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Chairman: Mr. Humberto DIAZ CASANUEVA
(Chile).

AGENDA ITEM 47

Measures designed to promote among youth the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples (A/5364, A/5445, E/3638 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.1183 and Corr.1) (continued)

1. Mrs. DADDAH (Mauritania) said that her country's difficulties in providing a proper education for its young people were well known. Mauritania was still under-developed; there was a shortage of trained personnel and a colonial mentality still persisted among some of its people. Yet Mauritania faced the future with confidence, convinced that youth, which was numerically the strongest element of the population, would carry forward the work of construction. The Government was doing more and more for young people, and appropriations for the ministry of national education and youth represented the largest item in the State budget. Adults of all countries had a great responsibility not to disappoint the hopes placed in them by the young. The United Nations, in particular, had a magnificent role to play in promoting the education of youth, to ensure that the generation of tomorrow followed ideals of justice and peace and lived its life freed from the spectre of war.

2. Her delegation fully approved of the basic ideas of the draft resolution containing a draft declaration A/C.3/L.1183 and Corr.1, but would have liked the text not to confine itself to generalities capable of diverse and even contradictory interpretations. It would have preferred more than an implicit reference to the need for young people throughout the world to know one another and to share what was best in their cultural heritage. Peace rested on love and respect for other people without distinction. Schemes enabling young people of different nations to work in common on some international project or to enjoy works of art together would serve the cause of peace better than the most erudite discourses. Africans had sometimes found that people from other continents approached them with a degree of condescension and a number of prejudices. Some visitors had even expressed astonishment to find that their hosts were not living among beasts or perching on coco-nut palms. Yet later they had come to appreciate and to love African people and African art, literature and folk-lore. The idea of war would disappear when all the fruits of human genius in all

parts of the world had truly become the property of all mankind.

3. She would be happy to support any amendment spelling out the need for mutual understanding to which she had referred. Time permitting, her own delegation would submit an appropriate proposal.

4. Mr. DELGADO (Senegal) said that young people, who had a vital role to play in national development and international co-operation, should be guided by ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding. In a world in which many evils still persisted, the draft declaration was particularly opportune and would form a permanent source of inspiration for the young. Consideration of the idea had been repeatedly deferred and, after three years of reflection on the subject, the time had come to take action. With some goodwill, the Committee should be able to complete its work on the text at the present session.

5. Senegal had always been fully aware of the need to promote among its young people the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding. With that purpose in mind, his Government had established a ministry of youth, sports and education, built a large number of youth clubs and encouraged pioneer movements and the organization of youth in a national union. Thanks to that policy, young people everywhere, at school, in factories and in the countryside, were taking an active part in the effort of national rehabilitation, an effort freed from the ideas of colonialism and the influence of a corrupt modern world. To guide youth was not to indoctrinate it, but to protect it from complexes, to give it a sense of its dignity and its responsibilities and to implant respect for others. It was that policy which had enabled the young people of his country to play their full part in international co-operation.

6. On the basis of the experience acquired in Senegal, his delegation welcomed the principles set forth in the draft declaration, which were of universal application. Some countries, actuated by the same principles of international solidarity, had recently formed corps of young volunteers to serve the developing countries. Such movements had been initiated in France, in Germany and in the United States, where the late President Kennedy had set a magnificent example by the creation of the Peace Corps.

7. The text before the Committee was on the whole acceptable. The sponsors had themselves recognized that it was not perfect and expressed their willingness to consider suggestions for its improvement. Certain highly controversial political principles might perhaps be omitted in the interests of achieving unanimity, certain gaps might be filled, and the drafting improved; but his delegation was more interested in substance than in form.

8. In principle IV of the draft declaration, an idea might be included which appeared to flow naturally from the basic principles set forth. One of the most

effective means of bringing young people of different nations together was the twinning of cities in different countries and continents. In recent years, numerous experiments had shown that the arrangement represented something like a new form of direct diplomacy, promoting contacts between people, and more particularly between the young, and co-operation between the cities of under-developed and of advanced countries. Twinning provided a popular basis for the propagation of the principles of the United Nations Charter among young people. Political and other leaders of many nations, including his own, had supported the twinning principle, and many African countries were co-operating in the "United Towns Organization", which concerned itself with the training of qualified personnel and international civic education through personal contacts. The cities of more than thirty countries in east and west and in the developing areas had joined the twinning movement. The world meeting of the youth of twin cities, which had been held at Lerida, Spain, in July 1963, had further strengthened the solidarity of the young people of all countries.

