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QUESTION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED

WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGING

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Karl BORCHARD (Federal Republic of Germany)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 24 September, the General Assembly decided to include in its agenda the item entitled "Question of the elderly and the aged: reports of the Secretary-General" and the item entitled "World Assembly on Aging" and to allocate them to the Third Committee.
2. The Committee considered these items, jointly with items 77, 81 and 89 at its 14th to 23rd, 25th, 26th, 29th and 42nd meetings from 18 to 28 October and on 1 and 15 November 1982. An account of the discussion of the Committee is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/37/SR.14-23, 25, 26, 29 and 42).
3. Under agenda item 82, the Committee had before it the following documentation:
 - (a) Day for the Aging: report of the Secretary-General (A/37/408), submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/20;
 - (b) United Nations activities in the field of aging: report of the Secretary-General (A/37/435), submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/20;
 - (c) Letter dated 11 October 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Final Communiqué and other documents of the Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries, held in New York from 4 to 9 October 1982 (A/37/540);

(d) Letter dated 18 October 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/37/551);

(e) Letter dated 15 October 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/37/4).

4. Under agenda item 83, the Committee had before it the following documentation:

(a) Report of the World Assembly on Aging (A/CONF.113/31); 1/

(b) Letter dated 15 October 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/37/4).

5. At the 14th and 15th meetings, on 18 and 19 October, the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs made introductory statements under agenda items 82 and 83, and at the 16th meeting, on 20 October, the Secretary-General of the World Assembly on Aging made an introductory statement under agenda item 83.

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.3/37/L.21

6. At the 29th meeting, on 1 November, the representative of Malta introduced a draft resolution (A/C.3/37/L.21), submitted under items 82 and 83, entitled "Question of the elderly and the aged" and "World Assembly on Aging", respectively, sponsored by Austria, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, France, Greece, Guatemala, Liberia, Malta, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Romania, Sierra Leone and Suriname as well as Argentina, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Egypt, Guyana, Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mauritania, Spain, Thailand, Togo, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Venezuela, subsequently joined by Ecuador, Guinea and Mali.

7. A statement by the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution was circulated to the Committee in document A/C.3/37/L.26.

8. At the 42nd meeting, on 15 November, the representative of Malta, on behalf of the sponsors, orally revised operative paragraph 5 by adding the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: "In doing so, the Secretary-General should make every effort to reallocate existing global resources;".

9. At the same meeting, the representative of the United States of America introduced an amendment (A/C.3/37/L.30) to the draft resolution which called for the addition of a new operative paragraph reading as follows:

1/ Report of the World Assembly on Aging, Vienna, 26 July to 6 August 1982
(United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16).

"18. Decides that the above paragraphs will be implemented to the extent that they can be financed within existing global resources or by voluntary contributions which may become available from the Trust Fund."

10. At the same meeting, the Committee voted as follows on draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.21 and the amendment thereto:

(a) Amendment A/C.3/37/L.30 was rejected by a recorded vote of 67 to 23, with 32 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chad, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Benin, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Botswana, Burundi, Denmark, Djibouti, Fiji, Finland, France, Iceland, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Norway, Paraguay, Portugal, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Upper Volta, Viet Nam, Zaire.

(b) Draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.21, as orally revised, was adopted by a recorded vote of 121 to 1, with 7 abstentions (see para. 11). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji,

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Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

11. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Question of aging

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 33/52 of 14 December 1978, in which it decided to convene a World Assembly on Aging to call world-wide attention to the serious problems besetting a growing portion of the population of the world and to provide a forum to launch an international programme of action aimed at guaranteeing economic and social security to older persons, as well as opportunities for them to contribute to national development,

Recognizing that increasing longevity is a biological achievement and a sign of progress, and that the aged are an asset and not a liability to society because of the invaluable contribution they can give by virtue of their accumulated wealth of knowledge and experience,

Bearing in mind that countries gathered in the World Assembly on Aging reaffirmed their belief that the fundamental and invaluable rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights apply fully and undiminishedly to

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the aging, and recognize that the quality of life is no less important than longevity, and that the aging should therefore, as far as possible, be enabled to enjoy in their own families and communities a life of fulfilment, health, security and contentment, appreciated as an integral part of society,

