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THIRD COMMITTEE
19th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 24 October 1984
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MADAR (Somalia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 85: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/185 and 262; A/C.3/39/L.6)

AGENDA ITEM 89: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/262)

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AGENDA ITEM 91: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/191)

1. Mr. YOLAH (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs) said that, in spite of efforts made in the past two decades, poverty remained a major challenge to the world community, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America. While the long-term implications of the global recession had still to be assessed, short-term indications were that the poorer sections of national societies had continued to experience severely shrinking job opportunities in many parts of the world, with no clear prospect of alleviating unemployment and underemployment in the near future. In many developing countries, not only had personal incomes declined but essential goods and services provided by the public sector had been drastically reduced.

2. Key forces of social change continued to determine the nature, scope and alternative paths of social development. For example, the impact of demographic changes on socio-economic development and on family structures was closely linked to such issues as employment, shifts from agricultural to non-agricultural occupations and varying health needs; such changes would have far-reaching implications, especially for the poorest people, unless immediate measures were taken to reduce hunger and poverty and to expand employment opportunities. The constant growth of urban population stemming from natural increases and internal migration was another factor for change, and the immediate results were most evident in developing countries. Other sources of change were the increase in secondary schooling in many developing countries, the role of technology and the resurgence of confrontations among communities and groups with different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, leading to a reappraisal of the role of organized social groups and individuals in economic and social development. In many developing countries, that reappraisal was taking place against a backdrop of severe social and economic problems.

3. Given the prevailing social and economic difficulties faced by so many countries, a fresh approach was needed in the ongoing development dialogue which would expand the social dimensions of development strategies. There must be a rededication to the principle of encouraging peoples' involvement in development through participatory structures and procedures at the local level and through social and economic programmes at the national level which took into account

(Mr. Yolah)

endogenous capabilities and initiatives. Nations could thus stem the alienation of national culture that often resulted from policies based on dependent models of development, which had for so many years hindered the achievement of stated national goals.

4. At the international level there was a need for a concerted effort to develop an integrated approach to development which could foster national self-reliance and individual initiative, by pursuing a balanced approach to population, resources, environment and development and ensuring that the developing countries achieved a significant improvement in their living standards through economic and social transformation based on human dignity and social justice. The solution of problems of employment or education and strategies to improve the status of women, for example, were mutually reinforcing because they were all aimed at eliminating social disparity. By the same token, setbacks in one sector were bound to have repercussions for the other sectors. As had been underlined by the International Conference on Population held in August 1984 in Mexico City, the formulation of national population goals must always be considered as a constituent element of socio-economic development policies, involving, inter alia, the improvement of health, the integration of rural and urban development strategies and the need to address the problems of migrants, refugees and women.

5. In Africa, the combined effect of adverse climatic conditions, invasions and internal strife, coupled with demographic expansion, weak and overtaxed internal structures and a deflationary international economy, had exacted a heavy human toll, with drastic increases in hunger and malnutrition-related diseases as well as a deterioration in social services.

6. The situation in Africa was unlikely to be resolved in two or three years on the basis of demand-curtailement programmes and the benefits of a still sluggish world recovery. It was a deeply-rooted problem calling for fundamental structure of changes, bold reordering of national priorities, more prudent resource management and renewed commitment by the international community to economic co-operation for development. A rural-oriented development strategy was an imperative. Mobilizing and allocating increased resources for rural development through decentralized, local action and private initiative would go a long way towards softening the impact of short-term adjustment and meeting the nutritional needs of the poorest. At the regional level, African countries needed to intensify mutual economic co-operation as a matter of utmost urgency, especially in sectoral projects having an important social component.

7. Lastly, African development was particularly affected by the problem of institutionalized racism in South Africa. For the victims of apartheid, there could be no genuine social development as long as they were deprived of their fundamental rights. The international community must remain resolute in its support for all efforts to eliminate apartheid.

8. Although the impact of the global recession of the 1980s on development had been severe all around the world, it was important to note that the modest social

(Mr. Yolah)

gains of the 1960s and 1970s had not been totally eclipsed by that recession. With a renewed commitment by the international community, it would be possible to resume progress.

