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Chairman: Mr. PAPASTEPHANOU (Greece)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 72: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/33/193, A/33/257 and Add.1, A/33/261)

1. Mrs. BEN AMI (Israel) said that every society aware of its present and responsible for its future regarded the education of the younger generation as the best investment to protect its future. In addition to education in the home, which was limited in the modern world, and action by schools and colleges, that task required the provision of formative frameworks of an educational and recreational type for young people's leisure hours.
2. Over and above the special characteristics of youth in different countries and areas, different economic and social strata and different cultural environments, young people of today had to face common problems. One of the most serious difficulties of present-day society was a failure to adapt to the rapid changes taking place in it. The only hope for overcoming that difficulty lay in a new generation of young people who, growing up in the new circumstances, would find it easier to adapt to them. Young people must become aware of the great physical and cultural diversity of the world and learn to respect the feelings and values of others and to live free from fear and prejudice in an international community in which the potential of each country and each individual were fully realized.
3. It was necessary to promote youth structures for youth and with youth, with a view to ensuring more favourable conditions for education, training, health, social welfare and employment; equitable participation in national development plans and international co-operation programmes; and opportunities to participate in the taking of decisions on questions of national interest. The United Nations had, since its establishment, recognized that participation was the key to the success of activities in the youth field. That approach had recently come to be accepted at the national level as well.
4. Her delegation fully agreed with the Secretary-General's report on the proclamation of an International Youth Year (A/33/257), and particularly with paragraphs 10 and 13 of the report, which revealed a sense of realism and a flexible and cautious approach to the subject.
5. Israel had abundant experience in the education and training of young people in environments other than school and work; although youth problems continued, of course, to exist, the successes achieved had aroused interest in various countries of the world, to which Israel was providing assistance through the sending of technicians and through courses and seminars held in Israel. The purpose of that assistance was not to transfer experience from one environment to different environments but to adapt to the conditions and expectations of each country certain objectives which were considered fundamental to the education of every young person: to train an efficient producer, to foster an enlightened consumer, to bring up a conscientious citizen and to educate the individual to achieve his own ideals and realize the high ideals of society.

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6. Miss SFALHOUB (Jordan) said that her country's main resource was the human element, which was predominantly young, since 64.9 per cent of the population of 2.5 million was under 24 years of age. An annual population growth rate of 3.5 per cent meant that the demographic structure would remain the same.

7. All Jordanians were entitled to schooling, but because financial limitations made it impossible to maintain more than two universities, 16 per cent of young people obtained higher education abroad. Although there was some brain drain, it did not interfere with national development or the equilibrium of society.

8. Special directives had been established to orient education and vocational training towards fulfilling the objectives of the five-year development plan initiated in 1976, designed to increase the gross national product by 12 per cent. The Jordan Youth Welfare Organization, established in 1966, channelled young people's capabilities towards positive action for themselves and their society. The organization supported the establishment of cultural, social and physical-training clubs and gave special attention to the Boy Scout and Girl Guide movement, youth camps and hostels and sport unions. It also endeavoured to construct bridges between Jordanian youth and youth in other Arab and foreign countries; it organized seminars and programmes with the co-operation of governmental organs. There was a shortage of sports and athletic leadership because trained personnel were attracted to neighbouring countries by the prospect of higher income; therefore projects such as a Physical Education College had been initiated to meet the needs of the Ministry of Education, the armed forces and other bodies.

9. Youth compounds were being established in all major cities of Jordan with a view to channelling the abilities of young people towards the development of scientific, practical and technical skills, while at the same time developing human understanding and providing recreational opportunities.

10. Youth Vocational Training Systems provided opportunities for youth to develop basic skills and a healthy respect for the manual skills which were indispensable for increasing and improving production. By the end of the five-year development plan, all youth centres would provide vocational training for both young men and young women.

11. Jordan supported international co-operation in the youth field. Consequently it welcomed the recommendation of the Secretary-General on channels of communication with youth and youth organizations (A/33/261) and the proposal to hold an International Youth Year, in the preparation for which, as was clear from paragraph 20 of document A/33/257, the technical co-operation work of the regional commissions would be of special importance. In conclusion, she suggested increasing the number of symposia allotted to the area to which Jordan belonged and expressed the view that in-depth study and analysis would be needed if the proposed International Youth Year was to achieve its objectives.

