cornerstone of a more promising future. During the Year, the young people have demonstrated their eagerness to participate in pursuing the ideals of the United Nations, while the older people have shown that they are in favour of their participation.

We must try to do our utmost to bridge the generation gap in order to spare society any break or interruption and to make sure that we are not betraying the young people and that they themselves are not betraying their predecessors. With the principles established by our Charter and by the institutions for international

(The Secretary-General)

co-operation forming part of the United Nations system, we shall pass on to the young people the foundations of peace and human progress. They will have to continue with the building of the edifice and we must facilitate their task. That is a great message that is brought to us by the International Youth Year.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to suggest that the list of speakers in the debate be closed tomorrow at 12 noon. I hear no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I would therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

Mr. CEAUSESCU (Romania) (spoke in Romanian; English text furnished by the delegation): It is a great pleasure for me to speak to you, the participants in the United Nations World Conference for International Youth Year, which is clear proof of the concern and interest shown by the world forum for the younger generation. By a happy coincidence, the year dedicated to the younger generation, and in particular this Conference, are being held in the context of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, thus illustrating the close link between the major political issues on the United Nations agenda and specific youth issues.

The major event we are attending is a profound expression of the will of the Member States of the United Nations, committed - at present and in the future - to approach in a realistic and responsible manner the complex problems concerning youth and their adequate solution.

International Youth Year, which was successfully prepared and observed throughout the world at the governmental and non-governmental levels, has fully demonstrated the great timeliness and relevance of its motto: "Participation, Development, Peace", decided upon by consensus by the General Assembly in 1979.

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

By its creative enthusiasm and capacity, by resisting anachronisms, and by showing receptivity to new values, youth has demonstrated, especially in the past few decades, that it is not only an important fund of "demographic capital", but also an important factor for social action, which can and must join in the efforts of nations to build a better and more just world. The motto of International Youth Year highlights this active vocation of the younger generation, in relation not only to the development of nations and the eradication of economic, social and cultural anachronistic situations, but also to the maintenance and consolidation of peace, the achievement of disarmament, and above all nuclear disarmament, and the creation of a climate of international security, understanding and co-operation.

Bearing in mind that youth is - and will always be - an active subject of history, it is natural that the younger generation should want to have a say and become directly involved in the efforts of nations to shape the future of mankind, as well as its own future.

Such a requirement is ever more vital, as it is true that contemporary youth is starting life in a highly complex age, in which its own fundamental right - the right to peaceful life and existence - is questioned.

The fundamental problem of our age is how to achieve disarmament, nuclear disarmament above all, how to remove the danger of a world conflagration which threatens to destroy human civilization as a whole. It is well known that, because of the unprecedented level it has reached, both as regards the amount of military expenditures as well as the destructive power of the weapons produced, the arms race deeply affects the life of peoples, including that of the younger generation, being a permanent source of tension and instability throughout the world.

At the same time, the negative effects of the world economic crisis are felt by all national economies and, particularly by those of the developing countries.

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

In the circumstances, it is essential to establish a new international economic order by doing away with the anachronistic phenomenon of underdevelopment and the great gaps between the rich and poor countries, and by securing the right of each nation to free and independent economic development.

There is no doubt that the issues specific to young people in the 1980s, as well as those that will characterize the social status of future generations, cannot be separated from the issues we have mentioned. . As a matter of fact, youth is the first to feel the impact of all these processes, both nationally and internationally, in a variety of ways.

We should also mention that, in numerous countries of the world, young people face unemployment, illiteracy, delinquency, violence and terrorism, marginality, drug abuse and other situations of "moral pollution" - serious phenomena which greatly reduce their capacity for constructive action for the benefit of and in harmony with the objective trends of society's development.

That is why political decision-makers at the most varied levels - local, national, regional and global - have the task of taking effective action to eliminate all these phenomena from the life of young people, to enable the younger generation to play an increasing role in taking over and enriching the material and spiritual values produced by mankind.

In the context of the preparations for International Youth Year, a lot has been said in various circles about the meaning and purpose of this event.

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

In our opinion, the defining element in this respect has been the fact that International Youth Year has asserted itself not only as a year about youth, but, in the first place, as a year for youth. Today, after years of intense preparations, as well as during the observance of the Year itself, one can say that this important event has emphasized the concerns of all those with responsibilities in the field of youth to take a realistic and thorough approach to the problems confronting the younger generation in various social and demographic contexts, as well as at the world level. This has clearly brought out the need to establish youth-oriented programmes designed to bring about the free promotion and implementation of the fundamental rights of young people to education, work, culture and information, and to participate in decision-making. At the same time, International Youth Year has demonstrated the existence of the necessary resources to open future prospects aimed at substantially enhancing the contribution of the younger generation to the efforts made by people for their national development, for adequately examining and settling the vital issues of international life, for the halting of the arms race and the adoption of firm measures of disarmament, for the maintenance and strengthening of world peace, the democratization of relations among States and the establishment of a new international economic and political order.

In this context, it should be recognized that both the preparations for and the observance of International Youth Year have formed a stimulating framework for the concerns of a large number of bodies and organizations, first of all of those with direct decision-making responsibility, in view of an ever-deeper knowledge and evaluation of the global situation of youth and of adopting, on this basis, medium and long-term strategies.

The establishment of national committees or similar bodies for preparing for and observing International Youth Year in practically all States of the world

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

has been a prime prerequisite for dealing with the issues of the younger generation, from the specific perspective and conditions of each country, and for identifying the most suitable practical solutions capable of improving the economic, social and cultural status of youth.

At this time in history, we should also point out the important role played, through their practical orientation, by the five meetings held in 1983 for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and West Asia, in obtaining a regional view of issues related to youth in order to promote the objectives of International Youth Year, namely, participation, development and peace. At the international level, I should like to highlight the activity carried out, in a spirit of full understanding and co-operation, by the United Nations Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year. The results of its four sessions contributed to furthering the preparations for International Youth Year and to benefiting from and furthering an exchange of information and experience between various bodies, institutions and organizations with responsibilities in the field of youth.

The United Nations programme of measures and activities for the preparation for and observance of the International Youth Year, adopted by the General Assembly four years ago, proved to be, as a result of its recommendations and guidelines, a stimulating programme of initiatives and a relevant source of inspiration for Governments and numerous other factors involved. At the same time, this is a reference document which guided all actions carried out in connection with the Year. It is quite natural that the programme has been enriched by the very fact that the preparations for and observance of the Year are taking place and by the new efforts and initiatives undertaken at national and international levels.

One can rightfully say that, throughout this process, the younger generation

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

has not only been the object of International Youth Year, but it has also asserted itself, by its potential, as an important subject, by joining in an original and creative manner the efforts and initiatives taken by Governments, by the United Nations system and its specialized agencies.

The Socialist Republic of Romania, which, as is known, has been the initiator of International Youth Year, welcomed with great interest the decision of the United Nations to proclaim this major event.

Romanian youth has become responsibly involved in preparing for and promoting the objectives of International Youth Year, benefiting from its original view of the role and place of the younger generation in Romanian society and from the constant attention and concern shown by both the Party and State.

Romania's younger generation possesses the necessary conditions for receiving multilateral training and for the free enjoyment of the right to work, to education and to culture. Likewise, youth and its organizations take a direct part in the collective organization and management of society and in decision-making in the most varied activities, such as in the economic, social, cultural and educational fields.

As in the Romanian nation as a whole, youth has participated actively, under the leadership of the Party, in implementing the programmes for the multilateral economic and social development of our country. At the international level, Romanian youth has continuously developed contacts and relations of co-operation with young people in numerous countries of the world and has joined the energetic actions of the younger generation for peace and disarmament and for building a peaceful and prosperous future for all the nations of the world.

Under the auspices of the Romanian National Committee for International Youth Year, set up in 1981 as a broadly representative governmental body which brings

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

together youth, student and children's organizations and a number of ministries and central institutions with concerns in the field of youth, various activities have been undertaken at both national and international levels devoted to the subjects of International Youth Year. In the same way, the preparations for and observance of this Year have generated a more intense and effective co-operation between various factors on the basis of a unified approach to the many economic, social, political, cultural and educational aspects which relate to the active role and status of the younger generation in Romanian society. Activities of scientific research and documentation on youth issues have also been developed.

Among the number of international events held in Romania, I should like to mention the round-table "Youth in the 1980s", organized in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the European regional meeting for International Youth Year; the international seminar on "Youth and Development"; as well as the World Conference of National Committees for International Youth Year on "Youth of the Year 2000 - Participation, Development, Peace", which took place in September this year in Romania's capital. I should merely like to say in this connection that the joint statement adopted by consensus by the participants at the Bucharest Conference was a heart-felt appeal for growing concern about youth matters, taking into account the valuable experience and initiatives accumulated throughout the preparations for and observance of International Youth Year.

The Conference that we are now attending offers me the pleasant opportunity of extending sincere thanks to all those who at various times have expressed their appreciation for the initiatives and efforts made by my country, the Socialist Republic of Romania, with respect to preparing for and observing International Youth Year and for promoting issues of the younger generation world-wide.

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

In the future, Romania will continue to act vigorously, both within the United Nations and within other international institutions and events, towards promoting a thorough approach to arriving at an appropriate solution of the issues concerning youth and for its increasingly active involvement in the life of nations and in international life.

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

By virtue of its character and effectiveness, and its thorough preparation, the International Youth Year has gone beyond the framework of a celebration, and has asserted itself as a large-scale and original event with a direct resonance in the life and concerns of the younger generation everywhere.

The current United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year is part of the same perspective; it intends to examine and endorse an important document designed to secure the continuity of efforts at various levels concerning the younger generation. These will be guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth. In my opinion, the above-mentioned document offers new and substantial scope for action over the long term, in accordance with a generally recognized truth, that no matter how well prepared and observed, International Youth Year could not solve all the complex problems confronting the younger generation in the various countries of the world.

Once endorsed, the guidelines are to be transmitted by the Secretary-General to all Governments, to all United Nations bodies, and to other international organizations concerned, for implementation. An important and significant role will fall to the national committees and other co-ordination machinery for the International Youth Year that have been set up in 158 countries. The success of the implementation of the guidelines will depend to a large extent on those committees continuing to function. Thus, on the basis of the experience of those committees, and in the light of the opinions expressed at various international events and gatherings centred on International Youth Year, we believe that ensuring the continuity of the national committees for the International Youth Year after 1985 would be of great practical utility. In view of the specific nature of those committees, and also the particular situation in each country, they could

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

undoubtedly function after 1985 as national committees for youth affairs, development and peace.

At the same time, in the United Nations it is certainly necessary to find new ways and means to ensure that the problems of the young people continue to benefit from the increased attention generated by the International Youth Year. The recommendations made by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year to strengthen the role and authority of the United Nations Commission for Social Development deserve to be studied with all seriousness. The absence of a United Nations body dealing directly with youth issues makes it more necessary than ever to make full use of all the existing machinery and structures within the United Nations system with competence in the field of youth. This requires persistent efforts both from Member States and from the United Nations Secretariat. We believe that the United Nations Vienna Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should organize its activity in such a way as to be able to fulfil faithfully the mandate entrusted to it for the implementation of the guidelines for further planning for the study of the field of youth and suitable follow-up activity.

One must also realize the undoubted fact that the problems of tomorrow's youth will not be the same as those of today's youth. This fact justifies permanent efforts and continuing concern geared to the specific dynamics of the younger generation.

The full commitment of youth to the efforts to fulfil the noble ideals of mankind is an important field of concern for Governments, and for governmental and non-governmental organizations at the national, regional and international levels, efforts which must obviously continue beyond the calendar limits of the year 1985. One first and fitting occasion, in this respect, is provided by the International Year of Peace, 1986, recently proclaimed by the United Nations, particularly since

(Mr. Ceausescu, Romania)

the fundamental significance of this year takes up one of the three basic themes of International Youth Year - Peace.

At the end of this century and millennium, the International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace will remain in the awareness of mankind as an event with broad and mobilizing effects. This is the direct result of the specific character of the subject to which the International Youth Year is devoted. It is quite understandable that the younger generation hopes that the year currently being observed world-wide will not remain on the United Nations agenda as a mere celebration. The younger generation hopes that the International Youth Year will open new and ample ways of improving the economic, social and cultural status of youth, and of involving young people in a more active and effective way in the study and solution of the major problems of the contemporary world.

Mr. PHILIPPE (Luxembourg) (interpretation from French): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European community and its 10 member States, as well as Spain and Portugal. Those States have taken an active part in the observance of International Youth Year. They will inform the Assembly about the activities they have conducted and experience they have gained during this year of national activities. The purpose of my statement is to express the interest that the European community has shown in the aims of this International Year.

While the participation of the young people in political and cultural life falls essentially within the authority of individual Governments, the Community, as such, contributes to ensuring their broader participation in the economic and social spheres, as well as in the development of their countries and of the European Community. We do not conceal that one of the major problems that we must face is that of youth unemployment. It is evident that activities in that area

(Mr. Philippe, Luxembourg)

must necessarily be part of a long-term effort. The European community, for its part, has in recent years developed a policy designed to improve young people's access to employment. I shall, however, limit myself to citing some of the activities or events that the European Community has sponsored in 1985, which are designed to support efforts already under way and to provide a new impetus.

Young people are at the centre of the economic and social policies of the European Community, and 75 per cent of the European Social Fund is spent on activities for the benefit of people under 25.

In 1984, the European Community launched a programme of action to stimulate job creation for young people, laying particular emphasis on programmes of vocational training, which constitute a means of preparing young people for a working life. In July of this year a memorandum was adopted under the heading "International Youth Year" which focuses on employment, education and training for young people, issues on the basis of which we shall be able to ensure that young people, through the full development of their individual personalities, participate in areas that affect their working lives at the local, national and regional levels.

The measures adopted in this context will attach great priority to training in the new technologies. A new Community programme of education and training in technology will begin early next year for a duration of seven years. The measures it includes are all designed to promote equal opportunity and to facilitate the often difficult transition from education to a working life, particularly by improving co-operation between schools and sectors of the working world. In this new programme the Community is certainly not neglecting those who are most disadvantaged, and thus special measures for disabled young people and young migrant workers have been adopted.

(Mr. Philippe, Luxembourg)

This passage to adult life can also be greatly facilitated through adequate information. It is in that context that, in less than a week, a major conference on information and participation by youth will be held in Luxembourg. This is a contribution of the European Community to the International Year resulting from a joint initiative of the Luxembourg presidency of the Council of Ministers and of the European Commission. It will address the participation of young persons in the organization and dissemination of information used during their transition from school to adult professional life to make choices, face new situations and take action with confidence in a world of growing complexity and economic uncertainty.

