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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 14 November 1985, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. DE PINIÉS (Spain)

later: Mr. AL-KAWARI (Vice-President) (Qatar)

- Expression of condolence to the Government and people of Colombia

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] (continued)
- Policies and programmes relating to youth: report of the Third Committee [95] (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

EXPRESSION OF CONDOLENCE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF COLOMBIA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Before we take up the agenda for this morning, I should like, on my own behalf and on behalf of all members of the General Assembly, to extend to the Government and people of Colombia our deep sympathy on the tragic loss of life and the tremendous material damage caused by the eruption of the Nevado del Ruiz volcano. May I also express the hope that the international community will demonstrate its solidarity, and generously and swiftly respond to any request for assistance.

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 (continued)

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): This morning, the Assembly, pursuant to resolution 39/22 of 23 November 1984, will continue its series of plenary meetings designated as the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year and dealing with agenda items 89 (International Youth Year: Participation, development, peace) and 95 (Policies and programmes relating to youth).

Before calling the next speaker, I remind representatives that, in accordance with the decision taken yesterday afternoon, the list of speakers in the debate will be closed today at 12 noon. I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names as soon as possible.

Mr. AURICH (German Democratic Republic) (spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation): On behalf of the younger generation in the German Democratic Republic I should like to extend warm greetings to the participants in the United Nations Youth Conference held under the motto "Participation, Development, Peace".

The present period of time confronts young people the world over with the historic task of preserving the hard-won world peace beyond the year 2000.

Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, addressing the youth of our country earlier this year, said:

"Never before have those alive been entrusted with such a vast measure of responsibility as today's generations, not only for themselves but also for their children and grandchildren. Echoing the feelings of all people in the German Democratic Republic, the youth are demonstrating for all the world to see that they are unswervingly committed to peace for today and all time, peace for our people and for all countries, peace for those living today and for generations yet unborn."

The six million children and young people of the German Democratic Republic are growing up right in the heart of Europe, the starting point of two devastating world wars. Today, we are holding out our hand to all those who share our commitment to peace and anti-imperialist solidarity. We are in favour of a world-wide coalition of common sense and realism in order to head off the danger of a nuclear holocaust now looming over the human race, and to shape international relations in a spirit of détente.

Full of hope, we are therefore looking to the meeting between the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan.

(Mr. Aurich, German Democratic Republic)

The young people of the German Democratic Republic support the peace proposals submitted by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty member States, as reiterated at Sofia recently. We are in favour of terminating the arms race, preventing its extension to outer space and achieving drastic cuts in armaments, especially in the nuclear field. "Star wars" must never get off the ground.

For this reason we welcome the Soviet Union's unilateral suspension of nuclear explosions. We support its proposals to reduce strategic nuclear weapons by 50 per cent and to agree upon a reduction of medium-range weapons in Europe. They testify to the Soviet Union's desire to bring about a change for the better in the world and in Europe. We would like to see the United States adopt an equally constructive approach to the preparations for the summit in Geneva.

The young people of our country fully support the proposal addressed by the Governments of the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe. We consider the idea of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Europe, as submitted by the Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme, to be just as reasonable as the proposals for nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions. Erich Honecker, the highest representative of our country, has expressed the readiness of the German Democratic Republic to make available all its territory for a zone free of battlefield nuclear weapons.

1986, the International Peace Year proclaimed by the United Nations, will prompt the Free German Youth, affiliated to the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Student Union, to redouble its efforts to preserve and defend peace. As before, we will do everything in our power to make sure that no more war, but only peace, will henceforth emanate from German soil.

(Mr. Aurich, German Democratic Republic)

The Twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students held in Moscow earlier this year, the most important forum for peace in International Youth Year, has enhanced our optimism. Therefore, we are convinced that we will succeed in staying the hand of those bent on war before the first shot is fired.

As is borne out by the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the situation of the younger generation in various parts of the world is exceedingly unsatisfactory. Many young people are fighting to secure their elementary needs. The youth of the German Democratic Republic, therefore, extend full solidarity to the peoples and States and their youth fighting for independence and freedom. We stand firmly by the side of free Nicaragua. We condemn South Africa's criminal racial policies, and fight for the release of African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela and other patriots. We support the struggle of the Palestinian people for their right to independent statehood, and we support the peoples of South-East Asia, Latin America and the front-line States in southern Africa in the defence of their hard-won national sovereignty.

As an example, 17 friendship brigades are at work in nine countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia. They are providing help in the fields of medical care, vocational training and technical maintenance. Young people from emerging nations receive a solid vocational training and university education in our country.

In the German Democratic Republic, the basic right of the younger generation to take part in political life, the right to work and recreation, to education and to happiness have become everyday practice. Never has there been on German soil a social system which has put so much faith in the rising generation, entrusted so much responsibility to it and offered it so much scope for creative self-fulfilment.

We set great store by material security. Young people in the German Democratic Republic do not know unemployment from their own experience. On the

(Mr. Aurich, German Democratic Republic)

basis of a rapid pace of productive growth and efficiency we are seeking to ensure steady improvements in the living and cultural standards of all classes and sections of the population, including the youth.

Every child can attend a 10-year general polytechnical school. All those growing up enjoy equal opportunities for development. During the past 15 years, public spending on school education has more than doubled. One-third of all pupils attend a school not older than 15 years. The average class size has dropped to 20 pupils. All schoolchildren can have hot meals at school and they are supplied with milk, with the State paying millions of marks to finance such programmes. Most pupils spend part of their summer vacation in a holiday camp.

(Mr. Aurich, German
Democratic Republic)

Every school-leaver, boys and girls alike, whether from a town or from a rural area, has the opportunity to learn a trade or profession. There are statutory provisions guaranteeing every apprentice a job. Apprentices are entitled to extended holiday leave and to monthly apprentice pay.

As far as university or college education is concerned, all undergraduates receive a grant, regardless of their parents' income. Three quarters of all students live in modern halls of residence at a very low rent. Special concern is shown for students with children. Students pay only half of the actual expenses for meals served in university restaurants. Needless to say, students, pupils and apprentices benefit from concessionary fares and reduced admission fees at public events. Stable prices for essential commodities and services are of great help for the material situation of young people in general.

Our State takes special care of young families. Interest-free loans are granted to newlyweds, loans which are waived either completely or in part when children are born. Measures have been taken to help young parents live up to their obligations on the job and in the family. They include a six-month maternity leave, childbirth allowances, paid leave of absence for one year at the birth of a second child, and the provision of places in crèches and kindergartens for all who want them; all these measures help young parents to fulfil both their professional and family obligations at the same time.

At present a large-scale construction scheme adopted by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany is under way in all parts of the country to solve the housing problem as an issue of social relevance by 1990. Since 1971 the housing situation has thus been improved substantially for more than 7 million citizens of the German Democratic Republic.

All citizens of our country are entitled to free medical care. The health of

(Mr. Aurich, German
Democratic Republic)

young people has shown a favourable trend. Infectious children's diseases are no longer a major issue. As an example, no child in the German Democratic Republic has fallen ill with tuberculosis or polio in recent years. A great number of diseases occur much more infrequently than in the past. Drug addiction is unknown. We are paying a great deal of attention to the promotion of a healthy way of life, to the observance of legal regulations concerning the protection of the health of children and adolescents, and to the encouragement of mass sport, which is the mainspring for our sporting prowess.

We set great store by ensuring meaningful leisure pursuits for young people. Material facilities for this purpose - for instance, youth clubs in newly-built urban districts - are being expanded rapidly.

Every talent, spotted in the arts, in science or in sports, is given due encouragement. Cultural groups of the Free German Youth foster our humanist heritage as well as contemporary music. They are open-minded towards everything progressive in the world. Great attention is given to humanist culture and art. Our youth organization runs three publishing houses, which in the past four years issued 2,692 books, for a total of over 100 million copies, both from the German Democratic Republic and from abroad. They also publish 15 papers and magazines, including one daily newspaper.

During the past five years, more than 1 billion marks were made available from the public purse to extend youth travel. Young people from the German Democratic Republic can go to 35 countries on four continents by booking a package tour offered by our youth travel agency at prices which do not even cover actual costs. A total of 300,000 such package tours to a destination abroad were available this year. On the other hand, hundreds of thousands of young people from abroad come to the German Democratic Republic every year. An exchange programme with the People's

(Mr. Aurich, German
Democratic Republic)

Republic of Poland, our neighbour, involved over 300,000 children and adolescents from the two countries this year.

Young people in our country grow up in an atmosphere of material security, a fact which makes for their readiness to do diligent and creative work and get involved on a democratic basis in the running of public and social affairs.

The rights and duties of young people in the German Democratic Republic are enshrined in the country's Constitution and in the Youth Promotion Act. As a matter of principle, no decision touching the interests of youth can be taken without the young people having a say or without approval by the youth organization. Some 33,000 young people have been elected to serve on representative bodies at various levels. The Free German Youth is represented by its own parliamentary group in the People's Chamber, our country's supreme legislative body.

Every State-appointed manager is required to draft an annual plan to encourage initiatives among young people, and to report publicly on the fulfilment of this plan.

All this makes for the free development of young people in our country so as to enable the younger generation to learn at an early age to take advantage of their democratic rights. In this way, the concepts of freedom and human rights take on a concrete meaning for the young people of our country, becoming a source of motivation and a verifiable fact of life for all.

But the prime condition for all this continues to be the preservation of peace.

We have noted with satisfaction that the documents adopted by the United Nations and its specialized agencies on the occasion of the International Youth Year are geared to this cause, too. This includes, as a major item, the declaration adopted in Barcelona by the World Congress on Youth of the United

(Mr. Aurich, German
Democratic Republic)

Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which emphasized the education of youth in a spirit of peace and understanding among nations.

The German Democratic Republic and its young people are ready to continue their efforts within and outside the United Nations system with a view to achieving the objectives of the International Youth Year.

Mr. MANIKAS (Greece): It is with great pleasure that I address this Assembly today.

When the General Assembly of the United Nations, in its resolution of 25 January 1980, designated 1985 as International Youth Year under the threefold motto "Participation, Development, Peace", the youth of Greece, like all young people all over the world, felt that the interest shown by the international community went beyond the usual traditional and paternalistic directives; in fact, it recognized the decisive contribution of the young to the shaping of present and future developments in the world.

The Greek Government believes in and constantly gives effect to the essence and meaning of the threefold motto of the International Youth Year. This special interest is proved by the establishment of the General Secretariat for Youth, which aims at giving the young the possibility of really exercising their rights.

We firmly believe, and our efforts are directed to that end, that whatever is considered at present as an individual privilege can be transformed into a social right.

However, it is commonly accepted that problems concerning youth cannot be solved unless peace and social justice prevail.

