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INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 33/7 of 3 November 1978 entitled "International Youth Year". In that resolution the General Assembly, inter alia, decided to proclaim an International Youth Year and to designate the most suitable period for its celebration, as well as the ways and means for its observance, at its thirty-fourth session. The Assembly invited again all States to make known their views, to offer additional suggestions concerning the International Youth Year and to send their proposals and observations in this regard to the Secretary-General before 1 July 1979. The Secretary-General was requested to prepare a comprehensive report which should present analytically the opinions expressed by States with respect to the various practical aspects of the celebration of the International Youth Year on the basis of the views and proposals made, including those submitted during the thirty-second and thirty-third sessions of the General Assembly. The Assembly further decided to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-fourth session an item entitled "International Youth Year" and to grant it the highest priority, due consideration being given to the final designation of the most suitable period for the celebration of such a Year.

2. The Secretary-General has requested Member States to make known their views and proposals concerning the observance of the International Youth Year by means of notes verbale. As at 15 July 1979, a total of 53 Member States had provided him with written statements of their views and proposals. The Observer Mission of Switzerland has also provided written views and comments. 1/

3. In addition to the written replies received, 75 Member States indicated views and proposals in oral interventions during the thirty-second (A/C.3/32/SR.63, 66, 70 and 71) and thirty-third (A/C.3/33/SR.7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) sessions of the General Assembly, the twenty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development (E/CN.5/582) and the first regular session of the 1979 Economic and Social Council (E/1979/C.2/SR.10, 12). The Secretary-General's preliminary proposals for the observance of the Year are contained in document A/33/257.

4. The present report makes reference to the above-mentioned replies and oral interventions in presenting the views and proposals of Member States for the observance of the Year.

## II. VIEWS AND PROPOSALS BY MEMBER STATES FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

### A. General observations concerning the objectives of the year

5. Most Member States favouring the observance of the International Youth Year considered such a year a useful, and potentially a significant, opportunity for drawing attention to the situation, needs and aspirations of youth, for increasing

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1/ Forty-four of these replies (including that of Switzerland) are reproduced verbatim in A/33/257/Add.1 and Corr.1, dated 1 and 4 October 1978 respectively.

co-operation and collaboration at all levels in dealing with youth issues, for undertaking concerted action programmes in favour of youth and for involving young people in the study of and resolution of major international, regional and national problems.

6. Most States emphasized action at the local and national levels, and appropriate action at the regional and international levels, dealing with specific youth issues. Some States emphasized that the programme for the Year should be formulated only after careful planning, 2/ keeping in mind the experiences of other international years. 3/ Several States recommended that no international conference be included in the programme for the year. 4/

7. With regard to the methods to be used for planning and formulating the programme of the year, the following principles received some support from Member States:

(a) National, regional and international youth organizations should be closely involved in the preparations for the year; 5/

(b) Planning and co-ordinating bodies should be established in each Member State to share responsibility for the observance of the year; 6/

(c) The programme for the year should be supported by voluntary contributions by Member States. 7/

8. There was no consensus among Member States as to the timing of the year and few concrete suggestions; suggestions included 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1985; the year 1985 appeared to have the greatest support. 8/

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2/ Replies of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Hungary, Ireland and Sweden; statements of Sri Lanka (A/C.3/33/SR.8, para. 2), Czechoslovakia (A/C.3/33/SR.11, para 10).

3/ Replies of Australia, Belgium, Denmark and Germany, Federal Republic of.

4/ Replies of Argentina and Japan.

5/ Replies of Austria, Hungary, the Philippines, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the USSR and Yugoslavia; statement of Yugoslavia (A/C.3/33/SR.8, para. 36); statement of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 35).

6/ Replies of Argentina, Cape Verde, El Salvador, the Philippines and the Seychelles.

7/ Replies of Canada and the Philippines.

8/ Replies of Cape Verde, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary and Norway; statements of Germany, Federal Republic of (A/C.3/33/SR.7, para. 29); Sri Lanka (A/C.3/33/SR.8, para. 2); the Philippines (A/C.3/33/SR.7, para. 22); the Bahamas (A/C.3/33/SR.8, para. 21); Pakistan (A/C.3/33/SR.10, para. 61). Bhutan (A/C.3/33/SR.11, para. 29); Egypt (A/C.3/33/SR.8, para. 24); Madagascar (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 29); Papua New Guinea (A/C.3/33/SR.11, para. 46); New Zealand (A/C.3/33/SR.12, para. 14).

