



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 77: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE
(continued)

AGENDA ITEM 81: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 82: QUESTION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 83: WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGING (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 89: WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 77: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE
(continued) (A/37/348 and Add.1 and 2;* A/37/237; A/C.3/37/L.16)

AGENDA ITEM 81: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH (continued) (A/37/401)

AGENDA ITEM 82: QUESTION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED (continued) (A/37/408;
A/37/435; A/C.3/37/4)

AGENDA ITEM 83: WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGING (continued) (A/CONF.113/31; A/C.3/37/4)

AGENDA ITEM 89: WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS (continued)
(A/37/160; A/37/351 and Corr.1, Add.1 and 2*)

1. Mrs. SAELZLER (German Democratic Republic) said that the large number of States participating in the World Assembly on Aging was indicative of growing interest in the solution of problems affecting the elderly. That interest was due in part to an increase in the world's elderly population, which in turn was the result of improved health care and social services. Her country's Constitution ensured its elderly citizens the right to social care, by which was meant the integration of older people into society as well as the provision of social welfare and medical services.
2. A solution to the problems of the elderly required a comprehensive consideration of the aging process, which would make it possible to maximize the ability of the older people to cope with daily life, rather than the adoption of individual ad hoc social measures. For that reason, the German Democratic Republic attached great importance to preparing people for the inevitable decline in their physical and mental abilities brought on by old age. Workers began receiving special, up-to-date gerontological care five years before their normal retirement age; they also benefited from special safeguards with regard to job security and the suitability of their work environment.
3. In addition, senior citizens experiencing some degree of alienation were assisted by a civic organization known as Volkssolidaritaet, which was designed to combat loneliness, the worst illness of old age. Volkssolidaritaet organized leisure and cultural activities for older people and provided them with helpers for their domestic chores.
4. Increasing numbers of elderly people in the German Democratic Republic wished to be lodged in retirement homes, where they were provided with a full range of services catering for their cultural needs at low, sliding scale rates. The construction of such retirement homes was an integral part of her country's housing construction programme.

* To be issued.

(Mrs. Saelzler, German Democratic Republic)

5. The World Assembly on Aging had revealed that older people occupied a relatively disadvantaged position in many countries. That was clearly the result of cuts made in social services to help finance an arms build-up. Moreover, the immediate effects of armed hostilities and related problems had particularly severe effects on older people. She asked how countries concentrating on increasing their military strength could fulfil the hopes of their elderly and aged in the spirit of the World Assembly on Aging and how the older generation could be guaranteed a carefree life in countries where competition, unemployment and inflation were increasing. The observance of a Day for the Aging, as proposed by the World Assembly, would be a mockery if concrete measures aimed at improving the condition of older people were not taken.

6. Mr. LIGAIRI (Fiji) observed that the subject of youth all too frequently occupied the headlines of the world press today. The youth protest movement had become so widespread that some considered it a twentieth century phenomenon which would inevitably manifest itself in all countries. However, the problems posed by youth in his country were different in nature and magnitude from those experienced in more affluent societies.

7. His Government considered youth to be one of its most valuable natural resources and had implemented policies to foster participation in development and responsible citizenship among young people. Formal and non-formal programmes had been developed in a number of settings to encourage self-reliance, community awareness and responsibility. His Government had supported existing youth organizations and had encouraged them to re-examine their role in the context of nation-building.

8. The preparation and observance of the International Youth Year involved a wide range of issues having long-term implications; they consequently required thorough and careful consideration between Governments and relevant national organizations. His delegation believed that the IYY programme should be closely linked to and strengthen existing national youth programmes and projects and should be adopted to conform to the objectives of individual countries' youth policies. IYY would provide a point of reference for mankind as it looked to the future and could inspire youth to work to solve the major international problems which affected their lives.

9. Youth must be involved in planning for a future which would be largely its own, even though that future was currently threatened by the halting of détente and the escalation of the arms race. Earlier efforts to bridge the gap between different ideological, social and economic systems had given way to provocation. Since youth would pay the heaviest price in any future world conflict, objectives for publicizing the IYY should include references to the role of youth in promoting the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding among peoples.