9. His delegation accordingly suggested that the following paragraph should be inserted in principle IV of the draft declaration:

"One of the most effective means of facilitating contacts and international co-operation among young people throughout the world is the promotion of the twinning of cities without any discrimination whatsoever under the auspices of national or international organizations".

If the sponsors were to accept his suggestion and certain drafting changes, his delegation would be happy to associate itself with them.

10. Mr. HANDL (Czechoslovakia) thought that the draft declaration fully accorded with the principles of the United Nations Charter and of various important declarations on human rights. The Czechoslovak people and Government welcomed any initiative aimed at the promotion of friendly relations and of co-operation among States. The pursuit of peace was a tradition of long standing in his country. In 1964, Czechoslovakia, with the participation of UNESCO, would celebrate the anniversary of the first charter of peaceful co-operation: a treaty establishing a European alliance proposed to other European States by King George Podiebrad in 1464. The treaty had contained a declaration of principles many of which were now considered basic rules of international law. The political and social conditions of the time had not been conducive to the acceptance of such a radical measure designed to outlaw war, but the event was not without its lessons for the current era.

11. Czechoslovakia sought to educate its youth in the spirit of peace, international understanding, love of freedom and friendship among all nations, irrespective of race, colour or economic or social system. Those principles were set forth in the Constitution, and Czechoslovak law made it a punishable offence to advocate war or national intolerance. His country's educational system endeavoured to instil those same ideals among the young, as also did youth organizations.

12. The adoption of the draft declaration before the Committee would serve a most useful purpose in reflecting the international community's concern at the hatred and intolerance which were unfortunately still being propagated among the youth of some countries.

He failed to understand the doubts expressed by some delegations. The adoption of declarations on important principles had become a well-established practice in the United Nations. Few would dispute the political, legal and moral value of such documents as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)) and the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (General Assembly resolution 1904 (XVIII)). Nor could there be any doubt of the competence of the General Assembly to state in formal terms a principle the observance of which was essential for the maintenance of peace. The United Nations should ensure, as far as lay in its power, that the coming generation would consist of men and women of high moral qualities, attached to the noble ideas of peace, liberty, dignity and the equality of all men and to the cause of humanity's happiness. The draft declaration before the Committee embodied the basic principles and recommendations required to achieve that end. His delegation would vote for it and hoped that the text would be adopted without any substantial changes which might lessen its usefulness.

13. U MYAT TUN (Burma) remarked that he found a somewhat patronizing approach towards the young in the draft declaration. Burma was entirely in favour of peace and of mutual respect and understanding between peoples, but he wondered whether curative measures of the kind envisaged were not needed rather by the old who, historically, had been the violators of peace. Moreover, the underlying philosophy seemed to be that, if only the minds of the young were filled with ideas of peace and with notions of mutual respect and understanding between peoples, all would be well with the world; yet the benefits of peace and the evils of war had been known for centuries, and the world was still far from sanity. He doubted whether the exposure of young people to preconceived political conceptions would produce, in the words of principle VI of the draft declaration, "people of high moral qualities, deeply attached to the noble ideas of peace, liberty, dignity and equality of all men, and ... conscious of their responsibilities in the world". Such intensive propaganda might result rather in boredom, disgust, and even incitements to violence.

14. Youth could be helped in many ways but, in the final analysis, it must have the major say in determining its own course. If an appeal must nevertheless be made to youth to shape the future of mankind, a more modest declaration, without overtones of conflicting ideologies and with reasonable and attainable objectives, was needed to command general acceptance.

15. Mr. ILYIN (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) expressed satisfaction that the Committee was finally embarking on the consideration of the present important item. The rearing of youth would to a considerable extent determine whether man was to sink lower or reach the great heights he was capable of attaining. One cause of the many tragedies mankind had passed through was the teaching of ideas of hatred, militarism, chauvinism and the like. The world was not yet free of such ideas, and the need to keep them from poisoning the minds of the young called for determined universal effort.

16. Despite the political and social differences between States, the goals and tasks of the young were

basically the same everywhere: to end the threat of war and the arms race, to establish lasting peace, to raise levels of living, to eradicate poverty and ignorance and to develop mutual friendship and respect.

17. The adoption of the draft declaration would be in keeping with General Assembly resolution 1572 (XV) on the same subject, and would be a logical development of the terms of the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the newly adopted United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the various human rights instruments adopted by the United Nations, UNESCO and other international organizations. The declaration would draw the attention of Governments and the world community to the problems of youth, aid educational institutions and parents and guide international youth organizations. Once adopted, it might serve as a great contribution to the cause of peace.