This is one of the reasons why the foreign policy of Greece follows to the letter the threefold motto of the United Nations and tries to promote it across the

(Mr. Manikas, Greece)

world. This is also the reason why our internal policy is characterized by the social orientation of our aims, so that youth will emerge as an autonomous element of social progress and democracy.

It is true that the present world crisis is felt by the young with the utmost intensity. It does not, however, follow that they are willing to conform to those systems, structures or choices which create and deepen this crisis. It does not mean that they will conform to fatalism and disaster scenarios, which deny development and hope, because the future belongs to them.

Accordingly, the orientation and activities of the General Secretariat for Youth promote and defend all initiatives that liberate the creative potential of the young and, at the same time, safeguard their political and social role.

The policy of the General Secretariat for Youth is oriented by the inspiration and creative imagination of the Greek youth and their struggle for a world of peace, solidarity and détente.

It is in this context that we promptly adopted and put into practice the threefold motto of the International Youth Year, "Participation, Development, Peace".

For example, we designated Chalki, a tiny island of the Aegean Sea, as an Island of Peace and Friendship dedicated to the youth of Europe, the Mediterranean and the whole world.

In September 1985 the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) jointly organized the International Forum of Chalki, in which young people from all over the world participated in order to express original ideas and proposals drawn from experience, in relation to the main subject of the Forum, "Youth as Innovators in Social, Economic and Cultural Development".

We are in the process of completing the necessary research for the legislating of an Act, which will correspond to a Charter of Rights for Youth, always taking into consideration the realities facing Greek youth.

We are safeguarding through legislation the participation of young people in politics and society by establishing youth councils in the local governments, the rural, labour and co-operative movement, universities and schools. In the sphere of the economy, this participation is realized through the diversified promotion of youth co-operatives, extensive employment, training and education programmes, the granting of loans under favourable terms to young professionals to promote work at a regional level; and in the field of culture it will be channelled through the financial support of culture youth clubs, the implementation of model cultural programmes, the creation of alternative space for recreation, athletics and leisure and the encouragement of youth amateur activities in all fields of contemporary art.

We have completed and financially supported model projects of local initiatives designed to give employment opportunities to young professionals, technicians and unskilled workers. These initiatives protect natural resources, respect the environment, create employment for the young, make use of alternative technology and introduce new forms of labour relations.

(Mr. Manikas, Greece)

We have carried out projects with field trips to poor areas of Greece, where university teachers, young scientists and students study on the spot the problems and needs of these peripheral societies and, along with the local population, formulate proposals for an integrated development.

We have worked out and supported projects on a national level that encourage ecological initiatives by the young.

We have supported in all possible ways numerous activities of the local governments related to the message of International Youth Year.

We believe that the designation of 1985 as International Youth Year has contributed to opening up channels of communication between youth associations and governmental bodies which deal with youth questions; it has given youth organizations the opportunity for international contacts and exchanges of experience; it has drawn the attention of the public to the importance of youth on the national and international levels. There is a need to continue and deepen this awareness and to support with practical means the efforts of the young in all social fields.

The International Youth Year does not come to an end with the end of 1985; it must become the starting-point for the substantial emergence of youth as the primary force for inspiration and innovation in the life of nations.

We believe that young people of different social, religious, national, cultural and political origins and convictions are able to overcome the barriers of prejudice and closed societies.

We also believe that young people can establish new forms of mutual understanding, free communication and coexistence based on equal terms.

This has a special meaning today, when the irrational course of the nuclear-arms race threatens the whole world; when the problem of hunger is the scourge of the third-world countries; and when the gap between North and South becomes deeper day by day.

(Mr. Manikas, Greece)

That is why today more than ever it is imperative to establish new and effective international relations based on dialogue and understanding and to bring new alternatives to bear on the problems plaguing life and peace.

For us - for Greece - youth is our great hope. For us, youth is the positive present, the happy future. We believe that young persons must have every chance in life. They deserve everything.

Mr. REHN (Finland): Finland supported and welcomed the decisions of the General Assembly to designate 1985 as International Youth Year and to devote a number of plenary meetings of the fortieth session of the General Assembly to the World Youth Conference.

We can now note with great satisfaction that the hopes set for the International Youth Year and its objectives in the theme "Participation, Development, Peace" have been fulfilled.

The interest aroused by the International Youth Year and the wide range of activities to which it gave rise have clearly led to widening international dialogue and co-operation and deepened the feeling of solidarity between young people. However, this can only be seen as the starting-point of a long-term process to pursue the initiatives taken during the Year.

As early as 1982 there was set up in Finland on a parliamentary basis a national Co-ordinating Committee with the task of drawing up a national programme of action by the end of 1986. That Committee had already last year delivered its preliminary programme of action. It consisted of both short-term and long-term measures and reforms related to youth, employment, housing, study grants, young families, rural youth and disadvantaged youth groups. Special attention was drawn to equality in society in general and between the sexes in particular. In addition to the programme of action, the Government issued a wide-ranging report to Parliament on youth policy in Finland.

(Mr. Rehn, Finland)

With regard to the strengthening of the national youth policy machinery, a special youth policy planning section was added in 1984 to the State Youth Council. In this youth policy section, all relevant government executive bodies are represented.

Although Finland's main emphasis in connection with the International Youth Year has been on the national and local levels, the consciousness and global awareness have grown concerning the situation of young people in the developing world. Disseminating information, involvement in development aid activities and growing interest in a more modest way of life - those are the ways in which Finnish youth has expressed its feelings of global responsibility.

Although it is our view that the importance of a more effective implementation of existing human rights instruments cannot be too often stressed, we acknowledge that a great many of the major problems young people in developing countries face are not covered by the human rights conventions.

To create conditions for permanent, direct and active participation of youth in the overall development process is of vital importance. We need to ensure the full exercise of the fundamental rights of young people to education, vocational training, work and social assistance, so that they can participate actively in the decision-making process. We also feel that education towards international understanding is indispensable. In Finland, this has greatly encouraged the participation and involvement of young people in development aid and in peace activities.

(Mr. Rehn, Finland)

International co-operation and exchanges between youth organizations have increased remarkably during the last few years, thanks mainly to greater international understanding among young people. Finnish youth organizations have been very active in this process. This promising development must be continued and strengthened. It is important for the world's peace, security, détente and development.

During International Youth Year one of the themes on which particular attention was concentrated was the question of how significant the years of youth are to a person's human growth. In the debate on education, it was underlined that schools should not only provide isolated facts and knowledge offering narrow professional skills, but rather that they should support the ethical and social growth of young people at a time when they are forming their personal values and critical judgement.

Young people should also be encouraged to participate in the development of the educational system. Rapid changes in society caused by new technologies and other factors, such as the growing influence of the media, make the creation of opportunities to develop participation even more urgent than before.

We note with great appreciation that the guidelines for the further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth, adopted by the Advisory Committee of the International Youth Year last March, provide the necessary flexibility to accommodate various international, regional, national and local needs. It is our opinion that the review and appraisal of these guidelines should be carried out by the United Nations system with a view to encouraging Governments to take appropriate and timely action to improve the situation of youth. In this respect, we also endorse the recommendation by which Governments are invited to consider the regular inclusion of youth representatives in their national delegation to the General Assembly and other appropriate United Nations meetings. The social

(Mr. Rehn, Finland)

structures of societies should include young people so that they would be encouraged to participate in the decision-making processes, especially in the context of education and employment. Youth has to be recognized as an active agent in the process of social change. Individually we can all further strengthen the continuing effort so that meaningful opportunities and real possibilities for youth can emerge.

My delegation in particular welcomes the recommendation contained in the guidelines concerning the greater involvement of youth and Governments in youth exchange programmes. As regards international meetings, we would like to emphasize the need for more exchanges and co-operation in the field of youth research.

Dear friends, old and young, we raise the voice of the second generation of the United Nations. We young people believe in this Organization and are ready to work for the realization of its goals.

Mr. AL-MUKHAINIE (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): Without any doubt the celebration of International Youth Year is an important event because young people represent a pillar of the future of peoples, a source of pride and wealth for them and the vanguard of their march towards progress. At the beginning of my statement on this item, I am happy to be able to express our thanks to the Secretary-General for the excellent report which he submitted on this subject in document A/40/701. I also wish to pay tribute to the Department for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

Before I describe the efforts made by the Government of my country on behalf of youth, I wish to recall the circumstances in which my country found itself before 1970, for the future of young persons seemed threatened then. Young people had no motivation to devote their energies to the benefit of the nation. Their ambitions were frustrated by underdevelopment and isolation. However, since

(Mr. Al-Mukhainie, Oman)

July 1970 when His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin Said took over in our country, the situation has changed dramatically. Since then the way has been open for young people to realize their hopes.

His Majesty declared 1983 as a Year of Youth in my country, and delegations of young people from 46 countries took part in the celebrations.

The fact that His Majesty the Sultan is President of the Supreme Council for Youth represents a step forward on the path traced by my Government. Young people are closely linked to the society of which they form part in the revival and the rapid progress taking place in my country. Young people have played an important role in development plans during the past 15 years, and are now to be found in all enterprises throughout Oman. The training received by young people to prepare them to assume their responsibilities and play their role in society is closely linked to the overall concept of science, which makes all aspects of training in science everyday life, ethics and work complementary. This training is provided by the State bodies and agencies of various kinds mentioned in Decree Nos. 40, 41 and 42 promulgated by the Sultan in 1982.

My country believes that a major role can be played by young people and it seeks to enable them to realize their aspirations. The importance we attach to education is an essential element in the creation of a progressive country in which an enlightened youth can assume its responsibilities. Our Ministry for Education and Youth has built schools and institutes in all the various disciplines and pays special attention to university level education so that young people can realize their aspirations and the goals of our renaissance. We believe in the role of youth.

The International Youth Year has been celebrated in my country on many occasions and in many different ways - through cultural and sport meetings, the organization of youth camps, and so forth. During the past year we organized seven

(Mr. Al-Mukhainie, Oman)

work camps for young people who took part in community development activities in land irrigation, drainage, health, the construction of roads and so forth. Last year young people also took part in activities at youth camps in Kuwait, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt and exchanges of groups of young persons took place among the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council. A cruise was organized for young people from my country and the other countries of the Gulf to visit the ports of the entire region.

(Mr. Al-Mukhainie, Oman)

Private and public youth institutions have made a great contribution to the International Youth Year by offering prizes for social and sports activities in the 42 departments of our Sultanate.

While we consider that scientific and vocational training is important for young people if they are to play their role in progress and development - and this is a fundamental task - it is nevertheless a difficult goal to achieve, unless young people are brought up on sound spiritual, moral and national principles. That is why my Government, through its various institutions, plays an important role in the area of guiding minors and young persons in particular, providing them with the means to combat harmful propaganda and ideas that are dangerous to their health and their very existence. That is how we try to reveal the true goals of such propaganda which runs counter to the interests of Moslem Arab society.