12. Ms. HUANG Kuo (China) supported the proposal for the proclamation of an International Youth Year. Since young people constituted the most dynamic force of society, it was vital to give sufficient attention to the problems affecting young people, such as education, employment and healthy physical and mental development.

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(Ms. Huang Kuo, China)

13. The problems of youth were inextricably linked with the political, economic and social problems confronting the people of each country. At present, the peoples of southern Africa still suffered under the oppression of racism, the rights of the Palestinian people had not yet been restored, and many third world countries still lived in underdevelopment and poverty inherited from imperialism and colonialism. The super-Powers continued to vie for world hegemony, expanding their armaments and preparing for war. Their aggressive and interventionist activities everywhere endangered the peace and security of the peoples of the world. Unless that situation changed, a happy life and healthy development for the young people of those countries and regions would be impossible. Young people all over the world were becoming increasingly aware that their future was inseparable from the fate of their own country and the march of world history. They were therefore resolutely participating in the struggle against oppression, aggression, intervention, foreign control and exploitation, imperialism, colonialism, hegemonism, racism and Israeli zionism and for national liberation.

14. The representative of Romania had proposed that young people should participate actively in the struggle to establish a new international political and economic order, to democratize international life, to establish international relations based on the principles of respect for sovereignty and equality, non-interference in the affairs of other nations, non-use of force or the threat of force, to eradicate colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid. That was the common historic task of the youth of all countries at the present time and should be a major element of International Youth Year. Young people must be encouraged to participate in the struggles of their time and mobilize their efforts to help solve the problem of today's world.

15. Mr. CABRERA (Spain) welcomed the fact that the item relating to youth was being considered at the beginning of the Committee's work, since one of the most serious problems of the present time was the frustration felt by young people in the face of realities which directly affected them, such as overt or covert unemployment. Young people must become fully integrated into the society in which they lived, and many of them had made effective efforts to co-operate in the development of the world's most depressed areas through such valuable programmes as that of the United Nations Volunteers.

16. His Government, which gave special attention to the subject of youth, had established a General Youth Directorate, directly responsible to the Ministry of Culture, and a Youth Institute, whose work related essentially to cultural activities and research. In the near future, the Spanish people would be given an opportunity to vote in a referendum on a draft constitution, prepared by all parliamentary forces, in which legal age, for all purposes, would be established at 18 years.

17. As could be seen from document A/33/257, Spain supported the initiative of proclaiming an International Youth Year and would be willing to play an active part in its observance. Plans were being made for the establishment, in the near future, of a Youth Council, which would be the competent Spanish authority to deal with the

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(Mr. Cabrera, Spain)

matter. In connexion with the International Year, the Spanish Ministry of Culture would be prepared to organize various activities, including an international seminar, the publication of various papers on the subject of youth and the award of prizes for the best dissemination work on youth topics by the press, radio and television. It would also participate in activities organized by the United Nations. The proposal to celebrate the International Youth Year was controversial, and had given rise to some misgivings, but there was reason to expect that all Member States would participate actively at the appropriate time, which he hoped would be in the near future.

18. Mr. KAJDY (Poland) said that youth had played a considerable role in the two fundamental historical processes which had brought about far-reaching changes in the social structure of Poland over the past 33 years: the social revolution and socialist industrialization. In 1978 more than 50 per cent of the 35 million inhabitants of Poland had been under 30 years of age, and approximately 15 million had been under the age of 24. Most young people worked in towns, mainly in industries, and there was no lack of employment for them. More than half of Poland's young workers had taken up work less than five years ago, and an increasing number of them had a sound educational background and good training, as well as considerable social and political awareness, and were actively involved in the affairs of work establishments and of the nation as a whole.

19. The Polish Government was paying special attention to youth problems, including those relating to education, work, housing and political activities, and it believed that those problems should be the subject of international co-operation. The United Nations should develop educational procedures which could embrace all young people and educate them in the spirit of the Charter, of peace and tolerance among nations, of the strengthening of international security and of the denunciation of colonialism, apartheid, imperialism, national oppression and social exploitation.

20. The proclamation of the International Youth Year and the improvement of communications with youth and youth organizations could be helpful, but it was the substance of co-operation rather than the establishment of costly infrastructures that was most important. Conditions must be created for the utilization of the abilities of young people, and they should have full and equal opportunities at school and at work, which meant not merely the right to education and employment but also the provision of material conditions for free education for all and at all levels and the creation of a sufficient number of jobs for young people. The younger generation must be prepared for life in peace and respect for other peoples, irrespective of their creed, colour and race. That was the idea embodied in the draft Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, submitted by the Polish delegation in the First Committee (A/C.1/33/2, annex).