18. The draft declaration was in keeping with his country's policy of peaceful coexistence. Mr. N. S. Khrushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, had recently stated that the USSR was prepared to continue developing international contacts, which had an important part to play in furthering co-operation and understanding among people. The young people of Byelorussia maintained such contacts by taking an active part in the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which brought together young people from ninety-eight countries, and in the International Union of Students. The Byelorussian committee of youth organizations maintained relations with more than twenty youth organizations in other countries, while the Byelorussian society for friendship and cultural relations with foreign countries had relations with 103 organizations abroad. Young Byelorussians regularly met the youth of other countries, and the Government accorded to its young citizens broad assistance and support and made sure that they were educated in a spirit of peace, friendship and understanding.

19. His delegation believed that young people should be guarded from pernicious influences and it therefore whole-heartedly supported the provisions of principle II of the draft declaration stating that "means of information intended for the young must foster among them the ideas of peace, humanism, liberty and international solidarity ...". Unfortunately, there were still frequent instances of the contrary. For example, most of the history textbooks being used in West German schools tended to reflect nazi views and to give a distorted picture of German history, the Hitler era and the persecution of the Jews.

20. It was generally acknowledged that personal contacts promoted better understanding, and the Economic and Social Council, in recognition of that fact, had, in its resolution 803 (XXX), called for the encouragement of "exchanges of persons working in the fields of education, science and culture". Yet in practice the holding of youth meetings, festivals and congresses often met with resistance from individuals, groups and even Governments acting out of purely political considerations. A particularly adverse situation existed in connexion with international sports events.

21. The draft declaration referred to the prohibition of organizations disseminating ideas of war, hatred and the like, and indeed the young should not be allowed to take part in such criminal activities. The main responsibility in that matter rested with the State. If the State, on the pretext of defending freedom of

association, allowed fascist and racist organizations to exist and to poison the minds of the young, it would itself be committing a crime against mankind. States should have a very definite policy on that question, including the necessary sanctions.

22. Moreover, State policy should embrace not only the general education of the young but also their vocational training and employment. His delegation held that work was the fundamental prerequisite of correct rearing. The lack of employment often led young people into a life of crime. Work was essential to instil in the young a need and desire to exert themselves on their own behalf and on behalf of society.

23. He thanked the sponsors for their excellent work and stated that he would vote for the draft declaration.

24. Mr. HERRERA (Costa Rica) said that the importance of the present question was obvious to all. If the contents of the draft declaration lived up to its title, then the Committee had before it a document which could make history.

25. The emphasis in the draft declaration was laid on ideals of peace, but peace seemed to be understood simply as the absence of war and armed conflict. He for one viewed peace as a phenomenon stemming from individuals who, through a perfect adjustment to natural and positive laws, were able to establish relations with others which created peace between groups, communities and nations. If peace was thus the culmination of a total process, it became difficult to understand the notion of educating specifically for peace.

26. Furthermore, a distinction should be made between two kinds of peace—static and dynamic. The former was the peace of the tyrant and the totalitarian régime and of their oppressed subjects, who were peaceful out of fear, apathy and helplessness. The peace towards which the young should be directed, on the other hand, should be based on the full exercise of human rights. Then it would be dynamic, and, equally important, it would be self-perpetuating. When the young became aware of their personal dignity, of their rights and corresponding duties, and of the need to respect the rights of others, it would be possible to eradicate the causes of discord and conflict. In brief, peace required a radical change in human nature, and that was a task deserving of every effort.

27. His delegation endorsed the draft declaration in principle, on the understanding that the ideals of peace to be promoted among youth were the ideals of an active and dynamic peace founded on the recognition and exercise of man's fundamental rights.

28. Mr. BARAMESWARAN (India) welcomed the initiative taken by the sponsors of the draft declaration. It would be difficult for the Committee to reach a decision on that important question in the short time available at the current session, but his delegation believed that a start must be made.

29. The report by the Acting Director-General of UNESCO took stock of current international and voluntary activities designed to promote among youth the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples, which it grouped under four main heads (E/3638, para. 10). In that connexion, he endorsed the observations and conclusions contained in paragraphs 27-37 of the same report. He also agreed on the need for basic research of the kind referred to (E/3638, para. 38).

30. In compliance with the Indian Constitution, the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, his Government respected the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples, which it endeavoured to promote, not only among youth, but among all groups of the population. It had developed a number of scholarship and fellowship programmes which enabled Indian nationals to study abroad and foreign nationals to study and make cultural contacts in India. Grants had been given to Indian sports organizations to enable them to participate in international events, and facilities had been provided for the participation of Indian youth in international congresses and conferences. India was also participating in the UNESCO Associated Schools Project in so far as it concerned education in international understanding and co-operation. The institutions carrying out experimental activities under those projects were valuable testing grounds for new teaching methods, and they exchanged materials and documentation with their counterparts in other countries.