9. Mr. BACKES (Austria) said that at the World Assembly on Aging held in Vienna there had been agreement that solutions could be found through mutual understanding among nations and among the different age groups of society. The fact that the International Plan of Action on Aging had been adopted unanimously demanded a suitable follow-up, particularly at a time of deteriorating international relations. His delegation was confident that the review of the Plan of Action by the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission for Social Development, would give new impetus to United Nations activities in the field of aging, and useful information would be gained by the return of the questionnaires sent by the Secretary-General to all Member States. Although the unit of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA) dealing with the question of aging would probably be able to cope with the additional workload involved in the preparations for the review, that unit needed to be strengthened. His delegation hoped that all Member countries which had adopted the Plan of Action would promptly and fully co-operate with the Secretariat in preparing and carrying out the first review, thus maintaining the impetus of the 1982 Conference.

10. In the context of the major events in the social and humanitarian field scheduled to take place in the United Nations system in 1985, his Government feared that issues of aging might largely be cast aside, as the elderly and aged did not constitute a pressure group comparable to some of the other groups. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the question of aging had been intensively dealt with at the International Conference on Population, and it particularly supported the recommendation that the aged sector of the population should be seen not merely as dependent, but as an active group that had already made and still could make contributions to the economic, social and cultural life of their families and communities. The only way to maintain interest in the question of aging during 1985 was to establish the necessary links between that and other social fields.

11. With regard to the United Nations Trust Fund for the World Assembly on Aging, his delegation noted with satisfaction that there were still resources available for project financing. Despite its budgetary restraints, Austria would continue its support for the Fund and was confident that further contributions would be forthcoming from other Governments. The Fund must continue its work until its long-term goal of fostering the self-reliance of Governments was achieved. Accordingly, projects such as seminars or educational programmes should be accompanied by specific undertakings, such as establishing centres for the elderly. In view of the confident handling of project proposals submitted by developing countries to the CSDHA unit, his delegation was convinced that the decision to administer the Fund through the Centre had proven to be a sound one.

(Mr. Backes, Austria)

12. He noted that, in order to maintain the traditional role of aged persons as sources of experience, knowledge and wisdom, more emphasis needed to be placed on communication and information. Thus, the support of the mass media was needed not only to publicize the past contributions of the elderly but also to show their current role in society. Lastly, he congratulated the many non-governmental organizations on their contribution towards solving the various problems of the elderly within the context of the Vienna Plan of Action.

13. Ms. O'FLAHERTY (Ireland) said that the National Youth Policy Committee of Ireland had expressed the conviction that youth policy must give young people an opportunity to participate in shaping the future of society. It also believed that voluntary youth work which allowed the young to contribute to meeting their own needs was of primary importance. Her Government was particularly conscious of the need to dovetail educational and training services and had, in recent years, trebled the number of training places for unemployed young people.

14. The Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the Preparation and Observance of International Youth Year reflected her Government's perceptions and led to a natural emphasis being placed on local, national and regional efforts as a focus for youth activities. That did not suggest that the international dimension was forgotten or that the need for better channels of communication between youth bodies and the United Nations was unrecognized. However, the strengthening of existing channels for co-ordination and communication should be the natural outcome of an increasing awareness on the part of young people and youth organizations of the value of international exchanges. Her Government was not convinced that the creation of new international bureaucratic structures would contribute to the strengthening of that communication. In addition, Ireland's conviction that both individual and collective development were the product of active participation led it to doubt the utility of a global plan of action. Given the wide variation in the circumstances of young people from society to society, such a global plan would be obliged to stress the general at the expense of meaningful activities of local, national and regional relevance.

15. Young people could not be considered in isolation from the society in which they grew, and a society which adequately protected the human rights of all already protected those of youth. The elaboration of a declaration on the rights and responsibilities of youth might bring about confusion and fragmentation rather than enhancement. The Year was a time of opportunity, a challenge to young and adult alike to join in overcoming the difficulties which confronted their common development. The possibilities of the Year, at both the national and international levels, were immense, and the initiative must be taken to encourage optimum participation by young people in the development of society.

16. Mr. JATIVA (Ecuador) said that Ecuador, a country in which the youth sector represented more than half of the population, attached special importance to the work of its National Co-ordinating Committee for the International Youth Year. Ecuador was studying the most appropriate methods of ensuring youth the exercise of their rights to vocational training and work. To that end, in 1983, youth from all

(Mr. Jativa, Ecuador)

provinces had met in a meeting on community development and family planning. Ecuador was thus implementing the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the Year. The importance which Ecuador attached to youth stemmed from the constitutional mandate of providing free education at all levels, for which 30 per cent of the State budget was allocated. Ecuador instructed its youth in the ideals of peace, freedom, justice and human solidarity, the true bases of civilized coexistence among nations.

