



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 23rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MADAR (Somalia)

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

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

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

1. Miss AL-TURAIHI (Iraq), speaking on the items relating to youth, said that her Government's Youth Ministry was responsible for overseeing youth activities in her country, and that the National Union of Iraqi Students and Youth maintained broad contacts with youth organizations throughout the world. Her Government recognized the innovative role of young people in development and in the political, social and cultural life of the country. Iraq was educating its youth to create a new generation of young people who respected family values and were aware of their responsibilities, and among whom delinquency, alcoholism and violence were unknown. Drug use was non-existent in Iraq.

2. A National Committee for the International Youth Year had been established in 1983 to carry out the Year's objectives. Iraq had participated in a regional meeting in Baghdad in October 1983 under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Western Asia. The National Committee was devoting considerable attention to youth in rural areas and recognized the importance of discouraging migration to urban areas, and it was co-ordinating its activities with its counterparts in other Arab countries. Five regional sub-committees had been established within Iraq. The National Committee also focused, inter alia, on study and research and on the role of youth in land reclamation, road building and health extension services. Broad media coverage of activities relating to the Year was planned.

3. Her country was pursuing its programmes relating to the Year despite the war imposed on it by Iran. She drew attention in that regard to paragraph 73 of document A/39/262, which indicated that Iran had sent thousands of boys to the war, most of whom had been killed.

4. At the regional level, the National Youth Institute was to convene a seminar on issues relating to the International Youth Year, and a book fair featuring young Arab authors was planned.

5. While her delegation considered that the success of the Year would depend primarily on achievements at the national and regional levels in accordance with the social and economic requirements of each country, it supported the idea of devoting some of the meetings of the General Assembly at its fortieth session to the question of youth and agreed that young people should be included in the delegations of Member States.

(Miss Al-Turaihi, Iraq)

6. Young people earnestly desired to live in a world where peace and justice prevailed. However, the economic gap between the developed and the developing countries continued to increase owing to the economic recession, while huge sums were spent on nuclear arms. The super-Powers must demonstrate political will and permit those funds to be used to create a better world. Young people participated in many environmental groups opposed to nuclear armament, and they recognized that real peace was not possible without due justice for oppressed peoples.
7. Turning to the question of aging, she said that her country faced no difficulties in dealing with the problems of the elderly, who remained a very important factor in family life. Fragmentation of the family was not a problem in her country, whereas it was in highly industrialized States. The elderly were protected by legislation on social security and pensions, homes for the aged existed and the Ministry of Social Affairs provided various services for their benefit. All sectors of the population contributed to the well-being of the elderly.
8. Turning to the question of disabled persons, she said that her country was convinced that the disabled should be able fully to participate in the life of society and that their dignity should be respected. Iraqi legislation provided for financial assistance and health care for disabled persons unable to work, and her country had established a rehabilitation centre for the handicapped, special school curricula, and health centres for pregnant women. The Government financed many facilities for the disabled.
9. Mr. TROUVEROY (Belgium) stressed the importance of sustaining for years to come the momentum generated by the resolutions adopted with regard to the items under discussion. With regard to the International Youth Year, his country had taken a number of steps to comply with the relevant recommendations of the United Nations. Three committees on the Year had been established - one each for the Flemish-speaking, French-speaking and German-speaking communities - and representatives of the authorities as well as of youth organizations sat on those committees. The task of the committees was to propose activities, encourage broad participation by the public and private sectors, and organize the representation of and participation by the three communities in activities at the national and international levels. A Co-ordinating Committee brought the three communities together to share their views and also involved government departments - which were free to take action on their own as well - in activities pertaining to the Year. The International Youth Year provided an opportunity for the three Belgian communities fully to inform the public of the views of Belgian youth regarding their role in the economic, social, cultural and political life of the country.
10. National efforts should be the focus during the Year, and the theme of "Participation" should occupy a central role. His delegation believed that every individual should be able to take decisions on all matters relating to his own existence. Youth must therefore have the opportunity to define their position and participate fruitfully in society, and they should be encouraged to develop an approach to society's pressing problems and enabled to propose solutions to those

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(Mr. Trouveroy, Belgium)

problems. Accordingly, emphasis would be placed on education, on communal policies relating to youth and on improving the situation of working youth. Special attention would be paid to young immigrants, young disabled persons and young women.