10. Despite the fact that most countries viewed national development in terms of five-year planning cycles, it should be borne in mind that contemporary youth would live into the twenty-first century. States must therefore give consideration to

(Mr. Ligairi, Fiji)

the needs, desires and ambitions of the generation for whom development was planned. Unless they consulted youth, Governments would be unable to anticipate changing moods and the emerging priorities of subsequent generations. However, such consultation was difficult in the absence of proper channels for dialogue. To remedy that situation in Fiji, the National Youth Forum was being strengthened, so that youth could participate more meaningfully in development, on the assumption that personal involvement constituted an effective antidote to the alienation from society which seemed to afflict youth in many parts of the world.

11. Mrs. ROSER (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the commission set up by her Government in connection with the International Year of Disabled Persons had made a number of recommendations for expanding the rehabilitation of the disabled during the 1980s. There was a need to adopt legislation which would provide comprehensive and standardized benefits for the disabled; subsequently, the rights of the disabled to social rehabilitation must be translated into reality, a goal to which rehabilitation institutions must increasingly be geared. Improved social security arrangements must enable severely disabled persons who could not be integrated into the general labour market to lead their lives with as much independence as possible. The system of out-patient and complementary services, particularly in rural areas, must be expanded.

12. She noted with satisfaction that the IYDP had heightened public awareness of the problems of disabled persons, particularly through exposure in the mass media. Her country's national commission would publish a report on the positive achievements of the IYDP thus far and submit it to Member States in December 1982. The report would also address the situation of disabled persons in the third world. Her Government would continue to give its full support to United Nations policies with regard to third-world countries.

13. Her delegation welcomed the adoption of the World Programme of Action, which constituted a good basis for improving the situation of the disabled throughout the world. To bring progress, however, suitable initiatives would have to be taken by individual countries in the next few years. She proposed that a meeting of experts should give further consideration to the establishment of an international identity card for disabled persons.

14. Mr. RAMALINGAM (India) emphasized the importance of the Third Committee's consideration, within a comprehensive framework, of several social issues concerning different but interdependent segments of society. Social policies had to be related to particular situations in both their conception and their implementation.

15. Interest within the United Nations in the problems of older people dated back to 1948, when the Economic and Social Council had first been asked to collect information on the subject; however, the convening of the World Assembly on Aging was a relatively recent initiative, most likely because of demographic changes and the consequent need to deal with issues and problems confronting an increasingly larger segment of society.

(Mr. Ramalingam, India)

16. Until recently, the problems of aging had been of little relevance to Indian social and economic life, largely because of the very low life expectancy. However, life expectancy had risen in the past 35 years and the rate of increase of the over-60 population, a segment which was expected to reach 7 per cent by the year 2000, exceeded that of the general population.

17. The Indian Constitution stipulated that the State should, within economic and developmental limitations, provide public assistance for the older generation. Citizens had legal obligations to parents who were infirm or unable to maintain themselves. While older people had traditionally commanded respect from the family and the community in India, modernization had had an effect on traditional family structure, with the result that they were more economically vulnerable. To deal with that problem, the Government had initiated several social-security programmes to assist the aging, but, as those measures applied only to persons working in the organized sector, it had been forced to take ad hoc measures with respect to the remainder of the population. The Government thus needed to ensure that the traditional system of caring for the elderly and the aged was maintained and strengthened in the face of the changes resulting from industrialization, urbanization and growing individualism. His delegation welcomed the acknowledgement in the International Plan of Action on Aging of the need to create a balance between traditional and innovative elements, and it supported the idea of an age/family integrated approach to planning and development that would recognize the special needs of older people.

18. While programmes for older people should be formulated in a manner that respected national traditions and values, there was much to be said for exchanges of experience among countries, particularly at the regional level. He urged the Secretary-General to take appropriate steps to promote such exchanges.

19. On the subject of youth, he said that independent India was not only a young country but also a country of the young, in which nearly one third of the population were in the 15-to-35 age group. According to the most recent census, that group numbered 212.2 million. The enormous potential which that large section of the population had for national development was self-evident. At present, young people were represented in positions of influence and leadership at all levels of government. He pointed to the involvement of Indian youth in combating the caste and dowry systems, promoting family planning and family welfare, health and sanitation, assisting the disabled and improving the environment.