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B. Activities at the national level

9. Many Member States considered that the International Youth Year should most appropriately be aimed at reviewing and improving the situation of youth at the national and local levels. Activities related to this aim could include:

(a) A systematic review of existing legislation, administrative structures and programmes related to youth; 9/

(b) Strengthening of mechanisms for co-operation with and among youth organizations and youth movements, both as a means for planning and implementing the year's programmes and to ensure more effective programming following the observance of the year; 10/

(c) Strengthening of research capabilities relating to youth issues, and of co-operation and collaboration among institutions engaged in youth research; 11/

(d) Concrete measures to intensify involvement of young people in national development activities and in programmes to resolve national and local problems, including the organization of work camps, seminars and courses; 12/

(e) Establishment or up-grading of youth centres, particularly in rural areas, and of libraries, recreation and sport centres; 13/

(f) Organization of events to provide recognition to outstanding young people for achievements in cultural, economic, social, educational and other fields of endeavour; 14/

(g) Use of the mass media to publicize the situation needs and aspirations of youth and related programmes; 15/

(h) A greater emphasis on drug, sex and environmental education, and on programmes to foster cultural awareness. 16/

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9/ Replies of Japan, Egypt, Iran and Mexico; statement of India (A/C.3/32/SR.71, para. 20).

10/ Replies of Finland, Mexico, the Netherlands and Uganda.

11/ Replies of Finland, Greece, Iran, Kenya, Mexico and Romania.

12/ Replies of the Bahamas, El Salvador, Egypt, Japan, Greece, Hungary, Kenya, the Philippines, Spain, Tunisia and Uganda; statements of the Central African Empire (A/C.3/32/SR.71, para. 27), China (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 14), Madagascar (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 29) and Indonesia (A/C.3/33/SR.11, para. 32).

13/ Replies of Egypt, El Salvador, Greece and Iran; statement of the Philippines (A/C.3/33/SR.7, para. 20).

14/ Replies of the Bahamas, Iraq and Spain.

15/ Replies of Iran, Iraq, the Philippines, Spain and Tunisia; statement of Spain (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 17).

16/ Replies of El Salvador, Greece and Iran.

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C. Activities at the regional and international levels

10. Many Member States believe that activities at the regional level, if properly conceived and carried out, could provide substantial support to efforts undertaken at the national level in favour of youth needs and aspirations.
11. At the regional level, some States emphasized the importance of meetings dealing with common regional issues, such as migration, employment, youth and family relationships, professional orientation, and problems of working students. 17/
12. Regional and subregional sports and cultural activities and exchanges were mentioned by several Member States as being useful activities during the year. 18/
13. It was generally held that activities at the international level should, similarly, support local and national activities during the year.
14. Issues of peace, security and the new international economic order, and related issues of human rights, disarmament, self-determination and independence, and the struggle against apartheid, colonialism, neo-colonialism, domination and exploitation were cited by a number of Member States as being significant considerations for inclusion in the programme for the year. 19/ Seminars, workshops and conferences were suggested to enable youth to discuss these issues and participate in the solution of related problems. Distribution of publications and other use of mass media should be used, it was felt, to support such activities. 20/
15. Several Member States suggested that an international conference or assembly be held as part of the celebration of the year. These suggestions included the view that youth from all Member States should meet at United Nations Headquarters to discuss their views and agree upon a programme of action for the year, that a governmental conference be convened during the year and that such a meeting include representatives of youth organizations. 21/
16. Some States suggested that a charter or resolution on youth rights and responsibilities should be elaborated as part of the activities for the year. 22/

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17/ Replies of Cape Verde, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, the Philippines and the Seychelles.

18/ Replies of Hungary, Iraq, Mexico, Spain and Togo.

19/ Replies of Cape Verde, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Finland, Germany, Democratic Republic of, Hungary, Mongolia, Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the USSR; Commission for Social Development, report on the twenty-sixth session, E/CN.5/582, para. 108 and the Sudan (A/C.3/33/SR.11, para. 23).

20/ Reply of Spain.

21/ Replies of Chile, Cuba, Greece, Hungary, Mexico, Romania and Tunisia; statements of Mexico (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 44) and Zambia (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 47).

22/ Replies of Barbados, El Salvador, Hungary and Romania.

