



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABDULHASAN (Kuwait)

later: Mr. GALAL (Egypt)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

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AGENDA ITEM 144: RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES TO BAN IN THEIR TERRITORY, AND TO REFRAIN FROM INSTIGATING OR SUPPORTING IN THE TERRITORY OF OTHER STATES, CHAUVINISTIC, RACIST AND OTHER MANIFESTATIONS THAT MAY CAUSE DISCORD BETWEEN PEOPLES AND INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNMENTS AND THE MASS MEDIA IN COMBATING SUCH MANIFESTATIONS AND IN EDUCATING PEOPLES AND YOUTH IN THE SPIRIT OF PEACEFUL CO-OPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL ENTENTE; AND EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE PROMOTION AMONG YOUTH OF THE IDEALS OF PEACE, MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLES (continued)

1. Mrs. KERN (World Health Organization) said that the World Health Organization's contribution to the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging had been summarized in the relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/43/583). In addition to those efforts, WHO had recently launched the Special Programme for Research on Aging, whose overall goal was to determine how the decline in physical, mental and social well-being of the elderly could be minimized in both developed and developing countries. The Special Programme, whose work would be guided by a Scientific Advisory Committee and a Programme Consultative Committee, had its own organizational identity and budget and was seeking co-operation with other United Nations agencies. The specific objectives of the Programme were to understand the basic processes of aging, to find ways to prevent and control the clinical manifestations of age-related disorders and to promote interaction between older people and society.

2. The Special Programme for Research on Aging supported research activities which took into account the cultural, social, economic and other values of different societies. For example, in many developing countries, social and cultural patterns protected the elderly from isolation. Such patterns should be encouraged. Research was also being carried out on the most effective use of self-care and informal care by neighbours and families. In that connection, WHO had long felt that the family unit was the corner-stone of its concepts of primary health care and health for all and, consequently, welcomed the introduction of the agenda item on families and the proposal for an International Year of the Family.

(Mrs. Kern, NHO)

3. WHO estimated that 100-120 million people in developing countries had disabilities and could benefit from rehabilitation. That number was increasing and was expected to reach 130-150 million by the year 2000. Among the Organization's efforts to benefit disabled persons were the development of a more modern approach to orthopaedic technology, enabling countries to set up decentralized, low-cost orthopaedic workshops, the production of a manual to increase community awareness and participation in the care of the disabled and an updating of the Manual on the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps.
4. Activities relating to youth being planned or currently under way included consideration at the World Health Assembly in May 1989 of the topic: "The Health of Youth"; national action planning workshops; special publications; the development and application of new methods of behavioural research with young people; workshops in counselling and communications skills on reproductive health in adolescents; collaboration with UNESCO on youth education relating to sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS; and participation in international meetings.
5. The topics of aging, disability prevention and rehabilitation, and policies and programmes relating to youth were among the most important challenges of the 1990s and beyond and the World Health Organization accordingly gave them the highest priority.
6. Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the creation of favourable conditions for young people was an organic element of the socio-economic policy pursued by the socialist State. In the Byelorussian SSR, under perestroika, with the expansion of democracy, the acceleration of socio-economic development and the intensification of scientific and technical progress, a broad range of changes were being introduced which affected all aspects of life. Young people needed to participate more than ever in political, economic and social activities and were being offered new opportunities to exercise their rights under the Constitution and the Law on labour collectives. The State system of vocational and technical education trained personnel for all sectors of the economy. Moreover, in pursuing the goal of youth education, which was to form a balanced, socially active personality, young people were being taught to cherish and protect the environment.
7. It was regrettable that there had been a decline in youth-related activities in many countries following International Youth Year; fortunately, that was not the case in the Byelorussian SSR. His delegation felt that the work of the United Nations and other organizations on youth questions was useful for States Members although it sometimes lacked scope and direction. One of the basic functions of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs was to strengthen channels of communication between the United Nations, young people and youth organizations for more effective exchanges of information on national youth programmes and experience. To that end, there should be a strengthening of the co-operation between the United Nations and its specialized agencies and non-governmental youth organizations, which played an active role in mobilizing the efforts of young people in the struggle for peace and equal rights and the realization of the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

(Mr. Ogurtsov, Byelorussian SSR)

8. An effective channel of communication was the Geneva Informal Meeting of International Youth Non-governmental Organizations. Such contacts should be strengthened, and the venues of such meetings should be varied. The role of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in promoting links between the United Nations and the Geneva informal meetings should be given more prominence.