20. He commended the useful work of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, but observed that, although progress had been made in the preparations for the IYY, much remained to be done. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that the IYY objectives and strategies should be carefully reviewed on a continuous basis. It was reviewing the recommendations adopted by the Advisory Committee at its most recent session and intended to study carefully the comments made by Member States on those recommendations.

(Mr. Ramalingam, India)

21. With regard to agenda item 89, he said that his delegation had been heartened to note the overwhelmingly positive response to the International Year of Disabled Persons. The widespread action at the national level had contributed to making the IYDP one of the most successful international years organized by the United Nations.

22. India's work in behalf of the disabled was a continuing effort, for the problems of disability unfortunately would not be quickly eradicated. The draft World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons was a most comprehensive document which acknowledged both the importance of analysing the situation of the disabled, within the context of differing levels of economic and social development and different cultures, and the responsibility of Governments in that area. Considerable emphasis had rightly been placed on disability prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities for the disabled. Consequently, his delegation hoped that the General Assembly would adopt the draft World Programme of Action.

23. Mr. MITREV (Bulgaria) said it was only natural that the United Nations should devote increasing attention to problems relating to youth. Young people had an enormous potential of goodwill and determination to live in peace, which should not be wasted in a world whose primary concern was peace, security and disarmament. However, if young people were to play an active role in achieving those objectives, developing their countries and shaping the future, they required adequate political and socio-economic conditions for the full realization of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

24. Unfortunately, in many Western countries young people were the chief victims of unemployment, social insecurity and injustice and the lack of an opportunity to play their rightful role in economic, social and political life. Juvenile delinquency, drug addiction, despair and alienation affected the youth of those countries because of the painful clash between youthful idealism and the crushing reality of the mercantile capitalist society.

25. In Bulgaria, young people were a powerful factor in the country's political, economic and social life. Over 20,000 young people had been elected to serve at various levels of government, while thousands of young people participated in the management of the national economy or in shaping Bulgarian socio-economic policy and cultural life. The work accomplished by his country's largest youth organization, the Dimitrov Young Communist League, at its recent fourteenth Congress demonstrated the important and active role of young people in Bulgarian society and their awareness of the interests they shared with young people throughout the world. In 1982 alone, the Dimitrov Young Communist League had organized 11 major international events and had received youth delegations from over 100 countries. Bulgarian children and young people had also participated in the second International Assembly of the Banner of Peace movement, which had been initiated by his Government three years earlier.

26. His delegation was convinced that youth-related activities at the national and international levels should be directed towards attaining the objectives set forth in the United Nations Charter and act as a stimulus to the solution of the world's

(Mr. Mitrev, Bulgaria)

major problems, the most important of which was the need to preserve peace. The peace movement in many countries, in which hundreds of thousands of young people were active participants, was another indication that contemporary youth was aware of its power and determined to defend its right to life, self-realization and human dignity. United Nations activities within the context of the IYY should therefore reflect the interests and aspirations of the world's young people and should help to strengthen international peace and understanding and to eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, apartheid and social injustice. His delegation had considered the Advisory Committee report in detail and believed that many of its ideas merited further consideration. He welcomed in particular the useful observations and recommendations contained in appendix II.

27. Mr. KOROTICH (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation supported the International Youth Year; the motto of the year - Participation, Development, Peace - reflected the need for the participation of young people in solving the vital problems of strengthening international peace, in limiting the arms race and achieving disarmament, and in supporting the peoples struggling for national independence and against racial discrimination, apartheid and all forms of colonial dependence and foreign domination. Special attention must be paid to the further development of co-operation in solving the problems of youth, ensuring their participation in the socio-economic development of their countries and protecting their socio-economic and cultural rights, including their right to work, education and health care. Achieving the goals of the International Youth Year was all the more vital in view of the serious deterioration of the international situation through the fault of Western militarist circles. The unprecedented arms race unleashed by the United States and other NATO countries laid a heavy burden on working people, and above all on young people. Military expenditure was intensifying the economic crisis in western countries; expenditure on social needs was being cut, and there was growing inflation and unemployment. Young people were the first to suffer and that led to phenomena such as crime, drug addiction and a sense of alienation among youth. Improvement of the situation of young people in developing countries was hindered by the economic backwardness of those countries resulting from long colonial domination by the imperialists and from various forms of neo-colonialism and foreign economic and political dependence, as well as the plundering of resources by international monopolies.