11. In the belief that all segments of the population should be in a position to optimize their potential with a view to improving living conditions of society as a whole his country was striving to improve the situation of unemployed youth, who were more vulnerable to the international economic crisis than other population groups, and to improve living conditions in the developing countries - the objective being improved and more just North-South relations - by helping the developing countries to tackle their own problems. Because his country believed in peaceful coexistence and full respect for the rights of the individual, it envisaged organizing exchange programmes with youth of other countries on the subject of peace. The status of conscientious objectors might also be re-examined in conjunction with the observance of the International Youth Year.

12. Turning to the question of aging, he said that his delegation looked forward with interest to the first quadrennial evaluation, to be undertaken in 1985 by the Commission for Social Development, of the implementation of the International Programme of Action on Aging. His country had adopted national and local legislation on matters relating to the elderly and was continuing to develop a policy on aging based on the following principles: firstly, the elderly should be able to remain in their usual environment as long as possible; secondly, where that was not feasible, self-contained supervised housing facilities should be made available; and, lastly, additional rest homes with sufficient skilled personnel would be built to accommodate older persons requiring care.

13. Turning to the question of the disabled, he said that the national High Council on Disabled Persons had recommended that other national bodies and local organizations should implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. The many measures taken to that end focused on prevention, rapid provisional care, home care and independent living. The competent Belgian authorities had welcomed the launching of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. Moreover, his delegation had co-sponsored a resolution on human rights and disabled persons at the fortieth session of the Commission on Human Rights and it hoped that the rights of the disabled would be discussed in the appropriate United Nations bodies.

14. His delegation was disappointed at the late circulation of document A/39/191, which could not help but restrict the scope and efficacy of the recommendations to be made to the General Assembly. His delegation would have liked a fuller and more systematic discussion of the guidelines relating to the Decade. Although his delegation in principle opposed the proliferation of funds outside the regular budget, it felt that, given the importance of the subject, the Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons should be encouraged to pursue its activities within the resources already committed to it. Lastly, his delegation urged the Secretary-General to reallocate resources to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, particularly to the unit responsible for implementing the objectives of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons.

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15. Mr. TOYAD (Malaysia), referring to the item on the International Youth Year, said that young people, who constituted the majority in his country, played a vital role in nation-building. The Government had established the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in 1964 to formulate policy measures to enable youth to participate in and contribute to national development, and with that end in view, several programmes were being implemented. The Ministry attempted to generate a spirit of self-reliance in young people through the various youth organizations in the country, and although it provided them with assistance and guidance, they maintained their autonomous status.

16. In keeping with the spirit of the Year, his Government had established an International Youth Centre in Kuala Lumpur. The Centre provided youth-training facilities and would serve as the focal point for international youth organizations operating in his country. The Government was also upgrading its National Youth Training Centre at Petrak to train young people from friendly countries in youth work. His Government was confident that the participation of foreign youth would be beneficial to them and to their Malaysian counterparts. He reiterated his country's willingness to share its knowledge, experience and facilities with others.

17. While his delegation fully endorsed the guiding principles for the Year provided by General Assembly resolution 34/151, it believed that the primary focus should be on activities at the national and local levels, which should address the specific needs and aspirations of youth. Activities at the international and regional levels essentially should support those undertaken at the national and local levels.

18. Observance of the International Youth Year should not merely take the form of festivals, seminars and conferences, but should also seek to instil in youth an understanding of their rights and responsibilities and a feeling of self-reliance. Co-operation between Governments and non-governmental youth organizations was therefore indispensable. Lastly, he stressed that provision should be made for evaluation of all activities undertaken prior to and during the Year in order to ensure adequate follow up.

19. Mr. RAKOTOZAFY (Madagascar) said that the International Youth Year would contribute to greater public awareness of youth-related problems, and the various recommendations of the Advisory Committee would help many States to formulate suitable policies on youth's role in national development and the preservation of international peace.

20. Madagascar's youth policy was designed to combat alienation of young people and to bring about their social integration and their participation in national development and in the promotion of international co-operation and understanding. Considering, however, the current international situation of super-Power tension, human-rights violations and economic crisis, his Government feared that national and international efforts devoted to young people might prove unsuccessful, given that youth represented the social category which paid the heaviest price for that dangerous situation. Great importance therefore attached to the International Youth Year in increasing awareness of youth-related problems and promoting solidarity among young people. In that regard, his delegation supported the programme of activities recommended by the Advisory Committee.