The objective will be to seek means of implementing a more participative and more effective youth policy to assist young persons in developing their capacity to communicate and their initiatives in this area of information for youth. The kind of information sought varies from one generation to the next. Young people who best know their own needs should therefore participate in the preparation and dissemination of this information. The conclusions of that conference will obviously be taken into consideration in the preparation of new proposals for future community activities.

The International Youth Year will be followed by the International Year of Peace. Peace was also one of the topics of International Youth Year. That link is not fortuitous, for we have the heavy responsibility of providing future generations with a life of peace combined with respect for the dignity of the human person.

Unfortunately, only hypocrisy can prevent us from asking ourselves how many young people died during this year in bloody wars and, indeed, how many youngsters in the age group that we call youth were sent onto the battlefield.

(Mr. Philippe, Luxembourg)

Having drawn the lessons from their history, the nations for which I am speaking today are endeavouring to provide youth with an education that will be an apprenticeship for peace. Education should not only promote the development of the individual personality but should also lead to absolute respect for human dignity and values, as well as respect for equality of rights among all nations. The education of young people is one of our best guarantees of peaceful coexistence among all the nations of the international community. But have all the States which will speak in this debate taken advantage of this Year to ensure that their school curricula lay the foundations for harmonious life among nations? Have the hate-filled references in the school books of too many countries deliberately creating enemy images been eliminated?

Peace at the international level presupposes tolerance, mutual understanding and recognition of the rights of others. Peace within frontiers can exist only in justice and freedom.

The Ten, as well as Spain and Portugal, share the view expressed by the World Youth Congress, held in July in Barcelona, at which participants voiced the hope that "the dynamic process of communication and exchange engendered by the International Youth Year will not be exhausted at the end of 1985". The momentum that has been created must be maintained, because there are too many objectives of International Youth Year that still remain to be attained.

Youth symbolizes the future, and there is no wiser investment than in that future in the hope that future generations will finally realize the eternal ideals of mankind - ideals which, for us, have all too often remained mere dreams.

Mr. MISHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The motto of International Youth Year - "Participation, Development, Peace" - is a concentrated expression of the vital aspirations of mankind's younger generation. At the same time, it reflects the essential objective needs of all mankind, since youth is not only its future but also its present.

The noble goals of International Youth Year were met with wholehearted support in the Soviet Union, where concern for the welfare and comprehensive development of young people is part and parcel of government policy. In our country the United Nations initiative for the observance of International Youth Year is regarded as extremely important and timely.

Representatives of the Soviet Union and of Soviet youth organizations participated with great interest in the activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to identify the aims of International Youth Year and to draft relevant documents.

The collective efforts of the representatives of over 90 Member States and about 30 non-governmental organizations resulted in the adoption of guidelines for further planning and follow-up activities relating to youth set out in document A/40/256. That document reflects in a balanced way specific recommendations aimed at resolving youth problems at the national, regional and international levels.

We regard as of fundamental importance that part of the document which emphasizes the need for expanding the active participation of young people themselves and their organizations in the life of society and, in particular, in ensuring and achieving peace and development.

As a result of the efforts of the United Nations, its organs and specialized agencies, and of the interest and goodwill demonstrated by a majority of States Members of the United Nations, International Youth Year has produced some positive

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results. It should be noted in this connection that International Youth Year has undoubtedly helped to strengthen the desire of world youth for peace, mutual understanding and co-operation for the benefit of development, social progress and social justice.

However, while we note such positive steps, we should not exaggerate their scope and results. In many countries of the world youth continues to be the most vulnerable socio-demographic group. The intensifying arms race, which devours colossal resources, brings about a deterioration in the socio-economic status of young people. It is no secret that in the developed capitalist countries young people face, inter alia, serious violations of their social, economic and political rights.

We have in mind above all unemployment, which has reached catastrophic proportions, discrimination against youth in employment and remuneration, and lack of equal access to education, medical services and participation in social and political life. In the developed capitalist countries, young people aged 25 or less account for 44 per cent of the 32 million unemployed. According to United Nations data, there are in the developing countries 600 million unemployed, 900 million illiterate, 500 million undernourished, and 1 billion persons living in poverty, most of whom are young people.

In countries ruled by dictatorships or fascist régimes, young people, in addition to being deprived of any real rights, also face formal restrictions on their most important rights and freedoms, which are in effect totally denied them and flouted in practice.

(Mr. Mishin, USSR)

Therefore, in reviewing the results of International Youth Year and in taking note of the positive steps taken in the course of its preparation and observance, the Conference should, we are convinced, focus on still unresolved youth problems.

The key to all the global problems of our time lies in the solution of the central issue, that of ensuring lasting peace, achieving real disarmament and preventing an arms race in outer space.

Four decades have passed since the victory over nazism and fascism in the Second World War, to which the Soviet Union made a decisive contribution. The harsh lessons of the War must not be forgotten. They require that the present younger generation, which shoulders a great deal of responsibility for the destinies of the world today and tomorrow, should engage in a resolute struggle against war even before it has broken out.

In present conditions it is the duty of all States Members of the United Nations, while strictly observing the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, to make resolute efforts to create a healthier international environment, to prevent the threat of a nuclear catastrophe, to strengthen international peace and security, to prevent the militarization of outer space, to put an end to the arms race, to achieve general and complete disarmament, and thus to ensure the primary human right, the most important right of young people, namely, the right to live in conditions of peace and freedom.

As the international community is aware, the Soviet Union has been working consistently and with perseverance for a lasting peace and a tranquil and normal international environment. It has favoured halting and reversing the arms race. Explaining the essence of the Soviet Union's foreign policy, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, stated, during his meeting with members of the French Parliament on on 3 October:

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"We believe that the validity of one's ideology and the advantages of a system chosen by a nation of its own volition should be proven, not by force of arms, but only and exclusively by force of example. Such is our unshakeable conviction."

This conviction is corroborated by the specific peace initiatives taken offered by the USSR, such as the unilateral moratorium on all nuclear explosions; the proposal addressed to the Government of the United States for a mutual renunciation of space strike weapons and their complete prohibition accompanied with a truly radical 50 per cent reduction in the nuclear arms maintained within range of each other's territory; a moratorium on the deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe which began some time ago in response to the deployment of new United States medium-range systems in the territory of several West European countries; and the proposals regarding the main directions and principles of wide-ranging international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and utilization of outer space submitted for the consideration of the current session of the General Assembly.

We are convinced that International Youth Year and its concluding event, the World Conference for the International Youth Year, will make a substantial contribution to the process of improving the international environment and help to consolidate the forces of peace and progress, which are to launch a new offensive in 1986, the year that has been proclaimed by the United Nations as the International Year of Peace.

Since the United Nations adopted the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples 25 years have passed; however, up to now, the aims of that Declaration have not been completely implemented. We emphasize once again that the policy of colonialism in any form or manifestation, including racism and apartheid, cannot be reconciled with the United Nations Charter and the Declaration on decolonization. We reiterate our support for those peoples fighting for their legitimate right to freedom, independence and self-determination.

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We believe that the present Conference is not entitled to ignore the struggle waged by the people of South Africa against the system of apartheid. The Soviet delegation shares the outrage and indignation of world public opinion in connection with the brutalities visited on the indigenous population of South Africa by the racist régime. Not a day goes by without the world shuddering at new crimes committed by the racists, whose victims are young people, young women, children and old people.

The Soviet people are solidly behind the struggle of the peoples of South Africa, who are in the front ranks of those who are opposing apartheid. We fully share the recommendations of the public hearings on the activities of transnational corporations in southern Africa and their co-operation with the racist régime in South Africa, which were held in New York from 16 to 18 September this year.

We wholeheartedly support the struggle of the people of Namibia for their country's freedom and the struggle of the front-line States in southern Africa against the continuing aggressive activities of South Africa and its hirelings.

The Conference cannot fail to pay attention to the situation in the Near and Middle East, where the inalienable rights of the Arab people are being flouted, as well as the question of the situation in Central America, where the people of Nicaragua, with arms in their hands, have been obliged to defend their independence against the criminal contras.

There can be no doubt that the maintenance of the apartheid régime, the aggressive acts of South Africa and Israel and the bloodshed in Central America are made possible only by the massive support provided by the forces of reaction, racism and expansionism by world imperialism.

The Conference should resolutely condemn the system of unequal economic relations which has been created by imperialism, the exploitation of the developing countries and the pillaging of their natural resources by transnational

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corporations, and the strangling of the economies of the developing countries by debt.

We support the demands of the developing countries for the establishment of a new international economic order on a just and democratic basis in accordance with the decisions previously adopted by the United Nations, as well as their calls for an end to "cultural", "information" and other forms of neo-colonialism. The continued existence of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid and of all forms of exploitation, oppression and inequality is intolerable. This constitutes the main obstacle to the achievement of a real improvement in the status of youth and the elimination of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

The years since the Second World War have provided convincing proof that youth and its organizations - and in particular democratic youth and student and non-governmental groups - are making a serious contribution to the solution of many problems facing mankind. They are doing a great deal to make the voice of young people, their problems and aspirations heard at the United Nations. Our delegation believes that the international community is duty bound to support in every way the activities of Governments aimed at solving the problems of young people, improving their status and enhancing their role in the life of society. That is why we stand for a further expansion of co-operation between the United Nations and democratic youth organizations and for improving the channels of communication between them, and regard the informal meetings in Geneva as the principal channels of this kind.

We are strongly against any attempts by imperialism to use International Youth Year for the organization of measures that run counter to the aims and purposes of the Year and are directed at undermining the democratic youth movement. We are against attempts to block co-operation among young people having different political orientations. We believe that the priority goal today is the unification and co-operation of youth to achieve lasting peace and genuine development.

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The Twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students, held earlier this year in Moscow, was a vivid demonstration of the aspirations of youth for peace, mutual understanding, co-operation and friendship. The Festival was the major event of the Year in the international youth movement. As representative of the host country, I wish to express our appreciation for the assessment of that event in the reports of the Secretary-General.

An important feature of the Festival, which predetermined its success, was the fact that it became a concrete contribution of young people themselves to the implementation of the aims and purposes of the Year and a manifestation of the enormous creative potential and organizational abilities of young men and women from all parts of our planet. This highlighted another feature of the Festival, namely, its unprecedented representative character and political scope. More than 20,000 delegates from 157 countries of the world and from West Berlin took part in the Festival, as well as representatives of 86 international and regional youth organizations, the United Nations and its bodies. The delegations represented more than 3,000 youth, student, trade-union, women's, anti-war, environmentalist and other organizations.

Preparations for the Festival and the event itself opened up broad possibilities for constructive dialogue between young people of various political, philosophical and religious convictions. The exchange of views among them was highly productive. It will make it possible for youth from different countries to realize that the most diverse problems confronting youth have common basic roots: the domination and arbitrary excesses of monopolies, the arms race and the build-up of tensions. The realization of that fact should be recognized as one of the most important results of the Festival. Another significant outcome of the Festival was its participants' awareness of the need to unite in order to wage a successful struggle for social, economic and political rights of young people.

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It is also noteworthy that questions of co-operation between youth and student organizations and the United Nations, of the role of young people and students in the promotion of the principles and purposes of the United Nations system and of the historical experience of co-operation among peoples within the framework of the United Nations, which were the subject of profound and comprehensive discussion at the Centre for the International Youth Year, occupied a central place among the Festival's 15 specific topics. In the appeal to youth and students of the world, which has been issued as an official document of the United Nations, participants stressed the importance of International Youth Year and reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

I am happy to be able to inform the Assembly today about the implementation in the USSR of the aims and purposes of International Youth Year. It should be emphasized in the first place that it is only natural that the Soviet Government and by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union should have given continuous attention to the younger generation, since under socialism the interests of young men and women coincide with the interests of other social groups and of society as a whole. Most of the recommendations contained in the programme of measures and events for the Year have already been implemented in our country or are in the process of being successfully carried out in the course of the development of our society. The socialist system has freed young people from exploitation and inequality. It guarantees in practice a broad spectrum of social and political rights for young people, ensures unimpeded access to creative work, education, culture and sports, and provides a secure future for young people.

There has been no unemployment in the USSR for more than half a century. Our youth, like all other Soviet people, are guaranteed the right to work, including the right to choose a profession and employment in accordance with personal preferences and with abilities, skills and training. We believe that the time has

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come to have the fundamental right of youth to work reflected in the decisions of the United Nations.

Like all other Soviet people, Soviet young men and women enjoy and exercise the right to leisure, housing, free medical services and access to the achievements of culture, as well as a number of other rights and freedoms. Compulsory general secondary education has been introduced in the Soviet Union. Today, practically all young people in the USSR possess a secondary, specialized secondary or higher education, or are studying in schools or specialized secondary or higher educational establishments. Some 5.3 million young men and women are studying in approximately 900 higher educational establishments, and 4.5 million are studying in over 4,000 specialized secondary schools. I would recall that the system of education in the USSR is known for its general accessibility, that it is free at all levels, and that students receive government scholarships and substantial material benefits. There is also another important point: half of the students in Soviet colleges and 74 per cent of the students in specialized secondary schools come from the families of workers or peasants.

Youth in the USSR participates actively in government. For instance, one out of five members of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and one out of three members of local governing bodies are under 30 years of age. The Leninist Komsomol, which is a broad-based autonomous non-governmental organization comprising about 42 million young men and women, makes active use of the right granted to it under the Constitution of the USSR to undertake legislative initiatives, and participates in the preparation and implementation of the most important national programmes.

This, and the other rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of the USSR, in conjunction with the peaceful foreign policy of the Soviet Union, create overall conditions indispensable to the attainment of the three interrelated aims of International Youth Year: participation, development and peace.

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It should be stressed in particular that the implementation in the USSR of the aims and purposes of Youth Year is a logical extension and an organic and integral part of the policy pursued by the Soviet State with regard to youth. A high-level commission for the observance of International Youth Year has been established in the USSR under the chairmanship of Geidar A. Aliyev, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. That commission has drawn up and is successfully implementing a wide-ranging set of measures with a view to promoting the participation of young Soviet men and women in the country's political, social, economic and cultural affairs, further improving conditions for Soviet youth in employment, education, everyday life and leisure, and strengthening co-operation with progressive national, regional and international youth organizations.

In 1985, schools providing a general education are to be built to accommodate 951,000 students. A long-term comprehensive programme for the period 1984 to 1990, entitled "Healthy students", is being successfully implemented. To improve conditions for sports activities and physical training, 20,000 sports facilities of various kinds are to be constructed; many of them are already in operation. Ninety sports schools for boys and girls will also be opened shortly. Substantial amounts of money have been appropriated for the construction of new student hostels. Measures have been taken to provide young families more rapidly with comfortable housing. Major appropriations have been made to implement reforms in the general secondary and vocational schools.

I wish to emphasize that the Youth Year programmes, in combination with other social and economic measures taken by the Soviet Government, cover virtually all aspects of the lives of Soviet young people. They are directed towards expanding

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possibilities for the participation of young men and women in the political, social, economic, cultural and scientific affairs of the country.