17. Ecuador's unswerving objective of promoting programmes for youth in order to harness their creative capacity was also reflected at the regional level in its support of the establishment of the Latin American and Caribbean Centre for Youth and its contribution to the preparation of the regional plan of action adopted by the Latin American preparatory meeting for International Youth Year.

18. In view of budgetary restrictions, Ecuador supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/39/262, para. 2) that as an integral part of the observance of the Year, the General Assembly should devote an appropriate number of its plenary meetings in 1985 to policies and programmes relating to youth, designating those meetings as the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year. It also welcomed the decision (A/39/262, para. 1) that the General Assembly should approve a fourth session of the Advisory Committee with a view to recommending to the General Assembly at its fortieth session guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth.

19. The 1982 World Assembly on Aging had highlighted the complexity of that subject, which affected all countries in different ways. Even though Ecuador had a relatively small aging population, it was engaged in State and private activities for their well-being and was preparing specific, co-ordinated measures to enable that group to contribute in the socio-economic and cultural fields and to ensure them a life of abundance, health and happiness within their families or as independent individuals. In that context, Ecuador was studying the recommendations of the 1984 International Conference on Population, particularly recommendation 58, which urged Governments to reaffirm their commitment to the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging.

20. As a catalyst for international co-operation in the formulation and implementation of national policies and programmes, the United Nations Trust Fund for the World Assembly on Aging was an essential element for achieving the objectives of the International Plan of Action. Ecuador therefore supported its continued existence.

21. Ecuador's National Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons had carried out valuable work through the provision of rehabilitation services and the elaboration of the Disabled Protection Act of 5 August 1983. In view of the decisive role played by the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons, Ecuador agreed that it should be continued throughout the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons for the benefit of disabled persons, particularly those in developing countries, and that the name of the Fund should be

(Mr. Jativa, Ecuador)

changed to the United Nations Fund for Disability. Nevertheless, his delegation believed it essential to increase the financial resources of the Fund in order to achieve the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons.

22. Mr. GUSTAVSSON (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and his own country in connection with item 91, said that the adoption by the General Assembly of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons marked an important step in the thinking of those active in the social field. The concept of equalization of opportunities emphasized in the Programme reflected a new approach to attaining full participation and equality, to the effect that all services and activities available to citizens in general should also be accessible to the disabled. The needs of the disabled should be viewed in the framework of equality of human rights and, in that context, the organizations of disabled persons played an important role.

23. Measures to meet the needs of disabled people should be integrated into the general social services provided by society and not concentrated in special institutions or systems. Society must be adjusted to the needs of disabled people and their active participation must be facilitated.

24. Because of their belief in the need for integration, the Nordic Governments continued to have doubts about a permanent trust fund for disability-related projects. Each international body should be responsible for the implementation of those parts of the World Programme of Action which fell within its field of competence. Each body should assume its responsibility to integrate the disabled into its overall planning, and he therefore underscored the need for increased resources for existing programmes for the benefit of disabled persons. The existence of a special fund might obscure that fundamental principle and could be used as an argument in favour of the respective competent organizations' renouncing their irresponsibilities concerning the disabled.

25. The Nordic Governments saw the need for the monitoring and co-ordinating function with which the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs was entrusted. It was important that the Centre should be given adequate funds within the United Nations budget and the necessary administrative capacity and independence. In particular, the Centre should develop its consultative services to Member States in such tasks as drawing up national plans of action to complement the World Programme.

26. The Nordic delegations were concerned that the Secretary-General's report (A/39/191) had been issued only at the very beginning of the current discussion. His remarks on it would therefore have to be of a preliminary nature. While the report offered a comprehensive review of what had been done thus far, it had very little to say on the further implementation of the World Programme. It merely recommended the drawing up of detailed guidelines for the implementation of the Programme with particular attention to the prevention of disability. While such guidelines could be useful, their elaboration no doubt would be time-consuming. The General Assembly should make some recommendations for action in the near future.