Last year during the celebration of our fourteenth national festival the Sultan addressed young people and said:

"Young people must not only be prepared through education and culture to assume their responsibility in the future. They must also preserve the achievements of their fathers and must increase production as much as possible to ensure the prosperity of our country. They must realize that prosperity and progress can come about only through serious and responsible work."

The role of women is no less than that of men in my country. Many women have made their presence felt by taking part in the country's productive life and all youth activities. We are convinced that women are half of our society in every sense of the word.

In conclusion, I affirm that we support the resolution on the International Youth Year. Our participation in the commemoration of this Year results from our conviction that young people must play an effective part in the future of mankind and a life of stability for all peoples.

Mr. ORNAT (Poland) (spoke in Polish; English text furnished by the delegation): It is a great privilege for me to address this United Nations General Assembly in my capacity as the Chairman of the Polish Committee for the Observance of the International Youth Year. The Committee is a body comprised of 58 representatives of various social and professional communities, the State administration, political parties, public, co-operative and educational organizations, and Polish youth organizations in particular.

It gives me great satisfaction to inform the Assembly that the Polish Committee for the Observance of the International Youth Year, a body which represents the hopes and aspirations of the young generation in People's Poland, has contributed in a practical and tangible way to the implementation of the lofty ideals proclaimed in the motto "Participation, Development, Peace".

Each of those words denotes very concrete issues, very essential reasons relevant to the present day and to the future. Let me recall here the following question asked by Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzelski from this very rostrum on 27 September:

"Are we going to be the last generation that ensures the continuity of life on Earth?" (A/40/PV.12, p. 28)

At a time when mankind is faced with the threat of the extension of the arms race into outer space and when no one is able to predict the magnitude of the negative consequences of such a step, that question becomes particularly justified.

The mere proclamation of the International Youth Year does not solve urgent problems of today's young generation. The essential task of this proclamation is arousing the interest of all decision-making centres in the problems of youth, and in shaping public awareness of the fact that the problems of tomorrow must be addressed today.

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

The history of the world, the history of civilization and nations, provides examples of the fact that the failure to remember such fundamental and simple truths sometimes leads to a tragic end. This reflection has added a new important dimension to the education of young Poles in the spirit of peace.

A special role fell to the many international meetings, round-table discussions, seminars and symposiums on disarmament and the preparation of youth for life in peace which have been held in our country. The calendar of international events organized in Poland under the auspices of the Polish Committee for the International Youth Year contained scores of celebratory events. They were organized by young people and youth organizations: the Union of Socialist Polish Youth, the Union of Rural Youth, the Union of Polish Pathfinders, the Polish Students' Association, the United Nations Students Association of Poland, and the All-Polish Peace Committee, as well as other organizations and cultural establishments.

Activities in favour of maintaining peace, halting the arms race and initiating disarmament are extremely important for young Poles. That flows from history, from the extreme sensitivity of the whole of our Polish society to the instances of resurrection in certain countries of the ideology and practices of fascism and territorial revisionism. By massive participation in the observances of the fortieth anniversary of the victory over fascism, Polish youth responded to the attempts to question the decisions of Yalta and Potsdam, at the same time demonstrating their allegiance and commitment to the ideals for which millions of Poles offered their lives in the struggle of the Great Coalition of the Second World War.

The Twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Moscow, played a particularly significant role in the implementation of the underlying idea of the

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

International Youth Year. Representatives of Polish youth were present and active at the Festival, helped to create its atmosphere of being a platform of collaboration in the name of peace, and participated in the important discussions held in the Festival's thematic centres. The Festival allowed for all the messages of the International Youth Year to be presented in a frank and judicious manner, comprehensively and in a variegated context, thus becoming the highlights of its observances.

An accomplishment of the Festival that was of singular importance for Polish youth was the indelible sense of the community of views represented by young people of different races, religions and world outlooks, and from different socio-political systems, in their campaign to maintain peace in the world. It was strongly confirmed once again that millions are united in the movement for this cause. In my country there has been greater participation by young people in the struggle for peace and disarmament, and the strengthening of friendship and confidence among nations. We have deeper knowledge of those problems today, and the sense of the importance of those issues is more widespread.

Today young Poles give top priority to halting the arms race, passing on to disarmament and, above all, eliminating nuclear weapons. In this context, we support the proposal to declare a moratorium on all nuclear explosions. We want Europe, on whose territory two world wars were fought in this century, to become a continent free of missiles and all types of weapons of mass destruction.

The prevention of nuclear war - in which the security of nations is an important premise - is the supreme goal of our time. All initiatives and proposals dictated by genuine concern for lasting peace will serve that goal well. Today, confronted by the threat of an extension of the arms race into outer space, the world could find itself on the eve of a qualitatively new state in this race and mankind just one step away from total annihilation.

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

It is particularly important, therefore, to make the whole international community aware of the need to co-operate in outer space in conditions of its demilitarization. Hence, we fully endorse the idea put forward by Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzelski in the General Assembly to have a group of eminent experts of various nationalities prepare, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, a study on the various consequences of the militarization of outer space.

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

We are expressing our unswerving readiness to co-operate with all those who want the world to be a safe place for all mankind. The Congress of Intellectuals for the Defence of the Peaceful Future of the World to be held in Warsaw in January next year will virtually inaugurate the celebrations in the world of the International Year of Peace proclaimed by the United Nations. Young Poles and all Polish people will welcome sincerely and with due respect all those coming to attend the Congress. I was instructed by Polish youth to tell you that the doors of People's Poland are open to all young people in the world who are striving for peace and wish to participate in the dialogue enhancing peace.

International Youth Year is coming to an end. Yet I am certainly not alone in my conviction that we can speak about its conclusion only from a formal point of view. It is also because problems of young people, and the opportunities and hopes of youth are as old as the world itself. They will remain topical for ever. That truth is being confirmed by the notions of development and progress, expressed also in the motto of International Youth Year. Development is not feasible without the involvement of young people. Progress comes about largely as a result of creative unrest, anxiety, a critical attitude, desire to improve the world, and a revolt against imperfections, which are features identified with young people and youth. It is no different in Poland where young people under 29 account for nearly 50 per cent of the population.

May I be allowed to present at least a few of the major facts documenting conditions in socialist Poland for the commitment of young people, an increase of their influence on the whole of Polish life, and their participation in the shaping of its image. This is a constant and comprehensive process. Its characteristic feature is the special significance attached to decisions and initiatives designed to shape an active attitude of the younger generation towards work and civic duties. An important demonstration of this process is the growing participation of young

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

people in the activities of the Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth, people's councils, trade unions, and the co-operative movement. Recent elections to the Sejm produced a strong representation of young people in the Polish Parliament. One in every five members of the people's councils is a young person. Throughout the country, the work of several hundred rural communes is run by young commune executives, and the life of the countryside by many young village administrators.

That is the result of the consistent implementation of the policy of the Polish United Workers' Party, manifesting itself in a striving for reconciliation, the reform of various spheres of our life, and overcoming impediments to development.

Legal provisions concerning problems pertaining to young people are of key significance for their professional and social involvement. Those provisions cover the development of the education process and equal educational opportunities for the younger generation, elimination of differences in access to education and culture related to the social environment, and access to university level education. We are proud that secondary education is universal in the Polish People's Republic. However, we are striving for a speedier and genuine equalization of educational opportunities in the cities and in the countryside, the expansion of scholarship programmes, and the provision of opportunities of active participation in cultural life, sports and tourism. The organization of this year's summer holidays for children and young people is a significant example. Over 3.1 million boys and girls availed themselves of various forms of rest and recreation, organized with considerable assistance from the State, in attractive summer resorts at home, and, also abroad, in the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and Cuba. Many Polish young people spent their holidays in West European countries. Similarly, the State grants diversified and extensive assistance in the field of health care

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

and the development of young families, as well as in meeting needs in sports, tourism and culture.

There is no hunger in Poland. There is none of the unemployment that afflicts many of the highly industrialized countries of the world and is particularly detrimental to young people. Poland is free of many of the plagues scourging our civilization. This does not, however, mean that young Poles are living an easy life. Some of the problems are still the aftermath of the Second World War, others stem from Poland's current difficult socio-economic situation, which does not remain unaffected by the illegal restrictions imposed by some countries.

The Polish State and our whole nation, facing as they do, more than enough problems, such as the acute housing shortage, are struggling to alleviate the negative effects of the crisis on the young. This is the aim of the Government programme to improve the conditions of life and to give young people a good start in their working life, both in urban and rural areas.

An extensive scholarship and material assistance network was created to cater for a vast number of young people. Pupils in secondary and vocational schools can avail themselves of free board and reductions in mass transit fares and school canteen charges. Primary school textbooks are free. The timing and conditions of the education and rest of young people are protected by law.

Students are taking part in the activities of the Senates and Faculty Councils of their universities and in the elections of University Rectors. Material worries do not impede studies.

There are many provisions relating to the employment policy for young people in relation to their qualifications and university education.

Many measures were related to the implementation of the programme for the observance of International Youth Year. Its observance in Poland had yet another

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

important aspect, namely, it enabled Polish young people to become acquainted with the role and place in international relations of the United Nations, an organization that has been consistently striving for 40 years for the maintenance of international peace and security, constructive co-operation among States with different socio-political systems, full compliance with the principle of non-interference and respect for the internal systemic solutions of every State. We are fully aware that the materialization of those ideas depends to a large extent on the consciousness and behaviour of the younger generation. International Youth Year has served this end well. It is with this conviction in mind that Polish young people will be participating, together with progressive youth of the whole world, in the observance of International Peace Year.

Bearing in mind the preparations for and the observance of International Youth Year world-wide, and the implementation of the tasks set out in the special programme of measures and activities in the course of the four sessions held so far by the Advisory Committee for International Youth Year, and in the regional meetings, I think we can give a favourable verdict on the implementation of the guidelines of International Youth Year.

The Year has helped to increase the interest taken by Governments and the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as non-governmental organizations, in the problems of youth and its role in the solution of the key issues of humanity in the economic, social and political spheres. It has reaffirmed the significance of peace to the professional and social prospects for young people. It has reaffirmed that the prospects for young people are defined by degree of the improvement in international relations and the maintenance of peace. That end would be well served by the implementation of the principles contained in the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, adopted on Poland's initiative by the General Assembly in 1978.

(Mr. Ornat, Poland)

Active participation of young people and of their national and international organizations in the preparations of the International Year of Peace should be a natural continuation of the International Youth Year. The guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth set forth in document A/40/256, the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, offer opportunities for appropriate implementation of one of the most important targets of International Youth Year, that is, continuation of co-operation among Member States and organizations of the United Nations system with respect to problems of youth.

We are interested in the maintenance of close co-operation between the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and national, regional and international organizations in the dissemination of information and documentation, and in the expansion of international co-operation in youth studies.

We are also in favour of the enhancement of the role of the Commission for Social Development in specific problems concerning youth. Regular review and evaluation of the above-mentioned guidelines should contribute to increasing the interest of Governments in undertaking appropriate projects to improve the situation of young people.