It is noteworthy that issues relating to youth have been comprehensively reflected in the recently published new draft programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Soviet communists regard the upbringing of young people as a most important party, State and national concern. The draft of the new party programme stresses that it is necessary to give much closer attention to the social problems of young people, striving above all to satisfy more fully their needs in the spheres of work and everyday life, education, culture, professional and career opportunities, and the sensible use of free time.

The Government of my country, consistently carrying out the Helsinki agreements and United Nations decisions in this field, promotes and encourages in every way the development of contacts and co-operation between the youth organizations of the Soviet Union and those of other countries. Suffice it to say that the USSR Committee of Youth Organizations maintains fruitful working relations with almost 2,000 youth organizations in more than 150 countries. What must be noted in particular is the breadth of the political spectrum of co-operation and the diversity of the forms it takes.

International youth contacts are regarded in our country as an important element of the overall process of international co-operation and as an integral component in the process of relaxing international tension. Détente in turn is the prerequisite for the development of co-operation in humanitarian fields. An easing of confrontation leads to an increase in the number of exchanges in the fields of culture, information, education and tourism. That is why it is important to work consistently to eliminate political and psychological factors contributing to the threat of war, and to strengthen mutual trust in world politics.

We believe that questions relating to the status of youth should be given substantial attention at the inter-governmental level as well. They must remain on

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the agendas of existing United Nations bodies such as the Third Committee of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organisation.

In his welcoming address to participants in the twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Sergeiyevich Gorbachev, said that

"The problems of life affect and concern young people no less intensely than the older generations. With the inherent enthusiasm of youth, they mobilize themselves to struggle for social justice and genuine freedom, for making the benefits of life and the benefits of civilization accessible to all, and for banishing violence and racism, inequality and oppression, militarism and aggression from the life of man and all mankind."

An ancient dictum has it that healthy youth makes a people immortal. That is true both for mankind as a whole and for each and every nation individually. Energy and enthusiasm, an interest in what is new and progressive, an active rejection of injustice and a striving for friendship: all those qualities inherent in youth must be fully utilized for the benefit of mankind and in the interest of progress and peace.

Let me express my confidence that the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year will help increase the contribution of the United Nations to the mobilization of efforts of States genuinely to improve the status of youth and to preserve and develop, in the interest of peace and social progress, the positive changes in policies related to youth that have been achieved in the course of the preparations for and observance of International Youth Year.

Mr. LAUTENSCHLAGER (Federal Republic of Germany): The representative of Luxembourg spoke earlier in our debate on behalf of the European Community and its member States. I should like to associate myself fully with his statement and add a few short remarks. Like the representative of Luxembourg I shall deal with the real subject of our discussions, namely, questions concerning youth, its problems and aspirations.

The motto of International Youth Year, 1985, is "Participation, Development, Peace". The participation of youth in the life of a society extends in particular, in our view, to three areas: the economic, the cultural and the political.

The goal of economic participation implies that every new generation has to be integrated into the safeguarding of the material basis of subsistence of the society to which it belongs, as well as of its fellow human beings in other societies. That goal can be attained through the capacity of youth for work and through the motivation of concern, based on solidarity, for the well-being of all.

The goal of cultural participation implies that every new generation must be enabled to engage in give-and-take participation the culture of its own country. That in turn implies the passing on of the cultural heritage of the past to the young generation of today and enabling the young generation to put that heritage to creative use and to develop it further.

The goal of political participation implies active integration into the democratic process of discussion and decision. All who are committed to that goal will welcome it when youth has its say and makes itself heard in political life. Even the protest which is often voiced nowadays by youth is a legitimate means of democratic discussion and participation in the political life of any society. It is hard to believe that in societies where nothing is heard about the problems of youth those problems do not exist; rather one must assume that youth has a particularly hard lot in such societies.

(Mr. Lautenschlager, Federal Republic of Germany)

With its decision to declare 1985 International Youth Year the United Nations made an important contribution towards giving improved and greater chances of acceptance of the will of youth to participate, and of giving effect to that will towards giving youth shared responsibility for shaping the future.

In the Federal Republic of Germany we have published, on behalf of the National Commission on the International Youth Year, all available data on the situation of youth in our country. Youth research in the Federal Republic of Germany has been able to achieve significant results and findings in the International Youth Year. The German Youth Institute enjoys intensive international co-operation in the field of youth research and is prepared to expand further such co-operation. On the occasion of International Youth Year it has published a handbook on the situation of youth in the Federal Republic of Germany. Among other things that handbook documents the historical development of the situation of youth in our country.

However, not only on the special occasion of International Youth Year but for a long time before this we have been making particular efforts to further the interests of youth on its way to economic, cultural and political participation. That commitment has also been at the root of our co-operation in the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year. Promoting international co-operation by the youth of our country with the youth of other countries is and remains an important objective of the Federal Government. This also applies to the promotion of federations of youth in associations which are autonomous and independent of the Government. We lend our particular support to co-operation by our youth with youth associations of other countries.

However, we shall be able to achieve international understanding among youth only if the youth of other countries also is granted the option of choosing

(Mr. Lautenschlager, Federal Republic of Germany)

partners in understanding and co-operation across borders and of visiting such partners.

The motto of International Youth Year also comprises, besides the notion of participation, the notions of development and peace. The youth of the world is thus called upon to orient its commitment in all fields to enhancing freedom and justice everywhere, for only where freedom and justice are furthered may we really talk of a development doing justice to the interests of the people. The youth of the Federal Republic of Germany, because of experience from the past, is particularly sensitive to trends jeopardizing such enhancement of freedom and justice and it takes the initiative in making itself heard in all appropriate ways in the public discussion at large. Participation in the development of one's own country but also in the development of the international community as a whole calls for peace as its basis. This conforms not only with the conviction of my Government but also with that of the young generation in my country. Peace presupposes that there can be discussion and understanding on conflicts, differences of opinion and philosophies. Only where understanding is possible will international co-operation lead to the solution and elimination of conflicts.

As never before in the history of our country, the youth of the Federal Republic of Germany is open to international understanding, international co-operation and international solidarity. International Youth Year has opened new vistas and chances for that solidarity. The youth of the Federal Republic of Germany is prepared to make its own contribution so that these chances may be used and these options realized. To the best of its ability the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany will lend its support to those endeavours.

Mr. OTHMAN ABDUL (Malaysia): There is special significance in the fact that this year we are celebrating both the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and International Youth Year. On the one hand we are seeking to strengthen and revitalize the United Nations so that it will better serve the needs of generations yet to come; on the other we are seeking to inspire and galvanize the youth of today so that they in turn will be better able to serve the needs of the United Nations in the difficult and challenging years ahead. The observance of International Youth Year therefore, like our recent commemorative celebrations, should not merely manifest itself in festivals, speeches, resolutions and so on but rather aim at achieving tangible results, to instil in youth a spirit of leadership, self-reliance and discipline so that they will always be conscious of their responsibility to their community, society and nation and to the wider world beyond.

(Mr. Othman Abdul, Malaysia)

The adoption of resolution 36/28 by the General Assembly in 1981 and the proclamation of 1985 as International Youth Year is a recognition of the significant role that youth can play in the task of fostering a just and progressive order at both the national and the international level. For us all, our youth is the basic foundation of our respective national societies and will guarantee our independence, national identity and continued progress and development, particularly in a country such as Malaysia where a large proportion of the population - 76 per cent to be precise - is under 35 years of age. We take pride in this knowledge as young people are undoubtedly our resources for the present and the future. National development requires the utilization of human resources and in this regard young people represent our most precious resources.

Participation and development are two of the interrelated and interdependent themes of International Youth Year. The direct participation of our youth - be it in the political, economic or social field, in nation building or in national development - has long been emphasized by my Government. Young people, as we know, are active agents of social change and progress. They are a voice which must be heard and a living force which must be properly channelled.

To implement resolution 36/28, Malaysia has organized various programmes and activities at the national, regional and international levels in collaboration with several agencies, such as the Asia Youth Council, the Committee for Youth Co-operation of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the Malaysian Youth Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Volunteers, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the International Labour Organisation, CYP and various other governmental and non-governmental organizations.

(Mr. Othman Abdul, Malaysia)

Projects such as an international youth course on youth entrepreneurship development, the training of trainers in youth work, an essay competition, an international youth work camp, and an international youth rally were held during the year and received a tremendous response from countries within and outside the region. Such response is indicative of the fact that given the proper guidance and opportunities, young people, irrespective of belief and culture, can be a positive force that can contribute towards national development and the realization of world peace in line with the spirit of the theme for International Youth Year.

Based on our firm commitment, Malaysia will continue to play an active role in promoting active youth participation in development through a variety of programmes involving young people of all nations.

Steps which have already been undertaken to establish an International Youth Centre, an International Islamic Youth Camp and other facilities are specific indications of the seriousness of my country in fulfilling its commitment to promote youth development in the region, particularly among the developing countries, as well as throughout the world.

Malaysia notes with grave concern the problems faced by youth in the world, which, if not given proper attention, will hamper the international community's efforts to mobilize young people for constructive activities. Such problems as youth unemployment, moral decadence and drug abuse are among the major problems that must be given immediate attention.

The problem of drug abuse, particularly by the youth of my country has been an area of specific concern to Malaysia. Malaysia is facing a very serious problem of drug abuse and has taken every necessary step to combat this menace. Malaysia has mobilized every means within its power to eradicate this problem to ensure that the majority of its young people are free from the pernicious effects of drug abuse and

(Mr. Othman Abdul, Malaysia)

to enable them to concentrate on and involve themselves meaningfully in development activities. Being a small country with a small population, Malaysia needs the active participation of its youth in all its endeavours.

Of the three themes enunciated, peace is indeed the most elusive ideal of all. Malaysia continues to inculcate in its youth a sense of international solidarity and co-operation through its educational curricula, foreign student exchange programmes, and the involvement of its youth delegations in international activities and forums. As part of our contribution to International Youth Year, an international youth centre is currently being built in Malaysia. Once completed, it will provide facilities for youth training and serve as a focal point of activities involving various international youth organizations. The interaction of young people from different countries would be mutually beneficial, as not only are knowledge and experience exchanged but new friends are cultivated.

Young people are our hopes for the future. With them, properly nurtured, cultivated and disciplined, lies the destiny of mankind. The young have their vision of the kind of world in which they would like to live, and such a world will be very different from that of ours today. The challenges before them are immense. It is our responsibility to provide them with the necessary tools - intellectual, physical and spiritual - to meet these challenges. International Youth Year is dedicated to that task and, speaking for Malaysia, I pledge our commitment to play our part.

Mr. KOOIMAN (Netherlands): I am pleased to see so many young people sitting here, although still not enough, in my opinion. However, last year's recommendation to include youth representatives in the national delegations has clearly had a positive effect. I am sure that this is the first time that so many young representatives have assembled in this Hall. At the same time I cannot

(Mr. Kooiman, Netherlands)

help wondering what the number of youth representatives will be next year. In general - and perhaps I am now touching on a sensitive spot - I wonder if the near future will show any tangible results as a follow-up of the observance of International Youth Year, 1985. It is after all the practical impact of the Year that will count.

Many young people tend to lose faith in the future: uncertainties about getting a job, doubts about the purpose of education and vocational training and the awareness of living in a world full of constraints and capable of destroying itself many times over. These kind of things do not make life easy for young people. A feeling of uselessness, alienation, reluctance to take any responsibility, vandalism, aggression and escapes from reality such as drug addiction and religious fanaticism can all be considered expressions of discontent with their situation.

Nevertheless, most young people do not lose heart. In spite of the attitudes and behaviour I have just mentioned, which touch young people especially, vulnerable as they are, the United Nations should get rid of the dominant image of unhappy, unmotivated young people. For this overlooks the many ideas and initiatives of young people. Young people are at a stage in their lives at which they are looking for their own identity, at which they experiment with their role in society. Their creative potential is therefore often shaped in an alternative way, a way that deviates from the traditional culture. In many cases, however, traditional culture is still so dominant that it leaves hardly any room for the innovation and reform pursued by youth.

Mr. President, did you ever ask a young person what the United Nations means to him or her? Well, I can tell you what I have heard. Being a youth representative, not a young diplomat but someone who tries to bring the United Nations closer to people of my age, I have spoken to many of them. In many of

(Mr. Kooiman, Netherlands)

their answers I heard that the United Nations has little appeal to them; they see it as something powerless that has no special relevance to them. However, if they are asked about International Youth Year the answers are a lot more positive.

A typical feature of the observance of International Youth Year in the Netherlands has been that young people and their organizations have been able to take initiatives of their own. This has been apparent in the organizational structure for the Year in my country, in which two national committees co-operated, one of the youth organizations and the other at the inter-ministerial level. The National Youth Year Working Group included 150 youth organizations. Its activities have been based on the recommendations of the United Nations and on the principle of achieving the goals of International Youth Year as much as possible through and for young people themselves.

(Mr. Kooiman, Netherlands)

The Working Group selected the following themes as priorities for action during the Year in the Netherlands: youth unemployment, young people from cultural and ethnic minorities, the status of minors, youth culture and peace and development.

On these themes a plan of action has been developed. The Netherlands Government allocated about \$US 1.3 million to support the realization of projects pursuant to this plan as well as those developed by individual organizations and young people themselves. Also, considerable funds were donated for this purpose by local and regional authorities. Many of the projects financed were successful. In the Netherlands we have all learnt from the International Youth Year and I believe that our experience can be most useful for the follow-up of this Year at the national, but also at the regional and international, level.

In adopting the recommendations of the Third Committee during this United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year we shall take a strong commitment on our shoulders. By endorsing the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth, prepared during the fourth session of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, we are committing ourselves to doing our utmost to ensure their most appropriate implementation. The guidelines reflect both a balanced synthesis of the experiences gained and a realistic assessment of the aspirations, needs and problems of young people. Moreover, they provide a conceptual framework for a long-term strategy.

With the help of the guidelines, it is now up to us to secure the strengthening of youth-related policies and programmes after the International Youth Year. In line with the basic philosophy and strategy for the International Youth Year, emphasis should be laid on activities at the national and local levels.

This, however, does not mean that action on the international level is less necessary. Rather, it is now up to Governments, in co-operation with the United

(Mr. Kooiman, Netherlands)

Nations bodies and agencies, as well as to other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, especially youth organizations, to undertake the necessary measures to narrow the focus on youth policies and programmes. Young people and their organizations should be involved as much as possible in the planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of youth-related aspects in policies and programmes.