(Mr. Gustavsson, Sweden)

27. Modern technology presented a promise as well as a challenge for all. That was true not least for the disabled. New technology had greatly improved life for many disabled persons. On the other hand, high technology could also mean reduced human involvement in the work process. It was therefore necessary to enable disabled persons themselves to participate on an equal basis in preparations for the new high-technology society. Only when the disabled fully exercised their real influence on their own conditions could there be true equalization of opportunities.

28. Ms. QUINTANILLA (United States of America) said that her delegation fully supported the decision to declare 1985 the International Youth Year and was pleased to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.6. Young people must be actively involved not only in events relating to the Year, but also in studies of the causes of and solutions to societal problems. Their genuine participation required educational opportunities, the free discussion of ideas and the free flow of information, activities that would make the Year meaningful in a way that rallies, world conferences, slogans and petitions would not. Her delegation was very encouraged by the varied programmes being planned for the Year and by the fact that young people were frequently involved in the planning process.

29. The United States International Youth Year Commission was the official non-governmental body for activities relating to the Year in her country. Its goal was to highlight the situation of youth in society, to promote greater public awareness of the Year and to generate broad discussions of its themes. One of the many programmes envisaged would deal with the situation of youth in the United States and the rest of the world, focusing on the specialized needs of youth, with particular emphasis on the disabled, and on the many positive contributions of young people to society. The Commission maintained contact with its counterparts in other countries and had been represented at meetings of the Advisory Committee and at regional preparatory meetings.

30. Turning to the question of aging, she said that in view of the widespread interest in the subject and in the follow-up to the World Assembly on Aging in her country, her delegation had been disappointed that document A/39/147 had been provided only the preceding week, particularly since the responsible government agencies had had only limited time to review it. Her delegation looked forward to discussing the issue and the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging more fully at the next session of the Commission for Social Development. The discussion should focus also on the United Nations Trust Fund for the World Assembly on Aging and terms of reference for its use, and she would therefore have liked to see information on specific programmes funded and on the financial situation of the Fund, rather than the summary presentation appearing in document A/39/147. Those details should be included in future reports to the General Assembly.

31. Her Government planned to spend approximately \$9,300 per elderly person in 1985, which represented an 8 per cent increase over 1984 and a 50 per cent increase over spending in 1981. Financing for the elderly represented 28 per cent of the entire Federal budget. In addition, the indexation of payments from Social

(Ms. Quintanilla, United States)

Security and Supplemental Security Income programmes protected recipients from any real loss in benefits. Under the Older American Act, comprehensive co-ordinated services would continue to be provided in such areas as health and social services, nutrition, continuing education, housing and transportation, and the Act placed special emphasis on provisions to combat Alzheimer's disease, to prevent abuse of the elderly and to promote health education and training. Older volunteers also provided assistance to younger families at risk and to the frail elderly.

32. With regard to the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, her delegation regretted the late receipt of document A/39/191 for the same reasons she had mentioned with regard to document A/39/147, and hoped that the former document would also be provided to the Commission on Social Development for consideration at its next session. Follow-up activity in the United States on the United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons had been extremely positive. President Reagan had signed a proclamation recognizing the Decade, and Congress had called for an annual report from the President on plans developed by the Executive branch in accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/53 and the action taken on those plans. Federal policy encouraged care for the disabled within the context of the family and community, promoted the integration of the disabled into society, schools and the workplace and fostered the independence and dignity of such persons. The efforts of non-governmental organizations and the private sector in response to the Programme of Action had been impressive and were essential to the Programme's success. Her delegation had previously paid tribute to the vital role of non-governmental organizations in that area. In 1984 it wished to add a tribute to the contributions of American corporations to promoting a better life for the disabled. The National Organization on Disability, a direct outgrowth of the International Year of Disabled Persons, was funded entirely by the private sector. The expansion of employment opportunities for disabled persons was of course vital. She noted in that connection that large and small corporations representing a variety of industries had increased their hiring of disabled persons and had participated in training and placement projects for the disabled.

33. Ms. DRIVENES (Norway) said that young people had participated in her country's delegation to the General Assembly for many years, and that had helped to enhance international awareness among Norwegian youth. She hoped that the number of young people on the delegations of other Member States would be significantly increased. Her country, which was a member of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, believed that the recommendations of the Committee now before the General Assembly satisfactorily reflected the many concerns voiced in the course of the preparations for the Year. Youth organizations in Norway attached considerable importance to follow-up activities to the International Youth Year, for the experience gained could serve as a basis for further action, particularly at the national and regional levels.

