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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 59th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 2 November 1995, at 11 a.m.

President: Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.55 a.m.

SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS (continued) (E/1995/124/Add.1)

Report of the Committee on Non-governmental Organizations

The PRESIDENT drew attention to the report of the Committee on Non-governmental Organizations (E/1995/124/Add.1). Paragraph 5 of the report contained a draft decision recommended for adoption by the Council on applications for participation in the open-ended inter-sessional Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples from organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. He took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

It was so decided.

(f) SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS (continued) (A/1995/123 and Corr.1 and A/1995/L.69)

Mrs. LIMJUCO (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, proposed that the Council should resume consideration of document E/1995/L.123 and Corr.1 in order to adopt the final draft of the world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond. There was a consensus among the Group of 77 and other delegations that there should be no further discussion of any of the paragraphs in the text and that the final draft should therefore be adopted at the current meeting. Delegations which had reservations about the text could express their views, but that should not prevent the Council from adopting the programme by consensus.

The PRESIDENT recalled that, at the previous meeting, it had been reported that agreement had not been reached on a number of paragraphs during the open-ended informal consultations in the working group of the world programme of action for youth. The President had then announced that no consensus had yet been reached on the final draft in document E/1995/123 and Corr.1 and that he would consult with the President of the General Assembly on

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the matter. According to the statement just made by the Philippines, that situation had changed and a consensus seemed to have been reached.

Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt) said that nothing had changed since the Council's previous meeting and that a consensus had still not been reached on the draft text. While his delegation hoped that the world programme would be adopted by consensus, he wished to further improve the text so that it could be acceptable to all the delegations. Further informal consultations could be held in order to achieve a consensus; and the world programme could then be adopted by consensus in a formal meeting.

Ms. WAHBI (Sudan) said that her delegation wished to adopt the world programme of action for youth in order to have a framework for international cooperation in that field. Nevertheless, no consensus had emerged since the previous meeting of the Council.

Mrs. TAVARES DE ÁLVAREZ (Observer for the Dominican Republic) urged the Council to adopt the world programme of action for youth by consensus at that meeting in view of the importance of the question and the agreement reached on the matter by the Group of 77 and other delegations.

Mr. RODRÍGUEZ (Observer for Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that his delegation had felt that a consensus had been reached during the open-ended informal consultations on the world programme of action and therefore supported its adoption by consensus at the current meeting.

The PRESIDENT said that, following the previous meeting of the Council, he had informed the President of the General Assembly that a consensus had not been reached on the world programme of action owing to lack of time. However, if a consensus had been reached on the draft text subsequently, it could be adopted at the current meeting.

Mrs. LIMJUCO (Philippines) said that there was consensus on the document. When she had referred, in her statement to the General Assembly, to disagreement, she had meant that it had not been possible to accommodate the views of all delegations in the final text. Nevertheless, the document had received broad agreement and those delegations which had reservations should not now attempt to reopen discussion.

Mr. OTUYELU (Nigeria) said that the programme of action had been drafted after two years of deliberations by the working group which, in his view, had done a good job. At the special plenary meetings of the General

Assembly all speakers had called for its adoption. Though not all delegations were satisfied with every part of the text, they must bear in mind that no document could be perfect and he appealed to them to approve the programme of action now before them, imperfect though it was.

Mr. DEHGHANI (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran) said that further consultations were necessary since no consensus had been reached on certain paragraphs of the document.

The PRESIDENT said he wished to make it clear that consensus had been reached on all paragraphs of the document, but that consensus had subsequently broken down. It would be incorrect to give the impression that there had never been consensus.

Mr. AGGREY (Ghana) said he also recalled that consensus had been reached. Moreover, the consensus had broken down over issues which had been discussed many times already. The real question was not whether there had been consensus, but whether the Council genuinely wished to adopt a programme of action. If that were the case, the document would be approved at once, as the Philippine delegation had requested. No delegation should try to undo what had been achieved by the Working Group. The Council must act with dignity, maturity and responsibility. It must decide whether it was more important to arrive at consensus or to agree upon a text. If further informal discussions were held, it was unlikely that any text would emerge.

Mr. COLOMA (Chile) agreed that the debate should not be prolonged indefinitely. Delegations which had objections to specific paragraphs should join the consensus, stating their reservations after the adoption of the programme of action.

Ms. WAHBI (Sudan) said that, while her delegation supported the concept of a world programme of action for youth, no purpose would be served by adopting a document upon which consensus had not been reached, since States would not be able to implement a text which did not accommodate their concerns.

Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt) said that, while his delegation wished the document to be adopted as soon as possible, there must be genuine consensus. Egypt had requested that the wording of three paragraphs should be improved. There had been no intention to reopen negotiations on the entire text.

Mr. CONTINI (France) said he supported the view of the Spanish delegation that the statement made by the Chairman of the working group to the

effect that consensus had not been reached was incorrect. The document had been agreed upon by all parties present, including those delegations which had since expressed objections. He urged them to state their reservations after the adoption of the document in accordance with the usual procedure.

Ms. ENGELBRECHT (South Africa) observed that consensus and unanimity were not synonymous. If the Council strove to reach unanimity, nothing would be achieved.

Mrs. LIMJUCO (Philippines), supported by Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that, as consensus had been reached, the Council should proceed to adoption of the programme of action.

Mr. TELLES RIBEIRO (Brazil), recalling that consensus was not the same thing as unanimity, suggested that an appeal might be made to those delegations which still had some difficulties with the wording of the text to make declarations to that effect after its adoption.

Ms. MURUGESAN (India) expressed support for the remarks made by Brazil, the Philippines and South Africa, and said that the interpretation of any particular paragraph was a matter for each individual Member State.

Mr. DEHGhani (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, despite the existence of the right to express reservations, it would be preferable for the Council to arrive at a genuine consensus, and that with some flexibility, it should be possible to do so.

Mrs. MSUYA (United Republic of Tanzania) said that consensus had in fact been reached, and appealed to all delegations to adopt the document.

Ms. DURÁN (Venezuela) said that her delegation had joined the consensus within the Group of 77, and was in favour of adopting the document.

Ms. BUCK (Canada) agreed with the remarks of the European Union and of the Group of 77. After so many years of negotiation, it was time to adopt the document, and those delegations which had problems should make reservations.

Ms. AKBAR (Observer for Antigua and Barbuda) and Mr. BARRETO (Observer for Peru) expressed support for the appeal made by the delegation of the Philippines, on behalf of the Group of 77, that the document should be adopted without further delay.

The PRESIDENT suggested that an overwhelming number of members of the Council were in favour of immediate adoption of the draft programme of action. The latest attempt to introduce amendments to certain paragraphs had failed to

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bring on board any wider support in the Council, and he urged that those countries which had difficulties, rather than blocking consensus, should enter their reservations in whatever manner they wished. Otherwise, the debate on the subject would continue endlessly. If it proved impossible for the Council to adopt any document on the subject of the world programme of action, the credibility and sense of responsibility of the Council would be seriously called into question.

Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt) said that his Government still had reservations regarding the formulation of paragraphs 56, 57 and 58 of the draft. The rights of young people in the area of sexual health must be understood within the framework of parental responsibilities. His delegation would not, however, oppose the consensus on the adoption of the draft.

Ms. WAHBI (Sudan) said that a real consensus would require that the world programme of action should be truly capable of being implemented. That in turn required that the preoccupations of different States, with their diverse social structures and cultural and religious beliefs, should be taken into account. While the programme contained many positive elements, it did not sufficiently take account of those differences.

The PRESIDENT said that he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the draft of the world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond.

It was so decided.

Ms. WAHBI (Sudan) said that her delegation had reservations on paragraphs 8 (g), 49, 56, 57 and 58 of the draft world programme of action. The culture, society, and beliefs of the Sudan were such that no pregnancy could be considered unwanted, except for medical reasons. Also, the provision to young people and adolescents of health-care services in respect of sexual matters must be subject to parental guidance and supervision.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan) said that his Government, while welcoming the adoption of the draft world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond, reserved its position regarding paragraphs 56, 57 and 58.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the draft resolution contained in document E/1995/L.69, recommending to the General Assembly the adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond.

Mr. AQUARONE (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, said that the beginning of paragraph 2 of the draft resolution should be amended to read "Invites Governments, with the support of the international community, non-governmental organizations, as well as the public and private sectors ...".

Mrs. LIMJUCO (Philippines), supported by Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt), proposed that in the fifth preambular paragraph, the words "including the Youth Forum" should be deleted.

Mr. AQUARONE (Netherlands) said that the sponsors would accept that amendment.

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted.

The PRESIDENT expressed his thanks to those delegations which, despite their significant difficulties with the draft world programme of action, had none the less permitted its adoption by consensus.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT informed the Council that, in the context of efforts to bring the Bretton Woods institutions closer to the United Nations system, an agreement had been signed between the United Nations, the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), copies of which would be circulated to members of the Council. Furthermore, the Managing Director of IMF and the President of the World Bank had been invited to take part in an informal meeting of the Council.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.