It would also be useful to expand and consolidate co-operation among non-governmental youth organizations, mainly through the Geneva Informal Meetings with the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

In conclusion, I should like to express our hope that the ideas and content of International Youth Year will become a lasting element of our common endeavours for the good of the younger generation, and will serve to enhance the position of young people in society and make their goals and aspirations come true.

Mr. HAMILTON (United Kingdom): We have been urged to speak for only 10 minutes, so I shall be brief.

For all of us here this is the culmination of an exciting year. The fact that the United Nations should have designated its fortieth year as International Youth Year is, I believe, a recognition that, though the natural tendency on such occasions is to look back, we should be looking forward - building on the lessons of the past to create a better future.

What is it that I or the other representatives from national youth organizations assembled here can contribute that the experienced diplomats or politicians cannot? That may sound a very arrogant question, but it is, I believe, fundamental to the aims of International Youth Year.

First, we have a unique stake in the future. It is, after all, we who will have to live with the consequences of policies adopted today. Furthermore, it is we who will, to a great extent, have to implement them. It is therefore right that we should at least have a say in the establishment of such policies.

Secondly, experience gained by young people at all levels in a variety of activities is of prime importance, and can be enhanced through their dedication and enthusiasm. This enthusiasm for change and optimism is probably greatest in the young. Further, youth has fewer prejudices and more open minds, and is more receptive to change and new ideas. In a world where the population is growing rapidly, and where technology is changing all of our preconceived notions, we must find ways to adapt to the future, not be rooted in the past.

Each country has approached International Youth Year differently, depending upon its social, political and cultural systems. In the United Kingdom the decision was rightly taken that International Youth Year should not only be about youth but to the largest extent possible be run by youth; youth should be given the responsibility for formulating its own goals and strategy in its own way, with minimal interference. That is why I am here today, as the Chairperson of the

(Mr. Hamilton, United Kingdom)

British Youth Council in Scotland, a member of the International Youth Year Committee in Scotland and a representative of all of the United Kingdom national co-ordinating committees.

My Government, early in the preparatory stages of International Youth Year, established four co-ordinating committees in the United Kingdom, one each for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to administer, stimulate and publicize International Youth Year. Those committees, predominantly run by young people, have been given the responsibility for co-ordinating local, regional and national activities undertaken by individuals and youth groups. As a result, we have seen in all parts of the country an increase in the participation and achievements of young people, particularly at the regional and community levels.

I should like to mention, albeit briefly, some of the many successes in Britain over the past year. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, for example, organized a residential and expedition project, which incorporated the study of various industries around Britain. International Youth Year has also presented the perfect opportunity to encourage young people to take up a new sport through the campaign by the Sports Council entitled "Ever thought of sport?" And the Scottish National Co-ordinating Committee has established a youth trust fund, with the aim of providing quick, easily accessible small grants for local initiatives. Through these and many other events, young people have had the opportunity of meeting and working together to mutual benefit. We hope that, using the catalyst of International Youth Year, developments which have not reached fruition can and will do so in the years to come.

The youth of the United Kingdom, like those of so many other developed countries, face constant challenge and frustration in domestic affairs. Youth unemployment, drug abuse and racial disharmony, to cite a few matters, are an

(Mr. Hamilton, United Kingdom)

unhappy facet of life, but are actively being tackled through effective government policies and concerted efforts by all sectors of society, including youth themselves.

On the wider international scene, International Youth Year has given youth, worldwide, a chance to prove their worth - to feel that they have been listened to, that their ideas and aspirations will be taken account of in the future, and above all to give them hope. It is often said that today's youth are a lost generation, deprived of opportunities, both economically and socially. Experience over the past year has not borne that out. The Year has in fact provided a unique opportunity for people of different backgrounds and cultures to meet, and many young people from all over the United Kingdom have participated in the many international exchanges, events and conferences.

"Hello UK", for example, afforded the opportunity for young people from the member States of the European Economic Community to visit Britain and learn more about its culture through young people. Conversely, Operation Raleigh presented the opportunity for British young people to organize expeditions to many parts of the world. Such exchanges foster understanding, which is a necessary prerequisite for peace; they also lead to an appreciation of the problems experienced by different societies and the way in which we can cultivate long-lasting friendships between nations.

Such communication is essential if peace in the world is to be maintained. Understanding each other's background and views can only increase trust. That, perhaps, has been one of the greatest contributions of International Youth Year, and something we should all strive to improve in the future.

With that view in mind, the Youth Hostels Association, a non-political organization which encourages international travel and tourism, has played a significant role. Its worth, however, would be greatly increased if it were

(Mr. Hamilton, United Kingdom)

allowed to operate on a truly world-wide basis. The opening up of national boundaries, youth exchanges and unimpeded travel to other countries - all of those measures can promote understanding. I urge those countries where human rights policies are restricted, and where free travel, a free press and the free exchange of ideas are prevented, to think again.

On the development side, we shall all reap the benefit in the future of youth being more involved. This is one area where vision, enthusiasm and hard work make a vital contribution to essential change. There is so much to be done in the world today, but it is easy to become daunted by the sheer scope of the task. Youth may not be able single-handedly to build reservoirs, but they can help drill small wells in areas which would otherwise be arid; they may not be able to build large, expensive hospitals, but they can help with vital village immunization projects, which save thousands of lives.

In my country the Voluntary Service Overseas Scheme has for many years enabled young people to put their skills and talents to work in developing countries for the benefit of the people. Voluntary youth organizations - for example, the Scout Association - have encouraged similar development projects among their members. Young people have also raised large amounts of money for famine relief in Africa, through the Live Aid concerts and other voluntary appeals. The young people of today are not self-centred; they want to help other people, and International Youth Year has given them that chance.

(Mr. Hamilton, United Kingdom)

Youth can and should involve itself in the major political problems of the day. One such is the situation in South Africa: the British Youth Council supports the youth of South Africa in their struggle against the deplorable system of apartheid. It also deeply regrets that there is no end to the tragic situation in Afghanistan which has forced thousands of young people to flee from their homes and traditional way of life in the face of aggression.

Young people in the United Kingdom are the recipients of a wonderful gift - the gift of freedom: freedom of thought; freedom of voice; freedom of belief. I believe that such a gift should be cherished and carefully nurtured to allow the experience of one young generation to become the seedling of the next. Young people in the United Kingdom have not become an insular group, rather they have proved themselves capable of successfully bridging generation gaps. There can be no doubt that the ease of dialogue and the flow of communication is of paramount importance if changes for the better are to be made. Young people are prepared to work hard for that change that they consider essential so that we can all live in peace and harmony. International Youth Year has focussed attention on our needs and our capabilities, and we thank the United Nations for that chance - we have accepted it with open arms and will make good use of it for all our futures.

Mr. RASMUSSEN (Norway): I feel privileged as a representative of Norwegian youth organizations to be a member of my country's delegation to the United Nations General Assembly. I feel especially honoured speaking here at the World Conference of the International Youth Year, and at the same session when the United Nations is celebrating its fortieth anniversary. I see this as a contribution to improved understanding and contact between Norwegian youth, youth organizations and the United Nations.

(Mr. Rasmussen, Norway)

Several Norwegian youth organizations are actively engaged in international affairs and issues. For the past 15 years youth representatives have been participating in the Norwegian delegations to the General Assembly. This has definitely contributed to international awareness and orientation among young people in Norway.

Against this background it is my sincere wish that the number of youth representatives in the delegations of States Members of the General Assembly can be significantly increased on a permanent basis. We have all supported clear recommendations to this effect in several resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. International Youth Year represents a good opportunity for Member States to follow-up in this respect.

Personally, I am representing the youth organizations in the Norwegian national committee of the International Youth Year. I should like to use this opportunity to give some information about the implementation of the Youth Year in Norway. When preparing the programme and actions of International Youth Year, we stressed especially two elements:

First, the main idea of designating 1985 as International Youth Year should be considered as an opportunity to pay special attention to young people and as a contribution to long-term solutions of their problems and improvements in the situation of young people.

Secondly, we gave priority to initiatives, activities and involvements at the local level. It is, in our opinion, important to focus on the everyday situation of young people in their local communities, particularly activities organized by and for young people.

Numerous initiatives and activities have already taken place while others that have been initiated are still in the process of being carried out. In Norway and

(Mr. Rasmussen, Norway)

in several other countries International Youth Year has contributed constructively to initiating and strengthening a process towards greater recognition of the role that young people can play in all spheres of society. This is a process that we should all encourage. I should like to stress that the participation of young people in the decision-making process is of great importance both at national, regional and international levels.

At the national level the Norwegian Youth Year Committee put special emphasis on the activities of two events. A Youth Forum was organized in August in the Storting, that is the Parliament. Young people from different parts of Norway, representing different organizations and groups, assembled for three days in the Parliament building. They had discussions with the Prime Minister, the chairmen of the political parties and members of the Government.

Furthermore, 36 youth organizations and 5 development aid agencies, in October this year arranged a successful television campaign called "The Youth Campaign" in co-operation with the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. The campaign had two aims. One was to collect money for financing development projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The other was to give information about the situation in developing countries and their need for development aid.

During the campaign approximately \$9 million were collected for developing projects, many of which are directed towards youth. This campaign is an example of international solidarity initiated and to a large degree carried out by youth and youth organizations. In my opinion, this is an example to be mentioned among initiatives like the "Band Aid" concert to support starving people in Africa.

Such initiatives are, in my opinion, very challenging to the United Nations and the Member States to strengthen their efforts to create a more just world and a better future for young people of today.

(Mr. Rasmussen, Norway)

During Youth Year the Norwegian Government has put special emphasis upon the problems of youth unemployment. In order to cope with this problem the Government has implemented a plan of action to secure young people beyond the age of 20 either employment or education. This plan of action will probably be fulfilled by the end of 1985.

(Mr. Rasmussen, Norway)

Turning to the United Nations and the follow-up of International Youth Year, I would like to point out two important aspects of the Year: first, the need to encourage and stimulate active participation by youth in the society at all levels, nationally and internationally, because to give young people the opportunity for active participation is a challenge to our societies; secondly, the importance of bringing the ideas on which United Nations was founded to young people and new generations in order to promote peace, international solidarity and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We believe that the proposed guidelines for a follow-up of the Year have established a solid platform for future work on these questions, both for the Member States and for the United Nations in developing better co-ordination of youth questions within the Organization.

Further, I would like to stress the important role of the national youth organizations when talking about youth participation in society. These organizations have experience in motivating young people. They are also an important channel of communication between young people and what I will call the adult society at all levels, nationally and internationally.

From the Norwegian point of view it is important that national youth structures should be bodies established by young people themselves, organized and governed by youth. In countries where the youth structures are not sufficiently developed the International Youth Year committees could make a platform for permanent structures. However, if these committees were to be made permanent the responsibility for their activities would have to rest with the young people themselves.