28. Turning to the work of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, he said that the draft declaration of the rights and responsibilities of youth required careful study but was of great significance. The regional meetings referred to in decision 5 must be financed from the funds already approved for those purposes; in that connection, the Secretariat must review its recommendations contained in paragraph 5 of document A/37/348/Add.1. His delegation supported the suggested amendments to the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/237), especially the new paragraphs 9, 17 and 75. It believed that the strengthening of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should be achieved primarily through the more effective use of existing material and human resources and internal redistribution in accordance with the priorities established. The Advisory Committee's recommendations as a whole should be financed entirely from the financial resources already allocated.

(Mr. Korotich, Ukrainian SSR)

29. In the Ukrainian SSR, thanks to the efforts to maintain peace undertaken by the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and progressive society, young people had not known war for several decades. Since unemployment was unknown in Soviet society, young people were able to realize their full potential and had made a significant contribution to the achievements of Soviet Ukraine. Nearly everyone in the Republic completed secondary education. It was considered very important that every young person should be guaranteed work in accordance with his skills and qualifications, under article 197 of the Labour Code of the Ukrainian SSR. Ties between Ukrainian youth and their contemporaries abroad were successfully developing, as was the exchange of delegations between youth organizations of the Ukraine and foreign countries. The Ukrainian SSR was providing considerable assistance to developing countries in training national skilled personnel; some 22,500 students from 91 countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America were currently studying at its educational institutions. In the Ukrainian SSR young people enjoyed all political, economic, social and cultural rights, which were ensured in practice by the socialist system. Young people were broadly represented in local Soviets of People's Deputies, in the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, and in trade unions. Permanent commissions on youth affairs attached to the Soviet peoples' deputies were another example of the concern about youth and their needs. The range of youth publications was constantly being expanded. The largest Ukrainian youth organization, the Leninist Young Communist League of the Ukraine, had over 6.7 million members; under the Constitution it played an active role in all areas of life and participated in the adoption of decisions on questions of education, vocational training, labour and the working and living conditions of young people. Young people were represented in the Ministry for Higher and Secondary Specialized Education and other organs of the Republic. Ukrainian young people were playing a very active part in the struggle for peace and disarmament. They participated in the peace march of Soviet youth, and at special meetings they had voiced angry condemnation of Israel's barbaric aggression and of the arms race and its initiators.

30. His delegation hoped that the International Youth Year would help unite young people of the entire world in the struggle for peace, social progress and disarmament and contribute to ensuring the rights of young people, chief among them the right to exist.

31. Mr. GILLETTE (France) said that the report of the World Assembly on Aging would in future years be a reference document on the basis of which international solidarity must be strengthened in face of the aging of populations and individuals; that solidarity should be a matter of priority for the United Nations and its specialized agencies, so as to maintain the momentum of the World Assembly on Aging. Old age was too often associated with deteriorating standards of living, loneliness, poverty, social or physical dependence and public assistance. The International Plan of Action on Aging revealed the multiple dimensions of the problem and should facilitate the elaboration of realistic policies in each country to reduce inequalities in the light of national needs. In France, the policy for the aging had been helped by the establishment of a State secretariat responsible for older citizens. National bodies for retired and older persons would contribute

(Mr. Gillette, France)

to the preparation of the next five-year economic and social development plan; the Plan of Action would then be broadly disseminated, and an international seminar on the results of the World Assembly on Aging would be held in the light of the work of the current session of the General Assembly. It was important to bear in mind that the aging population was doubling every quarter of a century: the report on the world social situation revealed the aggravation of major discrepancies between standards of living in different countries despite decades of international efforts.

32. The realization of the principles contained in the Plan of Action depended on the follow-up in each country but also on international initiatives and efforts by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Strengthening of the Secretariat Units concerned with the implementation of the Plan of Action was the first requirement for more effective international action. Increased international co-operation was also necessary, and the role of specialized agencies and funds would have to be further enhanced at each geographical level, so as to improve the impact of available resources. In token of its full support for the Plan of Action, France would continue to contribute to the Trust Fund in 1983.

