



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GARVALOV (Bulgaria)

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

AGENDA ITEM 80: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE
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1. Mr. NHAMO (Zimbabwe) expressed deep sympathy to the Government and people of
Algeria over the loss of life and property in the recent earthquake.
2. At the World Conference, Zimbabwean women, after a long period of isolation,
had been able to communicate with the international community. His delegation was
deeply concerned about equality between women and men. It believed that equality
of opportunity and responsibility must be enjoyed by all human beings in every
society.
3. Before independence, Zimbabwe had been united with the progressive forces of
the international community in the struggle for freedom, independence, peace and
security; it now enjoyed the rights of a free nation. The independence of
Zimbabwe had been achieved at a time when the international community had been
entering a new era. For 90 years women in Zimbabwe had endured suffering and
death, particularly during the long and bitter struggle against colonialism,
racial discrimination, apartheid and foreign domination in Zimbabwe. Through their
heroic efforts, they had achieved considerable political, economic and social
progress and had assumed their rightful place in the building of a new order.
4. Now women must be given equal access with men to rights and opportunities.
It was imperative to become more flexible in attitudes towards the role of men
and women in society and to avoid rigid concepts of stereotyped roles for either
sex.
5. Under oppressive colonial rule, women had not been able to participate fully
or effectively in determining the course of the country's history or to make any
meaningful contribution to its economic and social development. Lack of
educational opportunities had resulted in a lack of political and social
consciousness among women and only a few Zimbabwean women had managed to enter
professions traditionally reserved for women, such as health, education and
welfare.

(Mr. Nhamo, Zimbabwe)

6. By the application of proper policies and initiatives, the situation was now being reversed. The experience of the liberation struggle had demonstrated the tremendous contribution which women could make at the leadership and decision-making level through direct participation in the country's development. That contribution had given momentum to a drive for greater equality of opportunity for men and women and equal participation in national life under the guidance of the Government. Zimbabwean women were also playing an effective role in the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme to which the Government had given first priority. Health services for those in the low-income brackets and primary education in which women were playing a leading role were being provided free.

7. The majority of refugees in almost all areas were women and children. For Palestinian and Namibian women and children, life meant endless suffering. Justice, peace and equality were vague concepts far beyond their reach. Amid all that suffering, huge sums of money were being expended for the acquisition of armaments, producing an ever-increasing threat to international peace and security.

8. Over the past two decades one of the significant achievements of the international community had been the attainment of self-determination by most of the former colonies. Technological progress had been achieved in all spheres of economic activity, thus offering substantial possibilities for improving the well-being of all peoples. Yet colonialism, foreign domination, racial discrimination, apartheid and neo-colonialism was still among the greatest obstacles to the full emancipation and progress of the peoples in the developing countries and the benefits of technological advancement were not shared equitably among the members of the international community. The international community was now battling to achieve full equality, justice, peace and progress; part of that struggle was aimed at ensuring equality between men and women.

9. Mr. FØRDE (Norway) said that the Norwegian delegation had abstained at the Copenhagen Conference in the vote on the Programme of Action as a whole; it was unfortunate that the introduction of considerations which had very little to do with the main themes of the conference had spoiled the broad consensus that existed on the Programme of Action, except for three controversial paragraphs. Nevertheless, his Government intended to participate in the implementation of the Programme.

10. Some progress had been made in Norway in the efforts to reach the goals of the World Plan of Action. National machinery and legislation had been established and it functioned fairly effectively. The Government was actively working on strategies and priorities for the national plan of action covering the last five years of the Decade. Education and access to paid work for women would be among the most vital questions; in that connexion, compensatory measures like quotas were already being applied. His Government was also concerned with achieving a more equitable sharing of household duties between women and men. To achieve equality, the stereotyped roles of the sexes had to be discarded and care had to be taken that the change did not benefit only the men. It was important to educate the young in those matters and to work out social benefits and conditions of work in a way that actively encouraged men to assume their share of child care and household duties.

(Mr. Førde, Norway)

11. The interaction between States in the economic field had a strong impact on the status of women in the world: it influenced production, opportunities for employment, the structure of human settlements and other determining factors of the standard of living. The world economic recession of recent years had in many ways affected women more adversely than men in both developed and developing countries. It was important that women's economic role be taken fully into consideration wherever economic policy was decided. In discussing the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade delegates had demonstrated a keen interest in how the Strategy would affect women and a realization that economic factors had inhibited the full participation by women in development on an equal basis with men. It was to be hoped that the forthcoming international negotiations on economic matters would pay due attention to how the outcome would affect women.

12. Equal status for women would not come automatically as a result of economic development but economic development constituted the most favourable condition for such social change. In addition, a clearly-defined policy and a continuous effort to implement it were necessary to ensure the full integration of women in economic life. For that purpose, it was important to secure the full participation of women in the political and other decision-making processes. Cultural traditions must not be used as an excuse for legitimizing the continuing subordination of women. Women should be better represented in delegations to international meetings and the secretariats of international organizations should employ more women at all levels. One impediment to women was lack of training in the more procedural and technical aspects of international co-operation and his Government was considering new measures to give more women the necessary training and education through courses, seminars, etc.