Governments, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, bilateral aid agencies and multilateral financial institutions should increase financial and other contributions for developing and implementing youth related policies and programmes. Since it is not likely that substantial new funds will become available, existing programmes should be improved. This can be done by strengthening the technical co-operation activities and by integrating youth-related elements in overall United Nations programmes. In these programmes, attention should be paid to a limited set of priority themes, such as communication, housing, culture, employment and education, which have a direct effect on the improvement of the situation of young people. These activities should be budgeted according to the priority they deserve. After 1985, co-ordination in the field of these youth-related activities should be actively pursued by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. By increased attention to youth elements every specialized agency, for example, can take up in its programme one or, preferably, more youth-related projects. As another example, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme can strengthen the role of that organization at the field level with a view to promoting the incorporation of youth-related projects in the preparation and implementation of country programmes.

What I am saying is that we should find tangible results in next year's report of the Secretary-General when we discuss the evaluation of International Youth Year.

(Mr. Kooiman, Netherlands)

For years now the United Nations has been discussing the use of channels of communication between the United Nations system and youth and youth organizations. This item is often treated separately from the preparation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to youth. But of course this item is not a distinct one. Especially in the preparation and implementation of youth-related projects, use should be made of the willingness to participate and of what I have just called the creative potential of young people. Therefore, the utilization of channels of communication should be an integral part of the planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of youth policies and programmes.

Let young people come forward with their own ideas and projects. Let the appropriate existing United Nations bodies and agencies, together with young people, form task forces on such projects. These task forces enable young people to implement their projects. One can talk about youth, think about youth, decide about youth and do a lot for youth, but this tends to happen only after it is recognized that young people constitute a problem to society or have problems themselves. The draft resolution on channels of communication only strengthens this impression, and express our regret on this point.

The main aim of channels of communication is to bring the United Nations and young people closer to each other. The best way to do that is to involve the United Nations and young people in each other's work. After all, is participation not one of the main themes of the International Youth Year? And does participation not imply that young people take an active part in decision-making processes and activities, in short, get involved, not as the object but as the subject of policies and programmes? All this is in recognition of the fact that young people form a significant part of today's society, are involved in it and have the

(Mr. Kooiman, Netherlands)

willingness to contribute to it, if it concerns them. Channels of communication are a tool for encouraging youth involvement. Therefore, we should not miss the opportunity to utilize them and, where possible, to improve them.

The United Nations itself should also adopt a more active attitude towards youth-related activities. During the Barcelona Conference on Youth, a document was circulated in which an account was given of the youth-related activities carried out by the United Nations system. In that document it was mentioned, for example, that one of the youth-related activities was the appointment of a young employee. I am terribly impressed.

Furthermore, I notice that sometimes there is a lack of co-ordination. In requesting the Secretary-General to keep youth-related activities under review, I hope that he will continue to take an active attitude on two main aspects: first, encouragement of specific action for the benefit of youth and, secondly, efforts to secure the proper integration of youth-related activities in existing policies and programmes and the overall co-ordination of activities within the system. When an evaluation report on International Youth Year is prepared by the Secretary-General next year, he should not forget those important aspects of the follow-up of the Year.

In conclusion, by endorsing the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up the United Nations and all its Member States take upon themselves a commitment to secure action in the field of youth as an integral part of social and economic development. I hope that authorities will be amenable to taking account of the ideas and initiatives of young people. Youth activities should aim on the one hand at fostering initiatives of, by and for young people, and on the other at promoting youth participation within existing structures. Even where the alternatives and reforms which are brought forward by young people may seem a

(Mr. Kooiman, Netherlands)

threat to traditional values, I am firmly convinced that these alternatives and reforms are an expression of an active and positive attitude towards society, a sense of responsibility for contributing to the advancement and enrichment of society. Young and old should work together on this. The International Youth Year has created a momentum and a situation in which it is possible to join hands. Do not wait for the future, but act now. I must admit that, if next year's report does not show any positive results, I shall be forced to admit that young people are right in considering the United Nations to be too powerless to do anything of relevance for them.

Mr. PANDEY (Nepal): At the very outset, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to commend the decision to hold a plenary debate on policies and programmes relating to youth. Apart from underlying the great importance which this Organization has rightly accorded to them during International Youth Year, we consider it particularly auspicious that this meeting should take place at the very same venue where world leaders, just weeks ago, reiterated their collective faith in the United Nations, and in the future in such ringing terms. This we find entirely appropriate because the future, very clearly, belongs to the youth.

Before going any further, I should also like to express my delegation's appreciation of the reports of the Secretary-General, contained in documents A/40/64, A/40/256 and A/40/701. They not only provide an excellent overview of the general situation of the world's youth in the 1980s, but also contain valuable guidelines for further planning and follow-up in the field of youth by national Governments and international organizations committed to this timely cause. In particular, my delegation whole-heartedly endorses the Secretary-General's recommendation, contained in paragraph 71 of document A/40/64, that the momentum generated during International Youth Year should be kept up and that Governments continue their efforts to develop integrated youth policies.

This, in fact, brings me to the observance of International Youth Year in Nepal, a direct outcome of which has precisely been the decision to continue a number of specially tailored youth programmes for International Youth Year even after 1985. Of the twenty-two separate programmes launched in Nepal in the context of International Youth Year are the following: the setting up of a youth service fund to assist youth who show promise in different fields of endeavour; the organization of youth camps; instituting a youth volunteer programme; and the establishment of primary schools with local youth participation covering 50 of the Kingdom's 75 districts.

(Mr. Pandey, Nepal)

Indeed, in keeping with the themes of International Youth Year, that is, participation, development and peace, youth volunteers since the beginning of 1985 have been actively associated with not only briefing village folk about our national rural development plans but have also been explaining to them how best to exploit benefits for themselves from such developmental activity. Similarly, and consistent with the triad of themes for International Youth Year, youth camps in Nepal throughout 1985 have successfully carried out various construction work in the transportation, irrigation and health fields, among others. Under International Youth Year programmes in my country, and with the active participation of youth volunteers, 100 new primary schools have been established. Similarly, a four-day youth camp on afforestation resulted in the planting of 100,000 new saplings. A number of national-level seminars on population, skill development and unemployment have also been organized in past months under the International Youth Year banner. A consciousness-raising international seminar on drug dependence among youth was also successfully organized in Katmandu. A more long-term project also dedicated to the cause of Nepali youth, is continuing, in-depth study on the status of youth in Nepal, an endeavour that, on completion, should provide invaluable guidance for policy-making in all matters relating to youth in the future.

While these and other similar youth-related activities have immeasurably contributed to enhancing public awareness of the situation of youth, and particularly of their special needs and aspirations, they have had the welcome net effect of expanding the base of youth participation to the district or grass roots stage from the central level. This has been possible, in the main, by Royal patronage of and guidance to the International Youth Year National Committee, constituted by His Majesty King Birendra, under the Chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince Dharendra.

(Mr. Pandey, Nepal)

At this juncture, I am happy to disclose in this Assembly that attention to the role and potential of youth in Nepal is by no means something new. Youth, defined in our country to include all adults below 40 years of age, have in fact been granted a pre-eminent role in the national affairs by our Constitution itself, through the establishment of a National Youth Organization composed of youth, elected by and responsible to youth.

That body, one of six class organizations within the structure of our national polity, has indeed been particularly successful in developing political leadership among youth, leadership that naturally evolves through their active and purposeful participation in the whole gamut of activities that embraces national socio-economic development.

If our national party-less polity is thus itself institutionally geared towards tapping the potential of youth energy, idealism and skills, careful thought has also been given to ensure that there is no conflict between the generations, especially to ensure that, while it is important to go ahead with change and development, this is not achieved by sacrificing any of our country's rich and ancient cultural heritage and traditions which provide us emotional sustenance while safeguarding the country's distinctive personality and identity.

This brings me to the theme of peace, the last, but by no means, the least important of the troika of admirable objectives spelt out for International Year of Youth. While I need hardly remind this Assembly of Nepal's unwavering support to the cause of international peace and security, our quest for peace within our borders has been inspired by our staunch belief that there can be no development without peace, nor any peace without development.

It is this that is the motive force of Nepal's zone of peace proposal that has generated such an emotional response among the Nepalese people, and, more so, among its youth which has been so actively participating in national development, both

(Mr. Pandey, Nepal)

within and outside the context of International Youth Year. If the importance which we in Nepal have been giving to youth flows, to a great extent, from our Constitution itself, it is only natural in a country which, though ancient, really opened its doors to the outside world, and thus to the winds of the modern concepts of planned development and change, less than four decades ago. Youth, and especially its educated segment in newly developing countries such as ours, have, therefore, a far greater role in nation-building than may be true elsewhere. It is also for such a reason that we can so completely associate ourselves with the basic thrust of International Youth Year based as it very realistically is, on the realization by the international community to make youth partners, rather than mere beneficiaries, of national development plans.

We welcome the trend, as reflected in today's evolving world leadership pattern, of giving a greater share of responsibilities to younger people. Apart from the fact that a more even distribution of power among different generations makes for a more stable and socially equitable society, we believe it also contributes to peace. Given the dynamics of social, economic and political transformation across the world, today's problems may not be resolved by yesterday's means.

(Mr. Pandey, Nepal)

To the extent that youth must be prepared to grasp firmly the torch passed on to it by older generations, the increased awareness of this which has occurred as a result of the world-wide observance of the International Youth Year is most noteworthy and laudable. Given the truism that aimless, frustrated or uncaring youth can easily trigger social and political upheavals, my delegation commends this Organization's farsightedness in thus focusing on the importance of youth's participatory role in harnessing the forces of development and channelling them towards the goals of social progress and peace.

Finally, my delegation wishes to assure the Assembly that Nepal will never be found wanting in responding, within its limited means, to any call beyond 1985 for further advancing the cause of the world's youth, led as we are by an enlightened, progressive monarch who not only is committed to the noble ideals of participation, development and peace but also has done so much to give Nepalese youth a sense of mission and ample opportunities to be useful to their communities and country.

Mr. RIERA (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): As other delegations have done, I should like at the outset to express the Spanish delegation's satisfaction at the celebration of this World Conference of the United Nations for the International Youth Year. The fact that the General Assembly is devoting plenary meetings to policies and programmes relating to youth is the most significant proof of the universal recognition of the decisive role played by youth in the great issues affecting the present and future of mankind.

In addressing the problems of youth we are not talking only of a quantitatively very important group. We must also ask ourselves what kind of world we wish to build in future decades - a world which is undergoing and will continue to undergo great changes that especially affect young people, who too often are the victims rather than the protagonists in this process.

(Mr. Riera, Spain)

My delegation endorses the content of the statement made this afternoon by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Community, of which my country will soon be a member, but I should like to emphasize certain points in connection with International Youth Year on which my country would like to place special emphasis.

The Government of Spain, in conformity with United Nations recommendations and through a broad-based representative Committee for the International Year, has set itself two basic objectives for the Year.

We proposed, first, to examine and evaluate the situation of young people in our country. That has led to the report on youth in Spain, submitted last June, and the publication of a series of studies relating to sectoral aspects of young people in Spain.

From the report on youth in Spain I wish to emphasize the two conclusions that we find especially relevant. First, today Spanish youth are facing serious difficulties in becoming involved in the productive activity that should enable them to achieve economic self-sufficiency and family independence. The personal and social consequences of this forced extension of their juvenile status are, of course, a source of concern. Secondly, however - and this is the most relevant conclusion - we cannot continue to refer to the problems of youth as though they were an isolated matter; rather we must talk about the problems of society. Too often more attention is paid to the most spectacular and obvious effects of the problems of youth than to their true causes, which do not lie with young people themselves but in the society of which they are a part.

That is why the policy for youth must be designed to ensure that all Government action gives priority and importance to it and that it is allocated to and co-ordinated between the different departments with skill and dynamism to remain in contact with the feelings and realities of young people.

(Mr. Riera, Spain)

That conviction has led the Government of Spain and the Committee for the International Youth Year to work on the second major objective, namely, the promotion of youth programmes and policies as an integral part of social and economic development. Throughout this year specific programmes have been prepared in which almost all the various departments of our Ministries have participated. I should like to emphasize the plan for training young people and finding them jobs and the national plan to deal with drugs. At a forthcoming meeting of the Committee for the International Youth Year we shall present the programmes established in my country, which will be expanded for next year.

However, the youth policy will not be viable without the real and active participation of young people themselves. The direct promotion of young people's participation in all aspects of the life of our society, its forums and associations and especially its youth councils is a great responsibility for the administration. Such participation is not fictitious or imposed. Participation should be conceived as a real, freely exercised possibility for young people to contribute to the definition of objectives and the adoption of measures both in areas that directly affect them and in the taking of more general decisions in political, social, economic and cultural spheres of the community.

The motto of International Youth Year is "Participation, Development, Peace". Today no one believes that we can pursue those objectives without international collaboration and co-operation. Our world is experiencing an irreversible and continuous process of economic, political and cultural interrelationship. The problems of youth, which are problems of society, are not peculiar to any one country. They are questions of a general character, although naturally they take their own form in each place and under specific national policies.

(Mr. Riera, Spain)

Only through dialogue, mutual confidence and new North-South relations will it become possible to open up new and better horizons for young people. This is where the young people should be in the forefront, because they are the ones best qualified to break the infernal and irrational cycle of tension and confrontation in the world. Young people throughout the world have many things in common, but one thing in particular - the struggle for peace, a peace which cannot be reduced merely to the absence of war but involves full respect for human rights and the full sovereignty of all peoples.

Our country and specifically the city of Barcelona, was the site of one of the most important activities of the International Youth Year - the World Youth Congress, organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in which 608 young persons participated, as well as experts and high-ranking authorities on youth at the governmental level and from non-governmental youth organizations. That Congress corroborated what I have just said: that there is a need for dialogue and co-operation, through open, representative bodies, to confront with good sense and imagination, the problems that affect young people throughout the world.

The Spanish Government is firmly convinced that the International Youth Year should serve, inter alia, to strengthen the role of the United Nations as a forum for meeting, debate, study, co-operation and exchanges among Governments, experts and non-governmental youth organizations.

We cannot disappoint the expectation that has been created nor can we end International Youth Year on 31 December as though it were a kind of temporary phenomenon. This Year should be a point of departure for the programmes and activities set in motion to be amplified and consolidated in future years.

(Mr. Riera, Spain)

That is why we feel that this Conference, along the lines of the resolutions submitted, should commit all the organs of the United Nations system to the inclusion in their programmes of projects related to youth, to an increase in the funds made available to support programmes in the least developed countries, to the establishment of better and broader channels of communication with youth and to greater emphasis on the role of regional organizations as the most appropriate context for co-ordination and exchanges in their respective countries.