If youth organizations are to promote the ideas of the United Nations they will have to be heard within the United Nations system. For this to be achieved, we need efficient channels of communication between youth organizations and the United Nations. Over the years the General Assembly has discussed the importance

(Mr. Rasmussen, Norway)

of such channels and, in our opinion, proper channels of communication form a basic prerequisite for the active involvement of young people in United Nations matters.

The Geneva Informal Meeting is, as far as we know, the most representative co-ordinating forum at the global level, and the Meeting should be further developed as the main channel of communication between the United Nations and the youth organizations.

Norway fully supports the guidelines for improving these channels of communication. The Norwegian Government supports the Geneva Informal Meeting financially with the aim of facilitating the participation of youth organizations from developing countries. We urge other Governments to do likewise.

Finally, I believe that increased youth participation represents a challenge to society and its decision-makers. Many of the problems which the world is facing, such as those of the environment, disarmament and the North-South dialogue, are problems which the young people of today will have to face tomorrow. This only underlines the necessity of having structures that involve young people in the different decision-making processes. The idea of the International Youth Year should also be taken as an inducement for the adult society to consider carefully what kind of society they want to hand over to coming generations.

Miss FRANCIS (Barbados): My delegation is mindful of the importance of this occasion, when plenary meetings of this Assembly are being held to consider programmes and policies relating to youth and are designated meetings of the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year.

Perhaps there are no comments on any aspect of human affairs which have greater difficulty in avoiding the label of truisms than those that speak to the importance of youth. And yet there is every justification for the time and energy which this Assembly will devote to formulating in detail and emphasizing

(Miss Francis, Barbados)

for the world to see the goals and guidelines which are set for the participation of the youth of the world in the development of the peoples of the world towards peace for all mankind.

In keeping with the United Nations proposal that the year 1985 should be designated International Youth Year, the Government of Barbados selected a Co-ordinating Committee comprising 32 persons representative of a wide cross-section of Barbadian youth organizations, as well as individuals with a special interest in youth work. This Committee was launched on 16 November 1983. Its terms of reference were to prepare a programme for the observance of International Youth Year, 1985, and to advise the Government on a programme of action for youth in the areas of development, legislation, employment, social activity and the establishment of representative youth organizations and regional youth outreach. The age range of 15 to 29 was adopted as representative of youth. Activities were therefore focused on that age group.

The Committee from the outset recognized that any advice on, or recommendations concerning, youth must have a direct input from the young themselves. To this end, two seminars for youth were held in September 1984. The response of the young was very encouraging, in terms of both attendance and their involvement and participation in the several workshops and subsequent sub-committees set up to examine the topics and make recommendations to the Government.

The National Advisory Commission completed its draft report in November 1984. This report was submitted to the Cabinet in early 1985 and has been approved in principle. Some of the issues raised at the conference, which have been reflected in the report, were youth unemployment, the problems facing youth in agriculture, the need for effective drug education together with the establishment of a drug rehabilitation centre and the need for hostel facilities and a home for teen-agers, especially teen-age mothers.

(Miss Francis, Barbados)

The report also recommended a number of activities which it was felt would provide inspiration for the youth and prepare them for the Decade of Youth, 1986-1995.

The Year, which was officially launched on Saturday, 19 January 1985, has provided the youth of Barbados with a forum for their own self-expression and for their exposure to, and involvement in, community service. It has afforded the opportunity for direct dialogue with the Government.

(Miss Francis, Barbados)

Radio stations have donated additional radio time to youth especially for International Youth Year. This has provided them with greater opportunity for making their voices heard and presence felt. It has been for many a welcome exposure lending itself to the building of self-confidence as they participated in the programmes at various levels. Through this medium the wider Barbadian society is becoming more conscious of the potential of youth and their dedication to service.

One of the ways by which one can measure youth development is how young people are organized, or attempt to organize themselves, for the task before them. This year has seen numerous examples of youth in action, organizing their own activities through their own initiatives.

This augurs well for the future. It has been heartening for the Government to note that at village, parish and national levels there has been no lack of youth organization and participation in their own activities, whether athletic, cultural or religious.

One of the areas in which Barbados is deficient is that of proper documentation of our village histories. This was highlighted by young people, who have now taken on the difficult task of providing this documentation themselves. They have begun to research the histories of the villages surrounding their several headquarters and so preserve for posterity their own history. They see this as a project stretching into the Decade of Youth and as one which will bring them greatest reward when they see the results of their labour being used as a textbook in the History and Social Studies Departments of our schools. In their own words, they see it as "A Gift from the Youth of Barbadoes to the Youth of Barbados".

Some of the other activities and programmes co-ordinated by the National Advisory Committee have been the following: a national poster contest, the publication of an International Youth Year Newsletter, a National Youth Week, from

(Miss Francis, Barbados)

25 August to 2 September, and the production of a Gospel Album by a Church Youth Group.

Young people are also very much involved in the United Nations tree-planting project. This has served to raise the conscious level of many with regards to the care of the environment.

The fact is that youth represents a very large proportion of our population. Out of the Barbados population of 252,000, 163,000 fall under the age of 35. This in itself presents a challenge in areas of education, employment and sports and recreational activities.

Barbados recognizes that youth needs to be assisted in its preparation for the world of work. To this end the National Training Board, which is charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating all areas of training, has embarked on an expanded programme of skills training, apprenticeship and a skills action programme in order to prepare young people for and to introduce them to the world of work. The number of skills training centres has been increased, as well as the number of skills being taught. The duration of the skills training courses has also been increased from three months to six or nine months. This longer training period will assist in making youth more employable at the end of the training period.

Sports and recreation and the proper use of leisure time go a long way towards the well-balanced development of young persons. Mindful of this, the Government continues to provide additional sports and recreation facilities and community centres. Plans are in train for the erection of an indoor gymnasium which, it is hoped, will be commenced in 1986.

The Government's commitment to the Commonwealth Youth Programme has been renewed. During the year, benefits to our youth have been in the areas of training, exchange visits, and a recently concluded survey on attitudes of young people - unemployed young people - which will provide a base for future planning and

(Miss Francis, Barbados)

policy with regard to youth development. Barbados was recently host to the Meeting of Directors of Youth Affairs, sponsored by the Commonwealth Youth Programme, Caribbean Centre.

In conclusion, I should like to sum up my country's policies and programmes in terms of the theme, "International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace".

The Government of Barbados has no difficulty in recognizing the profound importance of the direct participation of youth in shaping the future of the nation. It has consistently recognized that the greatest natural resource of the country is its people and that the future of its people is in the hands of its youth.

Traditionally Barbados has pursued a policy of devoting a comparatively high proportion of its limited financial resources to education and training. Thus there has been a consistent adherence to the view that development of the country will be impossible without adequate development of its young people.

Barbados has over the years demonstrated its conviction that youth should be encouraged to contribute its energies, enthusiasm and creative abilities to the tasks of nation-building. The Government of Barbados uses progressive legislation for the strict preservation of human rights, acknowledging, together with other rights, the right to work, the right to freedom of travel, the right to justice before the law and the right to freedom of expression in a truly democratic society. Thus the Government of Barbados is carrying out its duty which in turn preserves for the individual the enjoyment of those rights which on the international scale are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Such a policy is, in my Government's view, the best earnest of its dedication to doing its part in saving future generations from the scourge of war. In shorter words, this policy is a sure signpost towards the third element of the theme of International Youth Year - peace.

Mr. DUGUAY (Canada): "Participation, Development, Peace" - I am pleased that the United Nations is celebrating International Youth Year in this world forum. During this fortieth anniversary, as we consider the process of renewal within the United Nations, it is especially appropriate to note the objectives of International Youth Year and acknowledge the achievements and aspirations of young people, on whom we rely for our vision of the future. In the final analysis, it is their dreams which will be the foundation of a better tomorrow.

On behalf of 10 Canadian youth delegates representative of all parts of Canada, of both official languages and of the multi-cultural mosaic which is Canada, I take pleasure in reading out the statement they have prepared, as follows:

"The future is not a gift, it is our achievement. It requires constant work and effort, a will to act as well as to speak and a deep commitment to and optimism about the future. Canadian youth would like to see a long-term effort being made where youth issues are concerned. We have identified some problems, let us now work on the solutions. We in Canada have been fortunate to experience a very successful International Youth Year and have seen the fruition of many of our youth's projects. In many ways we feel we have harnessed youth's interest and willingness in working for a better tomorrow, which is inescapably linked with the future of youth in every nation. We are concerned and we want to help. Give us a chance to tell everyone how we think issues of global concern can be addressed. What we lack in experience we more than make up for in enthusiasm and hope.*

* Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Duguay, Canada)

"Can we truly restrict youth to an age category? Is not youth a state of mind, where two universes become intermingled? One universe being the expression of lofty ideals, full of magical dreams and the hope for a better world, and the other being the real world.

"We should not turn our backs on our dreams. Let's use the resources of our hearts and our minds to build a better world. A world of peace based on understanding, communication exchange, focusing on what unites us rather than on what divides us. Peace. This should not only mean negotiations, treaties and cease-fires, but a real state of mind articulated around a world more just.

(spoke in French)

"Young Canadians believe that, by means of the programmes established throughout the country, we are seeking, albeit in a very modest way, to grow and to realize our potential. This experiment has enabled us to grow, and at the same time it has enhanced the stature of the country and of the world as a whole. International Youth Year has offered all of us an exceptional opportunity for which we are grateful and which will have valuable and lasting repercussions."

(continued in English)

That is the end of the statement prepared by our young people, of whom we are extremely proud.

(spoke in French)

International Youth Year has offered young people a very special opportunity. They were able to express their views, to seek answers to questions of interest and concern to them, and to show what they were capable of. It was also an opportunity for international institutions, Governments, private and voluntary groups to

(Mr. Duguay, Canada)

respond with encouragement and innovation to the aspirations of youth, to their energy and spirit. It has provided an opportunity for all parties to foster the international understanding and co-operation that is sought by the young people of all countries.

My Government has been firmly committed to the goals of International Youth Year and, under the responsibility of the Minister of State for Youth, has drawn up a wide-ranging programme. Under this programme we sought above all to provide financial support for the initiatives of the young people themselves.

(continued in English)

Young people in Canada have been quick to seize the opportunity. They have undertaken hundreds of projects of local, national and international scope. They have formed organizations to represent their views. They have started new businesses. They have published books, produced films and composed music. They have frequently placed their energy and skills at the service of their communities, often without remuneration. They have organized and represented Canada at international meetings. They have stood for and been elected to office. They have questioned, prodded and challenged Governments and other institutions when and where they perceived that their needs were insufficiently recognized or their views unacknowledged. It is this willingness to challenge which ensures the survival of all of our democratic institutions.