13. Member States had a great responsibility for helping the Secretary-General to find women candidates for positions in the Professional and higher categories in the Secretariat so as to reach the target of a 25 per cent increase in the number of women over a period of four years.

14. Norway supported the strengthening of the Commission on the Status of Women, for it had a most important role to play in the review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action and the Programme of Action.

15. His delegation also expressed appreciation for the important contribution of the non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the United Nations Decade for Women. The United Nations Secretariat had been able to maintain contact with interested non-governmental organizations in a most satisfactory way, thus giving widespread publicity to activities under the Decade.

16. Norway had already announced that it would contribute financially to the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. Research helped determine areas where urgent action was required. By seeking the collaboration of other institutions, especially the regional centres for training and research, the Institute should be in a good position to assist in implementing projects and programmes requiring expertise.

(Mr. Førde, Norway)

17. Norway had supported the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women ever since its establishment and had pledged 1 million Norwegian kroner to the Fund each year throughout the United Nations Decade for Women. The Consultative Committee of the Fund had demonstrated an ability for innovative thinking and realistic judgement which was widely appreciated. Co-operation between the Fund and the United Nations Development Programme seemed well established and a formula should be sought to integrate the Fund as a separate unit within the United Nations Development Programme. His delegation agreed with the Consultative Committee that in future the salary of women programme officers in the secretariats of the regional economic commissions should be covered from the regular budget.

18. His delegation complimented the Secretariat on the efficient way it had given publicity to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; Norway had signed the International Convention and would ratify it in the near future.

19. Miss SABATIER (Niger) said that during the United Nations Decade for Women, positive achievements had been made in Niger; at the same time, Niger was aware of the efforts which must be continued.

20. Her delegation denounced the debate which had taken place at the World Conference and during the Committee's discussions based on the allegation that a group of countries had politicized the World Conference and prevented the adoption of the Programme of Action by consensus. Ever since the World Conference of the International Women's Year the women of the third world, while recognizing their common cause with women of the world as a whole, had expressed their determination to participate in the struggle against all forms of oppression, domination and discrimination. African women, supported by all nations which valued peace and justice, had called for special attention to be accorded to women subject to the odious practice of apartheid. The women of the third world had drawn attention to the close link between the improvement of their status and the global improvement of the living conditions of peoples generally, as well as the establishment of a new international economic order. Yet, at the World Conference some delegations had urged that there should be no talk of politics. That ambiguity must be resolved and clarified: if the international community condemned apartheid, why should women not be able to say anything about it or take any action? Although the General Assembly had convened a special session exclusively devoted to the vital question of Palestine women at the World Conference had voted against an entire programme because a few paragraphs referred to that question. Women must stand up for their beliefs and ideals, and they had the right to defend the position of their countries.

21. The Committee could make a positive contribution to the objectives of the Decade by considering ways and means of implementing the relevant recommendations of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels. Her delegation believed that activities at the intergovernmental level must take into account all the objectives of the new International Development Strategy. It stressed the importance of the efforts being undertaken to promote technical

(Miss Sabatier, Niger)

co-operation among developing countries. When Member States attended United Nations meetings concerned with questions other than women's issues they should ensure that due importance was attached to the latter.

22. One problem brought up at the World Conference had been the practice of female circumcision. The member countries of the African Group had wished to avoid any reference being made to that practice because they had already considered the matter at length at the regional meeting at Lusaka and had discussed possible solutions; they did not want any interference on the part of nonregional countries. It was advisable to avoid giving too much importance to a problem since that could exacerbate prejudice. It was ironical that certain countries had tried to arouse feelings of pity and shock about female circumcision but had said nothing about economic and military support to régimes which sought the extermination of entire peoples.

23. The World Conference had called for unity and had undertaken commitments for the Decade. It was not a time to provoke dissension.

24. Miss MONTEIRO (Mozambique) said that the problem of inequality between men and women could not be solved merely through the advancement of women in areas such as education or improved employment. The key to the problem was the full participation of women at the decision-making level in planning and governing their societies. The promotion of women had to be viewed as a means to an end - the full participation in all aspects of the society. Her delegation could not conceive of women's emancipation through effective and equal participation without a radical transformation of the feudal and capitalist structures of society. It was therefore imperative that a new national economic order be built as a framework for internal plans based on equality.

25. The Mozambican woman had fought inequality in different ways throughout the colonial era and that fight had culminated in her active participation in the struggle for national independence. Political independence could be achieved only through the full participation of women. The struggle for women's emancipation in the People's Republic of Mozambique was an integral part of the struggle of the Mozambican people against underdevelopment, hunger, disease, misery, illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness. In rural and urban areas, the goals of Mozambique were the consolidation of political independence and the construction of a strong and prosperous economy. They involved men and women of all races and ethnic groups in the building of socialism. Her delegation believed that as long as men continued to exploit other men and as long as people continued to be oppressed, there could be no talk of equality, peace and development. In addition, it was impossible to achieve equality of women without establishing a just and equitable economic order on a global scale.