34. A National Committee for the International Youth Year had been established in Norway in 1983, with the Minister of Culture and Science as its President. Committees had been organized throughout the country to co-ordinate and stimulate appropriate local activities and to co-operate with youth organizations and related

(Ms. Drivenes, Norway)

institutions already dealing with youth questions. Thus, young people were assuming responsibility and participating actively in planning for the Year, and would continue to do so in the observance of and follow-up to the Year. It was encouraging to note that many countries in different parts of the world had established national committees. Those committees should strive to ensure that their activities would have a long-lasting positive effect on the situation of youth within their countries.

35. Given the importance of ensuring that young people would continue to be heard within the United Nations system, her delegation requested that the Advisory Committee at its fourth session include recommendations regarding channels of communication between youth organizations and the United Nations among its proposals on follow-up activities relating to the Year. The co-ordinating link between the United Nations and world youth provided by the Geneva Informal Meeting should be strengthened, and her Government urged others to follow its example by providing financial support to the Meeting to facilitate participation by youth organizations from developing countries.

36. Mr. VOICU (Romania) stressed the need for an ongoing exchange of information to strengthen international co-operation on matters relating to disability prevention and the rehabilitation of the disabled. The competent bodies in his country devoted special attention to the recommendations arising out of the International Year of Disabled Persons and to the World Plan of Action concerning Disabled Persons. Measures had been adopted to prevent disability resulting from occupational accidents and diseases and to accommodate the social, medical, educational and vocational training needs of the disabled with a view to their integration into society.

37. With regard to the question of aging, he emphasized the need for increased efforts to ensure the implementation of all the recommendations which had appeared in the documents of the World Assembly on Aging with a view to resolving the many problems facing the elderly. His delegation, which had been a sponsor of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, believed that action on behalf of the elderly inter alia in the medical and social fields and with regard to social security, should correspond to their particular social and economic requirements, and that special attention should be paid to the situation in developing countries. As the World Assembly on Aging itself had stipulated, the objectives of the Programme of Action should be adapted to the goals of the new international economic order and to the guidelines set out in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

38. Given the importance of international co-operation with regard to measures on behalf of the aging, the United Nations should systematically evaluate developments in the field, the work of the World Health Organization on gerontology and geriatrics should be expanded, and the activities of the International Labour Organisation regarding the work potential of the elderly should be expanded. Drawing attention to paragraphs 40-42 of document A/39/147, he stressed the importance of expanding intergenerational contacts in preparation for and observance of the International Youth Year.

(Mr. Voicu, Romania)

39. Referring to the question of youth, he said that in the interest of ensuring the adequate participation of youth and youth organizations in the implementation of the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the preparation and observance of the International Youth Year, the efforts of national youth organizations to fulfil their role as channels of communication between the United Nations and youth should receive full support. His country had established a National Committee on Youth in 1981 representing youth organizations, certain ministries and other relevant bodies. One objective of the national plan adopted by the Committee was to ensure the responsible participation of youth in implementing national development objectives. The plan envisaged many activities relating to the International Youth Year, an exchange of information and experience with other national committees and broad contact with the organizations in the United Nations system. His delegation did not agree with these delegations that had questioned the advisability of long-term planning with regard to youth.

40. Lastly, his delegation reserved the right to raise the question of youth again during consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council, when the Committee would have before it a resolution adopted by consensus by the Council concerning co-ordination and information in the field of youth.

41. Mr. ZAYAS (Cuba) said that since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 34/151, of which his delegation had been a sponsor, his country had encouraged the active participation of youth in activities relating to the International Youth Year. Cuba had also supported the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the Preparation and Observance of the Year because it was in favour of the active participation of non-governmental international organizations in the activities relating to the Year. Cuban youth and student organizations were making a constructive contribution in that regard.

42. The active support of youth in Cuba's revolutionary process had from the outset channelled the energies and creative capabilities of the young people into the establishment of a new society. Cuban youth played a key role in the economic and social development of the country and in supporting other peoples who were struggling to combat the vestiges of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Young people should also help to study and find solutions to the major problems of the modern world, which included the struggle for national independence, self-determination and the elimination of foreign domination, the implementation of a just and equitable new international economic order, the preservation of peace and efforts to halt the arms race. From the outset, his delegation had fully supported the Advisory Committee and the activities which it promoted to ensure the success of the International Youth Year.