21. As had been emphasized at the eleventh World Festival of Youth and Students, recently held at Havana, to be young should also mean to be progressive and to be

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(Mr. Kajdy, Poland)

ready to change outdated social structures, combat exploitation and sexual and racial inequality, and work towards a new international division of labour which should rule out exploitation of man by man and of country by country.

22. Youth should play a greater and more creative role in the attainment of those educational and political objectives through national and international organizations. The informal meetings of youth non-governmental organizations, which were held periodically in Geneva, should remain the basic channel of communication between the United Nations and youth organizations, but other channels of communication needed to be improved as well.

23. The proclamation of the International Youth Year should be followed by a thorough study of the needs and demands of youth, taking account of the possibility of mobilizing youth of various countries for the purpose of achieving greater social development.

24. Mrs. RAMANANTSOAVINA (Madagascar) said that youth constituted one of the pillars of the socialist revolution in the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, which had always given special attention to the problems of young people, who made up 65 per cent of its population. That fact was demonstrated by the existence of the Ministry of Youth, which co-ordinated the activities of governmental and non-governmental agencies in that field. An attempt had been made to create favourable conditions for the effective participation of youth in various economic, political and social activities, with a view to attaining development objectives and meeting the needs of the social revolution. Young people were brought up in a spirit of discipline and responsibility towards the entire community. Young people participated, for example, in vacation projects, socialist production co-operatives and literacy campaigns.

25. As had been stated in detail by the delegation of Madagascar at the thirty-first and thirty-second sessions, youth played a prominent role in economic and social development. It was a subject of development, through education and training; it was a resource for development, and it provided well-rounded and responsible participants in the process of development. Malagasy youths also participated in various international events, at which it expressed support for the anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist and anti-racist struggle and for the fundamental principles of the Charter.

26. The delegation of Madagascar supported the proclamation of an International Youth Year and considered that its preparation and conduct should be the joint responsibility of adults and young people. During the celebration of the Year it would be necessary to take account of the differences between the problems of the developed and the developing countries and between rural and urban areas.

27. The Third Committee should draw up a specific programme for the effective promotion of youth and should encourage studies and surveys on the needs and aspirations of youth.

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(Mrs. Ramanantsoavina, Madagascar)

28. With regard to document A/33/193, and particularly paragraph 27, her delegation welcomed the efforts made by the United Nations to improve the situation of youth, which had made it possible to identify the needs and aspirations of young people in practically all regions of the world. It was to be hoped that the regional commissions would organize symposia, meetings, conferences and workshops on the major topics concerning youth and that experience would be exchanged at the international level so as to improve the situation of young people.

29. It would be helpful if the countries which had already identified and embarked on a youth policy could receive financial and material assistance from the United Nations, for example through the establishment of a special fund for youth. If the Committee agreed in principle to hold the International Youth Year, the Year should be dedicated to promoting awareness, as well as to co-ordination and consolidation of all kinds of activities with a view to the effective participation of youth in the achievement of the objectives of the Charter and the struggle against social injustice and the imperialist policy of domination. The Year should provide an opportunity for youth to expand its role in the consideration of governmental problems in the contemporary world such as disarmament, the elimination of underdevelopment, the building of the new international economic order and the elimination of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid, and for young people to affirm their determination to contribute to the building of a world of peace and co-operation. It would be better if the International Youth Year could be held earlier than 1985, which was the year that had been proposed.

30. With regard to means of communication with youth and youth organizations, her delegation felt that consciousness-raising, education and information for young people should be parallel measures. The content of the information should be given careful study to ensure that it contributed to the attainment of national and international objectives regarding youth. In that field the United Nations should make a contribution in the form of teaching materials and funds.

31. Mr. MOSKALENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that youth represented the future of nations and in it rested the hopes of all mankind. Young people now constituted a very powerful force; movements of young people and students contributed actively to world peace and youth movements were participating in the struggles being waged throughout the world to prevent another world war, deepen détente, foster understanding among peoples, achieve international peace and security and halt the arms race and the march of the imperialist forces.