9. In order to galvanize attention on the problems of youth, consideration should be given to the elaboration of an international legal instrument on the rights of young people. His delegation fully supported the view expressed by the representative of Morocco on the need to reduce military expenditure and reallocate resources to social programmes.

10. Mr. GALGAU (Romania) said that the efforts of Government to benefit disabled persons had faltered lately as a result of the economic and social constraints affecting many countries, in particular, developing countries. It was unfortunate that the combination of retrenchment in social programmes and the debilitating effects of the external debt had resulted in increasing neglect of the population group most in need of social protection. His country fully supported the recommendations of the 1988 Global Meeting of Experts calling for action to overcome the difficulties of the first half of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and to accomplish more during the second half of the Decade.

11. His country had set up a national co-ordinating committee for the protection and rehabilitation of disabled persons. Special training, educational and vocational centres for handicapped children and young people were functioning and new rehabilitation centres for the disabled had been created in recent years. Special programmes were also being conducted to ensure the full reintegration of the disabled into the mainstream of economic and social life.

12. The international community had not yet achieved a satisfactory level of multilateral co-operation in co-ordinating policies, establishing guidelines and formulating viable strategies to combat crime. In that connection, he wondered whether the interregional preparatory meetings of experts preceding the congresses on crime prevention and the congresses themselves were the most appropriate frameworks for achieving co-operation. Furthermore, until the major causes of crime, stemming from the prevailing economic and social conditions, were eliminated, no significant progress could be achieved. A thorough reassessment of what could be done by the United Nations in crime prevention was needed.

13. Not enough attention had been given to the issues of juvenile delinquency, particularly the prevention of juvenile crime and the education and social reintegration of juvenile offenders. It had been Romania's experience that preventive measures and special efforts for social reintegration of offenders were the only long-term viable solutions in combating crime. The wide-scale amnesty programme for delinquents, implemented at the beginning of 1988, combined with special training and reintegration programmes for offenders, had proven quite successful.

(Mr. Galgau, Romania)

14. His country fully agreed with the views of Poland that the family, representing the basic social unit, should be strengthened. Families not only provided protection in times of economic stress to the most dependent members of the population but also possessed unforeseen capacities to adapt to new situations and challenges. Consequently, and in spite of the reservations expressed, his delegation supported the proclamation of an International Year of the Family. Such an event would highlight the importance of the family and provide the impetus for policies that would more effectively promote its well-being.

15. Mr. SHKUKA (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that one of the major results of International Youth Year had been greater international understanding of the problems and needs of youth. The follow-up activities to the Year undertaken by the organizations of the United Nations system and governmental and non-governmental organizations had helped many Governments, particularly in the developing countries, to develop their youth organizations and adopt measures for the complete integration of youth in the development process. The success achieved was still very limited, but the experience acquired gave grounds for optimism.

16. Neither youth nor any other sector of society in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya suffered from unemployment. It was, however, affected by the inhuman suffering of young people in countries where youth unemployment was a serious problem. Policies and programmes involving youth should not be restricted to ensuring such elementary rights as the right to work, but must be directed towards enabling young people to fulfil their aspirations by means of plans and programmes that were in accord with their inclinations and desires. In keeping with that goal, his country had revised its school curricula in order to take account of the individual abilities and potential of young people. In addition to instruction in the basic school subjects, they could now receive vocational training in order to facilitate the transition from school to working life.

17. One of the most important aspirations of youth was to live in dignity and peace. The international community should therefore take a particular interest in young people living under colonialist and racist régimes, who were often forced to become freedom fighters, thrown into prison and subjected to oppression and exploitation.

18. The International Year of Disabled Persons had been one of the most successful international years ever organized by the United Nations, which was a clear indication of the enormous interest taken by the world of today in disabled persons and their problems. In implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, his country had formed a national committee and entrusted it with the task of drafting guidelines, programmes and legislation relating to the welfare of the handicapped. A number of laws had been promulgated providing disabled persons with shelter, home help, prosthetic devices, education, exemption from income tax, the facilities necessary for them to use public transport, and exemption from customs duties on the items they needed to import. Many conferences, seminars and sporting events had been held, and rehabilitation centres had been built. His delegation would like to stress the importance of

(Mr. Shkuka, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

international technical co-operation in matters relating to disabled persons and, in that connection, to point out that the industrially advanced countries had a major responsibility to provide assistance to those developing countries most in need of the expertise at the disposal of the former.