(Mr. Rakotozafy, Madagascar)

21. The adoption of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons had marked a decisive shift in attitudes towards the disabled, who were now regarded as citizens in their own right and with a responsibility for national development. His Government's policy in that regard aimed to ensure full participation and equality. Preventive health measures included free vaccination against polio at urban health centres, broader health-education programmes for mothers and children, and primary health care.

22. Nevertheless, the Government's efforts were encountering serious difficulties, particularly because of the unavailability of reliable information about disabled persons and the inadequacy of rehabilitation centres. Multilateral assistance was being sought to renovate existing facilities and improve training methods. The specialized agencies should play a major role in that regard to ensure the implementation of the World Programme of Action.

23. Mr. DARWISH (Egypt), said that his country attached great importance to youth-related issues, since youth had a unique role to play in national development as future leaders and decision makers. At the same time, the escalation of the arms race and international tensions were just two of the problems that confronted young people today.

24. In the developing countries, youth should be involved in socio-economic development and should gradually be given greater political responsibility. In Egypt, that approach had been pursued successfully in tackling problems of illiteracy and over-population, and further progress was expected on the basis of long-term planning initiated by his Government and the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and the Supreme Council for Education.

25. His delegation favoured the convening of another session of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, but agreed that its mandate should not include the formulation of a long-term global plan of action. The developing countries did not have the same social and cultural background as the developed countries and their values and objectives, as well as their ways of solving problems, were different. He proposed that the Advisory Committee should consider the question of channels of communication, but as a separate matter from that of the follow-up to the Year.

26. His delegation welcomed the initiative of UNESCO in holding the World Congress on Youth in Barcelona in 1985, and hoped that the Congress would lead to a better understanding of and help to solve the problems confronting youth in the modern world.

27. He had no objection in principle to the idea of designating a number of plenary meetings at the fortieth session of the General Assembly as the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year, but doubted whether holding meetings at such a busy time would lead to a productive discussion and appraisal of youth-related problems. It would be preferable to hold regional meetings either at a different location, or after the fortieth session had ended.

(Mr. Darwish, Egypt)

28. It was ironical that the International Youth Year should be observed at a time when young people in various parts of the world were denied the right to celebrate or participate in the event, particularly in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories or in Namibia and South Africa. Closing schools and universities there had become a common practice. Urgent action was needed to remedy that situation.

29. Mr. WAKJIRA (Ethiopia) said his country believed that youth was a vital force behind efforts to bring about social and economic justice and prosperity. The dynamism of youth, however, needed to be channelled so that society could benefit from their creative ability and enthusiasm. Youth, in fact, had an obligation to society and should uphold the virtues of equality, justice and peace. The Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association had been established to mobilize the enormous resources of young men and women anxious to assist in national development. Since the revolution, young people had assisted in improving agriculture and building bridges, clinics and schools, and had been active in the nation-wide drive to combat illiteracy and in environmental programmes to control deforestation, desertification and drought.

30. On the international level, his delegation fully supported the International Youth Year because Ethiopia placed great faith in the positive role that youth could play for peace and development.

31. With regard to the problems of the disabled, Ethiopia was attempting to meet their needs through rehabilitation programmes instituted within the limited resources available. Those programmes were aimed at helping the disabled to engage in productive activities and thus enable them to become self-sufficient and overcome their psychological alienation.

32. Mrs. IDER (Mongolia) said that the International Youth Year was clear evidence of growing interest in the problems of youth and a recognition of their role and potential. It coincided with the fortieth anniversary of the victory over fascism, and that occasion should be used to enhance efforts to eliminate the threat of nuclear war. Given the extremely grave world situation resulting from the aggressive policy of imperialist circles, world peace had become the concern of all mankind, and young people in particular were destined to play an active role in its preservation.

33. Her Government had proposed for consideration by the General Assembly a new item entitled "Right of peoples to peace", and had submitted the draft declaration on the subject. The International Youth Year should be directed at averting the threat of war and achieving global security, and at supporting the struggle of young people in southern Africa, the occupied Arab territories and Central America against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid, and for their freedom and independence. It should also help to establish a new international economic order, improve the socio-economic situation of youth and secure their rights, particularly their right to education and work.

(Mrs. Ider, Mongolia)

34. Her delegation appreciated the contribution of the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations in preparing for the Year. One of the major events would be the XII World Festival of Youth and Students to be held in Moscow in 1985. She also supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, especially with regard to the designation of meetings during the fortieth session of the General Assembly as the United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year.