32. At the Eleventh World Festival of Youth and Students held at Havana, in which young people from 145 countries had participated and at which the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic had been represented, the young people had declared their readiness to fight for international détente, for general and complete disarmament, against colonialism and neo-colonialism and for non-interference in the internal affairs of States. In the Secretary-General's report on policies and programmes relating to youth (A/33/193) it was noted that since 1965 the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had adopted a number of resolutions on youth and had prepared many reports, studies and surveys relating to the matter. Nevertheless, in

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(Mr. Moskalenko, Ukrainian SSR)

many countries young people suffered from conditions of insecurity, a low level of education and vocational training, inadequate health facilities and malnutrition. In the capitalist countries young people were subjected the most ruthless exploitation and there were 200 million children in the world who were suffering from hunger and 260 million children of school age who had no opportunity to acquire an education. Young people had to suffer the consequences of the negative aspects of present-day society, namely, unemployment, inequality of income and discrimination in employment and education. Those problems could be solved only through profound social and economic changes and youth must participate in that process.

33. In the Ukrainian SSR young people had political, cultural and economic rights which were realized in practice; they had access to education, they could choose the occupation they preferred and they were free to participate in cultural movements and in the work of the Government. Unemployment did not exist and labour legislation provided great benefits for young people. Committees on working youth had been established and young people had a high level of work training. Education was free and unrestricted and the State was concerned to place persons who had received higher education in jobs suiting their qualifications. Work specialization took into account the requirements of planning in the different sectors of national activity and the Government contributed to the training of highly qualified technical management personnel. In the past two decades more than 30,000 young people from other countries, particularly developing ones, had studied at Ukrainian teaching and training establishments, and 15,000 young people from foreign countries and national liberation movements were receiving training in the country's universities and academic centres. The youth of the Ukrainian SSR were educated in the spirit of freedom and peace, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples.

34. Those were the goals which guided the press, radio and television. One quarter of the country's writers and journalists and one third of its sculptors and painters were under 30 years of age. Young people enjoyed political rights; they could vote and be elected to the organs of State power. There were more than 60,000 young people of both sexes in the soviets of working people's deputies. The new Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR, adopted in 1978, reflected the important role played in social and political life by the country's principal youth organization, the Komsomol, whose membership consisted of 6,300,000 young people.

35. If an international youth year was proclaimed, the Ukrainian SSR felt that it should be prepared on a broad basis, with the participation of recognized youth organizations such as the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Union of Students and that to ensure the success of the Year it would be essential to deal with the problems which were of genuine concern to youth: the problem of international peace and security, the deepening of détente, the cessation of the arms race and the elimination of systems of weapons of mass destruction, the **struggle** for national independence and against racism and colonization and the establishment of the new international economic order.

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36. Miss RWABAZAIRE (Uganda) observed that, as had been said time and again, the future of any country lay in its youth, for it was young people who would have the responsibility for directing the affairs of the State and the destiny of the nation. It was therefore the duty of every nation to guide and assist youth in harnessing its vast potentialities for economic and social development. Education was one of the ways in which that could be done. Uganda attached great importance to formal education, although a large number of school-age children did not attend school or did not go beyond the elementary level. That was due to lack of means - at Uganda's level of development it could not afford to provide free education for all - and a shortage of teachers and adequate school facilities. More emphasis was being placed on practical training and that had helped to reduce the number of young people with frustrated hopes of securing white-collar employment and to reconcile them to community life based predominantly on the rural economy.

37. Furthermore, Uganda had evolved a youth policy which recognized the vital role of youth organizations in the field of non-formal education. The Uganda Youth Development Organization brought together all organizations dealing with youth through the National Youth Council. That Council advised the Government on youth problems and aspirations and on programmes and policies relating to youth.

38. There was still a tendency in Uganda for young people to drift from rural to urban areas in search of work, with all the problems which that created because of the surplus of labour in the market, and the Government's policy was to halt that tendency by means of agricultural settlement schemes for training youths in improved farming methods. The sum of 3 million Uganda shillings had been allocated to that programme. In addition, rural youth not engaged in settlement projects were encouraged to farm in groups.

39. Another youth programme was that of the Young Farmers of Uganda run by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, which was a voluntary, self-help and learn-by-doing educational programme run by the young people themselves.

40. In order further to harness the potential of youth, the Government, through the Ministry of Labour, was seeking to equip young people with technical skills needed in the industrial sector. The Ministry ran programmes such as that of the Directorate of Industrial Training, which was responsible for the development of human resources and talent and enabled workers to improve their technical skills. In that endeavour the Government had the co-operation of UNDP and ILO and received bilateral assistance from friendly countries.