19. His delegation would like to reaffirm the importance of the results achieved by the various United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders and of their role in strengthening international co-operation and stimulating international dialogue on crime. His country had had a long-standing interest in issues relating to the prevention of crime and had participated actively in the work of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control for a number of years.

20. In October 1988, his country had hosted an inter-Arab seminar on juvenile delinquency in the Arab world which had been attended by representatives of Arab States, research centres, universities, international institutions and organizations, and the United Nations. The seminar had studied Arab and international experience in the prevention of juvenile delinquency, international standards relating to juvenile delinquency and the extent to which they were appropriate for the Arab world, and the Tripoli plan for the administration of juvenile justice. The conclusions of the seminar would be communicated to interested international organizations.

21. Major developments had taken place in his country since March 1988 in the field of human rights. New concepts of crime and the treatment of offenders had been introduced, and his delegation hoped that those developments would have an impact at the international level.

22. Mr. Galal (Egypt) took the Chair.

23. Mrs. LABARIA (Philippines) said that she shared the view of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna that the current global economic crisis was as much a social crisis as an economic one. Therefore, social policy must become an effective component of development strategies. She reviewed the current social policies agreed upon by the international community, highlighting the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future for national, regional and interregional policy makers. The real value of those guiding principles would be demonstrated by their implementation at the national level and the United Nations must continue to support efforts to that end.

24. Her delegation welcomed the discussion on the family and its role in the development process. In her country, the family was considered as the foundation of the nation. That principle was institutionalized in the 1987 Constitution, which included provisions intended to strengthen the family's solidarity and promote its development, protect the institution of marriage and the rights of spouses and protect the rights of children. Her delegation heartily supported the proposal to proclaim an international year of the family.

(Mrs. Labaria, Philippines)

25. The results of the efforts and activities devoted to youth were encouraging. There was a growing global awareness of the needs and aspirations of young people and it was now widely accepted that youth participation should be considered as an integral component of the development process. Fully cognizant of the vital role played by Philippine youth, her country had adopted a policy aimed at the promotion and protection of the overall well-being of young people. In that connection, the medium-term plan for development, 1987-1992, emphasized, inter alia, the intensification of values education in the schools and the importance of equal access to education and training opportunities. To that end, her country had recently enacted legislation providing free secondary education in public schools beginning in 1988. Another important activity was the National Youth Convention, held from 14 to 16 October 1988, which had focused attention on the development of rural youth.

26. Elderly people constituted a highly important social element in the Philippines and had much experience and wisdom to offer. To implement the International Plan of Action on Aging, a national Plan of Action had been formulated in consultation with the elderly focusing on their specific needs, such as health and nutrition, economic self-sufficiency, group care and community involvement, and social and spiritual involvement.

27. The year 1988 was particularly significant because the General Assembly would decide on the recommendations of the Global Meeting of Experts held in August 1988 to review the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. Her delegation welcomed those recommendations and hoped that they would provide further momentum for the implementation of the Programme.

28. Her country had taken a number of steps to benefit disabled persons. The National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons had been created in 1987. Acting as a consultative and co-ordinating body for governmental and non-governmental organizations, the Council had been instrumental in, among other efforts, making schools and city streets accessible for disabled students. In addition, the Philippines annually observed a National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week. Her Government had also implemented a number of policies with a view to ensuring equality of employment opportunities for disabled persons, including soliciting voluntary participation of the private sector through the provision of tax incentives, conducting vocational rehabilitation and training programmes, particularly in rural areas, for disabled persons and enacting tax measures to support those programmes. It was strengthening its linkages with national non-governmental organizations by conducting regular dialogues in the country's 13 regions.

29. Mr. GOLEMANOV (Bulgaria) said that social problems often transcended national boundaries, and called for broad international co-operation. The groundwork for such co-operation should be laid by identifying priorities, establishing objectives for joint action and adequate planning. Effective international programmes should be co-ordinated with national and regional activities.

(Mr. Golemanov, Bulgaria)

30. Bulgaria supported the objectives and activities envisaged in the International Plan of Action on Aging and the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and had undertaken a number of steps at the national level designed to respond to existing needs and intensify efforts.

31. Bulgaria was also actively interested in United Nations-sponsored international activities in the field of crime prevention and control. The periodic United Nations congresses served a useful purpose; their work should be oriented towards consolidating and, wherever possible, expanding the areas of consensus on important issues of universal significance. Major documents adopted by the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders exemplified that trend; it was to be hoped that the Eighth Congress would build on the results already achieved. Bulgaria supported the offer of Cuba to host that important event.