26. The situation in southern Africa was still deplorable for women struggling for their equality with men through participation in the struggle for national liberation. That struggle could not succeed unless the apartheid régime and all forms of racial discrimination were totally eliminated. Colonialism, neo-colonialism and apartheid were incompatible with the desire to promote peace and

(Miss Monteiro, Mozambique)

development among people and more particularly, they constituted an obstacle to the integration of women in development. Her delegation reiterated its solidarity with the women of Namibia and South Africa who were still denied employment and deprived of their fundamental rights of self-determination.

27. In the Middle East, the only condition for the realization of equality between men and women was the self-determination and full realization of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Israeli policy of occupation was oppressive to men and women of Palestine.

28. Her delegation regarded the World Conference as a success because it had achieved its objectives. She also hoped that all Governments were making substantial efforts to achieve the goals of the Decade and to implement the Programme of Action. In conclusion, her delegation wished to express its appreciation of the valuable role played by the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women and sincerely hoped that it would continue to provide assistance to developing countries.

29. Mrs. EFTEKHARI (Iran) said that the Copenhagen Conference had provided the first contact between women in revolutionary Iran and women from other nations of the world. Iran had participated with a new outlook with regard to the problems confronting women and had had an opportunity to express its views in the light of the position and role of women dictated by the Islamic and revolutionary aspirations of its people. The Conference had demonstrated that although the Decade was already at mid-point, there were still many tasks to be undertaken to achieve its goals by 1985.

30. The Conference had clearly indicated that the problems of women in the world were truly political problems and thus could not be separated from other political issues that confronted mankind today. Women were under the stress of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, imperialism, exploitation and degradation as deeply as men. Women also bore the same responsibilities as men in wars of liberation as freedom fighters and participated in the general movement to spread awareness among the oppressed and exploited peoples of the world. Her delegation regarded the decisions of the Conference as a positive contribution to a better understanding of the problems confronting women on a world scale. However, it believed that those decisions could have been more forceful.

31. Iran was particularly in favour of the decisions concerning the Palestinian women, women under apartheid and women in Western Sahara. It believed, however, that special emphasis should be placed on the fact that every community had its own set of social, economic and cultural characteristics and the decisions of the Conference must be implemented specifically within the framework of those characteristics. There were no preconceived solutions with universal applicability for human problems. It was therefore imperative that local laws and customs be taken as a basis for solving problems facing women in each community.

(Mrs. Eftekhari, Iran)

32. There were certain principles in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran that specified and guaranteed the rights of women. Islam placed great significance on the family as the basic unit of the community and as a factor for harmony and high moral standards. Harmony and morality within the family meant a lively and productive society and the responsibility of men and women was primarily the attainment of that objective. In order to facilitate that task, and in order to prevent misinterpretations by uninformed circles about the status and rights in an Islamic society, the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran clearly stated in article 21 that the State must guarantee the rights of women in every respect within the framework of Islamic custom by creating a favourable atmosphere in which women could develop their personalities and benefit from their material and spiritual rights as citizens of Iran. Iranian women had played an active role in Iran's revolution and were now bearing their share of the burden of reconstruction. Iran regarded the education of women as crucial for the advancement and perfection of the family and community because education helped women to co-ordinate their responsibilities in society with their responsibilities in the family.

33. Ms. ANDERSON (Guyana) said that in the 1980s, with developing countries facing mounting problems of low earnings for their exports, increasingly high prices for manufactures, protectionism in foreign markets and generally imported inflation, the development effort demanded nothing less than the complete involvement of all, regardless of sex. That was why her delegation believed that the importance of the role of women in economic and social development and the need to ensure their full participation in the political and decision-making process could never be overemphasized.

34. For Guyana, the participation of women in development on a basis of full equality with men was not an issue. The Government of Guyana afforded every opportunity for and actively encouraged the preparation of women for service in all fields where the nation required it. Employment opportunities continued to increase with the rapid growth of co-operatives and small-scale industries, with assistance by the Government mainly in the form of loans, credit facilities and marketing of products.

35. Her delegation was convinced that to the extent that developing countries could make maximum use of all their resources, including human resources, their contribution to the establishment of the new international economic order would be enhanced. As efforts continued within the United Nations and in all international forums for the creation of that new order, it was imperative that due consideration be given to the participation of women at the national, regional and international levels. Her delegation was pleased at the efforts being made within the United Nations system to assist national Governments in ensuring full and effective participation by the entire population at all stages and in all aspects of the national development process.

36. The Programme of Action and the resolutions adopted at the Copenhagen Conference were evidence of the positive results of that Conference. Her delegation called for all possible support for the adoption of the Programme of Action at the

(Ms. Anderson, Guyana)

current session of the General Assembly. It was now incumbent on Governments and all concerned to display the political will necessary and strive for the implementation of the Programme at the national, regional and international levels. Its implementation would open new horizons for women all over the world, but particularly for the oppressed women of South Africa and Palestine and refugee women in general.

37. The establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women filled an urgent need in the specific areas of training and research in the interest of women. Her delegation hoped that the necessary arrangements would soon be finalized to enable it to begin operation from its headquarters in the host country, the Dominican Republic.

38. Guyana had been among the countries which have taken the opportunity at Copenhagen to sign and ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Indeed, a number of provisions in that instrument were enshrined in Guyana's national Constitution. Guyana would continue to strengthen the involvement of women in the development process on an equitable basis in keeping with the conclusions reached at the Copenhagen Conference.

39. Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that a number of delegations had requested information about the appointment of the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and its installation in the host country. As she had mentioned in her introduction of her report of the Secretary-General (A/35/94), those administrative questions were currently being worked out actively in the Secretariat. The Secretary-General had been requested in General Assembly resolution 34/157 to consult the Governments of Member States with respect to the appointment of the Director. In that connexion, members of the Board of Trustees of the Institute had met informally at Copenhagen and had been able to express their views. Full consideration was also being given to geographical distribution and the nature of the work of the Institute. Consultations were still taking place and she hoped that the Secretary-General would be able to appoint the Director in the near future so that she could begin her functions as soon as possible.

40. With regard to the installation of the Institute in the host country, she observed that the negotiations on the agreement to be signed between the Secretariat and the host country were being actively pursued and it was hoped that all relevant problems would be ironed out soon. In any event, the work of the Institute had begun in January 1980 in a very active way, as had been reported by the President of the Board of Trustees at the Copenhagen Conference. The Institute had issued five publications in three languages as part of its contribution to that Conference.

41. Some delegations had requested information about the procedures relating to the pledging by Member States of national experts or other kinds of non-reimbursable contributions such as the provision of scholarships and the organization of seminars and meetings. In that connexion, one Member State had made a specific and very generous offer to the Institute. Such offers were, naturally most welcome.

The provision of personnel services from sources external to the United Nations common system was governed by administrative instruction ST/AI/231, which was an official document of the Secretariat and which described the procedures to be followed. Whenever a Member State was interested in offering such assistance, the proposal should be addressed officially to the secretariat of the Institute, which would discuss it in detail with the representatives of the country concerned for appropriate action. The same procedure applied to the offer of scholarships and the hosting of seminars and meetings of the Institute.

42. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had completed its general debate on agenda items 80 and 83. Any draft resolutions submitted on the items would be put to the vote between 5 and 7 November.

AGENDA ITEM 69: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/35/361 and Add.1; A/34/855; A/C.3/35/3)

AGENDA ITEM 81: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/35/503; A/C.3/35/3)

AGENDA ITEM 71: PROBLEMS OF THE ELDERLY AND THE AGED: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/35/130 and Add.1 and Corr.1; A/C.3/35/8)

AGENDA ITEM 73: QUESTION OF A CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (A/C.3/35/L.14)

AGENDA ITEM 79: INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/35/274 and Add.1 and A/35/291; A/C.3/35/5)

AGENDA ITEM 70: PRESERVATION AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL VALUES, INCLUDING THE PROTECTION, RESTITUTION AND RETURN OF CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC PROPERTY (A/35/349 and A/35/419)

AGENDA ITEM 68: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

AGENDA ITEM 72: HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS (A/35/202)

AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (A/35/65, A/35/96, A/35/132, A/35/137 and Corr.1 [English only], A/35/173, A/35/185, A/35/288, A/35/434, A/35/457 and A/35/462)

(a) REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE (A/35/40; A/C.3/35/4)

(b) FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/35/417)

(c) STATUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AND THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/35/3/Add.24; A/35/195)

43. Mrs. SIIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs was the focal point for three of the items under consideration, namely, agenda items 69, 81 and 71. Those items would be introduced by the Chief of the Social Development Branch.

44. Mr. ERGUN (Chief, Social Development Branch) said that preparatory work for the International Youth Year had already begun. The Secretary-General had circulated the substance of General Assembly resolution 34/151 to Member States, non-governmental youth organizations and United Nations agencies and offices, including the regional commissions, with a request for suggestions for a specific programme of measures and activities for the preparation and observance of IYY. The responses from Governments had been summarized and distributed to members of the Committee as an addendum to the report of the Secretary-General (A/35/361/Add.1). As of 25 October, replies had been received from 18 Governments and 12 youth organizations.

45. Resolution 34/151, declaring 1985 the International Youth Year, had also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session the report of the first session of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year. The main development conveyed to Member States in that report (A/34/855) was the statement of the former Chairman of the Third Committee that agreement had not been reached on the appointment of 23 Member States to the Advisory Committee, as requested in resolution 34/151. In that connexion, he wished to stress the importance of the early constitution of the Advisory Committee in view of the rapidly growing interest in IYY.

46. The observance of IYY in 1985 and the preparations for it during the period 1980-1984 would be part of the over-all activity designed to encourage further involvement and participation of youth in development and peace. Those activities required the full co-operation of the agencies of the United Nations system, which had already been initiated by an interagency meeting on youth. The United Nations had been receiving an increasing number of inquiries from youth organizations and Governments regarding the preparations for and observance of IYY. The letters reflected the ardent hope of youth to have a prominent role in development, world peace, disarmament, safeguard of human rights, promotion of social justice and creation of an economic order conducive to human progress and development. In view of those developments, any serious delay in reaching agreement on the membership and convening of the Advisory Committee at an early date would have an adverse effect on both the strategy of preparations and initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General and on the momentum developing on the part of youth and youth organizations and Governments.

47. If 1985 was to be an assessment stage of all the work leading to IYY as a basis for a long-range programme of action, as recommended by the Secretary-General, then the establishment of national committees for IYY became a very urgent aspect of the preparations. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee should be conveyed to Member States by the Secretary-General at the earliest possible moment to allow a realistic period for the initiation of national-level activities.