35. Mongolia was actively preparing to celebrate the Year. The national co-ordinating committee was taking comprehensive measures to improve cultural and educational work among youth and strengthen the material base of education. In August 1984, her country had hosted a regional meeting of representatives of youth organizations from Asia and Oceania to discuss important issues of peace and security.

36. Young people of Mongolia enjoyed full rights to develop their abilities and participate in society, and had become an important force in every sector of the economy and culture. They assisted in agricultural development through the Young Revolutionary League, and were well represented in parliament and local government.

37. Mr. MURUGU (Kenya) said that his country attached great importance to youth, and welcomed the designation of 1985 as International Youth Year. Its motto was very much in keeping with the development objectives of the Kenyan Government, which encouraged youth participation, for example in a large number of social and economic projects.

38. The national co-ordinating committee set up for the International Youth Year met regularly and drew its membership from representatives of various government ministries and voluntary youth organizations. Action programmes for the Year covered such areas as education and training, soil and water conservation and reforestation, youth exchanges, the promotion of patriotism and nationalism, a credit scheme for young people wishing to engage in business, and information and publicity about youth development programmes and activities.

39. Government policy was to make the education and training of young Kenyans more oriented to the needs of the country. For example, a new educational system and curriculum would be introduced from 1985 based on eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education and four years of university education. It would make education more practical and relevant by teaching such skills as farming, building and sewing. In addition, government-assisted village polytechnics would be increased to provide more vocational-training opportunities.

40. During the International Youth Year, national youth exchange programmes had been planned for young people from various regions of Kenya. The programmes were intended to foster peace and unity among youth by encouraging them to work together and think of themselves as Kenyans first and not as youths of particular regions or ethnic groups. Another programme designed for youth was a scheme to issue loans on attractive terms to village polytechnic graduates who chose to venture into business as individuals or in groups.

(Mr. Murugu, Kenya)

41. The funding of the International Youth Year programmes would be undertaken by various Kenyan ministries and organizations. For example, a sub-committee of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and other information-related organizations had been entrusted with publicizing the work of young people during 1985, and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology would provide the funds for the introduction of the new educational system.

42. The implementation and development of youth programmes would depend on the economic position of the Member States and on how youth participated in their development planning. If Governments could be convinced to make youth development one of their priorities in resource allocation, meaningful programmes could still be implemented during the International Youth Year, even with meager resources.

43. His delegation stressed the importance of the question of aging, in view of the fact that Kenya would probably have no less than 1.9 million aged persons within a decade. Efforts were being made in Kenya to encourage the younger generations, through the extended family system, to care for the aging. Government measures included increased grants-in-aid to homes for the aged and the provision of essential facilities such as health care, shelter, water and food. Plans were also being studied with a view to formulating a programme of action for the aged.

44. With regard to disabled persons, his Government had closely integrated the potential of disabled persons into all other developmental activities. The President of Kenya had been personally involved in leading the country's many programmes and initiatives to assist disabled persons; *inter alia*, he had called for the waiver of duties and sales taxes on imported and locally manufactured aids for disabled persons. It was the President's fervent wish that the programmes for the disabled launched in 1980 and 1981 would provide the main thrust of an ongoing programme to be continued throughout the Decade and beyond.

45. With regard to the prevention of disability, his Government was preparing to launch a programme for disabled persons on 10 November 1984, in collaboration with UNDP, WHO and UNICEF. His delegation expressed its sincere appreciation for the excellent co-operation and help rendered by those agencies in planning the programme.

46. Mr. GOMES (Guinea-Bissau) said that the active and decisive role played by youth in the long struggle leading to the independence of Guinea-Bissau in 1974 had convinced the leaders of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) of the need to create a youth organization to channel, organize and direct the young in the complex national reconstruction phase; that organization had been founded in 1974 under the name Amilcar Cabral African Youth (JAAC).

47. JAAC in its task of educating the young sought to develop in them a love of their country and a sense of militant participation in its social, economic and cultural development. Other goals of JAAC included teaching young people about the history of the Party, developing in them a sense of democracy and justice and making them true defenders of the revolutionary principles for which many of the finest sons of Guinea-Bissau had fought and died.

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(Mr. Gomes, Guinea-Bissau)

48. Guinea-Bissau had supported the General Assembly decision to proclaim 1985 as the International Youth Year because that decision had shown the international community's concern for youth, who accounted for 30 per cent of the world's population. His Government had set up a national committee to co-ordinate International Youth Year activities which had prepared a programme of action including numerous provisions concerning the responsible participation of youth in realizing the country's economic, social and cultural objectives.