41. Voluntary youth organizations, such as the YMCA, the Girl Scouts, the Boy Scouts and the Uganda Work-Camps Association, had helped young people to adjust to the new urban environment through assistance with housing and constructive recreational activities.

42. The Ugandan Government was not oblivious to the special problems of youth in areas of armed conflict and youth who were the victims of apartheid, racism, racial discrimination and foreign domination in southern Africa and the Middle East. It

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(Miss Rwabazaire, Uganda)

felt that it was imperative to take action at the international level to eliminate all vestiges of colonialism and racial discrimination, achieve the equitable distribution of wealth among nations as envisaged in the New International Economic Order, and increase technical co-operation among countries at both the regional and international levels. It was in that spirit that her delegation would welcome the proclamation of an international youth year, which would have to be carefully prepared if it was to be assured of success.

43. Mr. MONTEMAYOR CANTU (Mexico) said that the topic of youth was of continuing importance because young people not only were the future of mankind but, to a great extent, were a vital part of the present. In the case of Mexico, to speak of youth was to speak of the majority of the population; the demographic pyramid was broad at its base but it was also long in the middle. The Government of Mexico therefore welcomed with great enthusiasm the idea of celebrating an international youth year, which it considered not only desirable but necessary.

44. Some countries had expressed concern at the proliferation of international years proclaimed by the United Nations, but the proclamation and celebration of special events actually resulted from an increasing awareness on the part of the international community of certain problems which were of concern to the majority or even to all of its members. What was of concern to the Government of Mexico was the appropriate preparation of a special event of that nature and the effectiveness of the measures taken in connexion with it. The Mexican Government felt that the international youth year should make provision for a world meeting of young people representing the youth organizations of their respective countries which would draw up an action programme aimed at giving practical effect to the measures adopted.

45. Mrs. MULUNDIKA (Zambia) emphasized the importance of youth in any society and country. In Zambia youth comprised one half of the population; young people had contributed to the struggle for national liberation and, after independence, their programmes and activities had constituted an integral part of national development endeavours.

46. Her Government supported the proposal for the proclamation of an international youth year, and the development of channels of communication by the United Nations with youth and youth organizations. The observance of an international youth year would bring into sharp focus the world's failure to harness the energies and creative abilities of youth. By and large, young people were denied participation in policy formulation in the political, social and economic spheres. Frustration on the part of youth had resulted in problems such as drug abuse, excessive drinking, crime and social rebellion.

47. Youth unemployment resulting from poorly planned educational systems continued to plague the world's youth, and was the direct consequence of an imperfect social order which needed radical reform. There was a need for improved programmes to meet the needs and aspirations of youth. Paragraph 10 of the Secretary-General's report (A/33/257) rightly pointed out that the proclamation of an international youth year would not by itself increase the chances that the situation of youth

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(Mrs. Mulundika, Zambia)

would be better understood, but its observance would provide an opportunity to define and undertake concerted efforts at the national and regional levels to address specific youth issues. Her delegation remained open-minded as to which year should be declared international youth year and had taken note of the suggestion of 1985, which would mark the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples. During such a year Member States should be called upon to initiate projects to enhance the situation of youth, and at the end of the year an international conference should be organized to review the achievements and make the necessary recommendations to the following session of the General Assembly.

48. In order to cater for the interests of youth in Zambia, the Party and Government had embarked on a development policy which comprised educational policy, the building of socialism as an ideological basis, co-ordination of youth activities, promotion of participatory democracy, provision of cultural and sporting facilities and promotion of friendly relations between the youth of Zambia and other countries.

49. With regard to the development of channels of communication with youth and youth organizations, her delegation believed that there was a need for the United Nations to create regional centres for youth which could co-ordinate national efforts in that field. In that connexion, she informed the Committee that the Commonwealth Youth Programme provided for three training centres for advanced studies in youth work and that the Africa Centre was based at the University of Zambia in Lusaka. Her delegation welcomed the idea of introducing a United Nations Youth Information Bulletin, to which Zambian youth would definitely be contributors.

50. In Zambia, a start had been made in the process of integrating youth participation in the political sphere through the United National Independence Party Youth Brigade and the establishment of a National Youth Council possessing policy formulation rights. There were centres for training in basic skills, and voluntary work was encouraged. The Youth Brigade held an annual Youth Week during which voluntary projects geared to community service were undertaken.