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17. Activities to strengthen international friendship and understanding through exchanges, encouragement of youth tourism, an international youth day were also suggested. 23/

18. Cultural activities centred around the interests and activities of young people received wide support among Member States commenting on the programme for the year. Such activities included international programmes and competitions based on films, photographs, philately, drama, books and articles, music and other works by young people. 24/

19. Some States suggested that international seminars and meetings on specific youth-related topics be held, including the rights of working youth, young women and children; common interests of young scientists and scientific activities related to youth; and reinforcement of co-operation among non-governmental youth organizations. 25/

20. Several Member States proposed that United Nations activities in the field of youth should be strengthened and expanded in connexion with the preparation and celebration of the year. These proposals include the establishment of a United Nations Commission on Youth, a United Nations Youth Research and Documentation Centre, the strengthening of the activities of the regional commissions and specialized agencies and of interagency co-operation and collaboration in this regard, and the extension of the scope of the quarterly Youth Information Bulletin issued by the United Nations. 26/

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23/ Replies of Finland, Germany, Democratic Republic of, Iraq, Spain, Thailand, Togo and Uganda; statement of the United Arab Emirates (A/C.3/32/SR.66, para. 15).

24/ Replies of Greece, Hungary, Iraq and the Seychelles.

25/ Replies of Hungary, Iran, Romania and Spain; statement of Democratic Yemen (A/C.3/33/SR.11, para. 33).

26/ Replies of Finland, Iran and Romania; statements of the Libyan Arab Yamahariya (A/C.3/32/SR.71, para. 61), the Philippines (A/C.3/33/SR.7, para. 21), Jordan (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 11) and Poland (A/C.3/33/SR.9, para. 23).

III. PROPOSALS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE OBSERVANCE  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

21. The Secretary-General already has proposed a series of principles and approaches to the observance of the International Youth Year in his preliminary report on this subject (A/33/257, paras. 13-22). Those principles and approaches remain valid and should be considered as one of the bases for the Organization's further discussion of proposals for the Year.

22. The Secretary-General wishes to make the following specific proposals for the consideration of the General Assembly:

1. General principles

23. In view of the time required for adequate preparation for the Year and the fact that the next several years already have been designated for the observance of other subjects, the Secretary-General proposes that the year 1985 be designated as International Youth Year. That year has the distinction of being the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between People, contained in General Assembly resolution 2037 (XX) of 7 December 1965, and the fifteenth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Volunteers Programme, contained in General Assembly resolution 2659 (XXV) of 7 December 1970.

24. The Secretary-General proposes that the full title and name of the year be "International Youth Year: Development and Peace". This theme reflects, in his opinion, the predominant concerns of Member States for the Year as well as a dynamic unifying concept for the activities of the Year. It is also consonant with and supportive of the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter, and includes, implicitly, the concern for youth participation in national and international development that is a major focus of United Nations activities regarding young people.

25. International Youth Year activities prior to and during the Year should be undertaken at all levels: national, regional and international, and within the United Nations system. The purpose and thrust of these activities should be to address and deal with the specific needs and aspirations of youth, wherever those needs and aspirations are expressed. Therefore, the primary focus of the Year's activities should be on youth at the national and local levels. International and regional level activities should be primarily supportive of activities undertaken relative to national and local youth issues.

26. The Secretary-General believes that, while international meetings, seminars and events concerned with specific subjects of relevance to the theme of the Year would be desirable, a single large-scale conference or assembly on the over-all theme of the Year would not best serve the purposes of the Year or be justifiable in terms of expense and benefits that could be expected to result from it. He therefore recommends that the programme for the Year not include such a conference or assembly.

2. Activities at the national and local levels

27. The Secretary-General proposes that a National Co-ordinating Committee for the International Youth Year: Development and Peace, be established in each Member State. The majority of the members of these committees should be young people between the ages of 15 and 24, chosen by representative youth organizations in those States or by other means determined by each Government concerned. The National Co-ordinating Committee would serve as the liaison organization to the United Nations regarding the programmes for the Year.

28. Each Member State should undertake, as part of its activities for the Year, a thorough review of national policies concerning youth, of national and subnational legislation concerning youth, of services for and administrative structures relating to youth questions, and of mechanisms for involving young people in decision-making, for the purpose of proposing and implementing necessary improvements in these areas.

29. Each Member State should prepare an "Agenda for National Action" for the Year, in which specific youth needs are identified and action programmes proposed for implementation during the Year.

30. Taking into account the resolutions on the new international economic order, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the resolutions on the new International Development Strategy, it is suggested that the following problem areas be considered among the priority topics around which to centre the activities of the International Youth Year:

(a) The importance of expanding and diversifying production and trade of the developing countries with regard to reducing unemployment and under-employment among youth, halting rural-urban migration and containing the outflow of trained personnel;

(b) Social aspects of national and international migration of youth, with special reference to the problem of alternative life-styles and indigenous development;

(c) Education and training of youth with regard to:

(i) The objective of developing and strengthening the indigenous capacity of the developing countries in the field of science and technology;

(ii) The objective of promoting economic and technical co-operation among the developing countries;

(iii) The objective of increasing agricultural and food production in the developing countries;

(iv) The objective of promoting industrialization in the developing countries;

(v) The objective of strengthening national self-reliance.