(Mr. Ergun)

48. With regard to agenda item 81, Policies and programmes relating to youth, he pointed out that the Secretary-General's report on channels of communication with youth and youth organizations (A/35/503) had been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 34/163. Resolution 34/163 had been the outcome of the General Assembly's adoption at its thirty-second session in 1977 of a series of guidelines for improving those channels of communication and the Secretary-General's follow-up report (A/34/199) had been presented to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session in 1979. The resolution, together with its annex containing draft additional guidelines for improving channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations, had been submitted to all Member States, regional commissions and regional and international youth organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, with a request for comments. The views expressed in response to resolution 34/163 and the observations and recommendations of the Secretary-General were set forth in parts II and III respectively of document A/35/503.

49. The Secretary-General had been requested by the Economic and Social Council to bring to the attention of the General Assembly Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/25, concerning co-ordination and information in the field of youth, to permit all Member States to comment on the best ways of improving co-ordination and information in the field of youth within the United Nations system.

50. The links between the activities of International Youth Year and the activities undertaken on improvement of channels of communication with youth and youth organizations had been apparent in the replies from Member States. That was a reaffirmation of the comprehensive approach required in dealing with issues related to youth, as had been emphasized by a recent interagency meeting on the question. The interagency meeting had recommended that channels of communication with youth and youth organizations should be linked together in the United Nations system and also linked with International Youth Year. It had also stated that the Geneva Informal Meeting (GIM) should be used as a major channel of communication and that questions regarding youth should be seen as broader social questions, with youth being recognized as a major resource for development and service, rather than as a problem group separate from the general society: resolution of youth questions should involve working with and not simply for youth.

51. The activities envisaged to improve the channels of communication were essential to the long-range success of the United Nations system's youth-related activities, particularly International Youth Year, and to involving youth as participants and beneficiaries of the New International Economic Order and the International Development Strategy.

52. Up to 25 October, 12 replies had been received from Governments on channels of communication, but the 18 replies on the International Youth Year also included recommendations on channels of communication. The replies in general reaffirmed the basic orientation of the programme and emphasized the importance of wider distribution of the Youth Information Bulletin and its publication in an increasing number of languages, establishing training programmes and seminars for youth, expanding the United Nations advisory services in the field of youth and focusing activities at the national and local levels.

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(Mr. Ergun)

53. Introducing agenda item 71, on problems of the elderly and the aged, he drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General on a draft programme and arrangements for the World Assembly on the Elderly (A/35/130 and Add.1), which had been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 33/52 of 14 December 1978. The decision to hold that Assembly had been the result of discussions in the Third Committee during which concern had been expressed by developed and developing countries about the question of aging in general and the aged in particular. The increase in the absolute and relative size of aging populations in all regions of the world had serious social and economic implications for societies and for the aging; it deserved the attention of the international community. The documents had been discussed by the Economic and Social Council at its first regular 1980 session and the Council, in its resolution E/1980/26, had endorsed the Secretary-General's programme and recommended that the General Assembly at its current session should approve the proposals for the World Assembly on the Elderly, including the establishment of an Advisory Committee (A/35/130, para. 50). It was suggested that the composition of the Advisory Committee should be determined by the Chairman of the Third Committee and that the Advisory Committee should be convened as early as possible in 1981.

54. The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had already started preparatory work for the World Assembly on the Elderly, in full co-operation with the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. The Centre was convening regional technical meetings on aging, with a view to assembling a group of specialists to prepare a report on the situation in each region. The regional reports would be used as background documents for regional intergovernmental preparatory meetings which the Secretary-General proposed should be held in 1981 in co-operation with the regional economic commissions.

55. Since the question of aging was an interdisciplinary issue, on which many organizations in the United Nations system were working, the organizing committee of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination had convened an ad hoc interagency meeting in Vienna in September 1980, which had been a useful step towards a co-ordinated approach to the World Assembly. The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had requested the specialized agencies and regional commissions to designate focal points for direct co-operation in the preparatory work for the World Assembly. The Centre was also working closely with the international non-governmental organization concerned and non-governmental committees on aging had been established in New York and Vienna.

56. Mrs. SANTANDER-DOWNING (Secretary of the Committee), speaking on behalf of the Director of the Division of Human Rights, introduced agenda items 68, on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance; 72, on human rights and scientific and technological developments; and 73, on the question of a convention on the rights of the child.

57. With regard to item 68, the Commission on Human Rights at its thirty-sixth session had continued to give high priority to the drafting of a declaration on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief, with a view to submitting the draft declaration to the General Assembly at its

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current session. In its resolution 35 (XXXVI), the Commission had recognized that some progress had been made by its working group but that much remained to be done. It had therefore decided to continue its work, as a matter of highest priority, at its thirty-seventh session in 1981; to establish an open-ended working group for the purpose; and to allot enough time to complete work on the draft declaration at that session.