51. In the field of international co-operation, Zambian youth had participated in international youth programmes through the Pan African Youth Movement and the Commonwealth Youth Programme, and had recently participated in the World Festival of Youth and Students in Havana.

52. Mrs. DJABIE (Togo) said that the Government of her country always involved young people in policy-making and in all development efforts. There was a youth section in the Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais through which young people had participated in the reform of education and were now collaborating in the reform of the system of land tenure and in the drafting of the family code. The youth section organized seminars for young people and State-aided programmes for the prevention of immorality and juvenile delinquency.

53. Togo had economic, social and cultural structures to facilitate the integration in the development process of young people, who were actively participating in the establishment of agricultural co-operatives, modernization of agriculture and adult literacy programmes.

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(Mrs. Djabie, Togo)

54. Her country supported the initiative contained in General Assembly resolution 32/134 for an international youth year, and suggested that an annual international youth day should also be organized.

55. The Government of Togo had sent youth delegations to a number of international meetings, had served as host to a regional conference on the topic "Children, youth, women and development planning" in 1972 and had sent a large delegation to the World Festival of Youth and Students at Havana in 1978.

56. Mrs. SAHGAL (India) referred to the problems and frustrations of young people who could not find suitable employment or could not obtain the education that would give them access to employment opportunities. The fortunes of youth were inextricably linked with the needs of a country's economy, and schemes for youth must become an integral part of over-all development. In India a large number of public works programmes already existed with a view to generating employment and ensuring mass participation and in programmes which sought to mobilize young people an effort was made to appeal to their idealism and sense of adventure, since a country's best hope for progress lay in the convinced contribution and the effervescence of its youth.

57. At the same time a rethinking of education was going on, to try to relate it more closely to employment outlets and to utilize non-formal education programmes which would reach young people in the rural areas and the tribal areas.

58. The Secretary-General, in his report in document A/33/257, had made an excellent suggestion regarding a major project which might be undertaken to assemble data and analyse existing capabilities relating to youth at the national level. Such a project would be extremely worth while in the preparation of programmes for an international youth year; it would especially help the developing countries to formulate youth policies and programmes and would enable the regional economic commissions to assist Governments in formulating such policies and programmes.

59. With respect to document A/33/261, concerning channels of communication with youth, she said that her Government agreed to the guidelines proposed in the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/135 and especially supported the idea of exploring the possibility of establishing a national liaison and focal point on youth within each country.

60. In connexion with document A/33/257, India supported the proposal concerning the proclamation of an international youth year, provided that there was adequate preparation. The Secretary-General's report contained good suggestions for activities during the year, and it would also be advisable to set up an advisory group to help in the organization of the programme, as had been done in the case of the International Year for Disabled Persons. Member States might consider formulating a youth policy and declaring that policy either before or during the international youth year.

61. With regard to the United Nations Volunteers programme, her Government welcomed that effort of UNDP to assist local institutions in community development

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(Mrs. Sahgal, India)

activities through programmes and projects which conformed to national development priorities and structures.

62. Mrs. LYKOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that policies and the programmes relating to youth should be considered within the context of the general development and particular problems of each country.

63. The Havana Youth Festival had been a striking event, confirming the desire of the world's youth to see international peace and solidarity prevail. Her delegation felt that the conclusions of that festival should be included among the documents of the Secretariat.

64. The problems of greatest concern to youth were the maintenance of peace, the establishment of a climate of détente and the elimination of racial discrimination and the vestiges of colonialism. In working out youth policies and programmes, young people's energy and enthusiasm for solving those problems should be put to use, and they should be given help in reaching their objectives. The economic problems of developing countries gave urgency to the effort of young people to free themselves from colonial exploitation and establish a new international economic order. In view of the enormous sums consumed by the arms race, it would be extremely useful to implement the Soviet proposal for reduction of the military budgets of States and to use the funds thus released to increase assistance to developing countries.

65. In the Soviet Union young people could fully develop their creative capacity. The Constitution of October 1977 granted young people rights in all areas of life, and millions of young people throughout the country were taking part in plans for development, including the development of science and culture. Twice in the twentieth century, the Soviet Union had been devastated: first by the war of 1917-1922, then by the Second World War. Many towns and villages had been reduced to ashes. Soviet youth had then selflessly applied itself to the task of national reconstruction and had gone on to co-operate in economic development, which was today the common task of the 112 nationalities in the Soviet Union. Currently the most important goal was to develop the productive capacity of Siberia and the northern regions, which possessed large deposits of coal, petroleum and minerals. Soviet youth was actively participating in that work.