32. The international Youth Year had furnished a useful opportunity to highlight the specific needs of youth, promote broad co-operation in assessing youth issues and encourage young people's participation in the solution of major national, regional and international issues. An appropriate organizational basis had been set up for further constructive activities in that direction. There was a close link between the activities undertaken by or for young people and the struggle for peace and international security. Young people were also active participants in the development process, but unless the critical social and economic problems of the world were resolved, it would be impossible to ensure the full and effective enjoyment by youth of their rights and freedoms. On the basis of those considerations, Bulgaria had introduced resolution 1987/44 of the Commission on Human Rights.

33. His delegation was encouraged by the report of the Secretary-General concerning the International Year of the Family (A/43/570) and hoped that further progress would be achieved in issues relating to the family and the development process. It supported the undertakings of the Commission on Social Development and the Economic and Social Council in that respect. The role of the Commission for Social Development should be strengthened by increasing the membership to reflect more adequately the diversity of the world, by scheduling its sessions so that they were adapted to the pace of work of the other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council in the social and humanitarian fields, and by giving greater emphasis to the interrelation of global social problems and the situation of the most vulnerable social groups. The Commission should seek to achieve practical results through consensus, and encourage positive change in the social sphere and serve as a sound basis for the broad exchange of experience in the field of social development. The principles and objectives of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development provided the basic guidelines for broad and successful co-operation in the social field.

34. Mr. KOTEX (Ghana) said that developing countries faced increasing economic difficulties, largely as a result of the inequitable world order. Structural adjustment programmes, giving priority to key economic sectors, had created serious hardships, especially for the rural population, women and children.

35. Since current demographic trends indicated a very rapid increase in aging populations in a number of countries, the issue of aging must be considered a priority theme and treated in a socio-economic context. The African continent was expected to experience one of the largest increases in the numbers of elderly persons of any world region.

36. In Ghana the extended family and the community in general still constituted the primary sources of care for the elderly. Economic reforms had had adverse social effects, however, because of changes associated with the replacement of agrarian societies by new industrial economies, the physical separation of generations through migration of the young to cities and urban areas the shifting trend from extended to nuclear family structures, especially in the urban areas and the increasing employment of women outside the home. Continuation of those trends might ultimately weaken the physical capacity of the family to care for the aged. His Government had therefore established a National Committee on Aging to consider the future problems of the aging population with a view to instituting programmes for their care. Ghana welcomed the establishment of the International Institute on Aging in Malta and hoped to co-operate fully with it.

37. His Government believed that economic and social development demanded the active participation of young people. It had established a national youth organizing commission under the Ministry of Youth and Sports to oversee the activities of youth groups with a view to encouraging youth involvement in economically viable activities and socially necessary ventures. In the agricultural sector, it had encouraged the creation of mobilization squads to organize unemployed youth for farming activities and assist with community development projects in an effort to curb the drift to urban centres. His Government had shifted the emphasis from correctional to promotional measures in dealing with delinquent youth, and introduced vocational training to help them re-enter society. It was also introducing settlement farms as an alternative to reform institutions for delinquent youth.

38. In Ghana, plans and programmes for the disabled focused on rehabilitation. Over the years a government committee on disabled persons had explored avenues for improving the lot of the disabled and making them more independent.

39. Although it was generally acknowledged that crime prevention was essential to social and economic development, it remained one of the areas most resistant to reform. In the developing world, efforts to deal with disruptive crimes such as economic crimes and the fraudulent use of public resources had yielded less than desirable results. Ghana welcomed the attempt by the international community to strengthen global and regional co-operation in the field of crime prevention and was pleased that the regional institutes so far established were active participants. It hoped that the necessary support and resources would be made

(Mr. Kotey, Ghana)

available to the newly created African Institute in Uganda to enable it to promote knowledge on effective methods of crime prevention in the African region and encourage joint action in the areas of common concern in Africa.

40. Ghana appreciated the efforts made by the United Nations Office at Vienna to organize all available human and financial resources for the support of policy makers in the social sphere as well as the co-operation of UNDP.

41. Mr. TURK (Israel) expressed his delegation's disappointment that some delegations had chosen to politicize the debate on the cluster of social items under discussion, which pertained to the most basic humanitarian values and should be discussed in a responsible and apolitical manner.