Business, labour and voluntary groups have been seeking new ways of integrating young people's concerns in their activities. One financial institution has included a youth representative on its board of directors. A labour union has hired a youth consultant to advise on the prospect of youth within its membership. A social agency has changed its structure and operations on the advice of the young people it serves. Several voluntary organizations have set up youth advisory boards to strengthen their decision-making processes.

(Mr. Duguay, Canada)

(spoke in French)

As well as being a special opportunity, the International Youth Year is part of an ongoing process of involving people in the decisions that affect their lives. As the Year is drawing to a close, it is important to consider how to continue this process that International Youth Year served to highlight. In this regard, the report of the Secretary-General on guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth is, in the view of Canada, a useful source of information for Member States and other institutions. As far as follow-up within the United Nations system is concerned, Canada considers that issues of concern to young people should be treated as an integral part of the programmes of the United Nations and its agencies. Canada, for its part, will continue to respond in a concrete manner to clearly-demonstrated needs. We shall continue to consult the parties involved to identify the measures appropriate to each situation.

(continued in English)

Young people confront important challenges. They are concerned about their personal development - education, employment and family life. They are concerned about their status, about their place in society and about the rights and responsibilities of active citizenship. They are concerned about the world they live in - about peace and the protection of the environment. We, too, must show our concern for the abundant human and natural resources that we have inherited. We must ensure by our deeds, not by our words, that we leave more, not less, for those who will follow us.

While the resources at our disposal in meeting these challenges vary throughout the world, I am encouraged that young people throughout the world

(Mr. Duguay, Canada)

reflect a common spirit, a spirit that eludes measurement or precise definition but reflects their shared perspective. It is this spirit that is at the heart of International Youth Year.

This spirit, as I see it, embodies vision and idealism; it embodies energy, enthusiasm and initiative; it embodies a great willingness and capacity to care; and it reflects change. Young people bring a fresh perspective to problems. They are willing to test the untested and try the untried in search of a better world. They value tradition and experience as a base to build on, not as a restriction on the future we must examine. Today's dreams are often tomorrow's realities. It takes courage to apply one's dreams to reality but it is just this vision and spirit which founded the United Nations. And it is in this spirit that the hope for the future lies.

As we mark the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, let us look to the vision of youth, their spirit of innovation and work to ensure their active part in development.

Mrs. COLL (Ireland): At this stage in our debate, we are keenly aware of, and much impressed by, the enthusiasm generated throughout the world by International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace. The decision of the General Assembly six years ago to designate 1985 as a special year for youth has been vindicated by the mature and committed response of Governments. The overwhelmingly generous response of young people themselves to the challenge of International Youth Year has served to reinforce the commitment in Governments to stimulate, encourage and support the full development of the potential of their young people. It is essential that we preserve the momentum and build on the experience gained in this special year.

(Mrs. Coll, Ireland)

The Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the Preparation and Observance of International Youth Year, formulated as far back as 1981, recognized from the outset that the objective of enhancing the situation of youth throughout the world is best advanced through meaningful actions at the national and local levels; cumulatively, these actions could not fail to improve appreciably the opportunities for development of young people throughout the world. Thus, the observance of International Youth Year in Ireland has revolved around national and local action, an approach which has proven popular with the Irish people and therefore effective. Nineteen eighty-five has been a year marked by community action for and by young people.

(Mrs. Coll, Ireland)

I should like to outline the principal features of Ireland's preparation for and observance of the International Youth Year. The Government of Ireland adopted a comprehensive approach to the Year, undertaking, on the one hand, a major review of Government policy affecting young people and, on the other, promoting an enhanced awareness of their potential, needs and aspirations. A National Youth Policy Committee was established and given wide-ranging authority to review and make recommendations on Government policies pertaining to youth. The Committee's report was published and the views of all interested parties canvassed. For greater impact, a popular or young person's version of the report was also published.

My Government is committed to the establishment in International Youth Year of a comprehensive national policy on youth which will reflect this process of evaluation and consultation. The policy will be aimed at assisting all young people to become self-reliant, responsible and active participants in a democratic society. It will represent a most significant contribution to efforts for the further promotion of the well-being of our young people beyond the year 1985.

In addition, a National Co-ordinating Committee for International Youth Year was established. That Committee was mandated to stimulate, plan and assist activities calculated to enhance popular awareness of the situation of youth. It set itself the task of promoting the Year as one of challenge, opportunity and reward, placing the main emphasis on locally inspired planning and action for and by young people. The Committee was not disappointed in either the volume or the variety of the activity generated expressly in observance of the Year. I wish to stress very strongly that the Programme of Action undertaken for the Year was itself a product and reflection of the preferences, concerns, aspirations and energies of the young people of Ireland. I should mention also that both those Committees, although generously funded by Government, comprised strong

(Mrs. Coll, Ireland)

representation of our national youth organizations, all of which are non-governmental and operate with complete independence.

The specific activities which have marked International Youth Year in Ireland cover a wide spectrum and cannot usefully be detailed here. To summarize, I would say that the challenge and the opportunity afforded by the Year were picked up in a multiplicity of ways ranging from fun-oriented and awareness-raising events - whose value we do not underestimate - to more demanding programmes designed to foster the personal attributes and leadership potential of young people. A significant feature has been the spontaneous desire on the part of young people to develop or intensify links with their counterparts in Northern Ireland. This very welcome and promising development has manifested itself at both local and national levels. In the spirit of the Year, a great number of the initiatives undertaken had the objective of enhancing awareness and understanding among young Irish people of the situation of young people in other countries, and particularly in the developing countries. The impact of those initiatives will endure far beyond 1985.

At the regional and international levels, awareness of others has been promoted by numerous events which have served to gather together young people of diverse cultures and backgrounds in an atmosphere of co-operation, peace and understanding. These events have provided a unique opportunity for young people to appreciate the differences which exist between them even as they explore the precious bond so evident when young people of various nationalities get together.

If we view International Youth Year as a stimulus to enhanced options for real participation by young people in the societies in which they live - as my Government does - it is reasonable to assert that much has been achieved. Moreover, Governments must always think in terms of presenting options to their citizens, particularly their young citizens, in the certain knowledge that real participation can only be volunteered, never demanded. That conviction leads us to

(Mrs. Coll, Ireland)

stress the need to ensure that initiatives originating at the international level do not cut across or prejudice in any way either institutional arrangements or concrete measures in favour of young people which are in place at the national level. Wherever International Youth Year has been meaningfully observed, we can be confident that it will be appropriately followed up. Wherever the emphasis in youth policy is on offering young people opportunities for genuine participation in their societies, it is reasonable to expect that their energy and idealism will be so channelled as to contribute effectively to the objectives of development and peace.

Let me commend the Government of Romania for the vigour with which it pursued its initiative for a special year for youth. We thank the Secretariat for its continuous support and encouragement. We are confident that the positive impact of International Youth Year (1985) will endure.

Mr. JENERAL (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, I should like to thank the United Nations for the excellent conditions which have been afforded here for a broad exchange of views and experience, and for us to present our ideas on the observance of the International Youth Year. There can be no doubt that our Conference will contribute to an effective fulfilment of the fundamental objectives of the Year - Participation, Development, Peace - with a view to needs of the future.

Recent developments in the world have unequivocally confirmed that averting the threat of a nuclear catastrophe, the maintenance of peace and the safeguarding of international security constitute the prime condition and most significant prerequisite for the solution of the current problems of the younger generation. Moreover, the arms race that leads to a drastic increase in tension in international relations also siphons off immense resources that could be used for the purpose of eliminating unemployment, illiteracy, poverty and famine in Asian, African and Latin American countries.

(Mr. Jeneral, Czechoslovakia)

In order to achieve concrete results in this respect, top priority should be accorded, at both international and national levels, including governmental as well as non-governmental organizations, to an active struggle for peace, disarmament and relaxation of international tension.

We can take pride in stating that the people and youth of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic are solidly committed to this struggle. They associate their desire to live in a world free from wars, social or racial discrimination with unwavering support for the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and of other socialist countries, including the latest one embodied in the Declaration adopted at the session of the Political Consultative Committee of the States members of the Warsaw Treaty held recently in Sofia. At the same time it is necessary that the Governments of individual States, according to their achieved level of social development, create favourable conditions for a harmonious development of the personality of young people and for satisfying their legitimate demands and needs. In this respect, the best results have unquestionably been achieved by the socialist countries. This can be attributed to their approach to the solution of problems relating to youth. Young people enjoy broad political and social rights and privileges, using them actively not only for their own benefit but also for the benefit of society as a whole. It is therefore necessary to support the efforts of young people of capitalist and developing countries who are waging a valiant struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism and apartheid, who are more demanding and strive for the democratization of education and call for the solution of grave social and political problems.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, drawing on the positive experience already gathered, proposed at the 1981 session of the General Assembly that priority be accorded in the observance of International Youth Year to the questions

(Mr. Jeneral, Czechoslovakia)

relating to the rights of youth, particularly their right to education and to work. This is a basic prerequisite for the solution of what appears to be the most pressing problem facing young people today in a number of countries of the world, namely, the problem of unemployment. It is probably known to the General Assembly that the draft resolution on this subject submitted by the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was considered in a more elaborate form at the three successive sessions of the General Assembly.

International Youth Year is inevitably drawing to a close. The process it initiated, however, is far from having ended. It should continue to serve as a stimulus for an ever more active participation of youth and their organizations in the solution of the grave problems concerning them. It is also necessary to strengthen and further develop the prevailing trend towards broad co-operation and active efforts at the international level in the solution of the serious problems of the new generations.

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and all socialist society accord top priority in their policies to the care for human well-being. Their approach to youth is conceived in general as an approach to the future. That has also been reflected in our attitude to International Youth Year. In keeping with the spirit of the economic and social development set forth at the XVith Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the social safeguards for our youth have been further strengthened and their spiritual as well as material well-being has increased. A number of topical issues relating to the improvement of the welfare of young people have been resolved at joint sessions of the Presidium of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Socialist Union of Youth, the Presidiums of the Central Committees of the Czechoslovak National Front and the Socialist Union of Youth.

The Socialist Union of Youth, uniting more than 1.5 million young people

(Mr. Jeneral, Czechoslovakia)

from all social groups, that is about half of all boys and girls between 14 and 29 years of age, constitutes an integral component of the political system of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Through their organization, youth participate actively and directly in managing and building up their country.

It is no coincidence that in our country we have connected the observance of International Youth Year with the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the historic victory over Hitler's fascism and Japanese militarism and of the liberation of our homeland by the Soviet Army. We have made broad use of its positive values also in the active preparation for and participation in the most significant international event organized as part of International Youth Year - the XIIth World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow. Together with their contemporaries from 157 countries of the world, Czechoslovak youth demonstrated on that occasion their determination and desire to live in conditions of peace, understanding and friendship among nations, their solidarity with the youth of those countries that struggle for fundamental human rights, for freedom, independence and social progress, against all forms of oppression and discrimination.