The Government of Spain, the Committee on International Youth Year, the Council of Youth of Spain and all of the non-governmental organizations in my country are prepared to provide their full co-operation and support for these objectives, because in the final analysis we all share one great responsibility: to build a freer, more just and more united world in which young people will feel themselves to be, and will in fact be, the protagonists.*

Mr. PAZ AGUIRRE (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): In the framework of the provisions of resolution 39/22 of 23 November 1984, which decided to devote a sufficient number of plenary meetings at this fortieth session of the General Assembly to policies and programmes relating to youth and to designate this the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year, my delegation wishes to express its support for this observance and our satisfaction at the achievements already attained in the preparation and observance of International Youth Year under the slogan "Participation, Development, Peace". This has helped to mobilize efforts at the local, national, regional and international levels in order to promote the best possible living conditions for young people and conditions for human and professional self-fulfilment as well as to ensure their

* Mr. Oyoue (Gabon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

active participation in the general development of the society of which they are a part in conformity with its features and the priorities of each country.

Accordingly, the delegation of Uruguay welcomes this opportunity to thank Mrs. Leticia Shahani, the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, for her comprehensive presentation in the Third Committee of the complex of items relating to youth and especially the item relating to International Youth Year.

Similarly, my delegation expresses its appreciation to Romania for the role it played in the preparation of this observance. My country has been closely linked to these activities, as may be seen from the Secretary-General's report in document A/40/701 of 11 October 1985.

Moreover, Montevideo was the city that hosted the Second Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting for International Youth Year held from 26 to 29 August of this year. The Meeting which played an important role in the preparation and celebration of International Youth Year was attended by representatives of 23 States Members, of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), an associated State, the Secretary-General, several of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the Organization, intergovernmental organizations and numerous non-governmental organizations.

The Government of Uruguay gave its fullest support to the initiative and was represented at the inaugural meeting by the Minister of Education and Culture, Mrs. Adela Reta, who made an important statement. Mr. Norberto Gonzalez, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, also spoke and a message was read from the President of Colombia, President Belisario Betancur.

The meeting requested the representative of Uruguay to introduce the corresponding report with its annexes at the fortieth session of the General

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Assembly through the Permanent Mission at the United Nations. Accordingly, document A/40/706 was circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

In relation to this mandate, my *délegation* wishes to make some general comments with respect to the debates that took place at the Second Regional Meeting and the final report that was adopted.

The presentations given by countries and organizations coincided in their concern about the effects of the shortcomings of the development model and of the present crisis in youth, especially as regards low levels of education and their inability to keep up with the major changes, especially scientific and technological, that are taking place in the present world.

The subject of education is thus one of the key issues within the sphere of the problems of youth. As was rightly said by Mrs. Adela Reta, Minister of Education and Culture of Uruguay, "a policy for youth is basically a policy for education." Indeed, restricted access to education and the consequent lack of vocational training not only perpetuates the cycle of poverty but also prevents the participation of young people in the development process.

The thematic framework of International Youth Year focuses on three categories that are interdependent: participation, development and peace. In societies in the process of change, as is the case with Latin American countries, the question of participation by youth takes on great importance. The construction of a democratic, free and united society cannot be achieved unless youth is one of the actors in social transformation and an active agent in political affairs. Young people cannot be relegated to the position of simple spectators of these processes. There is nothing more harmful to bringing about democratic coexistence and the strengthening and the development of democratic institutions than the estrangement of youth, either through limitations in the existing system or through

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attitudes of apathy, indifference or rejection by young people themselves, especially due to the insufficiencies of the development model, the effects of a crisis extending beyond the economic sphere and undermining the moral basis of society, leading to despair, scepticism or rebellion among youth.

Full participation of youth in the political, social and cultural life of society then becomes a challenge that has to be met by all of society, including, above all, by young people themselves.

The subject of participation is thus closely linked with development as one of the basic aims of our societies. And if development is the new name for peace, there is a clear interdependence among the three factors. Our region is seeking development in a framework of peace. As was pointed out at the Meeting, without peace there can be no development and without development peace is precarious.

Unfortunately, our region, made up of peoples deeply linked by historical, cultural and spiritual roots, has not succeeded in consolidating the inestimable blessing of peace. Breaches of the peace are increasingly affecting our countries and particularly our youth.

Consequently, a common effort among all social strata, with the active participation of youth, to achieve peace is essential.

Hence, the relevance of this threefold objective set for International Youth Year. How can it be reached? The regional plan of action formulated a series of proposals to which have been added, as part of the Second Regional Meeting at Montevideo, complementary actions, especially actions to arouse public opinion, and in particular, the awareness of social communicators and educators so that centres of teaching at all levels and communication media can become the transmitting bodies for education, justice, solidarity and fraternity, for liberty, education and peace and for national understanding.

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The educational activities are also aimed at forming an awareness among youth about their social responsibilities, about the intrinsic dignity of each human being, about the value of work, be it physical or intellectual, and the co-operation that each one can lend as a subject and not as an object of the relations of production, about the great importance of the commitment of personal service to the society in which one lives in conformity with the talents one has received, as an indispensable condition for the building of an authentically democratic and participating society.

(Mr. Paz Aguirre, Uruguay)

To this end it is necessary to increase the awareness of young people that the construction of such a society implies respect for the diversity that comes about when we admit of different religions, ways of thinking, and political and social ideas, which should coexist in harmony in a pluralist society. That respect is reflected in relations between peoples and States as a true basis for peace and a necessary condition for the development of nations.

In that context, young people must also be made aware of regional problems, in our case specifically those of Latin America. They must be presented with the alternative of integration into a plan for restructuring our societies by which inequality will give way to justice, obsolescence to modernity, marginalization to free and responsible involvement.

Those measures to increase awareness, are combined with substantive action in the legislative, administrative and financial spheres, aimed at establishing ongoing policies for the education and training of young people and for promoting their participation in society, and a comprehensive approach to the problems of youth, which should be integrated into the nation's general policies and development plans, so that overall objectives, specific goals and operational modes applicable to youth can be integrated into each such relevant sector.

Of course, these measures will vary according to the situation in each country and to national priorities, but certain types of national action can be identified as needing to play an important role in overall policies and programmes for youth in the countries of the region, such as the promotion of the practices of democratic organization, with the aim of training young people and making it possible for them to participate, as the case may be, in the management of social and educational institutions. Other vital areas include the following: education in human rights matters; incentives to develop youth projects related to specific national tasks in order to forge a sense of social responsibility and participation as a creative

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force for the development of the community; promotion of action by committed young people in joint social projects, especially in the area of rehabilitation of delinquent or disadvantaged young people, prevention of the abuse of harmful substances, particularly drugs and alcohol and of other forms of escape and self-destruction, and in any other kind of action which responds concretely to the effects of the crisis in our countries, such as malnutrition, school-leaving, high youth unemployment, and other acute social problems.

It is particularly on that area that we can focus much of our collective responsibility regarding the future of young people in many parts of the world. Developing countries are experiencing a chronic economic crisis resulting in a lack of opportunity for vast sectors of their populations, and are in no position to offer suitable expectations for young people, who have only one option: to live in poverty, deprived of culture and unemployed. For this reason they loose their bearings and feel that there is no future for them, whereas they should be offered appropriate ways of using their incipient abilities for the benefit of their societies.

An enormous social responsibility is therefore involved. Public action by States and Governments should take the form of programmes to increase the means of spreading education, which should be sufficiently up-to-date in order to provide the student with intellectual preparation in keeping with the needs of a rapidly advancing world society, especially in the area of new technology. But we must emphasize that all these programmes are closely linked with the social prospects and real opportunities for young people in the economy; and their success depends on those opportunities providing hope and expectations sufficient to prevent the exodus of young persons, to allow them to settle down in their own countries, and to enable them to use the culture they acquire as a means of leading a decent

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life. That in turn must become the principal driving force of a just and generous society, free from hatred and frustration.

Thus we must give high priority to concerns about problems regarding education at all levels, vocational training, the teaching of arts and trades, and the development of employment programmes.

Finally, a programme of action at the regional level has been proposed, intended principally to support national activities and to permit exchanges and co-operation among countries, including horizontal co-operation, in which an important role is assigned to international organizations.

Those are my delegation's general views on the second Latin American and Caribbean regional meeting for International Youth Year, over which it was Uruguay's honour to preside. That meeting constituted a significant contribution to the achievement of the goals of International Youth Year. We shall continue to support the Year with the greatest of interest; it has served well the cause of promoting, spiritually and materially, the young people of our region.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): Israel is a young country. Only 37 years ago it regained its independence, yet it has a rich history and a tradition of 3,000 years. The Jewish tradition brought to the world the then revolutionary idea that all men are created equal. The Jews introduced the concept that justice for all should be the law of the land, and that wisdom and acquired knowledge are the only real and worthwhile properties of man.

All through the history of the Jewish people, a person's standing in society was measured by his wisdom and knowledge, and not by his riches and physical strength. The focal point for every individual, therefore, was always the attainment of know-how and learning, and the education of the young.

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

The State of Israel has, on the basis of those ideas, always concentrated its attention on the education of youth as well as on providing continuing education for adults. In that way the younger generation can develop its own personality and be prepared actively to participate in the development and rebuilding of their country - their State - their home. Special attention has always been given to co-operation between and the integration of different cultural traditions, while at the same time allowing them to retain their uniqueness.

A variety of programmes have been designed to bring together young people of different cultural and social backgrounds. Israel has organized a youth network. There are regular meetings between urban youth and youth from rural settlements and kibbutzim - communal settlements. Jewish, Arab and Druse youth from the distressed areas and development towns meet regularly to promote better understanding. Religiously observant young people meet those who are not observant, and they also learn to understand each other better. These projects help, with comparative success, to build bridges of good will and mutual understanding between young people from different cultural backgrounds, environments and social strata. They often get together in seminars, summer camps and arts festivals and at sports events.

Major resources and special attention are devoted to the problems and needs of school drop-outs. The programmes help those youths who have not been absorbed into the work force and who are in danger of becoming delinquents. A variety of projects now serve that marginal element of the youth community, seeking to restore such people to society through a special combination of study and vocational training.

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

These programmes put an emphasis on equality and individual dignity and help those teenagers by enabling them to live and study in specially established youth villages. In those specially organized communities, deprived young people can enjoy an overall encouraging environment for their course of rehabilitation, which prepares them for eventual integration into society. Israel is ready and eager to co-operate in parallel efforts by other United Nations Member nations and to share with them our successful experience in this field.

The purpose of the United Nations in declaring the year 1985 International Youth Year was to remind all nations of their dual responsibility towards their youth, to provide each young person with the best education, to try and help to develop their personalities and social responsibilities and to ensure for them a life of peace, freedom, honour and comfort.

After the United Nations declared 1985 as International Youth Year, an Israeli national committee was set up to develop a comprehensive plan to mark it, focusing on the problems and needs of young people. The committee includes representatives of all institutions, public organizations and youth organizations involved with the young people of Israel. It drew up a comprehensive plan to mark the International Youth Year which focused on the problems and needs of young people. Existing programmes and activities were examined, and the involvement and co-operation of young people in community activities was encouraged.

Special attention was given to programmes which increased contacts and understanding among the young. Current youth projects were therefore intensified and new ones initiated. In the implementation of the International Youth Year programme, conventions and study days on the subject of youth were held, material on young people's rights and duties was published, joint festivals of various

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

youth groups were held and meetings were organized in joint youth camps for young people from Israel to meet the young people from other countries.

We in Israel are eager to promote such meetings. We want to give our youth the opportunity to meet with youth from each and every country. Unfortunately, Jewish youth of the Soviet Union could not participate in these projects because under the current policies of the Soviet Government they are not free. They cannot leave their country; they cannot study their ancestral language, Hebrew; they are not allowed to develop their Jewish cultural heritage. If they do, they face the danger of harassment from the authorities. They are not free to meet their brethren, the youth of Israel, in building bridges of international understanding.

International Youth Year in Israel was inaugurated by each local authority through youth conventions to discuss the problems and needs of young people. Volunteer programmes were formulated for young people to serve the needs of their local communities. Educators in secondary schools held special sessions on the Year, using special materials distributed by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Another International Youth Year programme, with the slogan "Peace, Involvement, Brotherly Love" is one that enables young people from all parts of Israel to work and serve voluntarily in towns and communities in need of such assistance. Those volunteers have helped school pupils with their homework, and acted as youth leaders in afternoon and evening youth centres, clubs and youth organizations, and on sports fields. They have helped ambulance crews in emergencies and the traffic police in teaching drivers and pedestrians road laws and safety regulations. These young volunteers have helped the aged and disabled in their homes and the sick and injured in hospitals.

All those activities have been planned and carried out parallel to International Youth Year projects around the world.

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A highlight of the Year's programme, emphasizing international good will and co-operation, was an International Youth Camp held in the National Forest from 11 to 15 August. Israel commemorated International Youth Year by issuing an International Youth Year stamp in July. A special poster on International Youth Year was published and distributed in advance to all secondary school classes, as well as to organizations involved in the planning of the Year's activities.

In July this year an international symposium on youth and disability was organized in Jerusalem. This month an international seminar on working youth and developing countries will be held, further emphasizing this international bridge-building aspect of the Year.

The commemoration of International Youth Year in Israel will conclude with a special week of activities culminating in national youth conventions, where special awards will be given to individuals and youth groups who distinguish themselves in the different fields of volunteer work in their communities.

It is my Government's hope that International Youth Year activities in Israel will help to summarize and evaluate a host of programmes for the youth of Israel that had been started previously while serving as a catalyst and a springboard for new plans and challenges to be taken up in the future.

"Participation, Development and Peace" as defined by the United Nations when it launched this important programme are the hallmarks of Israel's activities this year and will be in the years to come. There can be no real development without the widespread participation and involvement of the nation's youth, and there can be no real development without peace. Let us all unite to further those goals. Let us all, especially the young, share in further development towards peace in the Middle East and throughout the world.

Mr. HVITVED (Denmark): On behalf of the Danish Government I have the honour to address the Assembly on the occasion of International Youth Year. My Government has made it possible for representatives of Danish youth to participate as members of the Danish delegation to sessions of the General Assembly, and thus made it possible for me to make this speech on behalf of the Danish Government.

To us it is very important that youth be included in decision-making everywhere and at all levels. That, of course, requires that young people are respected and taken seriously, but at the same time, of course, they must also have the capacity to involve themselves. Danish youth do involve themselves daily in the society surrounding them. Decisions on our daily life and future are to be made not only for us, but with us and by us. So far, young people have not achieved their full influence, but we are willing to help obtain it in a constructive way.

(Mr. Hvitved, Denmark)

The year 1985 was declared International Youth Year with the main themes of "participation, development and peace". In Denmark the activities of the Year have been based locally, participation being the main theme. During International Youth Year some 120 local youth committees have been working on the themes of the Year, and thus many young people have actively involved themselves. By means of campaigns, meetings and pamphlets, the Secretariat of International Youth Year has informed young people about what opportunities for their participation do or do not exist.