43. With reference to the question of aging, he said that the National Standing Committee on Aging in Cuba analysed and supported all necessary action on behalf of the elderly, inter alia in the fields of health, education and employment. His Government guaranteed a system of national security on the basis of the socialist principle of the full protection of society as a whole and accorded protection to the elderly to the fullest possible extent. Persons over the age of 60 accounted

(Mr. Zayas, Cuba)

for 10.9 per cent of the Cuban population, an increase of 37.1 per cent for that age group since 1970. An aging population placed increasing demands on society and on the State, which made it crucial to encourage older people to develop their own capabilities. Developing countries should share their experience in that regard.

44. In 1981 his country had established a National Committee on the Disabled on which various State organizations and institutions were represented. Its responsibilities included encouraging the participation of the disabled in the social, economic and cultural life of the country and ensuring recognition of their duties and rights through appropriate legislation and resolutions. His country was prepared to share its experience regarding assistance for the disabled for the benefit of other third-world countries.

45. Mr. RANDHAWA (India) said that the International Youth Year would provide an opportunity to assess the situation of youth and draw attention to the specific needs and aspirations of young people, who wished to participate actively in the development process and in the promotion of international understanding, co-operation and peace. His delegation therefore commended the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year for its excellent work in preparing for the Year and in promoting interest in and awareness of youth issues throughout the world. It particularly welcomed and supported the Committee's recommendation that meetings of the fortieth session of the General Assembly should be devoted to youth-related policies and programmes, since that would focus world attention on matters relating to youth without having financial implications. His own Government was taking steps to assess the needs and aspirations of young people with a view to developing and strengthening policies and programmes on youth within the context of overall development planning and local needs and priorities.

46. Referring to the aged, he said that they were entitled to health, security and contentment and that their role in society should reflect the valuable contribution that they could make by virtue of their knowledge and experience. His delegation welcomed the International Plan of Action on Aging because it had led to the adoption of measures responding to the needs of the aged.

47. In his own country, higher life expectancy and the social strains attendant upon industrialization and urbanization had increased the vulnerability of the aged, and his Government had responded with a number of social security programmes. Additional programmes were currently being prepared within the context of the International Plan of Action.

48. With regard to the disabled, he said that the proclamation of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons should contribute to the aims of preventing disability and rehabilitating and fully integrating the disabled into society, but that the implementation of its objectives required an increased flow of resources to developing countries, an exchange of technical information and the transfer of technological know-how.

(Mr. Randhawa, India)

49. In India various measures to prevent disability and ensure the social and economic rehabilitation of the disabled had been taken, and efforts were being made to provide the necessary facilities so that they could develop their talents and abilities to the maximum. Major programmes had been established to cover such areas as health, training, employment and rehabilitation, and would be further expanded to the extent that the country's resources permitted.

50. Mr. BRAUN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his country's policy with respect to the aged was part of a social policy designed to alleviate the difficulties faced by the aged as a result of social conditions. In accordance with the wishes of the aged themselves, efforts were being made not only to provide for their material needs but also to enable them to participate in the political and cultural activities of the community, through pilot projects covering social services, education, measures to bridge the generation gap, communal services, geriatric and psychiatric services and day-care or short-term care for the aged. In that connection, measures were also being taken to give binding force to the important principles and recommendations of the International Plan of Action on Aging adopted by the World Assembly on Aging in 1982.

51. His Government hoped that development aid projects for the aged in the third world would be financed from the United Nations Trust Fund for the World Assembly on Aging, to which it had made a contribution of DM 200,000. It also would be helpful if the Fund's activities were better publicized among States Members of the United Nations.

52. Turning to the problem of the disabled, he said that his Government regarded the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons as a welcome opportunity to enlist national and international co-operation to help disabled persons enjoy equality and full participation in society, and that even though the objectives of the Programme had been achieved in his country, it would co-operate to ensure that they were realized everywhere. His country would continue its own efforts to help the disabled, with particular emphasis on employment opportunities and increased training.

53. His Government supported the continuation of the Trust Fund, with contributions on a purely voluntary basis, but also felt that its work needed more publicity.