33. France supported the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and was in full agreement with its three main themes: prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities. Further consideration should be given to the possibilities of broader solidarity with the disabled of developing countries. With regard to the question of sheltered employment, France believed that more emphasis should be placed on the risks of segregation and the dangers of exploitation and on the need for careful monitoring. The United Nations could usefully contribute to the elaboration of instruments for the periodic evaluation and adjustment of the overall programme and of national programmes, in accordance with the results obtained and with the experience of other countries.

34. France had achieved substantial progress in dealing with the problems of the disabled. The implementation of a 1975 law had been accelerated, and new activities had been undertaken to help severely disabled adults. A two-year plan of action drawn up in 1981 laid down the objectives of absorbing disabled children into ordinary schools, enabling the disabled to live in normal environments and making it possible for them to work in normal work surroundings, thus ensuring greater equality of opportunity. Sheltered employment and the institutions for the disabled were being reorganized. All those activities could benefit from increased communication with other States.

35. France aspired to a greater development of international co-operation; the strengthening of international economic solidarity must include increased action to help the disabled. The principle of the right of the disabled to equality of opportunity and their right to participate fully in collective life underlay the Plan of Action; international co-operation could also contribute to greater international equality. The Plan of Action stressed the correlation between poverty and the percentage of disabled. Financial aid should therefore be considered as complementary to the general activities already mentioned. Existing resources and the Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons should

(Mr. Gillette, France)

be used to help activities aimed at implementing the world programme. France would contribute to the Trust Fund for the Disabled in 1983, so as to help strengthen the resources of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs through the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

36. Mr. GORRENDIAYE (Gambia) said that it was the duty of the international community to guarantee the survival of youth in the face of the growing threat of extinction as a result of the nuclear build-up. That concern had been expressed by young people themselves, who had manifested in world-wide demonstrations their total opposition to that trend. However, the search for solutions to problems of such magnitude as those faced by today's youth should not be confined to a single effort of one year's duration but should be seen as a continuous concern that would safeguard the gains achieved by universal action.

37. The deteriorating world economic situation had brought untold hardship, from which young people had not been spared. Together with growing unemployment and the drastic cuts in educational and training programmes, there was the selfish waste of huge sums of money expended in stockpiling deadly weapons. The current generation of young people resented war, condemned armed conflicts and denounced its perpetrators. They cherished peace for all mankind, and his delegation therefore strongly supported the views of the Advisory Committee on the participatory role assigned to youth during the IYY.

38. Young people in Gambia were expected to play a primordial role in their own development. They were assuming key functions in their local communities, in government and in other important sectors. They made an active contribution in all fields of nation-building, particularly in farming, which was the mainstay of the country. In 1985, when they were called on to play their rightful role in the observance of the IYY, they would not be found wanting.

39. Unfortunately, that was not true of black youth in South Africa, who, subjected to the racist régime's atrocious policies, pass laws and police harassment, had been deprived of their rightful place in society. It was only after the eradication of those deep-rooted injustices that the impact of their contribution would be appreciated. His Government would do its utmost to ensure the success of the International Youth Year.

40. Ms. YAMAZAKI (Japan) said that the International Plan of Action on Aging would bring about wider recognition of the problems of the older generation. Its contents were well balanced and would serve as a set of basic guidelines. As societies throughout the world witnessed the aging of their populations, one of their most urgent tasks was to lighten the economic, social and other burdens of older people, while at the same time maintaining the vigour of their societies. The process of aging and the actual situation of older people differed greatly not only between developed and developing countries but also among developing countries themselves. Adoption of the Plan did not, however, mean that the goals of improving the situation of the elderly and the aged had been achieved. The question of aging was large and complex, and there was a long way to go in the search for answers.

(Ms. Yamazaki, Japan)

41. Her delegation believed that the idea of designating a Day for the Aging should not be forced on countries that were reluctant to agree to it. It hoped that the thinking behind the proposal would be fully and correctly understood. The designation of a Day for the Aging would be useful in promoting further understanding of the issue, particularly, understanding at the grass-roots level. Her delegation was pleased to note that the International Plan of Action included that proposal and hoped that Member States, including those that had expressed reservations about the proposal, would nevertheless be generous enough to respect the spirit in which it had been offered.