Local youth councils have been created in several places in Denmark, and both a press centre for children and youth questions and a media centre have been set up on the occasion of International Youth Year. Through a special Youth Parliament, young representatives from the political youth organizations have been given the opportunity to discuss their wishes on youth policy.

Denmark stressed the theme "development" by means of a debate, and a subscription campaign for young people in Chile, Bolivia and Zimbabwe, and the Danish Government set up an international exchange centre in Copenhagen. Denmark's International Youth Year activities have been carried out both locally and centrally with such important themes as environment, leisure time, education and influence.

Young people today are facing a very difficult situation. The economic situation has resulted in a great number of unemployed people. The unemployed young lose their link with the surrounding society and their confidence. The high rate of youth unemployment may create an increase of conflicts in society and weaken young people's hope of a good future. Unemployment is a problem of special concern to young women. Traditionally, more women than men are unemployed and remain so for a longer period of time. This poses a risk to the progress towards equality made during the past decade.

(Mr. Hvitved, Denmark)

These problems will only be solved if the whole of the society is prepared to do so and if we are willing to take initiatives throughout the society. Furthermore, it is a prerequisite that everybody be ready to accept a distribution which will benefit the less privileged. The Danish Government has created more training opportunities in order that young people may have a chance to learn a profession.

It is equally important that those who show initiative in creating new jobs for young people be given the necessary support by society.

"Participation" is another of the themes of International Youth Year. It is essential to the development of our society that young people participate in decision making at all levels. It is question of our future: if it is built up without our participation, then the basis of future conflicts is already laid. Thus it is very important that a dialogue should exist between the decision-makers and youth. This dialogue is important because young people have new ways of expression and new norms differing from those valid for other parts of society.

Problems concerning education, employment and the acceptance of new norms may seem of minor importance in a world where a large number of young people live in developing countries. Those young people in the developing countries also need jobs, education and acceptance.

Of course, it would be a misunderstanding to believe that these problems are the only ones which the younger generation is concerned about. But if we do not pay attention to these conditions, we risk having young people behaving aggressively and perhaps being violent, and this is a threat to society. We have already seen examples of this tendency when young people find themselves in a desperate situation.

In the United Nations too, it is very important that attention be paid to youth and that young people be taken seriously. Ever since the twenty-fifth

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session of the General Assembly, representatives of youth have been included in the Danish delegation. The prerequisite for young people taking an active part in United Nations work is the existence of effective channels for information between young people, youth organizations and the United Nations.

Positive steps have already been taken, but something more can still be done. To us, International Youth Year is also an opportunity of improving the channels of communication. To us the Geneva Informal Meetings are such a mechanism. There seem to have been some misunderstandings concerning those Meetings and their role. It is very important to stress that the Geneva Informal Meetings are those of a broad organization which reflects all tendencies within its framework. In spite of the fact that several Governments have given those meetings political and financial support, there is no single or predominant political tendency at those meetings.

At the same time, it should be noted that those Geneva Informal Meetings represent the only broadly based forum linking the United Nations, youth organizations, and young people. Hence the United Nations should use International Youth Year as an opportunity to recognize those Meetings as the main channel of communication between youth and the United Nations. Furthermore, the Organization should give the Geneva Informal Meetings an opportunity of fulfilling its tasks as a world-wide channel of communication between young people and the United Nations, and should further the opportunities of having participants from developing countries at those sessions.

"Development" is another theme of International Youth Year. During 1985 there have been several activities designed to increasing solidarity between young people all over the world. The purpose of those activities has been to create an understanding of the situation of millions of young people and other underprivileged groups in the developing countries fighting against hunger and distress, and for economic independence, social justice and material progress. Those underprivileged groups are the main target of Danish development aid.

(Mr. Hvitved, Denmark)

The large amounts of money collected in the United States of America, Great Britain, Denmark and other countries through rock concerts this summer have shown that young people understand the need for a redistribution of resources. But they are also aware that music and concerts are not enough, that a redistribution of the world's resources must take place if there is to be a fair distribution between developed and developing countries. Such a redistribution is the only way to create the right conditions for the world to move towards social justice and an equal distribution of wealth through just economic relations on a basis of equality.

"Peace" is the third theme of International Youth Year. To us it seems that efforts to ensure that people have a peaceful and harmonious life can never be too extensive. Opportunities to create peace, and thus the prerequisite for participation and development are gravely threatened in our world of oppression, armed conflicts and an enormous arms race.

In our opinion the immense amounts which are spent on the arms race - both conventional and nuclear - could be used in a more constructive way to obtain peace by devoting them to development and civilian employment. We therefore support those United Nations reports on the connection between disarmament and development, and on conventional weapons.

In my part of the world we have lived in peace for 40 years, but young people still fear war and many of us are engaged in movements and organizations working for peace and disarmament. Young people today are worried about the arms race and the current development of new and even more destructive types of arms.

(Mr. Hvitved, Denmark)

Youth should be given every possibility of exchange with young people from other countries and continents, of travel to all parts of the world and to all nations, and of acquiring information on conditions elsewhere. At the same time all nations should implement the proposals on international education made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the special assemblies. These efforts will contribute to increased international understanding in a world where the young generation finds it hard to believe that mutual threats are the best guarantee of peace.

I have talked about the three main aspects of International Youth Year - peace, development and participation - as these themes and their meaning do engage Danish youth.

We are concerned that in many countries young people have no possibility of enjoying the most basic human rights. To us it is important that everyone enjoy his human rights. Hence, we have to support the oppressed people fighting for freedom. In particular developments in South Africa worry Danish youth. To us it is essential that concerted efforts be made to eliminate the apartheid system in South Africa.

It is important to have broad national follow-up on the International Youth Year in order that results gained during the Year are maintained and developed.

Attention should also be paid to the international results. In the United Nations, follow-up should ensure that there is insistence on youth aspects in all aspects of United Nations work. It is important that youth itself should profit from final recognition of the Geneva Informal Meetings.

Even though next year will not be an international youth year, I hope that young people will be included in the development of society. Only by ensuring peace, development and participation for youth will it be possible to create a future which is created not only for youth but by and with youth.

Mr. BARTLETT (Jamaica): This year, when we are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, it is quite fitting that youth, which accounts for nearly one third of the world population and 60 per cent of the population of developing countries, should be given special consideration.

The designation of 1985 as the International Year of Youth, on the initiative of Romania, is undoubtedly a most valuable contribution by the United Nations has made to the world. It has given the opportunity for the global community to focus on the substance of its raw material as it builds the foundations of the future. Equally it has offered the young forums for self-examination and analysis, in which to discuss their role in the process of human development and to advance their own ideas as to how that process should be structured.

Under the theme of "Participation, Development, Peace", youth of all persuasions, colours, classes and ideological inclinations have found new dimensions for themselves, sought new solutions to their problems and offered concrete proposals for the improvement of their conditions.

Through these conferences, festivals, symposiums, competitions, projects and debates, the message of human rights, peace, fundamental freedoms, social justice and human solidarity has been transmitted.

Indeed, the Year has essentially been a good and necessary one, but not sufficient - not sufficient because the multiple problems unearthed during the Year and the various solutions offered cannot be dealt with during any given calendar period or, indeed, within a decade. But a decade is a measurable time within which a determined focus on youth could provide trends and clues, as well as results, for securing meaningful improvement in the conditions of youth globally. My delegation, therefore, in supporting the draft resolutions before us, wishes specifically to make reference to the need for the United Nations to declare the

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period 1985 to 1994 the decade of youth and to establish immediately within the Commission on Social and Humanitarian Affairs the infrastructure to facilitate arrival at a meaningful agenda for that period.

The problems and ills which beset youth run the gamut of the ills which beset humanity, the most critical of which is unemployment, which robs the society of meaningful participation in its development by a large portion of its citizens. Equally it is a burden on the society. But the solution is not uniform in all nations. The developed countries provide a picture in sharp contrast to that of the developing countries. It is projected that the youth population of developed countries will decline to about 176 million by the end of this decade and remain at the same level for the following three decades. As a consequence, the number of young workers, at present at a peak level of 110 million, will decrease and will continue to shrink to about 88 million by the year 2020. This means that the pressure on jobs for young people will ease off considerably over the present decade and that the trend will continue well into the next century.

On the other hand, it has been pointed out that for developing countries the prospects are alarming. The youth population, which is 625 million today, is expected to continue this upward spiral and to number about 1,115 million by the year 2020. As a consequence, the youth labour force in developing countries is expected to increase by 70 million by the year 2000 and by another 50 million by the year 2020. The developing countries are faced, therefore, with the task of creating well over 100 million jobs in the next two decades in order to absorb the projected 70 million increase in the youth labour force and the existing 35 million shortfall in employment opportunities for jobless youth.

In essence, in developing countries there are three young applicants for every job that is available. These young people are forced to be idle and to drift to the cities. This condition breeds hopelessness and despair and leads to crime, political instability and a host of other social ills. Another major result of

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unemployment is the growing problem of teenage pregnancy. This problem further restricts the opportunities available to the young female within the population and is a major constraint on individual and societal development.

The latest scourge that has affected the youth of our societies is the growing menace of drug abuse. Jamaica has not been immune from this problem. For our part, however, we have resolved to eliminate this evil from our midst and have developed a vigorous programme of public education and legal sanctions to ensure maximum results.

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In Jamaica the rate of unemployment among young people aged between 14 to 29 is 45 per cent. Of this group the rate among women is about 60 per cent. Jamaica today, like most third world countries, is saddled with a debt crisis, faces an adverse balance of trade owing to changing market conditions and the rapid rate of technological change and an energy crisis, and is unable to find economic sources of alternate energy. Traditional exports have been undermined by new market demands and protectionist policies in some markets. All those factors together have made it necessary to devise new and innovative policies and programmes to deal with youth. We embarked on a structural adjustment programme which has the objective of transforming the economy. Its details require the adoption of a new approach to production and significant changes in the type of products generated in agriculture, industry and commerce. It further requires significant adjustments in the standard of living of our people and challenges our ability to achieve meaningful economic growth through self-reliance. In this context an integrated youth programme which is geared to the development of a new type of youth, responsive to the goals and reflecting the aspirations of the new imperatives is vital.

At the present time, 35,000 young people in our country enter the labour market annually. The Government has sought to deal with them through this programme which is designed to orient youth away from the traditional solution of seeking employment and to encourage them to become self-employed through the establishment of small enterprises. The programme involves three approaches:

First, training. This involves advanced skill training, craft training, agricultural skill training and also a school-leavers programme under which young persons are placed with private firms, and others are streamed-off to tertiary institutions.

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Second, the stimulation of income-generating activities. Under this heading we have developed a self-start fund which will provide credit for youth who have received prescribed training. In addition, there is the solidarity programme which provides assistance in identifying viable projects and offers technical support in the management of these projects.

Third, personal and community development. This is a multi-faceted and multi-pronged programme which seeks to improve all aspects of physical conditions, particularly those of youth within the inner-city areas, while addressing the social, cultural and spiritual needs of the youths who inhabit areas around the inner-city areas.

The problems I have outlined are not unique to Jamaica and the solutions we offer reflect only one approach. However, it is clear that programmes such as these will have limited success in developing countries which are buffeted by the harsh economic winds of our time. My Government sees, therefore, the need for a shift of resources in international institutions and a reordering of priorities so that programmes designed to alleviate the growing problems in developing countries may receive greater assistance and support.

This to my mind is essential if the growing consciousness and hopes generated by the celebration of International Youth Year are not to be frustrated but converted into practical measures to meet the genuine needs of our youth.

It is essential not to lose momentum. In order to ensure that principles and ideas bear fruit, there is a need to devise a system of institutions which will enable projects and programmes concerning youth to be made concrete and realizable. It calls for more than mere co-ordination of efforts of national committees or national institutions. It calls for more than the monitoring of activities. Instead, it suggests the need for a flow of funds properly directed to or through an appropriate organization to provide, where necessary, funding for

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national machinery and specific projects, particularly in respect of youth unemployment. Although none of the draft resolutions before us deals specifically with that issue, all to some degree or other require follow-up action. We are all of the opinion that, in most cases, follow-up action will be impossible without resources.

During April of this year the Jamaica Organizing Committee held the International Youth Conference and World Youth Festival of Arts in Kingston. The latter was designed to bring together young people from various parts of the world in joyous celebrations and to kindle a spirit of brotherly love among the youth of the world. The Youth Conference was designed to stimulate serious discussion of problems affecting youths of the world.

I wish again to commend to the world community the Kingston Declaration of Principles, which represents the essence of the International Youth Conference. The full document has already been put to the United Nations, and has been distributed for Member countries to read. In that Declaration, over 1,000 democratic youth leaders representing 300 delegations from 100 countries re-affirmed their adherence to freedom and justice and to the democratic way of life which finds expression in the cardinal principles of free speech, free and fair elections, access to information and freedom of movement and of dissent. Similarly, these youths have declared their opposition to racism and apartheid, to totalitarianism and authoritarianism, to régimes which seek to oppress young people and the peoples of those countries wherever they may be and, of whatever orientation; they also expressed their opposition to exploitation and economic injustice and to the arms race. The Kingston Declaration of Principles is yet another call to the present leaders of the world to restore sanity and decency to human affairs and to reduce the misery and suffering which are fast becoming the rule rather than the exception in human existence. That Declaration is also a

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message of hope, indicating that youth has a clear understanding of the problems and can offer some solutions. Therein lies a measure of hope for the future.

In concluding, we wish to express our firm solidarity with the youth of Namibia and South Africa, suffering under the apartheid régime and struggling to destroy that hateful system, and with youth everywhere who, in the face of tyranny, despotism and authoritarianism, strive in the name of justice and freedom to build a better world.

Mr. GALINDO QUIÑONES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The International Youth Year has led to a keen awareness of what the new generations are and what they represent now and for the future. It has brought about a vast mobilization of young people and of Governments everywhere, and has demonstrated the power of the United Nations to act as a centre in this respect as well as the nobility and universality of these three major goals: Participation, Development and Peace.

The young are the most sensitive part of the social fabric of mankind. Many of the people in the world are less than 24 years of age and are the most receptive segment of our society. At present there are 921 million young people in the world. Their thinking and action are the oxygen which gives life to nations and to international debates.

Many of the resolutions which emanated from the General Assembly, and all the struggles for justice and liberation which the peoples have been waging, have found in youth throughout the ages their main advocate and protagonist.

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From the many forums of discussion and debate in all parts of the world repeated demands are heard in connection with such things as the struggle for world peace and against the arms build-up and war; respect for human rights throughout the world; the defence of sovereignty; non-interference in internal affairs; the self-determination of peoples; the peaceful solution of disputes; support for the peace negotiations of the Contadora Group in Central America; condemnation of all forms of racial segregation, such as apartheid; the promotion of truly democratic and pluralistic policies for the benefit of youth in all countries; the quest for new mechanisms to facilitate access by the young to decision-making bodies; a minimum of well-being; establishment of a new international economic order; opposition to all forms of subjugation and individual and collective repression; and action to combat illiteracy and against anything that fosters drug addiction, alcohol abuse or any other form of social degradation.