In concluding my statement, I should like to say a few words on the guidelines for further planning and a suitable follow-up in the field of youth approved at the fourth session of the United Nations Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year held in Vienna.

It is a forward-looking document, and the work of all those who participated in its drafting should be commended. It contains, in our opinion, a number of significant proposals aimed at improving the situation of youth, safeguarding their rights and interests and ensuring their active participation in the process of

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(Mr. Jeneral, Czechoslovakia)

social development. The document is well-balanced and we consider that it could continue to contribute to the fulfilment of the high aims of the International Youth Year.

(Mr. Jeneral, Czechoslovakia)

Governments, competent officials and international and national organizations should be receptive to the thinking of young people and support their basic aspirations to a better and more equitable society and to life and work in conditions of peace, understand and co-operation among nations. They should strive with the utmost responsibility to build a happy future for young people and save them from the danger of wars. That is a noble mission that should prompt appropriate efforts by all the peoples of the world. The coming year, designated by the United Nations as the International Year of Peace, creates the necessary prerequisites.

Mr. LUGO (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): The proclamation of International Youth Year is proof of the growing awareness of youth's enormous potential as a powerful catalyst for great changes, being an active protagonist in history.

In the debates held in preparation for International Youth Year a common denominator emerged - recognition of the relationship between the problem that concern youth and the major problems, political, economic, social and cultural at present affecting mankind. At the same time, the need was felt to formulate policies and programmes concerning youth that would draw on its immense creative potential as a dynamic factor for social renewal. We young Nicaraguans believe that more is needed than speeches and resolutions at the United Nations if we are to achieve our rights.

Within the framework of International Youth Year, the principal right of young people is that of living in peace, a right that is being violated by an accelerating arms race, which could unleash a nuclear war. At the same time, there is a deep economic crisis, causing unemployment and poverty, to which we must add the various regional wars in different parts of the world, in which hundreds of young people are dying. That whole situation is brought about by those who try to dominate small peoples, believing themselves to be the powerful of the earth.

(Mr. Lugo, Nicaragua)

Peace must be reflected in a better future for the young people of the world, in which their full rights are guaranteed and in which each young person can play a role in the struggle to achieve that peace. We must be in the vanguard in order to serve as an example to future generations, which will have to continue struggling until they win that victory. That has been proven by the various activities of young people throughout the world, which culminated in a meeting of solidarity and friendship during a festival of youth and students held in Moscow.

Each day the young people of the world are more aware of the need for peace and a new international economic order, the need to struggle against poverty, hunger and all forms of exploitation and social oppression, and the need to establish a régime of peace, dignity and social justice.

However, the great capitalist Powers of the world have tried to suppress youth's fighting spirit by various means, such as alcoholism, drugs and prostitution, which they promote to turn the attention of young people from the serious social situation in their respective countries, particularly in the countries of Central America, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

In Latin America, and particularly in Central America, we young people have begun to play an important role. The historic situation of domination, persecution, torture and murder of young people had led us in the last resort to take up arms in order to live better, because there is no greater crime in the world than that of denying young people their future. We are continuing to fight and to shed our blood for that future. Young blood is being shed in the countryside and in the cities of El Salvador for a better future, with social justice, peace, independence and freedom, just as it is being shed in Guatemala, Chile and South Africa.

(Mr. Lugo, Nicaragua)

In Nicaragua during the Somoza dictatorship it was a sin to be young; we were persecuted, tortured, murdered, denied our rights to study, work and above all to play an active part in the affairs of our country, and therefore we could not organize ourselves.

Therefore, several generations of young people paved the way to final liberation with their sweat and sacrifice. Young people's organizations emerged and were joined by the flower of Nicaraguan youth under the leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front, which was also born of the need to fight for a more just society.

When liberation came on 19 July 1979, a new task lay ahead - that of building a new society in our country. Since that date all years have been youth years in Nicaragua. Since the triumph of Nicaraguan youth, organized as the Sandinist youth of 19 July, we have fought great battles. The first involved forming a contingent of almost 100,000 young people who went into the mountains of our country to make almost 60 per cent of our population literate. That was a great victory for our youth and our revolution.

We have organized many production shock brigades which take part in the construction of strategic projects for the socio-economic development of our country. They also offer alternative work to combat unemployment in our country.

Year after year our academic vacations are pre-empted by the need to harvest our agricultural products for export which, for our essentially agricultural country, are essential to our economy. In a few days thousands of young people will leave for the countryside to begin those harvests.

(Mr. Lugo, Nicaragua)

However, our democratic and revolutionary process, which benefits the great masses in our country, has not been viewed favourably by those who throughout history have invaded us, causing suffering and death, and who are now imposing on us an unjust war. I am referring to the United States.

The burden of the war has fallen mainly on young people. We have once again had to take up arms. We have left our work, our studies and our families to defend the future that we had won.

Everyone knows the shameful manner in which we have been attacked, which has obliged us to defend ourselves, to join the troops of our People's Sandinist Army and to defend every inch of our territory so that it is not trampled upon by those who want our country to return to the exploitation of the past.

In Nicaragua, while fighting, working and studying with joy, to celebrate International Youth Year we organized artistic festivals in various regions. Young people from different segments of society - workers, farmers and students - take part, and we collect funds for the fighters at the frontiers as a demonstration of our solidarity.

Young people have the right to organize freely to take an active part in the construction of a new society, in trade unions, student organizations, and rural movements.

We are participating actively in decisions affecting young people in general so that they may play an active role in the economic, political, social and cultural development of our people. We were able to participate in the most recent elections from the age of 16 to elect executive and legislative leaders. Our parliament now contains 11 elected members belonging to various youth organizations. Today young people of all sectors of our country are preparing to express their views in a plebiscite to prepare the new constitution which will contain the basic principles of anti-imperialism, non-alignment and self-determination, which underlie our revolutionary process.

(Mr. Lugo, Nicaragua)

The young people of the Atlantic coast - a sector that was ignored by the Somoza régime - who belong to different ethnic groups - Creoles, Miskitos, Sumos and Ramas - are discussing the project for autonomy promoted by our revolutionary Government under which they will be able to elect their own authorities in accordance with their traditions and customs, which is also a part of the process of integrating that part of our territory into the rest of the country.

Young students have student organizations in which all Nicaraguan students are represented. These organizations watch over their interests and academic activities, and the quality of education and the physical conditions for study. Their leaders are elected democratically. In each study centre there is an advisory council on which students and teachers are represented; they are the leaders of the centre who take decisions that affect the life of the study centre.

We consider that a most important achievement for young people in rural sectors is their access to the land. In contrast to the past, each young person in the country now is assured of having his own land to cultivate; he is no longer a victim of the landowners. The agrarian reform has distributed 1,400,000 parcels of land.

There are many opportunities for recreation; there are various entertainment centres, centres for popular culture, sea-side resorts and sports grounds.

A factor that we consider decisive in the life of the young people of Nicaragua is the firm determination of the Sandinist National Liberation Front and the revolutionary Government to recognize our right to participate in the economic, social, political and cultural reconstruction of Nicaragua.

Despite the achievements that I have listed, we are still facing a great many problems. However, the essential problem is the war that is being waged by the United States Government against our people. That war obliges us to risk our lives

(Mr. Lugo, Nicaragua)

to defend our homeland. Thousands of young people who could be studying or engaged in productive work are on the battlefield fighting aggression.

The mercenary army is destroying schools, health centres and co-operatives, and murdering technicians. More than 50 promoters of popular education have been kidnapped or murdered. Any project that we have to undertake we must pay for in blood. When we teach literacy, the literary brigades are murdered; when we harvest the coffee crop, the volunteer harvesters are murdered; when we organize health campaigns, the health brigades are murdered.

Despite the war and the economic crisis that affect all young Nicaraguans, we look to the future with optimism. We still have a special place in the heart of our people. We shall overcome all obstacles in the way of a future of peace, progress and development. We young Nicaraguans make a special appeal to the youth of the United States to fight for this peace. Our cause is a just cause and our voice is the voice of millions of oppressed young people throughout the world. That is why we will overcome all obstacles, joining our hands in friendship and solidarity with other peoples of the world until the enemies of peace are defeated.

In Nicaragua our revolution has a life insurance, and that life insurance is the youth of our country.

Mr. THIOUNN PRASITH (Democratic Kampuchea) (interpretation from French):
The United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year could not be held at a more propitious time. Indeed, 1985 is a memorable year which will go down in the annals of the United Nations, replete as it is with significant events. It commemorates, inter alia, the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, with its theme of, "The United Nations for a Better World", the fortieth anniversary of the victory over fascism and the end of the Second World War, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It marks the

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

conclusion of the United Nations Decade for Women, and also the proclamation of 1986 as the International Year of Peace. All these historic events closely concern young people, in term of their education and future prospects, because they all constitute lessons, experiences and plans of action which prepare them for taking up the heavy responsibility for the peace and security of the world, for its development, and for greater social justice.

My delegation would first like to express its very sincere appreciation for the considerable work done by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year under the active and effective leadership of its Chairman, Mr. Nicu Ceausescu of Romania. The adoption of the Advisory Committee's guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth will demonstrate the success of our Conference because it will respond to the hopes and aspirations of young people throughout the world who all look today to our Conference for a practical contribution to solving the specific problems facing them, namely, the problem of how they can participate fully in achieving social justice and the aims of national development, the problem of their own development, that is, the burgeoning of their own personalities in the development of the society in which they live, and lastly the problem of preserving peace, which is the essence of life, and which can be ensured only by strict observance of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

These three fundamental problems, which were adopted as the themes for the International Youth Year, are inseparable. All are called on to give firm support to efforts to encourage the active participation of young people in development and to promote in the young the ideals of peace, mutual respect, understanding and co-operation among all peoples on the basis of equality and mutual advantage.

In addition to specific problems in certain countries and regions, it can be

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

said that young people wherever they are have to face common problems and challenges, particularly in terms of unemployment and underemployment, education and training, housing and family life, delinquency and drugs, respect for the traditional moral and family values.

Every day these problems torment and harass more than 1 billion young people throughout the world, but the situation is much worse for the 80 per cent of them who live in the developing countries afflicted by the economic crisis and the collapse of their economics, the colonial and racist domination of apartheid, as in the cases of Namibia and South Africa, war, particularly wars of foreign aggression and occupation, as in the Middle East, Afghanistan and Kampuchea, to mention only the main flashpoints in the world. Young people are the first and the most numerous victims of these scourges.

In the present day world where hotbeds of tension and armed conflict tend to multiply, where the use or threat of force tends to become the usual way of resolving differences between States, where the law of the strongest tends to replace international law, the situation of hundreds of thousands of young people is extremely alarming in these countries beset by conflict, which are all developing countries.