42. Mr. BADJI (Senegal) said that improvement in the quality of life was one of the objectives set forth in the International Development Strategy, an objective which often, in view of the complexity of the problems to be solved, seemed to be utopian. Runaway inflation, unemployment and high rates of interest and exchange were the ills often cited. As a result of the alarming world economic situation, most States, particularly those in a privileged economic situation and in a position to give new impetus to the world economy, were content to adopt policies whose sole objective was to solve their own internal problems, to the detriment of international co-operation dictated by the economic interdependence of States. Accordingly, his delegation could appreciate the noble initiatives taken by the United Nations in behalf of certain social categories which, because of their precarious situation, deserved special attention from the international community and from Governments.

43. In traditional African societies, older people had always been given a special status based on respect, prestige and wisdom. However, the disruptions caused by the establishment of development systems, often in contradiction to local realities, had often placed their status in jeopardy. It had therefore been necessary to bear in mind the changes which characterized contemporary societies and, as a result, to define national policies for the aging which would avoid such a generalization of the socio-economic problems of aging as had arisen in certain industrial civilizations. Senegal was fully aware of that problem and therefore had adhered scrupulously to the objectives of the International Plan of Action on Aging. The Senegalese authorities had organized an in-depth national rethinking with a view to improving and strengthening the programme established by the Government on behalf of persons over 60. The policy of the Government was to meet the needs of the aging in several areas such as medical treatment, health care and social security. His country was one whose culture was the very core of its being; it was therefore easy to understand why the role of older people in maintaining and developing cultural values was primordial. Senegal had decided to resist the insidious invasion of modern times by ensuring that its older population retained its true place in the family and in society. Accordingly, it believed that the international community should mobilize its imagination, generosity and capacity for action in behalf of the elderly and the aged.

44. Mrs. SARANGEREL (Mongolia) said the Mongolian People's Republic believed that the International Youth Year would draw the attention of Governments and the world community to the need for adopting specific measures at the national level to

(Mrs. Sarangerel, Mongolia)

improve the situation of young people and enhance their role in solving urgent current problems. Young people in many countries were deprived of the most elementary rights to work, education and participation in the life of society. In the capitalist world young people suffered heavily from unemployment and social inequality, and, as the bourgeois press recognized, they fell victim to drug addiction and alcoholism, as well as disillusionment and fear of the future, all of which led to crime and physical and moral degradation. The situation of young people in the developing countries continued to be adversely affected by the consequences of neo-colonialism, colonial oppression and exploitation which must be eliminated through radical socio-economic changes.

45. Socialism afforded youth all the conditions for the all-round development of the personality and active participation in socio-economic and political life. Mongolian young people were guaranteed broad political, economic and cultural rights; they had full access to education and a free choice of profession. They enjoyed free medical care, social-security payments and other benefits. They were broadly represented in the Great People's Hural and participated fully in industry, farming, health and culture. The Mongolian Revolutionary Union of Youth, with 200,000 members, was an independent organization which mobilized young people in solving socio-economic and cultural problems.

46. The aspirations of the younger generation could be realized only in conditions of lasting peace; in the current deteriorating international situation it was crucial to curb the arms race and avert a nuclear catastrophe, so as to ensure the well-being of present and future generations. The mobilization of large groups of young people in the movement to strengthen peace and international security and achieve disarmament should be an important aspect of activities during the International Youth Year. It was also important to involve young people in the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid, which were the main obstacles to the creation of socio-economic conditions for solving the problems of young people. An active contribution to the success of the International Youth Year could also be made by influential international non-governmental organizations such as the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Union of Students and the International Democratic Federation of Women.

47. Her delegation supported the work of the Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific and welcomed the study of the role of youth in socio-economic development, the formulation of a regional plan of measures for the International Youth Year and the holding of seminars and meetings on the subject. ESCAP resolution 223 (XXXVIII) provided for the implementation of the Specific Programme at the national level and for the establishment of national committees for the International Youth Year and dissemination of information on national experience in solving youth problems; the implementation of those measures would make an important regional contribution to attaining the goals of the Year.