One of the major forums in which these concerns were voiced was the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Congress in Barcelona.

The youth of the world demand full respect for their dignity, complete justice, unlimited freedom, increasing participation, full development and genuine and lasting peace.

We trust that, on the basis of this major mobilization, new seeds will emerge and bear fruit so that at the end of the millenium the whole world will be able to count on the will, the determination and the support of societies and Governments in fostering full development for the young within society as a whole. We hope that there will always be policies, programmes, structures and resources to benefit youth and help them develop better in all areas of human endeavour and that the struggle will continue to achieve better forms of organization and more effective

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mechanisms for participation that will bridge the generation gap and prevent conflict and guarantee continuity and changes that lead to improvement and progress.

In Mexico, the Government has been drawing up, establishing and giving effect to a youth policy along those very lines. We are bent on achieving the complete development of the new generation, fostering their training, organization and democratic, pluralistic, united participation, in a spirit of revolutionary awareness.

In my country the State and the society know that in youth there is an active, action-oriented element of the highest value, a very rich reserve for the present and future. One fourth of our population of almost 80 million is made up of young people between the ages of 14 and 24 living in rural and urban areas. Most are educated, and today they are being trained and their level of education is being improved.

The State has allocated most of its annual budget for the young to training the skilled personnel needed by the Government to confront the existing challenges of development, improving standards of living and eradicating whatever alienation and problems still exist. In this connection, we encourage social mobilization and support political mobility and interaction in a system involving a mixed economy which promotes private, social and public investment.

To carry out the various activities relating to International Youth Year we have established a national co-ordinating body led by our Head of State and made up of civil servants and youth leaders from the various political parties. Thus the varied ideological spectrum of our country is represented and fosters the concerted, pluralistic participation of youth and their leaders, as well as the promotion of those activities, which is unprecedented in Mexico.

In our country the theme chosen by the United Nations was understood in the following way. Participation was conceived in terms of giving greater democratic

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channels of participation in the tasks of the nation to youth; development as the promotion of education, culture, health, employment, housing, sports and recreation for the young; and peace as the ability of the young to struggle to uphold peaceful coexistence, human values and solidarity among all members of our society and with our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

To achieve those major objectives, national consultation forums were established for debate and discussion on matters and problems of interest to youth. From the national consultation that was conducted in the various capitals of the states of the Republic of Mexico recommendations and proposals emerged for the State, society and the youth organizations themselves. We should like to emphasize those that deal with employment, the situation of indigencous rural youth, health, ecology and the environment, education, culture, recreation, alienation, the social and political participation of youth, vocation, and urban youth, among others.

The President of Mexico recently designated 13 December of this year National Youth Day; it is a date that reminds us of the struggle of Mexican youth in 1847 to defend our sovereignty. On that day the National Congress of Mexican Youth and the corresponding national festival were inaugurated.

Because this is International Youth Year, special regular time slots have been allotted by radio, television and press for young people to express their viewpoints on various national and international problems. Periodicals and newspapers have been published, and many radio, television and film programmes prepared; various posters, leaflets, pamphlets and other means of communication have been printed. The idea was that the State and the society should be made more aware and should combine their efforts to have better and greater attention paid to youth. But,

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first and foremost, the idea was to mobilize the young people themselves to solve their own problems, setting aside paternalism of any kind.

In support of the United Nations initiative, the Mexican co-ordinating body, the Government and in particular the young themselves have been carrying out various activities involving such things as: a national congress; cultural and sports competitions throughout the country; the promotion of youth employment and programmes of economic development; various mass publications; the establishment of social solidarity brigades; demands for the young to vote in the 1985 elections; festivals in all the states of the Republic and in the capital; the establishment and development of a philharmonic orchestra; the establishment of clubs, committees and workshops for the development of youth, legal, labour, educational and health-related activities; and so on.

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We have issued a postage stamp that has already been catalogued throughout the world; we have issued commemorative coins and printed two youth yearbooks for 1984 and 1985. In schools, universities, neighbourhoods, trade unions, parties and churches, other important programmes were carried out and young people gathered to participate in these various activities. In this regard I have made a detailed report which will be made available to all of you.

In addition, I should like to say that, in Mexico, we have a political constitution which fosters peaceful coexistence and ensures rights for all our people. We have a national development plan and a programme whose main priorities are to make sure that the young, that is, the majority of our population, are the beneficiaries of our programmes. In accordance with 1980 figures, we have 15.5 million young people between the ages of 14 and 24. Out of a total of 34 million citizens of voting age, 9 million, or approximately 39 per cent, are between the ages of 18 and 24.

Our national educational system has 135,500 schools, which provide education to almost 25 million students from the lowest to the highest levels, and in which almost 1 million teachers are employed.

The goals of national renewal and revolutionary modernization called for by the President of Mexico, Miguel de la Madrid, specify that young persons and children in Mexico are the main beneficiaries of these programmes, and will become their strongest allies and promoters. We are today, therefore, carrying out activities to expand the legal framework necessary further to encourage and stimulate these sectors of our society.

Clearly, my country is doing a great deal for the new generation. It fosters humanism and the values of democracy, justice, freedom, independence and

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solidarity. At the same time my country promotes and disseminates the many cultures which are part of our national heritage. We are far from being a perfect nation, but we are doing our best to move ahead by democratic means and to break out of the crisis which besets us.

We have been promoting education, health, employment, housing, culture, recreation, sports and participation on many fronts, for these are vital for a nation on the move, such as Mexico.

We are striving to make a proper assessment of the energy, creativity and needs of the young, whom we encourage and in whose hands we place the future of our country.

We respect freedom and we are extending rights; we promote social solidarity and plurality. We have no censorship, nor repression, and we call for participation in the decision-making process. New horizons are constantly opening up for its development. We have established new forms of social organization which improve each and every community and which offer opportunities despite many difficulties.

Mexican youth are imbued with a great sense of humanity and an extraordinary dedication to the defence of the homeland, liberty, justice, independence and solidarity. They know full well how to distinguish between what is good and useful for the country and what is harmful to it. They are non-conformists; but they are positive human beings and seek transformation and progressive social change. They reject repression, interference and manipulation, as well as any form of intervention or intrusion by outside forces. Mexican youth is profoundly concerned with peace and the mobilization of the people, which helps to bring about the changes our society requires; they reject all kinds of oppression and find manipulative forms of capitalism repugnant. They strive to achieve a new, more

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just and egalitarian society. They are happy, friendly and sensitive to the pain of others. Recently, for instance, they gave an extraordinary demonstration of nobility when they helped their compatriots stricken by the recent earthquakes which affected Mexico City and other areas of the country.

Hundreds of thousands of young people from all social and cultural walks of life came out to give of their best and to help. They acted with great firmness and will to save lives, with great talent and an enormous compassion. They acted from altruism, without expecting any compensation, following the earthquakes, which gave them greater courage to achieve the tasks of reconstruction and which will become the starting-point for a new era, which Mexicans intend to turn into a brighter future. They acted with renewed strength, to turn sorrow and need, made worse by the economic crisis, into stronger bonds of brotherhood.

This lesson of greatness which they gave to the world is rooted in the involvement of Mexican youth in another era, in social movements struggling for national independence and the establishment and consolidation of the Republic during the last century. Furthermore, it stems from their great deeds at the time of the Mexican Revolution, the seventy-fifth anniversary of which we will be commemorating on 20 November, representing a great achievement, and which is now an institutional process, a process of renewal under whose protection our leaders and our people, particularly our youth continue to work hard on the many tasks which still lie ahead to help the poor of our country.

These are the values underlying policies for Mexican youth. The State applies these policies through various public bodies in support of the efforts of promotion, co-ordination and implementation carried out by our National Council of Resources for Youth, which works at the national level with the support of the Federal, state

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and municipal Governments and calls upon society to ensure that all these actions are carried out on a growing scale to cover an increasing number of young people.

We agree to a large extent with the proposed recommendations of the intergovernmental Advisory Committee which are being discussed at this meeting.

For example, we believe it is important to support the establishment of institutional structures to help the youth of those countries that do not have such structures. These bodies must have a very high participation from young people and work on the basis of concerted efforts. The United Nations as well as its agencies can make a valuable technical contribution for this purpose. In this connection, many countries, including Mexico, can co-operate by offering their own experience.

Bearing in mind the fact that this year has helped to sensitize public opinion and governments but also that it is a very short period of time in which to help youth achieve its full development potential, we believe that it is necessary to declare an international decade for youth from 1985 to 1995 so that, in that period of time, the Organization, as well as Governments and youth movements themselves may achieve the meaningful goals which they require for youth and its development.

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Thus we can perhaps lessen the adverse effects of having only 12 months devoted to problems of such major importance. We know that education of the future generations in the spirit of participation, development and peace is vital for the world.

From a social standpoint, the development of the world is in the hands of the young, and that is why it is so important to give them priority attention in all areas. With this in view, in order to better co-ordinate and apply the resources of the United Nations and its specialized agencies devoted to youth, and seeking to establish an institutional framework in which these programmes may be organized on a continuing basis beyond the international year or decade, we believe that we must do more and give greater support, because we cannot afford to waste time.

We believe that all countries want more concerted efforts for youth throughout the world. Rich and poor alike, we all have many young people to take care of, 187 million of whom live in developed countries and 734 million in developing countries.

Finally, Mexico salutes the youth of the world, and we call upon the young not to give up in their struggle. We know that where there is peace that peace must be preserved on the basis of respect, justice and freedom, and where peace does not exist it is of the utmost importance to struggle to achieve that peace, as is indeed done today by the youth of Central America, Africa and the Middle East.

We are convinced that youth provides us with the best seedbed for peace and fraternity. Hence we believe that Governments and social agencies must receive the support of youth increasingly to carry out the tasks ahead. Nothing can be achieved well without youth. Policy-makers must remember that dignity is to the human person what autonomy is to social organizations, what independence is to peoples and nations and what sovereignty is to States.

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): Ecuador is participating in this World Conference for the International Youth Year with the vitality of a young country where 62 per cent of the national population is composed of people under 24 years of age and where 2 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24 form the bulk of our electorate, thus keeping alive our national democratic system.

In connection with that World Conference, my Government has sent the following message to the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

"On behalf of the Government of Ecuador, I wish to convey a message of peace and friendship to all the young people of the world on the occasion of International Youth Year. The National Government has accepted the recommendation of the United Nations and has made arrangements for International Youth Year to be celebrated in the form of a number of co-ordinated cultural, scientific, artistic, sporting and social events, with a view to ensuring that the young people of Ecuador play a positive role in shaping the future of our country.

"The National Government is aware of the great importance of this topic and will continue to support all efforts made at the international level to ensure the active involvement of youth in the process of the economic and social development of peoples in a climate of peace friendship and understanding among all nations." (A/40/864)

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

In a significant coinciding of functions and aims, the same high-level committee in Ecuador which deals with International Youth Year does the same for the International Year of Peace. It is composed of the Ministers of Social Welfare, External Relations, Education, Culture, Sports, Agriculture and Defence and the representatives of our National Institute for Children and the Family. This committee undertook the task entrusted to it by the President of the Republic, Leon Febres Cordero, for a period to include next year, which would involve the carrying out of cultural, scientific, artistic, social and sport programmes, as well as research and consultations on the needs of Ecuadorian youth in order to ensure their full participation in the future of our country.

Regarding the goals and purposes established by the United Nations for this year and its slogan, "Participation, Development, Peace", we must point out in particular the importance which Ecuador attaches to the concept of development, which is considered to be the primary objective for our national and international activities, because it involves justice in both areas and the aim of achieving a better economic, social and economic life for individuals and peoples. Thus in the United Nations the lofty objectives of peace, disarmament and collective security constitute factors conducive to development, to the transfer of resources, to bridging the existing gap between the rich and the poor countries and, with the co-operation of youth throughout the world, to the overcoming of these problems on the basis of co-operation towards the reduction of tension, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the defence of the environment and true international co-operation.

The young people of Ecuador have responded to the call of the United Nations with great energy and hope, demonstrating their readiness to act responsibly for development without any distinction as to race, sex or social origin.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

In support of this process we have found to be very useful the documents issued by the Secretary-General, in particular those for the preparation and observance of the International Youth Year, "Participation, Development, Peace" (A/40/701), the report of the Advisory Committee submitted by the Secretary-General (A/40/256) and the report on social development entitled "Situation of youth in the 1980s" (A/40/64).

In this context, the activities in Ecuador have been conducted not only with regard to participation, in development and the maintenance of social peace, but also in terms of the establishment and organization of cultural activities of historical and artistic nature, school festivals, round table conferences, and research based on broad co-operation on the part of our youth. We have also conducted campaigns for the prevention of drug addiction and various forms of social pathology, as well as various school competitions in sport, literature, science and other activities, youth encounters, involving youth from rural and urban areas, and various tree-planting campaigns and arts and crafts exhibitions.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

A private organization, the 4-F National Foundation, which is concerned with the social and public interest and devoid of any political, religious or racial criteria, at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock undertook, in connexion with the International Youth Year, the promotion and organization of young rural Ecuadorians through the network of 4-F clubs with a view to developing civic values, loyalty to the community and responsibility in carrying out creative work in farming, arts and craft and community improvement projects, under the guidance of volunteer leaders and experts in various spheres of rural activity.

Various international meetings have been organized with technology and sports as themes, as well as cultural contacts in various intellectual spheres promoted by the State, the House of Culture and private entities.

Activities planned for 1985 and 1986 with youth participation in programmes between representatives of various regions of our country on subjects such as specific solutions required for the building of a world based on peace are proceeding apace.

The role of youth in national development is contemplated and fostered in the formulation of the National Development Plan, which has just been established by the National Government, in accordance with a formula devised by the National Development Council for the 1984-1988 period, with yearly goals on a global and sectoral scale for the economy, plans and programmes for investment and public services with the full participation of youth in the various aspects of promoting national growth in food production, the building of housing generating employment, as well as programmes for urban and rural development, agrarian reform and the setting up of rural settlements, the protection of the environment by means of programmes such as afforestation and the preservation of water resources, as well as mountaineering, travel for social awareness and working towards the full utilization of human resources in general.

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

Ecuador's best resource is its youth. With our youth we propose to have the country make progress towards the third millennium, in keeping with the ideals of the United Nations, to involve our youth in the crucial decisions for its future as a people upholding the objectives of participation, development and peace of this International Youth Year.

I should like to express the gratitude of the delegation of Ecuador for the fine work done by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, whose recommendations we hope will be endorsed by the General Assembly. Similarly, we are grateful to the Secretariat for its activities in ensuring the success of this Conference.