58. The question of human rights and scientific and technological developments, agenda item 72, had been a regular item on the agenda of the General Assembly since the International Conference on Human Rights at Tehran in 1968. The Assembly had considered the subject at its thirty-third session in 1978 and requested the Commission on Human Rights to instruct its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, as a matter of priority, to undertake a study on the protection of persons detained on the grounds of mental illness. The Sub-Commission, at its thirty-third session, earlier in the current year, had had before it a report from the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/Sub.2/466) and a draft body of principles submitted by certain non-governmental organizations (E/CN.4/Sub.2/NGO.81). In resolution 11 (XXXIII) the Sub-Commission had decided to appoint one of its members, Mrs. Erica-Irene A. Daes, as Special Rapporteur to study available documents and replies from Governments and specialized agencies with a view to preparing for submission to the Sub-Commission at its thirty-fourth session in 1981: guidelines related to procedures for determining whether adequate grounds existed for detaining persons on the grounds of mental ill-health; and principles for the protection of persons suffering from mental disorders. The Secretary-General had been requested to transmit a questionnaire prepared by the Special Rapporteur to Governments, specialized agencies, regional intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned, requesting comments, views and observations. The Special Rapporteur had been requested to submit her report, with a draft body of guidelines and principles, to the Sub-Commission at its thirty-fourth session, at which the Sub-Commission would establish a sessional working group to consider them.

59. The Sub-Commission had also adopted resolution 12 (XXXIII) on the need for immediate action to develop guidelines with a view to inviting States Members of the United Nations and international, intergovernmental or regional agencies to adopt rules for protection of the mentally ill and had decided that one of its members should be designated to undertake a study of the relevant guidelines in that area and submit it, together with proposals, to the Sub-Commission at its thirty-fourth session.

60. Introducing agenda item 73, she noted that the Commission on Human Rights, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 33/166, had continued to give high priority to the draft convention on the rights of the child. Discussions at its thirty-sixth session were reported in chapter XI of its report (E/CN.4/1408 and Add.1), which contained the texts of the preamble and two articles adopted by the Commission's working group. In resolution 36 (XXXVI), the Commission had decided to continue its work on the draft convention as a matter of priority at its thirty-seventh session, with a view to completing the draft convention during the session, for transmission to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council in

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1981. At the request of the Commission, the Council had authorized a one-week session for an open-ended working group prior to the Commission's thirty-seventh session in order to facilitate completion of the work.

61. Mrs. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on agenda item 79, the International Year of Disabled Persons (A/35/444 and Add.1). In accordance with the Plan of Action adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 34/154, the efforts of Member States and non-governmental organizations in co-operation with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations family had led to a proliferation of activities. At the national level more than 30 Governments had established national committees or similar bodies; at the regional level a technical meeting and a regional seminar on the International Year of Disabled Persons had already been held for Asia and the Far East and for Africa. The meeting and seminar for Latin America were due to take place from 5 to 11 November and for Western Asia in late November. While the programme budget contained no specific allocation for such consultations for Europe, the Government of Finland had expressed its willingness to act as host to a regional meeting in the early part of 1981. At the international level, the major activity envisaged for 1981, with the assistance of UNDP, was an international symposium of experts on technical assistance in the field of disability and technical co-operation among developing countries. The symposium would be a bridge linking IYDP activities to the long-term programme of action.

62. Interagency consultations had been held at all levels, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/154, and the Advisory Committee had been informed of progress. The Secretariat of the International Year of Disabled Persons was pursuing its activities in co-operation with interested organizations and agencies within the United Nations family and with Governments and non-governmental organizations.

63. The Advisory Committee had held its second session from 21 to 29 August and its report contained a number of resolutions calling for specific action. The Committee had also started consideration of a long-term plan of action and developed general directives on preparations.

64. With regard to the International Institute for Rehabilitation, the Secretary-General's report included some proposals based on interagency consultations and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

65. Mr. VOICU (Romania), speaking on agenda items 69 and 81, said that debates at previous sessions and the decision by consensus to have an International Youth Year were evidence of the keen interest of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and international governmental and non-governmental organizations in matters concerning youth. His country's position had been stated at many international meetings and more recently in his Government's reply (A/35/361/Add.1, p. 52). The younger generation's firm belief in International Youth Year as an opportunity for uniting youth in the transformation of human society had been amply brought out at the international youth forum in Romania in May 1980.

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66. Romania's belief in the younger generation's direct and active participation in building a better and more just world had recently been reaffirmed in a message by the President of Romania to participants in a seminar on the younger generation's contribution to peace, security and disarmament in Europe. The President had stressed the importance of youth as a force for progress and peace, with a vital part to play in changing society, in the fight for freedom and independence, in opposing imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, and in the establishment of a policy of equality among States, based on the right to free self-determination.

67. International youth activities in the current year had demonstrated the younger generation's interest in the problems of the contemporary world and its readiness to help in solving them. The seminar had made a substantial contribution to international recognition of the value of youth's part in efforts to promote confidence and respect among nations and a climate of peace and security in which all people could develop in freedom and independence, without aggression or interference from outside. Youth could play a decisive part in promoting the friendship, understanding and co-operation among States, regardless of social system, which were the prerequisites for world peace and security. To that end, co-operation between youth organizations was essential and he welcomed the proclamation of International Youth Year. He also welcomed the recent moves towards co-operation on youth, as evidenced by resolutions adopted by the World Conference at Copenhagen, the UNESCO Executive Board and the International Labour Organisation, by a number of youth and student movements and by the informal meetings held in Vienna and Geneva.