66. Education in the Soviet Union was compulsory for all. Institutions and centres for study by correspondence reached 5 million students, and several million more were working in specialized training institutions; young workers received special training to upgrade their qualifications.

67. The USSR was involved in training specialists for many developing countries, in particular by providing education for thousands of young people at the Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University. It also sent Soviet specialists to other countries to assist them in various fields, such as construction, exploration of natural resources, teaching and medicine, and contributed to solving the social problems of young countries.

68. Since only 13 countries had replied to the note by the Secretary-General concerning channels of communication with youth and youth organizations (A/33/261), it would be premature to move on to the formulation of additional recommendations. In her delegation's view, the Secretary-General should be asked to request further information from Governments in that regard.

(Mrs. Lylova, USSR)

69. The USSR had already communicated to the Secretariat its views concerning the proposed proclamation of an International Youth Year (A/33/257 and Add.1). It believed that serious attention should be given to the matter and a broad basis laid to prepare for the observance of the Year, after consultations with recognized and prestigious international organizations. At previous meetings organized by the United Nations on the topic of youth, there had been serious criticism of the abnormal practice of discrimination against certain democratic international organizations.

70. In observing International Youth Year, special stress should be laid on the problems of peace, security, disarmament and solidarity with the anti-colonialist struggle, as well as the building of the new international economic order, which should include the right to education and the right to employment. It would be advisable to hold national meetings in preparation for the Year.

71. Mrs. FLORES (Cuba) said that the United Nations should foster participation by adolescents in the transformation of social structures that did not meet their needs. There should be no attempts to make them adapt to unjust structures; rather, a national and international basis should be established for promoting and channeling the struggle of youth against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, racial discrimination and social inequality. The problems currently affecting youth in the developed capitalist countries, such as unemployment, drug abuse and delinquency, were a reflection of problems which affected society as a whole and which had repercussions upon the developing countries as a result of neo-colonialism. To attempt to solve them, young people should be urged to take part in the transformation of an unjust international economic order.

72. In Cuba, where more than half the population was less than 25 years of age, young people shared in the building of socialist society, and questions affecting youth received the utmost attention. Accordingly, her Government had expressed its support for the proclamation of International Youth Year (A/33/257/Add.1, p. 14).

73. The Eleventh World Festival of Youth and Students, held at Havana from 28 July to 5 August 1978, had brought together more than 18,500 young people representing 145 countries. As Cuba's Commander-in-Chief, Fidel Castro, had pointed out at its close, the great success of the Festival was due to the fact that the entire Cuban people had taken it to its heart and worked tirelessly for it. The Festival had brought into focus the feelings of solidarity and peace that had been its motto. Young people from all over the world had made their contribution to the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and racial discrimination and in favour of peace and justice for all mankind.

74. In the course of the Festival, on 4 August, Cuba had enacted its Youth and Children's Code, in which the right to a guaranteed full life for the youngest sector of society was given institutional form. The Code had great educational value and systematized, in morally forceful precepts, the rights and duties of children and young people in the construction of a new society and the obligations of other persons, bodies and organizations with respect to the communist education of the young generation.

75. There had been a lively exchange of ideas among the participants in the Festival

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(Mrs. Flores, Cuba)

about various topics of current interest, particularly through various political discussion centres and a Free Forum for discussion of problems of world-wide importance, such as those relating to peace, détente, security, co-operation and disarmament, the new international economic order, and the struggle of young people and students in capitalist countries against exploitation, recession and the power of monopolies and in favour of democratic freedoms and far-reaching economic, social and political change.

76. An international tribunal called "Youth Accuses Imperialism" had been one of the most important political activities at the Festival. For five days, important witnesses had told of the experiences they had suffered under oppressive régimes and valuable documents had been presented. Among them had been the statements of former operatives of the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and of Cuban security agents who had infiltrated the CIA and revealed various conspiracies to overthrow the Cuban Revolution and attempt to assassinate its principal leader. The tribunal had adopted a Final Declaration which recognized the right of all peoples to struggle for their true, real and definitive independence, condemned imperialism for its criminal policy of oppression and exploitation and demanded a halt to all forms of discrimination, which denied the full dignity of man.