(Mrs. Sarangerel, Mongolia)

48. With regard to the report of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, she said that her delegation supported the recommendation on drawing up a draft declaration on the rights and responsibilities of youth and also the suggested amendments to the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/237).

49. Mr. EHRLICH-ADAM (Austria) said his Government believed that the convening of an international conference in connection with the International Youth Year needed to be considered very carefully, since if full participation was not guaranteed, there could be adverse consequences for its outcome. It did not believe that a consensus on holding such a conference existed at present; the diverging opinions had been clearly expressed during the second session of the Advisory Committee. The convening of regional preparatory meetings, as experience had shown, was a suitable step towards convening a world conference; since the meetings would have to be arranged and serviced by the regional commissions, they would have to be provided with the financial and other resources required. The Economic Commission for Europe did not have any competence in the social field, and all costs incurred by extra-statutory ECE activities would have to be met by financing from outside the United Nations budget, which at a time of serious recession, was difficult for member States. Consequently, his Government welcomed the offer of the Government of Romania to defray the expenses of a regional meeting organized under the auspices of ECE.

50. Austria shared the view that the preparations for the International Youth Year should concentrate on measures to be taken at the national level. It was to be hoped that Governments would take measures aimed at allowing individual young people and youth groups to communicate, freely and without any interference by any Government, with individual young people and youth organizations in any other country. If that aim could be achieved, the United Nations would have made an essential contribution to improving understanding between nations, which was very important at a time of widespread distrust and hatred.

51. Austria had a long-standing tradition of supporting all United Nations activities aimed at mitigating the plight of disadvantaged population strata, and it therefore favoured international instruments granting additional rights to such groups. However, the draft declaration on the rights and responsibilities of youth, unlike other international declarations and conventions promoted by the United Nations, referred to the duties, as well as the rights, of one particular group of the population. His Government felt it dangerous to adopt such a document because of the possibility that it would be abused to the detriment of youth, and in particular invoked by totalitarian Governments to curtail the rights of youth.

52. If the proposals for the observation of the International Youth Year were to be implemented, the competent Secretariat units would have to be given the budgetary means and staffing to accomplish the tasks entrusted to them. Austria would support only those activities which were carried by consensus or at least by the broadest possible consent.

/...

(Mr. Ehrlich-Adam, Austria)

53. Activities in preparation for the International Youth Year had already begun in Austria. However, over the past year his Government had concentrated its attention in the field of social activities on the World Assembly on Aging, bearing in mind the increasing percentage of older people in society. Under the Austrian constitution, youth problems were within the competence of the federal provinces, and in principle the federal Government did not have any authority to act in behalf of youth. The federal authorities had, however, entered into a series of consultations with the governments of the federal provinces in order to ascertain the best possible method of preparing for the International Youth Year.

54. Mr. TADJUDDIN (Indonesia) said that his country had participated in action at the international level - for example, in the Advisory Committee - to ensure the success of the International Youth Year. Indonesia looked on the successful outcome of the IYY and the new role of youth and recognition of youth-related issues in national life as the extension of a long struggle to build a just and prosperous society that was free, responsible and unified. Young people in Indonesia were taking an active part in the country's social, political, economic and cultural development. At present, there were more members representing youth in the Parliament than at any time in the history of the Republic.

55. Indonesian young people were essentially no different from young people in the rest of the world, and they enthusiastically shared the majority's perception that they should play a meaningful role in overall development. It was within that framework that Indonesia interpreted the theme of "Participation, Development and Peace", which it was committed to make a reality. The IYY was not merely the summit of a course of events but also a beginning to consolidate youth-related co-operation and establish concrete programmes to resolve youth-related problems and issues. The rapid improvement in communication technology made it possible for everyone to share in the experiences and problems of youth in any country. As a result of the rapid dissemination of knowledge, there was among the younger generation a growing confidence and a readiness to assume responsibilities in nations and States, as well as in the international arena.

56. Indonesia supported the proposed declaration of the rights and responsibilities of youth because no one should claim rights without assuming responsibility. It did not believe that adoption of the declaration would weaken declarations that already existed.