68. Romania had been one of the 62 sponsors of General Assembly resolution 34/151. Its proposals, as recorded in document A/35/361/Add.1, included intensification of national, regional and international action in the period before International Youth Year; studies on improving the economic, social and political situation of youth; respect for the right of youth to education and employment; recognition of youth's values and aspirations; national, bilateral and multilateral scientific meetings to consider research on youth problems in different parts of the world; and the extension of contacts, exchanges and co-operation between research centres and institutions on youth.

69. The United Nations should intensify and improve its activities to ensure effective participation of representatives of the younger generation in all phases of important international programmes, such as the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade and the Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women; and national youth bodies should give official consideration to ways and means of implementing the various recommendations on International Youth Year.

70. The delay in setting up the Advisory Committee on International Youth Year should be offset by careful preparations to ensure that activities started without delay and the Committee should make every effort to prepare the programme required by resolution 34/151. The Secretary-General should prepare the necessary documentation for the Advisory Committee's first meeting in 1981 as soon as

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possible. In addition to replies from Governments, United Nations specialized agencies and international youth organizations, the documentation should also include a summary of the Third Committee's discussions on agenda items 69 and 81. He hoped that the Department of Public Information would take steps without delay to implement the provisions of resolution 34/151 concerning improvement of information on youth matters and that all sections of the Secretariat concerned would play their part. The success of the preparations for International Youth Year would depend on the active participation of the United Nations specialized agencies, and other international organizations and the widest possible participation of international and national youth organizations in implementing the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

71. The Romanian delegation had held consultations with many other delegations on a new draft resolution on International Youth Year, based on General Assembly resolution 34/151, which had been adopted by consensus. He hoped that the new draft resolution, which would be submitted shortly, would also be adopted by consensus.

72. Mr. WESTHOFF (Netherlands) said that he had been nominated by the Political Youth Council as the youth representative to the General Assembly from the Netherlands and that upon his return, his main task would be to visit many schools and conduct courses on United Nations matters. Further information about the project could be found in a paper which he would be happy to distribute among interested delegations.

73. The text of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade had stated that all countries should give high priority to the objectives of mobilizing and integrating youth in development. The role of youth, however, was not the same in developing and developed countries. While young people in developing countries should actively participate in the national development process, those in developed countries should concentrate on promoting public awareness of development issues and on persuading their Governments to give a higher priority to policies and programmes in the field of development co-operation and assistance. In that way, the youth of the developed countries could contribute to achieving a more equal balance of influence, especially at the decision-making level, and a more justified distribution of welfare and well-being in the world. Much remained to be done in that area.

74. One of the most urgent problems relating to youth was that of unemployment. It should be a priority responsibility of every Government to tackle the problem of youth unemployment both at the national level and through international co-operation and assistance to those countries in which unemployment almost automatically implied a lack of basic needs. Unemployment among the young should be a major substantive issue to be addressed within the context of the International Youth Year.

(Mr. Westhoff, Netherlands)

75. The International Youth Year should be seen not as a single, unique event but rather as a part of the longer-term process of involving youth in planning, policy and decision-making at the national, regional and international levels, with emphasis on national and regional action. In accordance with the decisions of the Economic and Social Council, the holding of a world-wide conference in an International Year was not desirable. Activities at the global level should be co-ordinated by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, which would limit its activities to co-ordination, administrative support, information exchange, technical assistance, the undertaking of comparative studies and the setting of norms, standards and regulations. His delegation attached great importance to participation as a main theme of the International Youth Year, providing the basic elements for the successful elaboration and exchange of views on the other two themes, development and peace. It was a mistake to think that young people could be held responsible for the promotion and furthering of development, peace and other important global concerns without giving them full rights and real influence. Youth and youth organizations should be actively involved in the preparations for the International Youth Year, in its observance and in the follow-up work. In practice, that implied that youth and youth organizations would attend and address the meetings of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, participate in the preparation of the various documents to be presented in connexion with the Year, and be adequately informed about its purposes and objectives.

76. In the Netherlands, the National Youth Council would act as a focal point and main channel of communication through which the Government and the public, particularly young people, could keep each other informed about developments and wishes with respect to the work of the International Youth Year. An adequate system of channels of communication was an essential condition for ensuring effective participation and making the Year a success. The General Assembly's guidelines for the improvement of the channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations should be carefully followed. The Geneva Informal Meeting of Youth Non-Governmental Organizations should be recognized and used as one of the main channels of communication. Governments and United Nations agencies, especially the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, should take advantage of the existence of the Geneva Informal Meeting and make every effort to involve the participating youth organizations actively in the preparation, observance and follow-up of the International Youth Year. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his report on policies and programmes relating to youth (A/35/503), had made a plea for increased financial and technical support to the Geneva Informal Meeting by Governments. Together with Austria, the Netherlands was already providing such support. States should include a youth representative in their national delegations to the General Assembly; that was a simple and effective way to promote the involvement and participation of youth in United Nations matters. Such a principle should also be included in the guidelines for the improvement of channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations.