Mr. DIALLO (Mali) (interpretation from French): The General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session designated the year 1985 as International Youth Year.

The reports of the Secretary-General in documents A/40/64 and A/40/265 have provided in-depth and precise information on the programme of activities for the Year, on the situation of youth in the 1980s and on the extremely important role youth can play in the search for solutions to the problems of society and the community of nations.

The holding of a World Conference for the International Youth Year in this year of the fortieth anniversary of our Organization is, in our view, of particular importance. This is an exceptional event which enables us to consider problems pertaining to youth, as well as the opportunities for youth to take a direct part in the dawning of a better world.

As the energy and the hope of a nation, youth has always had pride of place in society. When we consider their numerical importance, the high level of their awareness with regard to national questions and world issues, and its impatience in wishing to take part in decision making, we are faced with the fact that today nothing constructive or worthy can be done without its participation.

(Mr. Diallo, Mali)

Indeed, 20 per cent of the world's population is between the ages of 15 and 25 - in other words, 800 million individuals 75 per cent of whom are in the developing countries. The problems of youth are so numerous and so urgent that we could not lay down any strategy for development and social progress without taking into account the far-reaching aspirations and needs of youth.

The triple theme "Participation, Development, Peace" of the Conference clearly indicate the importance of this question and the interests it arouses, since youth is indeed the focal point of all the aspects of any country's policy: education and vocational training, employment, unemployment, health, democratic freedom, national independence, peace, the environment and ideals of progress.

All these aspects concurrent with the advancement of youth are among the factors, among many others, underlying the way in which a community deals with its youth and provides it with opportunities to realize its aspirations and to leave its stamp on a common future.

Hence every country has a set of measures designed to support, foster or direct individual and collective initiatives of youth itself and help them to develop their self-reliance and their active involvement in society.

In Mali, youth constitutes almost 53 per cent of our population. This means that the problems of youth are the focal point of the concerns of the political and administrative authorities in my country, which has celebrated with great enthusiasm International Youth Year.

Thus, since November 1984, the Department in charge of youth activities set up a National Commission and Regional Commissions entrusted with the task of considering overall problems of concern to youth nationally, regionally and internationally. Organizations of rural and urban youth, women's organizations, trade unions and technicians of ministerial departments took part in the realization of programmes for the activities laid down by these Commissions.

(Mr. Diallo, Mali)

Through their own organizations and structures, our youth is carrying out sports, artistic and cultural activities. It is participating actively at the grassroots level and at the highest levels of the political life of our country and to work on national and regional construction sites. There exists a National Service for Youth with the task of promoting the education, civic and professional training of youth with a view to its effective and full participation in the economic, social and cultural development of the country.

Our youth has relations of co-operation and enjoys exchanges in all spheres - sports, culture and politics - with youth organizations in other countries. It follows with great interest and support and in full solidarity youth organizations in countries still under colonial domination or living under the apartheid régime.

Our youth has always taken part in the World Festival of Youth and Students.

(Mr. Diallo, Mali)

As the central theme of International Youth Year, Mali has chosen the involvement of young people in the flow of production. The choice of that theme was dictated by the fact that the crisis in employment has assumed a national dimension in my country. As a sub-Saharan country, Mali has for more than a decade been subjected to the cumulative effects of drought and desertification. That situation has had a deleterious effect on agricultural production and on the livestock sector, creating a veritable catastrophe in rural areas. As a landlocked country, Mali has been sorely afflicted by fall-out from the world economic crisis. The slow-down in economic activity and the insufficient level of productive investments have created a situation of under-employment characterized by growing unemployment, increasing mass-migration and delinquency.

In the face of a such an unfavourable economic situation, it has become almost impossible to implement any sort of strategy designed to include young people in all aspects of development.

How can the young people of the third world be able to participate directly in shaping the future of mankind and play a useful role in the establishment of a new international economic order based on equity and justice, when their very existence is being threatened by the arms race and by the events and political consequences of the world economic crisis?

The Governments of developing countries are very well aware of the role that young people should be playing in nation-building. As we said earlier, every country has its policy, its strategy for dealing with its own young people. However, the implementation of that policy and strategy is generally compromised by climatic vicissitudes and by a breakdown in the fundamental balances in our national economies.

In order to achieve our goal we need the establishment of a more just international economic order and a halt to the arms race. The involvement of United

(Mr. Diallo, Mali)

Nations bodies and institutions, of non-governmental organizations and international youth organizations will also be very important in the elaboration, implementation and co-ordination of policies relating to young people.

My delegation believes that in establishing and facilitating co-operation among youth organizations, in mobilizing all young people to rally around the theme "Participation, Development, Peace", between today and the end of the decade we will be able to reduce the number of young people living on the fringes of society and increase their participation in the development process.

The mobilization of all people of goodwill the world over and the creation of conditions for the implementation of a genuine policy of equity and justice in international relations will enable us to offer young people the opportunity and the satisfaction of contributing to the building of a world of prosperity and peace, a world they will want to inherit and in which they will want to live.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The next speaker is the representative of the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations, upon whom I now call.

Ms. REINER (Holy See): It is with special satisfaction that the Holy See is speaking at this Conference on Youth as International Youth Year moves to its climax at this fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The preparations everywhere have been extensive, and the collaboration of the Catholic Church has been marked by the vitality and joy that characterize many young people in the Church today. Youth activities of the Church have included the International Meeting of Youth in Rome, with the participation of about 250,000 young people who demonstrated the great openness and interest of Catholic young people in the task of building a society of justice and peace inclusive of the spiritual dimension of human persons. Pope John Paul II sent a special message to the World Congress on Youth convened by the United Nations Educational,

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Scientific and Cultural Organization in Barcelona. Further, an annual World Day of Youth has been designated by the Catholic Church to direct attention to the contribution and potential of youth in creating a better future. Finally, I would like to recall the numerous programmes, seminars and meetings initiated by the many international Catholic non-governmental organizations with the participation of young people.

The Holy See would therefore express appreciation to all the members of the Third Committee, who for many years have guided the planning for this momentous occasion, and also to the Secretariat for its work culminating in this important event.

As the member of my delegation appointed for this agenda item, I would like to contribute from my research and my experience with my peers on three continents to the international dialogue here in three areas: the importance of International Youth Year, the situation of youth today and some major concerns of contemporary youth for consideration by the United Nations in the future.

The significance of International Youth Year needs to be exposed fully in order to enrich and to guide the actions of the international community in behalf of youth. Careful reflection on the truth about International Youth Year is a means of renewal and rededication.

Although the attractions and stresses of this moment in history command intense attention, the future of youth imposes an overriding importance because the future of youth signifies the future of all humanity. There is no tomorrow without the youth of today. The tomorrow of the world lies in the minds and hearts and hands of today's young people. Youth is the state of the future, and the young are the society of tomorrow. The destiny of all humanity is the destiny of this present generation of youth. When we ask ourselves, "What do we want for our future?" the accuracy of our answer hinges on what we are doing with, and for, our

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youth today. For these reasons, International Youth Year appears to us as a time of action to prepare the adulthood of the millions of youth of the world. My delegation insists most emphatically that the world of tomorrow and its society are created out of the actions for and with the youth of today.

Therefore, we say that the youth of today hold the key to the transformation of society. The hopes and plans made during this International Youth Year pass into the hands of my generation for implementation. The improvements envisioned and sought by adults will be realised as they are moulded by today's young people, and, in turn, my generation needs to learn this same lesson immediately, for the rapidity of social change is a reality we must cope with. We will have to be ready to prepare for our tomorrow, which is in the hands of the children of today. Therefore, communication among generations assumes increasing importance, and the openness of heart and mind, and that willingness to learn from others characteristic of little children, as proclaimed by Jesus in Christian Scripture, becomes essential for the happiness of all.

Most importantly, International Youth Year moves all of humanity closer to what we want to be. This year must be the beginning of the co-ordination of long-term programmes to confront the grave problems which menace the very existence of humanity by threats to the environment, which attack human creativity by unemployment and which diminish the fullness of humanity by erosion of the spiritual dimension of life.

International Youth Year is an opportunity for youth and adults together to renew themselves. It provides an impetus for all generations to overcome marginalization and divisions of all kinds in order to unite to make a new world where participation, development and peace flourish. It is a challenge to address jointly the uncertainties of the new century and to construct together the new civilization of truth and love.

(Ms. Reiner, Holy See)

Certainly one of the achievements of International Youth Year concerning which the world community can already be pleased is the amount of research undertaken through the United Nations Secretariat on the situation of youth. For the first time, as the documentation shows, we know more about the conditions of the youth of the world than before. The results of the research are alarming: health, education, unemployment; the situation of young women, of young refugees, of migrants and prisoners, of so-called street and abandoned youth, of young prostitutes, both male and female, homeless young people, and victims of violence are often in perilous situations and, we might say, unjust situations when compared with the attention, talent and finances devoted to armaments and destruction. The Holy See has called attention to this injustice on many occasions, and at this time we bring the attention of this International Youth Year meeting to such a scandal in the hopes that action will be taken on behalf of these particular youth groups.

In the matter of peace, a priority theme of International Youth Year, young people today are in the front row. More acutely than others for whom they are often the privileged expression, youth longs to live. And yet they are the first to be forced to take up arms, the first to be indoctrinated and manipulated in favour of violence and war. Many young people are convinced that war is not preparation for peace, and it is not a road to peace. Yet often in the quest for peace our ready good will is rebuffed and looked upon with condescension. Young people must often overcome the snubs of cynics and the indifference of those unwilling to listen to them and to encourage their participation in matters concerning themselves and their future, for example, peace. The willingness to participate must be given encouragement in each young person for otherwise we will not develop our abilities to help attain universal peace. Moreover, we will not achieve fulfilment as persons, for peace means the fulness of being. The words of the Holy Father give us confidence and strength here: "I believe in youth with all my heart and the strength of my conviction", he said.

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The youth of today are very demanding, sometimes falling into exaggeration and succumbing to personal selfishness. In us there is a desire for honesty, truthfulness, justice and consistency. There is widespread dissatisfaction among us evoked by the widely evident lack of justice and generosity. Very sensitive to the tension between good and evil in the world and in ourselves, many of my peers suffer intensely at the victory of falsehood and injustice and at our powerlessness to make truth and justice triumph. Like the youth of every age, we are searching for truth, for ideals to live by, for responsible participation, moral beauty and innocent joy.

The suffering of young people results also from the contradictory nature of the ideologies that impinge upon us and from the continuing emptying of ideals which we witness. Professional integration in societies where pleasure is the purpose of life demands compromises which for many of us sometimes inspire revolt, escape or resignation. But employment is not even available to so many, even though they have the necessary skills and are animated by good will to contribute to society. Young persons without work are exposed to every type of temptation: violence, drugs, even despair and suicide.

Also we are a questioning youth, wanting to account for what is happening, looking for the meaning of our own lives and the significance of humanity and of the whole universe. We are a youth which invokes certainty and clarity on our own destiny and with regard to our own conduct. Ours is a period of transition when uncertainties abound. Questions arise among us: what meaning does the life we are living have? Is it possible to hope? Certainly, clear ideas, well-defined goals and concrete proposals respond best to our needs. We sense the necessity of finding a reality that may give a decisive and ultimate meaning to our fragmented reality.

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Finally, we are a youth filled with fear: fears about the threat to survival of our human species, anxiety about the threat to peace in our world because of atomic armament, worry about the destruction of our ecological balance and our beautiful planet Earth and concern for the problems of our nations which remain unresolved for so long.

These then are some characteristics of youth today: critical, demanding, suffering, questioning and fearful.

An initial concern of my generation can be phrased this way: what will be the meaning of existence in the future? In the third millennium, the time of maturity for the youth of today, many of us believe that we will find our meaning in truth, the possession of truth and the possibility of living in truth. This is truth in thought and truth in action. To experiential and scientific truth must be added a profound moral and religious formation that will be deeply lived and bring about an increasingly harmonious synthesis between faith and other human dimensions: reason, culture, life. In his Apostolic Letter to the Youth of the World on the occasion of International Youth Year, Pope John Paul II explains:

"Truth is the light of the human intellect. If the intellect seeks, from youth onwards, to know reality in its different dimensions, it does so in order to possess the truth, in order to live the truth."

Youth seeks the meaning of human life in truth, the Truth that, as the Church teaches, will make us free.

A second concern of my generation is: how to arrive at goodness, how to pass through sacrifice, effort and struggle to a final triumph. The importance of the family as a teacher of good and a mentor of the good life cannot fail to be recognized. The stable family can provide for the young members loving patience, understanding and support so that they can discover their own infinite capacity for love, trust and sharing. This aspect of the family's educative role is particularly

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relevant to young people as they approach the age of marriage. The responsibilities of raising a family are enormous and in order to establish a solid and loving family relationship, the necessary qualities must already have been cultivated. The family that encourages its younger members to persevere in the face of difficulty must itself be encouraged by society.

However, in many instances today we find that the ideal of mutual support and development between society and the family is non-existent and the two are often in opposition to each other. If the family must fight for its own survival it cannot also give the necessary guidance to the young persons within it. Consequently, society suffers the double loss of breakdown in the family and the young person's frequent engagement in anti-social behaviour. Moreover, because their sense of self-esteem was not developed within the family or because they did not have the benefit of family protection, young people are exploited in degrading occupations such as prostitution. The Holy See strongly defends the rights of the family against undue interference in its structure and functioning and condemns those situations that debase the fundamental integrity of the person.

Finally, a concern of ours is how to explain to the world why we young people are filled with hope. How do we explain to the world the hope that lies at the very root of youth? Pope John Paul II and many others refer to us as "the hope of society" and "the hope of peace". In fact, youth is a sign that tells people of all ages something about themselves and about what it is to be a creation of God. The images of youth, such as beauty, strength and enthusiasm, symbolize qualities potential within every human person. Youth then is a precious possession, available to each one, not merely to those in the 15-24 age bracket. It is a timeless state defying death and it is a reminder that death is not the end and that death has been conquered. If the folly of youth is to cling to materialism, the wisdom of youth delves into a deeper vision of life where love, beauty,

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strength, enthusiasm, courage and resilience flourish. These youthful qualities and spiritual powers live within persons of all ages, and International Youth Year is above all a call to honour such youthful qualities of human nature.

In conclusion I return to an appreciation of International Youth Year as an impetus for the years ahead. This moment marks a determination not to leave the future to chance. It signals a time of commitment: the adults of today commit themselves to youth for a transformation of society into a better world tomorrow. Today's youth, my generation, commits itself to children, the youth of tomorrow and to the society we begin in collaboration with the adults of today. Basic to our future together is the assumption that work for youth must be done with youth. We urge a greater investment of human resources to prepare youth for the tomorrows and the optimism, dedication and good will of the adult generation to prepare with us for a future beyond this great International Youth Year.

The meeting rose at 7.40 p.m.