54. Mrs. SAELZLER (German Democratic Republic) said that it was of particular importance that the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the Preparation and Observance of International Youth Year, the regional plans of action and the documents prepared by the Advisory Committee for the Year should reflect the fact that the preservation and strengthening of peace was an indispensable prerequisite for realizing the rights of young people. When dealing with issues concerning youth, the highest priority must be given to the prevention of nuclear war, the reduction of international tension and the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means. Her own country's youth were clearly dedicated to those aims and supported the Government's endeavours to promote their achievement.

(Mrs. Saelzler, German Democratic Republic)

55. The objectives of the year - participation, development, peace - were interdependent and must be implemented at the national level in accordance with each country's possibilities and needs, with the help of the national co-ordinating committees. The efforts of her own country's national co-ordinating committee were aimed at mobilizing the country's youth to fight for peace, contribute to social progress and improve social conditions.

56. Her delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation to set aside meetings at the fortieth session of the General Assembly in order to review the implementation of the goals of the International Youth Year and to prepare guidelines for its follow-up. However, in accordance with relevant United Nations decisions relating to international years, that would have to be financed from the Organization's regular budget.

57. The youth of her country enjoyed a legally guaranteed and fully implemented right to social and material security and the various activities and meetings it had organized in preparation for the International Youth Year provided evidence of how extensively they participated in implementing their Government's policy of ensuring human welfare and safeguarding peace. Her country would always be guided by the principle that young people could develop successfully only when confidence was placed in them and responsibility entrusted to them.

58. She welcomed the forthcoming XII World Festival of Youth and Students to be held in Moscow, with its call for anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship, as a highlight of the International Youth Year and as a significant forum for giving fresh impetus to the people's struggle for peace and friendship.

59. Mr. ITOUA (Congo) said that his delegation approved the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year contained in the report on its third session (A/39/262) and the progress achieved in the implementation of the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities. His delegation also supported the efforts of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the Regional Commissions and the non-governmental organizations working for the promotion of international co-operation in the field of youth.

60. Youth, which constituted the majority of the Congolese population, participated actively in the political, social and economic development of the country and was struggling for the realization of the ideals of peace in the Central African subregion and throughout the world. The democratization of education in the Congo, reflected in a school attendance rate of 100 per cent, was aimed essentially at inculcating in the young the ideals of peace, freedom and the achievement of the objectives of progress and development. It was for that reason that the Congo welcomed the decision to proclaim the International Youth Year. In preparation for the observance of that event, a National Committee for the International Youth Year had been established with the objective of co-ordinating all programmes of action on behalf of Congolese youth.

(Mr. Itoua, Congo)

61. His delegation could not conclude its remarks without mentioning the lot of the many young people living in territories under colonial, racist and Zionist domination. He was thinking particularly of young people in Namibia, South Africa and Palestine and others who were still passive and innocent sufferers in a world of injustice and oppression that they had not made. His delegation hoped to see concrete action undertaken by the international community with a view to improving their living conditions.
62. His delegation accordingly believed that the International Youth Year should not be conceived merely as a commemorative year. Rather, it should be an occasion for drawing attention to the situation of youth and a leitmotif for undertaking concrete programmes of action on behalf of youth. That task was fundamental for the future of mankind.
63. Mr. QASIM (Oman) said that young people were the pioneers of the future but that before 1970 the outlook for the young in his country had not been a promising one. They had had no chance to develop their potential for the benefit of their homeland because of the backward conditions which were the legacy of colonialism. The uprising in 1970, however, had created an opportunity for the youth of Oman to realize its aspirations. Now his country's youth was integrated into a new, dynamic society, in which it had an expanding role in formulating and carrying out development plans.
64. In Oman special emphasis was placed on educating young people to be more useful members of society, and to that end a fully developed educational system, including specialized professional schools and scientific colleges, had been established, to which youth was guaranteed access through numerous scholarships. An important aspect of the task of providing youth in Oman with scientific and professional training was that of inculcating in them a love of their homeland through educational guidance and protecting them against subversive propaganda. Young women in Oman were on an equal footing with men and they had an equal role in society. In sum, his country was convinced of the importance of the role of youth in implementing the ideals of the International Youth Year.
65. In conclusion, he noted that the Secretary-General, in his report in document A/39/262, had made proposals regarding the convening of a World Congress on Youth. While the idea might have some merit, it would entail enormous expenditures, thus diverting funds from other more urgent needs.
66. The CHAIRMAN announced that Austria, Benin, Botswana, Democratic Yemen, Thailand and Uganda had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/39/L.6.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.