77. The Netherlands welcomed the suggestion made by some Governments to the Secretary-General that the number of languages in which the Youth Information

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Bulletin was issued should be increased, but it believed that first priority should be given to actually issuing the Bulletin on schedule.

78. Mr. SMYK (Poland) said that the subject of youth was of special significance to Poland because more than 50 per cent of Poland's population were young people below the age of 30. The problems of young people, their social and living conditions, educational and cultural aspirations, political and social activities and working conditions would have to remain central concerns of Governments and societies throughout the world. The younger generation provided the real security of mankind's future. It was the duty of individuals, societies, Governments and international organizations to see to it that youth was prepared to take up the challenge in a way commensurate with the magnitude of the task.

79. The General Assembly, in designating 1985 as the International Youth Year (resolution 34/151) had pointed out various ways in which youth could become involved in international affairs. Involvement of youth had one overriding objective: the creation of peaceful and humanistic conditions in a world of better understanding. Poland fully shared that lofty objective. In the last 36 years it had managed to revolutionize the social status of young people on a democratic basis of equal opportunity and education for all. Young people in Poland did not know the experience of national and class oppression, unemployment, hunger and humiliation, since they lived in conditions which were far superior to those in which entire generations of Poles had lived in the past. During the period of its socialist development, Poland had managed to establish a relatively high level of education. Students could avail themselves of a widely developed system of State assistance. The young people of Poland were also guaranteed full employment. The main characteristics of Poland's young labour force were higher standards of education, higher qualifications, better training, greater social and political awareness, and active involvement in the affairs of working establishments and of the country as a whole. In recent decades Polish youth organizations had been initiators of numerous activities on the international scene. Poland co-operated in the field of youth programmes with many European and non-European States, and specific provisions on programmes relating to youth had been incorporated into Poland's agreements on cultural and other co-operation with foreign countries.

80. It had been said that the youth of a nation were the trustees of posterity. The United Nations had an exceptional role to play in that regard by actively promoting educational processes among the younger generation of all countries in a spirit of peace and tolerance among nations. That could be a difficult undertaking because, on the one hand, the world today was much more complex than it had been at the framing of the Charter and, on the other hand, the young people of today did not accept the same language or the same attitudes which had prevailed some 30 years ago. What was needed, therefore, was the development of new, imaginative methods of dialogue with the younger generation. The education of youth should also aim at promoting its contribution to, and participation in, the implementation of wide-ranging social reforms, especially in the developing countries.

(Mr. Smyk, Poland)

81. The International Youth Year should bring about greater mobilization of all groups and institutions concerned and of the general public to create greater awareness of the outstanding contribution youth could make in the quest for a better and happier life in its immediate environment and in the world at large. In Poland, initial preparations for the Year were well under way.

82. Sister Janet RICHARDSON (Observer for the Holy See) said that today's world confronted young people with a desolate scene of violence, aggression, and economic and spiritual poverty. In some places, ideologies leading to hatred, violence and despair were gaining ground among young people. In many areas, young people lacked a clear idea of their place in work and society. Changes in family structures, in some cases, damaged the environment they needed for growth.

83. Almost universally, young people were hungry for change. They wanted a moral order in order to create a more just and fair world. They taught the older members of society that world peace depended on sharing material goods as well as sharing such spiritual goods as forgiveness and reconciliation. Only in communion with other persons, especially in the context of the family, and searching out that incarnation of liberation which was appropriate to the particular context of an individual's life could youth attain responsible freedom.

84. Participation by youth in the long-term planning and development process was of great importance. Each young person merited recognition of every aspect of his or her humanity, not only recognition at the level of material needs. The international community had an obligation to offer opportunities to young people in order that they might develop an integral culture joining scientific formation and a deep moral, religious formation. Young people had more than an economic theory to contribute to long-term planning and development. They possessed traditions which placed at the centre not an abstract ideology but the human person. They retained basic values focusing on the equality of all rather than oppression by the few they enjoyed the heritage of dialogue and peace as an alternative to violence and struggle, and they believed in the advancement of life in all its manifestations, never in its suppression.

85. In all planning for young people their participation should be fostered at every level, so that their multiple interests were represented. To ensure that all their activities could serve to promote growth, not only those who had given themselves to political processes but also those who had intellectual, artistic, athletic and religious experiences should be called upon to share their expertise. Diverse groups such as unorganized youth, excluded youth of the fourth world, young women, disabled youth and juvenile offenders would merit an opportunity to share their experiences, dreams and plans. The theme of participation, development and peace extended beyond the social and economic domains to include spiritual and cultural dimensions.

86. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the General Assembly, in resolution 34/151, had decided to establish an Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year and had given a mandate to the Chairmen of the Third Committee to appoint the 23

(The Chairman)

members of the Advisory Committee. Following consultations with the Chairmen of the regional groups for October, he proposed that the Committee should adopt a decision on the composition of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year reading as follows:

The General Assembly,

Taking into consideration the fact that it has not been possible to proceed to the appointment of the members of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year as provided in General Assembly resolution 34/151,

Decides that the Advisory Committee shall be composed of the representatives of 24 Member States as listed in document A/34/655 of 17 June 1980."

That decision should in no way set a precedent for the establishment of similar bodies in the future.

67. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that proposal.

68. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.