In these victim countries, where war has destroyed the social and economic structures, built up through the efforts and sacrifices of several generations, the young people, together with women, children and the aged, are the most affected. Those who have escaped death are deprived of their most elementary rights to a decent life, education, work and liberty. For them there can be no question of participation or development, but rather a question of survival, which can only be ensured by the return of peace with independence, honour and national dignity.

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

In Kampuchea, for seven years now, young people have been the innocent victims of a barbaric war of aggression which has threatened their very national identity. Hundreds of thousands of them have been killed by conventional, chemical and bacteriological weapons, as well as by the famine, which has been caused by the enemy and used as a weapon of mass extermination. Those who were able to escape death have been rounded up, and forced to serve as auxiliaries in the enemy forces, to undertake construction work, to repair military supply lines, to cut down forests, to serve as human mine detectors and to build barriers against the national resistance in mined and malaria-infested regions. Tens of thousands of them have been killed by mines and malaria, and tens of thousands of others have been mutilated or seriously affected by the after-effects of malaria. They are forcibly enrolled in the enemy forces in order to kill their own compatriots or be killed themselves. They are now forced to undergo a military conscription which involves a minimum of five years service, or are enlisted in militia units. Those who dare to show their opposition or to express any nationalism are imprisoned, tortured and killed. Those who are not being used as cannon fodder are separated from their parents and indoctrinated, either in the country or in the aggressor country or those of its allies, to try to deprive them of any nationalist spirit or feelings, and melt them in the crucible of the enemy plan to absorb Kampuchea and to serve the enemy's expansionist ambitions.

To escape this tragic fate, hundreds of thousands of young people have been forced to flee from their native villages and have become displaced persons or refugees scattered throughout the world. To replace them, the enemy has sent in more than 700,000 of its nationals, who are permanently established in Kampuchea.

There is no worse misfortune for a people and a nation than losing its national identity. It can be said without fear of contradiction that these seven

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

years of a war of aggression and occupation have cost Kampuchea a whole generation of its children. It is to defend their national identity at all costs that our young people are forced to join with all the people of Kampuchea in a fight to the death which has cost them endless sacrifices. They do not do this because they love war, but because they love peace; but it must be peace with independence and liberty, with honour and national dignity. The fight for liberation and national survival is now their sacred duty. If they did not fight, they would subsequently become a national minority in their own country and their national identity would disappear after a few generations.

Peace is the sine qua non for participation and development. The establishment of peace is the supreme ambition of young people throughout the world, and it can be ensured only by respect for the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and of the international law governing the relations among States.

It should be emphasized that International Youth Year should, as well as taking the form of a celebration, an end in itself, also represent a long process of growing awareness, of preparation and training of young people to shoulder their responsibility for creating a better world. To speak of the responsibility of young people for the future also involves indicating the heavy responsibility of their elders in helping them to take over. The guidelines drawn up by the Advisory Committee are a contribution to discharging this responsibility. But their implementation remains a difficult task.

The young people in countries which are in a state of peace, even relative peace, regardless of whether those countries are developed or developing, enjoy favourable conditions which make it possible to implement these guidelines in concert with their elders. The young people who are fighting heroically to liberate their countries from aggression and foreign occupation are learning day

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

after day, in their own flesh and blood, the meaning of the ideals of peace, freedom and justice, the sacred right of peoples to self-determination, the need for the peaceful settlement of disputes and the total rejection of colonialism, racism, apartheid and all forms of aggression and foreign occupation. There can be no doubt that these young people vitally need support and assistance from all young people throughout the world in order ensure that their just struggle is crowned with success.

We must also think about the young people who live in the aggressor countries, where they have no right to express their opposition to the disastrous and odious policies of their leaders. These young people also need support and assistance to ensure that they are given their right to participation, development and peace by their leaders, who continue to sacrifice them on the altar of expansionist and hegemonist policies that have been universally condemned. To help these young people in their just claims is also one way of helping to convince their leaders to heed the appeal of the international community, which has frequently called upon them to renounce the law of the jungle and to rejoin the civilized world by respecting in their deeds the principles of the United Nations Charter and of international law in the general interest of all, as well as in the particular interest of the happiness of their people and of their younger generation.

In this International Youth Year the young people of Kampuchea would like to reiterate their total commitment to defending the ideals of peace, freedom and justice, and to stand squarely behind young people throughout the world who are struggling for the same ideals, whether it be in Namibia and in South Africa against apartheid, in the Middle East, in Afghanistan or elsewhere. They know that their present fight for liberation and national survival is also evidence of this commitment and of this solidarity, as well as a contribution to the common struggle waged by young people throughout the world. Under the leadership of the Coalition

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

Government of Democratic Kampuchea, with H.R.H. Samdech Norodom Sihanouk as President of Democratic Kampuchea, the young people of Kampuchea continue to mobilize all their energies to strengthen and to further expand national unity in order to liberate the country and to rebuild an independent, peaceful, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea with a liberal parliamentary régime and a market economy where human rights are completely respected.

In their geopolitical situation, next to a neighbour of insatiable voracity, the young people of Kampuchea, who are fully aware that they are responsible for the future of their country, are profoundly conscious of the fact that it is their national duty to preserve the survival of their nation and also that it is their international duty to preserve peace, security, freedom and stability in South-East Asia.

Miss KAZELA (Zambia): My delegation attaches a great deal of importance to youth participation in all endeavours of human life and therefore greatly appreciates the step taken by the General Assembly to devote a number of plenary meetings to policies and programmes related to youth and to designate these meetings as the United Nations World Conference for International Youth Year in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/22 of 23 November 1984.

This Conference offers for the first time in a special way an opportunity for Member States to consider youth problems with the direct participation of young people and to share views and experiences on the best ways of dealing with youth problems.

My delegation recognizes the important role young people can play in shaping the future of mankind and the valuable contribution they can make to national development. Zambia, in keeping with its philosophy of humanism and in the spirit of the United Nations Charter, is committed to, and relentlessly seeks to promote, high standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social

(Miss Kazela, Zambia)

progress and development. We believe that, by virtue of their civil and political rights, young people have a responsibility to take part in economic, political, social and cultural decision-making so as to defend, pursue and satisfy their aspirations and needs. They therefore have the right to participate in the preparation and implementation of national development plans as well as in the execution of international co-operation programmes of particular concern to them.

(Miss Kazela, Zambia)

Despite the deteriorating economic situation facing the world today, particularly the developing countries, a number of activities, programmes, events, competitions, conferences, meetings, seminars, projects and festivals for the observance of International Youth Year have been planned and conducted. The formation of 158 co-ordinating committees by Member States is evidence of the seriousness the international community attaches to the importance of youth participation and hence the need to integrate them in the overall development process.

Young people constitute a group that is particularly vulnerable to the effects of the world economic crisis. Any long-term or short-term economic problems have an adverse effect on youth and their participation in society. They are often agents of social change but, equally, often victims of that change. My delegation is particularly concerned about the increasing problem of youth unemployment, lack of and inadequate education and its related problems in developing countries. The situation of youth becomes much more acute each succeeding year as the economic situation in these countries deteriorates, therefore failing adequately to integrate youth in society. Most of these young people drop out of the educational system without any marketable skills or experience for employment, therefore becoming a crucial factor that contributes to youth unemployment.

We believe that national youth policies are crucial for improving the situation of youth as they provide an institutional structure through which youth development activities could take place.

In order to undertake systematic planning and implementation of youth development programmes, the Zambian Government has a separate Ministry of Youth and Sports. With the active support of the Ministry, various activities in connection with International Youth Year were organized in Zambia, and these include:

(Miss Kazela, Zambia)

theatre festivals in which theatre groups, young performers and dancers were organized; game tournaments in which youth of all abilities were encouraged to participate; allocation of time by the mass media, including television, radio and newspapers, for items and programmes to promote awareness of the Year and other youth concerns; the holding of a National Youth Day during which a fund-raising walk was organized and awards presented to outstanding youth; and, in July this year, Zambian youth and youth leaders were among other young people who attended the twelfth World Youth Festival in Moscow, USSR, as a way of fostering a spirit of solidarity among young people.

Despite the critical economic problems affecting the implementation of youth development policies and programmes, my country has established specific programmes to provide employment and skills training to enable youth to work in groups or farm co-operatives as a basis for social development in their communities. Because of the predominantly agrarian nature of most African countries, the emphasis of youth programmes is on agro-based industries, agricultural rural production skills training schemes and settlements and community small-scale income-generating projects such as in ceramics, vocational training, joinery and carpentry, tailoring, bricklaying, metal work, poultry rearing and others in order to enable youth to be self-reliant and earn a living.

The International Youth Year has no doubt provided the much-needed impetus to the formulation and implementation of national youth policies and programmes by Governments. The contribution of non-governmental organizations has been crucial to the Year. They have collectively conducted an enormous number of activities within the context of International Youth Year. Of crucial importance is also the need to integrate the disadvantaged youth, such as young women and girls, rural youth, young refugees and disabled youth, into the national development process as an integral part of the national youth policy. We in Zambia feel that the United

(Miss Kazela, Zambia)

Nations should develop stronger and closer linkages with non-governmental organizations dealing with youth at all levels to develop programmes for these groups of young people.

My delegation is particularly happy with the consensus reached in the Third Committee on all the draft resolutions pertaining to youth which emphasize the creation of training and work opportunities to eliminate youth unemployment and illiteracy, establishing and maintaining channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organization and national co-ordinating committees to continue playing that role and to carry on the International Youth Year activities after 1985. It is our hope that the General Assembly will adopt the recommendations of the Third Committee in this regard.

It is necessary, in our view, to disseminate among youth the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and dedication to the objectives of progress and development. In this regard peace education and peace-related programmes should be focused on the eradication of all forms of prejudices and discrimination which manifest themselves in society particularly in apartheid South Africa. During this fortieth session, which coincides with the designation of 1986 as International Year of Peace, concrete steps and decisions should be taken by the United Nations to eradicate completely the system of apartheid which haunts the people of South Africa, of which youth is greatly affected. The youth of Zambia fully support and join the international community in fighting the crime of apartheid and strongly believe that the imposition of mandatory sanctions against South Africa is the only way of bringing peace to South Africa and the region as a whole.

In conclusion, I wish to express the firm belief of my delegation that there is need for follow-up for the International Youth Year after 1985 in order to ensure that the needs and aspirations of young people are in the forefront of

(Miss Kazela, Zambia)

development efforts. The momentum gathered during the preparation of International Youth Year should be maintained and Governments encouraged to develop integrated youth policies and programmes. Young people should be viewed as contributing members of society and not as a problematic group requiring help from society. Their participation in society should be taken seriously. While we greatly appreciate the important work the International Youth Year secretariat has done in preparing for International Youth Year celebrations and other youth programmes and activities, my delegation feels that the secretariat should be strengthened and its resources increased to enable it to continue rendering technical and advisory assistance to Governments requesting it, particularly with regard to income-generating projects.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.