77. Her delegation wished to draw attention to the situation of the young people of Nicaragua, who, in their intense struggle to put an end to a tyranny which had lasted more than 40 years, were being indiscriminately murdered by Government troops and mercenaries. Many of them, merely because they were young, were being taken from their homes and murdered in the streets before the eyes of their families, even though they had taken no part in the events.

78. Her delegation believed that the Committee should, in future years, continue to consider the important topic of policies and programmes relating to youth.

79. Mr. KESAVAPANY (Singapore) said that Singapore, a nation which was young both in its independence and in its demographic composition, was very interested in all questions relating to youth. Of a total population of 2.3 million people, approximately 55 per cent had not reached their fortieth birthday, and about 20,000 boys and girls each year left school and entered the labour market.

80. Singapore lacked natural resources and depended wholly upon the quality and skills of its human resources. It therefore placed great emphasis on the need to nurture and mobilize its most precious asset - its young people. The youth of Singapore, like that of other developing countries, had to face the problems of a world undergoing rapid transformation, and, in order to prevent the alienation of young people and ensure their participation in the nation's life, his country had set up an active youth programme which endeavoured to channel their energies into several institutions for productive purposes. The most important of those institutions was the People's Association, founded in 1960 with the aim of mobilizing the masses, especially youth, and promoting their participation in social, cultural, vocational and recreational activities. Under its auspices, a network of 189 community centres had been set up all over the country to provide

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(Mr. Kesavapany, Singapore)

the infrastructure necessary for youth efforts. Apart from a professional staff of over 1,000 and voluntary management committees, all community centres had a youth sub-committee, the function of which was to take the initiative in planning youth activities.

81. His country had set up two training institutions for developing quality leadership. In addition to those State-sponsored institutions there were also voluntary youth movements such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

82. His delegation believed that holding an International Youth Year would be beneficial and that it would help to focus the attention of the world community on the problems and challenges confronting the youth of today. However, as the Secretary-General had pointed out in paragraph 8 of his report (A/33/257), it would be necessary to study the question further and propose a framework of specific activities, if it was decided that such a Year should be held. Moreover, it should be noted that the United Nations would be proclaiming the International Year of the Child in 1979, and much of the impact would be lost if another year on a related issue were proclaimed so soon afterwards.

83. Mrs. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that her country had a population of 16 million persons between the ages of 15 and 24, constituting 22 per cent of the total population. Bangladesh subscribed to the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (General Assembly resolution 2037 (XX)) and to the numerous resolutions adopted by the United Nations on the situation, needs and aspirations of youth. It further believed that young people should be integrated into the mainstream of the development process at both the national and the international levels, so that they might play their due role in the establishment of the new international economic order.

84. In Bangladesh, the lack of resources posed a series of problems in organizing youth-oriented activities, and, in the context of a society in transition, youth also faced an identity crisis. The economic infrastructure was not yet fully geared to absorb young people into income-earning and income-generating activities. Her Government therefore assigned high priority to the task of organizing, motivating and mobilizing the nation's vast youth population for socio-economic development and community services. That constituted the key element in the policy planning and development programme of the country.

85. Her Government had established 20 youth welfare centres, where creative activities were pursued and vocational training was provided for unemployed young people. It had also taken steps to set up a comprehensive youth services programme at the national level, which had started operations early in 1978 at 38 rural locations with young people 14 to 20 years of age.

86. In 1977 her delegation had informed the Committee of a project for out-of-school youths conducted with assistance from the Economic and Social

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(Mrs. Chowdhury, Bangladesh)

Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). The aim of that project was to organize youth groups and to give young people vocational training and inform them of population issues and their responsibility in checking population growth. In the context of the project, 351 youth groups with at least 20 members each had already been organized in 1976-1977.

87. With regard to document A/33/257, her delegation shared the view of the Secretary-General that the proclamation of an International Youth Year would no doubt help to heighten awareness of the problems and potential of youth. However, in view of the great number of international years proclaimed recently, which could give rise to confusion and repetition, it felt that there should be a further exchange of views on the matter and that the adoption of a final decision should be postponed.

88. With regard to document A/33/261, her delegation supported the suggestion that the guidelines should be circulated once again to Member States, youth organizations and regional commissions, and it saw great merit in the idea of providing internships at the United Nations for young people from various parts of the world and initiating a programme of regional and national meetings, seminars, workshops and training courses with a view to ensuring that United Nations activities became a reality for young people.

89. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided that the deadline for submitting draft resolutions relating to item 72 was Thursday, 5 October 1978, at 3.30 p.m.

90. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.