42. The aging of Israel's population had become a major focus of public attention. Numerous government commissions had been established and research undertaken to explore the implications of aging for the health and social services system. The population structure, which included a significant proportion of older immigrants, gave rise to varying concepts of responsibilities towards the elderly, combining modern and traditional values. The successful blending of highly developed welfare systems and strong kinship and family solidarity values provided a possible pattern for societies of the developing world.

43. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health had developed social policies aimed at minimizing the incentive for institutionalization and maximizing the incentive for direct family provision of care. A major aim of social policy was to enable the aged to remain gainfully employed, to continue as productive members of society, and, if necessary, to change careers late in life.

44. The kibbutz experience provided an example of the application of an enlightened employment policy with respect to older workers. The kibbutz was responsible for ensuring a place of employment to elderly members, who were entitled to be partners in the decision as to where they would be employed. After the age of 70, members were no longer compelled to work, although they had the right to do so. From the age of 55, members could gradually reduce their hours of work, and after the age of 65 were released from compulsory participation in some more strenuous duties. Studies of various kibbutzim had found that more than 90 per cent of members over the age of 65 were employed. The kibbutz environment, with its age-related job shifts, facilitated the commitment to continued employment and permitted a form of phased retirement.

45. He stressed his country's whole-hearted support for the International Plan of Action on Aging, to which Israel wished to contribute, in particular by sharing its experience in policy development with developing countries and assisting in their application.

46. Mrs. VERLEZZA (Venezuela) said that Venezuela attached considerable importance to the issues of social development and crime prevention. Referring to item 93, she said that her country was seriously concerned about the increase of crime and growing transnationalisation of crime throughout the world and fully supported all initiatives taken to respond energetically to the problem. The significant efforts made by the United Nations in that field as reported in document A/43/572 which included the co-ordination and follow-up of implementation of the Milan Plan of Action should be continued.

47. Venezuela fully supported the preparations for the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders, including the highly useful interregional preparatory meetings of experts. The Eighth Congress would be an ideal forum for laying firm foundations for the strengthening of international co-operation.

48. The need for an efficient, rational, and humane system of justice and for the integrated sectoral and inter-sectoral planning of crime prevention was increasingly important, and the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control played a significant role in that respect. Due attention should be paid to the present structure and management of the secretariat of the crime prevention programme, particularly in the light of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1986/11 and 1987/56 and General Assembly resolution 42/59.

49. Referring to item 107, she said that her country considered the family nucleus to be the basic unit of society and the intermediary between society and the individual, thus playing a crucial role in the development process through its ability to generate creative responses to economic and social crisis. Venezuela had established a Ministry of the Family to co-ordinate all family-related programmes and prevent fragmentation of the Government's social programmes. Its purpose was to establish a new approach to social management, and in doing so it had been guided by an extensive consultation involving specialists, government officials and interested members of the public.

50. Venezuela's policy was consistent with international action in that field, which it fully supported. In October 1988, Venezuela had organized, under the auspices of UNESCO, a meeting of Latin American and Caribbean countries on the family and development, including family policies, the aim of which had been to share the experience of Venezuela's unique Ministry of the Family, and to enrich that experience with that of other countries of the region in the field of family policies. Among its conclusions had been those concerning the definition of the family environment for the formulation of government policies, the legal framework for the protection and promotion of the family, and governmental and non-governmental strategies for action on behalf of the family. That type of meeting should be organized in all regions as a way of making the international community more aware of the importance of the family in the development process. The interest shown by the United Nations in the family, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General (A/43/570) was gratifying and should be taken further, in co-operation with non-governmental organizations.