Convinced that the Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging adopted by the World Assembly on Aging, 2/ must lead to developing and applying, at the international, regional and national levels, policies designed to enhance the lives of the aging as individuals and to mitigate, by appropriate measures, any negative effects resulting from the impact of the aging of populations on development,

Recognizing that the Plan of Action should be considered an integral component of the major international, regional and national strategies and programmes formulated in response to important world problems and needs,

Recalling its resolutions 35/129 of 11 December 1980, in which it established a trust fund for preparatory and follow-up activities of the World Assembly on Aging, and 36/20 of 9 November 1981, in which it requested the Secretary-General to use the Trust Fund to encourage further interest in the field of aging among developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, within the context of the conclusions and recommendations of the World Assembly on Aging,

Acknowledging the role played by the United Nations and the specialized agencies through their efforts in the field of aging and the need to strengthen this role in order to make the implementation of the recommendations of the Plan of Action effective,

Emphasizing the importance of the Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging and stressing the spirit of co-operation that prevailed during the World Assembly on Aging,

Expressing appreciation to the Government of Austria for hosting the World Assembly on Aging,

Having considered the report of the World Assembly on Aging, held at Vienna from 26 July to 6 August 1982,

1. Takes note of the report of the World Assembly on Aging; 3/
2. Endorses the Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging contained in the report and adopted by consensus at the World Assembly on Aging;

2/ Report of the World Assembly on Aging, Vienna, 26 July to 6 August 1982 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16), chap. VI.

3/ Report of the World Assembly on Aging, Vienna, 26 July to 6 August 1982 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16).

3. Affirms that aging should be considered in the context of economic, social and cultural development, as well as in the context of international strategies and plans;

4. Calls upon Governments to make continuous efforts to implement the principles and recommendations contained in the Plan of Action as adopted by the World Assembly on Aging in accordance with their national structures, needs and objectives;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to ensure that sufficient resources within reasonable limits are made available for the effective implementation of, and follow-up action to, the Plan of Action as well as to maintain the momentum generated by the World Assembly on Aging; in doing so, the Secretary-General should make every effort to reallocate existing global resources;

6. Also requests the Secretary-General to take such steps as may be appropriate for the necessary strengthening of activities in the field of aging at the central and regional levels of the United Nations as set forth in the Plan of Action;

7. Further requests the Secretary-General to strengthen the international network of existing information, research and training centres in the field of aging in order to encourage and facilitate the exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences, as well as technical co-operation among countries within various regions;

8. Urges the Secretary-General to implement the recommendations concerning the international co-operation with respect to aging, as well as the assessment, review and appraisal of the implementation of the Plan of Action, using the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat as the focal point;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to use the Trust Fund to meet the rapidly increasing needs of the aging in the developing countries, in particular in the least developed ones;

10. Also requests the Secretary-General to use the Trust Fund to encourage greater interest among developing countries in matters related to aging and to assist Member States, at their request, in formulating and implementing policies and programmes for the elderly; further requests the Secretary-General to use the Trust Fund for technical co-operation and research related to the aging of populations and for promoting co-operation among developing countries in the exchange of relevant information and technology;

11. Appeals to Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund;

12. Urges the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, in co-operation with all organizations responsible for international population assistance, to strengthen its assistance, within its mandate, in the field of aging, particularly in developing countries;

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13. Requests the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission for Social Development, to review the implementation of the Plan of Action every four years, beginning in 1985, and to transmit its findings to the General Assembly;

14. Invites the specialized agencies concerned to co-operate with the Secretary-General in the implementation of the Plan of Action within their fields of competence;

15. Invites also the intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned to continue to give attention to major issues related to aging and to co-ordinate their work with the United Nations, particularly in view of the need for well co-ordinated activities for the implementation of the Plan of Action;

16. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session on the progress achieved in implementing and following up the Plan of Action and to include in his report an account of project activities financed by the Trust Fund;

17. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-eighth session a single item entitled "Question of aging" to replace the items "Question of the elderly and the aged" and "World Assembly on Aging".