49. On the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and the celebration of the International Youth Year, one's thoughts turned to the young people who were still suffering under racism and apartheid in South Africa; to those in Western Sahara, Namibia and East Timor who were struggling against oppressors to regain their dignity; to the young Palestinians who were fighting heroically to recover their lands, and to all young people who were suffering from hunger, poverty and ignorance. He called upon the international community to take urgent and appropriate steps to alleviate the suffering of those millions of young people so that they, along with their contemporaries throughout the world, could participate in the quest for peace.

50. Mr. CAMARA (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that FAO's activities relating to young people were mainly centred on rural areas. Their major objective was to mobilize the greatest possible number of young people and involve them actively in agricultural and rural development. Among other activities of particular interest in connection with the International Youth Year were the preparation of a working manual for youth of developing countries and of a publication on training for agricultural and rural development, and measures to emphasize the importance of youth in the context of World Food Day in 1985; other efforts included a series of studies on rural youth in several countries and a consultation of experts on rural youth to be held from 26 February to 1 March 1985 in Rome. Each developing country had also been requested to appoint an individual to be responsible for planning rural youth activities, and FAO was currently establishing a communications network to promote the exchange of ideas in that field.

51. With regard to the question of aging, particular attention was being paid to aged persons by the FAO office responsible for activities relating to women in agricultural production and rural development, particularly in the areas of research, training, energy and appropriate technologies. Experiments and studies were being carried out in several developing countries with a view to reducing the time and energy required, particularly for the elderly, to carry out certain activities, such as gathering firewood and hauling water. Reforestation projects had been introduced or intensified in several countries and access to water had been facilitated by the digging of wells, some of which had been equipped with pumps. Intermediate technologies relating to the food industry and special training programmes in improved agricultural techniques for rural women, including the aged, had also been developed.

52. The trend towards urbanization, which had left many aged persons behind in the rural areas, with few family members to help them and with a lack of medical

(Mr. Camara, FAO)

assistance and public transport, was another reason why more attention should be paid to the problems of the rural aged. FAO was also giving increasing attention to the problems of the handicapped in rural areas, including the gathering of better statistical data on the incidence and causes of disablement, particularly of the aged.

53. Lastly, he invited Governments to reply to the questionnaire concerning the review and assessment of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging. The replies could help FAO to gain insight into how it could more effectively integrate the problems of the aged into its rural programmes and projects in developing countries.

54. Mrs. BARGHOUTI (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization) said that the subject of youth was considered by the Palestinian people and their representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to be of immense importance and strategic value. Youth accounted for a very high percentage of the Palestinian people in comparison to other countries of the world. It was the younger generation and the elderly who suffered the most from the continuous displacement of the Palestinian people as a result of the wars waged by Israel, and the hardships inflicted on young people had increased generously during the years of Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israeli practices and policies against the Palestinian people, particularly against youth, had been reported by the United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories and by other bodies, such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

55. With the co-operation of the World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations, youth activities had been carried out in 38 refugee camps. In the Israeli-occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip, six centres had been closed by the Israeli occupation authorities. She drew attention in that connection to the recent letter from the PLO to the Secretary-General (A/39/548-S/16766) transmitting an appeal from the Palestinian youth imprisoned in the central prison of Nablus to the international community concerning the inhuman conditions and physical abuse to which they were being subjected.

56. The practice and policies directed against Palestinian youth were accompanied by an equally racist economic policy aimed at increasing the suffering of Palestinians living in the Israeli-occupied territories. The exploitation and abuses by the Israeli Government and enterprises of the Palestinian labour force and, in particular, of minors, had been discussed and reported by several international bodies. The situation of Palestinian workers from the Israeli-occupied territories employed in Israel was also rapidly deteriorating. As the most recent report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization had suggested, there should be a reassessment of the efficacy of the action taken thus far to combat the illegal employment of young Arabs from the occupied territories.

57. Mr. NEMADZIVHANANI (Observer, Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC)) said that for PAC the question of youth would remain an issue of central importance. The youth of Azania continued to make giant strides towards the establishment of a just and free Azania in which men and women would not be judged by the colour of their skin. In 1949 African youth, challenging the position of the liberation movement of the day, had given the Azanian people purpose and direction by adopting unanimously a nation-building programme popularly known as the Bloemfontein Programme of Action. It was that programme that had restored the pride of the African people, who owed no apologies for being black and who recognized themselves as a nation by virtue of having a national territory and being indigenous to the soil. The purpose of the Azanian struggle was not reforms and the attainment of civil rights but the repossession of the motherland.