51. Mr. TAHA (Sudan) said that the increasing numbers of disabled and elderly persons represented a new burden for the developing countries. The solution of their problems depended on the solution of the economic problem, which in turn depended on the presence of the necessary political will. Economic and social development must be accelerated, the new international economic order inaugurated and the necessary resources provided to the developing countries for the full implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.
52. Like other developing countries, the Sudan suffered from a number of internal difficulties, including the armed conflict in the South, famine, an influx of displaced persons and refugees, and natural catastrophes. While such difficulties affected all citizens, they inflicted particular suffering on the most disadvantaged groups such as the elderly, the disabled, women and children. It was those same groups that suffered most from the side-effects of structural adjustment policies.
53. There were in the Sudan about 2 million disabled persons. The high incidence of disability was due to endemic diseases and the diseases of malnutrition. The Government made great efforts for the welfare of the disabled and the prevention of disability by expanding its immunization programmes and programmes for mother and child care and occupational health. The strategy adopted by the Ministry of Social Welfare had the aim of developing the abilities of individuals so that they could participate in economic and social development. There was therefore growing interest in the rehabilitation and training of disabled persons.
54. His country was endeavouring to implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons through complementary official and popular action and was implementing projects aimed at bringing disabled persons into public life and providing them with a life of dignity. It had participated in many regional and international meetings on disability and endeavoured to profit from the experience of other countries in the welfare and rehabilitation of disabled persons.
55. Voluntary associations had played an important role in issues involving disabled persons, and his Government supported their efforts by making public buildings available and by providing import licences and exempting the importation of equipment for disabled persons from customs duties. Social work in the country was founded on a popular heritage of self-help and popular participation, since government endeavours alone would not suffice in view of the paucity of resources. The country's interest in self-help and popular participation had helped to attract voluntary assistance from abroad and to promote complementary interaction with it.
56. His delegation would like to stress the importance of United Nations system-wide co-ordination of policies and programmes in the field of aging and commended the draft outline of the system-wide approach to the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/43/583. It supported the establishment of an African society of gerontology and attached great importance to the information that the International Institute on Aging might be able to provide to

(Mr. Taha, Sudan)

the developing countries. Increased support should be provided to the United Nations Trust Fund for Aging in view of its vital role in promoting awareness of issues relating to aging and the assistance it provided to the developing countries.

57. The support of his country for the proclamation of an international year of the family stemmed from its awareness of a need to clarify family-related issues and its recognition of the vital role of the family in economic and social development.

58. There was a need to promote the participation of youth in development and to increase its participation in decision-making. In his country, youth participated actively in political, economic and social life. Within the trade union movement, young people had played a major role in bringing down the dictatorial régime in the uprising of April 1985. The Sudanese National Committee for International Youth Year was enthusiastically engaged in follow-up activities to the Year. The Sudan was anxious to reinforce the humanitarian values of young people and to make them fully aware of the dangers of war, racial discrimination and fanaticism.

59. The crimes committed against the people of the Sudan could not be forgiven, and the country continued to suffer from their consequences. His country was therefore particularly interested in crime prevention and criminal justice. The Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders had produced important results, and the efforts being made by the Secretary-General in preparation for the Eighth Congress were to be commended.

60. Mr. SOKALSKI (Director, Social Development Division), responding to questions raised by the representative of the Dominican Republic, said that the Aging Unit was part of the Social Groups Activities Branch which, in turn, formed part of the Social Development Division. Its staffing table comprised four Professional posts. Until 1985 and the recruitment freeze, the Unit had consisted of four staff members, plus one person on loan from the United Nations Population Fund. As a result of the recruitment freeze only two posts had been filled since spring 1988, although an exception had been made and a third staff member had been recruited and would be arriving shortly.

61. The main problem was the reduction of staff. Although the final decisions on the overall resources available to UNOV had not yet been made, it was known that the entire CSDHA would have to cut six Professional posts - one D-1, one P-5 and four P-4 posts, as well as replace one P-3 post by a P-2 post. Every effort was being made to apply the reductions evenly, with due regard for priority programmes. The Aging Unit would have to forgo at least one post. In that way, the number of its staff financed from the regular budget would be brought down to the present level of staff available to other comparable units - the Unit of Disabled Persons and the Youth Unit, both of which had suffered considerable staff cuts in recent years.

(Mr. Sokalski)

62. He was not aware of any serious proposal corroborating the reported rumour that the Aging Unit might be merged with another branch in CSDHA. The separate identity of the programme on aging had the fullest support of the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the Vienna Office. That should not be construed, however, as a denial of any future organisational changes in units dealing with social development. The reduction process, which was still under way, was particularly complicated in the case of UNOV, since it had a far thinner staffing base than other parts of the Secretariat. The new role conferred upon it in 1987 had not been accompanied by the transfer of the corresponding resources from Headquarters at New York. Unless resources additional to those now available under the regular budget were augmented, some restructuring might become unavoidable. He hoped, therefore, that extrabudgetary funds would be made available to the Aging Unit in order to obviate that eventuality.

63. Finally, in response to the query about the current balance of the Trust Fund for Aging, he said that the Fund's accounts were updated on an annual basis. At the end of 1987, the balance had been \$US 311,392. Funds disbursed as at 30 June 1988 amounted to \$US 134,000, leaving a current balance of some \$US 177,000.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.