31. A seminar, organized by the Indian National Commission for UNESCO in December 1960, had made recommendations concerning the roles of curricular studies, extra-curricular activities and teacher-training colleges, which would form the basis for the development of educational activities aimed at fostering better understanding of other countries. The National Commission had also undertaken to prepare audio-visual material on the life and culture of India for the use of school children in other countries. Arrangements had been made with the United Kingdom for a review of the history textbooks used in the two countries from the standpoint of accuracy and objectivity in the treatment of one country by the textbooks of the other, and similar projects were envisaged with other countries. One of the major obstacles to promoting international understanding through education was the dearth of suitable reading material, and the Indian National Commission had therefore obtained the services of a UNESCO expert to help in preparing such material and to advise the educational authorities on the promotion of appropriate activities. Thus, India was making determined efforts to promote among youth, through education, the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples.

32. The Indian Government had encouraged and assisted the large-scale celebration of United Nations Day, Human Rights Day, World Health Day and other special occasions, with a view to promoting teaching about the United Nations and the specialized agencies. The Ministry of Education had specially requested the directors of education to draw the attention of authors to the need to include in school textbooks, wherever appropriate, an account of the purposes and principles, the structure and the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

33. The divergence of views on the desirability and usefulness of drafting an international declaration on the subject under discussion was apparent from the report (see E/3638, paras. 334-335). In principle, his delegation favoured the idea of such a declaration, but it recognized the difficulty of agreeing on its terms, in view of the wide differences of opinion and the importance of the subject. The really urgent need at the present time was to strengthen and intensify the various existing activities for the promotion among youth of the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples, and it would be more appropriate for

the time being to place the emphasis on practical measures. In view of the key role of the teacher in any educational programme, the need for a reorientation of teacher-training programmes should be stressed, and there should be an intensification of teaching about the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and research into such basic problems as prejudices and the formation of attitudes. As was pointed out in the UNESCO report, however, the initial divergences of opinion on the question of a declaration need not necessarily be taken as an insurmountable obstacle to later agreement.

34. While his delegation supported the idea of strengthening youth exchanges, one of the major difficulties, which was likely to persist for some time to come, was the lack of foreign exchange resources in the developing countries. In that connexion, he suggested that the developed countries which welcomed visits under such programmes should allow the young people concerned to engage in part-time work. The selection of exchange students was also very important; in many cases, only the privileged classes in the developing countries could afford to travel abroad, and if organizations and universities in the host countries could not guarantee full financial support for the less wealthy, they should at least make it possible for them to obtain employment in order to help them to pay their expenses.

35. His delegation might speak again at the appropriate stage on the principles set forth in the draft declaration and it would, in the meantime, suggest a minor amendment to the last paragraph of the introductory resolution, where the word "or" would be preferable to the word "and" in the phrase "legislative and other measures".

36. Mr. MOLINA SALAS (Argentina) said that his delegation attached great importance to the humanitarian purposes that had guided the sponsors of the draft declaration, and it shared their concern. The United Nations had a continuing duty to seek new ways of encouraging aversion for war, co-operation between nations with different social and political systems, and the rearing of young people in "the spirit of dignity and of the full equality of all men and all races", as set out in principle III of the draft declaration.

37. Action should certainly be taken to promote better understanding between peoples through education, and a proper role must be allotted to agencies which specialized in that sphere of activity. His delegation questioned, however, whether a declaration was the best form such action could take; less spectacular measures might produce better results in the long run. If the Committee decided, however, that a declaration would be most effective, the text must be purged of any phrases and expressions that might have political connotations, which weakened its impact and deprived it of the support it needed. His delegation would therefore give special attention to any comments and specific proposals that would enable the General Assembly to make recommendations truly conducive to the achievement of the objectives sought in the draft declaration.

38. Miss WACHUKU (Nigeria) suggested that, in order to avoid the submission of a large number of amendments, the sponsors of the draft declaration should consult informally with any delegations which had suggestions to make concerning the text.

39. Miss GROZA (Romania) replied that the sponsors had been encouraged by the course of the debate, and

would be happy to consult with interested delegations with a view to producing a revised text.

40. The CHAIRMAN added that such an informal working group might also consider the divergence of views on the desirability of adopting a declaration at

the current session, of postponing its consideration, or of referring the matter to some other international body, and submit specific proposals on that point at the 1282nd meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.