57. His delegation believed that youth related issues were not the monopoly of any single institution within the United Nations system, and accordingly, a new separate institution should not be established. Instead, the existing youth unit within the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should be strengthened.

58. Regional meetings were quite important because all countries shared the same experience with respect to the development of youth. Indonesia wished to repeat its offer, made at Vienna at the Advisory Committee meeting in June 1982, to host a regional meeting in conjunction with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia

(Mr. Tadjuddin, Indonesia)

and the Pacific. His delegation would, however, request the Secretary-General to allow a certain degree of flexibility on the use of the allocated budget so as to enable the least developed among developing countries to participate.

59. Mr. TOPCUOGLU (Turkey) said that since its foundation, the Republic of Turkey had always attached great importance to matters related to youth. Accordingly, his delegation firmly supported the decision to designate 1985 as International Youth Year. Youth had become the fastest-growing age group in most parts of the globe, particularly in developing countries. That phenomenon had increased the importance of youth related issues and solutions for those problems had become more urgent than ever. Among the most prominent problems were those of the high crime and unemployment rates among young people and problems relating to housing, health and lack of educational opportunities. In Turkey, education was one of the top priorities in national development. In that context, his delegation shared the view that to combat violence, crime and terrorism among or by young people, it was essential to strengthen the educational role of the family, schools and society as a whole.

60. Turkey believed that the main responsibility in the formulation and implementation of youth policies and programmes lay with individual countries. Each Government must determine its own strategy for dealing with the problems of youth in the light of national priorities and possibilities. His delegation was therefore convinced that IYY activities at the international level should be primarily supportive of national efforts. It was important to avoid duplication and to ensure co-ordination among the work of the different agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. Information activities were also essential, in order to provide a broad base of support for the IYY.

61. National co-ordination committees as a focal point of national action could be the best means of maintaining liaison with the United Nations system. In that connection, a National Co-ordinating Committee for the IYY had been established in Turkey and was headed by the Minister of Youth. The proposed activities at the national level would touch on legislative measures, education and training, employment, social services, health, housing and sports. Turkey would do its utmost to ensure the success of the International Youth Year.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

62. The CHAIRMAN said that some delegations had requested an extension of the deadline for submitting draft resolutions on the items under consideration. Accordingly, he suggested that the deadline should be extended to Tuesday, 26 October, at 6 p.m., on the understanding that that would be the final extension.

63. It was so decided.

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64. Mr. SCHELTEMA (Netherlands), speaking on a point of order, said that he wished to raise a question that was of urgency and concern to his Government and to the Third Committee. He cited alarming reports from Guatemala that some 5,000 members of an indigenous tribe in the province of Chimaltenango, were in danger of annihilation within 48 hours unless they surrendered to surrounding troops.

65. Mr. DELPREE CRESPO (Guatemala), speaking on a point of order, said that the matter raised by the representative of the Netherlands was not on the agenda. Furthermore, the information that representative had given was erroneous. Many thousands of peasants obliged to remain in the mountains by guerrillas had been rescued by Guatemalan troops. They showed signs of malnutrition and disease and were being cared for by the army. They were not being subjected to attack but instead were receiving needed medical treatment. Guatemala had informed the Secretary-General fully of the situation.

66. The CHAIRMAN said it was true that the point raised by the representative of the Netherlands was not on the agenda. However, Guatemala too had given information on the matter, and if the representative of that country did not press his objection, he would allow the representative of the Netherlands to continue. If, however, the representative of Guatemala insisted on his objection, then the representative of the Netherlands would have to be ruled out of order.

67. Mr. DELPREE CRESPO (Guatemala) insisted that the point raised by the representative of the Netherlands was not on the agenda.

68. The CHAIRMAN said that in that case he had no alternative but to refuse to allow the representative of the Netherlands to continue his statement. However, that representative had already made his point in the Committee and could take up the matter with responsible persons such as the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights or the Secretary-General.

69. Mr. SCHELTEMA (Netherlands) said that he would abide by the ruling of the Chairman and thanked him for the opportunity to introduce part of his statement. He would get in touch with the competent parties, including the representative of Guatemala, in order to clarify the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.