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31. Data collection and analysis capabilities, and research programmes on youth-related subjects should be initiated at the national and local levels, in co-operation with related efforts at the regional and international levels.

32. Member States should elaborate a series of local and national public events during the Year in which young artists, musicians, writers, film-makers and other creative young people would present their work to the public at large. Such events could be organized as national competitions and, in association with other States, as regional and international events.

33. Events to recognize youth achievements in a broad range of fields should be considered by Member States. They could include a Youth Recognition Month, a Youth in Parliament Week, and essay competitions, for example.

### 3. Activities at the regional and international levels

34. The activities undertaken at all levels during the International Youth Year: Development and Peace, should be the occasion for increasing understanding among youth of the basic requirements for international amity and co-operation. At the same time, the Year should be an occasion for emphasizing that many of the youth-related development problems facing the developing countries are externally induced, i.e., resulting from the structure and functioning of the existing international economic system. For example, the problems of youth unemployment and under-employment, rural-urban migration and the outflow of trained personnel from the developing countries are closely linked to those of agricultural production and international trade in primary commodities of export interest to the developing countries; transfer of technology; or, in more general terms, the widening over-all development gap between the developed and the developing countries.

35. Research and action programmes in the field of peace education should be undertaken and strengthened during the Year by Governments and international non-governmental organizations, with the needs and aspirations of young people specifically in mind. United Nations bodies concerned with youth issues, education and peace should co-operate with research institutions and universities in all regions in such programmes.

36. The Secretary-General recommends that the General Assembly call upon the legislative bodies of the United Nations and the legislative organs of the specialized agencies to:

(a) Initiate intensive research on the youth question in relation to their respective areas of concern and competence;

(b) On the basis of such research, consider and recommend effective ways and means of enhancing the participation of youth in development and strengthening the role of youth in co-operation for international peace;

(c) Transmit the conclusions of their deliberations, including resolutions on future international action and, as appropriate, recommendations for national action, to the appropriate authorities.

37. Programmes of international youth exchange should be expanded by Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to foster international understanding.

38. A series of international youth cultural events should be considered, including:

(a) An International Cinema Week with films made by youth and on youth subjects shown throughout the world;

(b) A World Theatre Festival, in which university theatrical groups would participate;

(c) A poster contest among secondary school students to design a poster for the Year;

(d) A travelling photography exhibition on the theme "Youth in large cities, provinces and villages";

(e) An International Committee of Youth to select 12 important books of youth interest, which would be published by every Member State of the United Nations;

(f) An International Music Festival with young composers, conductors and musical groups;

(g) Special postage stamps and postcards in commemoration of the Year.

39. A series of international seminars and symposia on specific youth-related subjects could be scheduled, including employment and work orientation, the health situation and problems of youth, and co-operation among research and documentation centres concerned with youth issues.

40. At the United Nations level, a suitable support infrastructure for the preparation and elaboration of the Year should be established on a temporary basis. The Year should also be the occasion for a thorough discussion by the General Assembly and other bodies of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, of the World Social Situation of Youth and of how the United Nations system may better be organized to deal with youth issues. At the same time, the basic thrust of the Year's activities should be at the national and local levels. Special consideration should be given, therefore, to the further strengthening and expansion of programmes such as the United Nations Volunteers programme.

41. Suitable provision should be made at all levels for evaluating the activities and results of the Year and ensuring adequate follow-up. Consideration should be given to a "Decade and Plan of Action for the World's Youth" during a General Assembly discussion on this question following the conclusion of the International Youth Year.

4. Provisions for planning, direction and finance

42. The Secretary-General proposes that the General Assembly establish an Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year: Development and Peace, to be composed of 24 Member States. The Advisory Committee would meet annually prior to the Year to formulate a specific programme for the Year for consideration by the General Assembly.

43. Suitable provision should be made for the pledging and receipt of voluntary contributions from Member States and other sources to supplement funds provided under the regular United Nations budget for the costs of the programme of the Year.

44. Should the General Assembly decide to designate 1985 as the International Youth Year and should the Assembly decide that the preparatory activities leading to the celebration of the Year would not begin earlier than the 1982-1983 biennium, the Secretary-General would present the administrative and financial requirements in respect of the regular budget as non-recurrent items of expenditure within the context of the programme budget proposals for the biennium 1982-1983.

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