58. Azanian youth maintained that the removal of racial discrimination alone would fall short of reversing a situation in which 25 million people had been allocated less than 13 per cent of the total land space, while more than 87 per cent of the most productive and mineral-rich land was reserved for 4.5 million whites. Youth in Azania today remained opposed to the bantustan policy whereby the lives of blacks in Azania were deliberately rendered unstable by forced removals into arid and unproductive land so that they could provide much-needed black migrant labour. It was a policy that reduced black people to the status of beggars in the midst of so much wealth in racist South Africa.

59. It was because of the vanguard role played by youth in the 1950s that the unproductive non-violent methods favoured earlier had been abandoned by the people in 1960. After the infamous Sharpeville Massacre of 1960, African youth had transformed the struggle for freedom by going back to the concept of armed struggle waged by their forefathers before 1906. As a result of the campaign against inferior education mounted by the youth of Azania in 1976, the year of the Soweto uprising, the South African régime was using its army, police and repressive and discriminatory legislature to intimidate and harass the children of Soweto, whom it branded as radicals, non-conformists and communists.

60. PAC urged the Committee and the international community to support the efforts of Azanian youth to build a type of education for the Azania of the future which would be based on cultural harmony and understanding, human dignity and mutual respect. The question was, what could the international community do to improve the position of Azanian youth? The international community and Governments throughout the world should isolate South Africa economically, culturally, diplomatically and in the field of sport. History taught that there was no struggle without casualties, and it was therefore to be expected that the racist régime of South Africa, like all reactionary régimes in human history, would intensify its campaign of terror and repression. Azanian youth would therefore be forced to leave the country and flood neighbouring States and the camps of the national liberation movements. It was the responsibility of liberation movements to provide shelter, basic health care, food and education to this displaced and exiled youth, and to instill in them a sense of pride, direction and meaning.

(Mr. Nemadzivhanani)

61. In conclusion, he wished to bring to the attention of the Committee the plight of the PAC Six, the longest-serving political prisoners on Robben Island. They were now in their twenty-first year there, and all but one had been teen-agers when they had been condemned to that infamous prison. The call for their release should be intensified, and it was the collective responsibility of the international community to ensure that more young people did not follow them there.

62. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded the general debate on agenda items 85, 89, 90 and 91.

AGENDA ITEM 92: INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/39/511 and A/39/568; A/C.3/39/6)

AGENDA ITEM 93: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE (A/39/185)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/39/58 and A/39/566)

(b) PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO REVIEW AND APPRAISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN (A/C.3/39/7)

(c) VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/39/146 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/39/569 and Add.1 and A/39/571)

AGENDA ITEM 94: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (A/39/590)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (A/39/45, vols. I and II)

(b) STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/39/486)

63. Mrs. SHAHANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs), introducing items 93 and 94, said that the preparations for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women were well under way. Two regional meetings had been held during the current year, at Tokyo, Japan, in March and at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, in October. Two more regional meetings would be held before the end of the year, at Havana, Cuba, in November and at Baghdad, Iraq, in December. In addition, the regional seminar for the ECE region had recently been concluded at Vienna on 19 October. It was clear that while those regional meetings had reflected the specific priorities and needs of women in the regions concerned, they had also identified common problems of inequality, discrimination and marginalization, obstacles which women the world over experienced because of the mere fact that they were women. In the developing countries, women remained the poorest of the poor.

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(Mrs. Shahani)

64. Another important meeting that had taken place was the Interregional Seminar on Women in Rural Areas held at Vienna in September. The report of that seminar would be a background document for the World Conference. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council only had the day before concluded a pre-conference consultation at Vienna. That consultation would be most helpful in forging links between what would be called Forum '85 and the governmental World Conference. Forum '85 was scheduled to be held at Nairobi from 8 to 17 July 1985 with a three-day overlap with the governmental Conference.

65. At the national level, 130 Member States had responded to the questionnaire sent out by the Secretary-General on review and appraisal of obstacles encountered and progress achieved during the Decade. That was a record response as far as United Nations questionnaires were concerned and was most encouraging. Replying to the questionnaire would give Governments an opportunity to assess more accurately the real situation of women in their countries and would assist them considerably in preparing their positions for the World Conference. She also wished to suggest that widespread publicity be given to those replies at the national level by Governments themselves in order to alert policy-makers and to raise women's awareness, particularly at the grass-roots level, of their rights and responsibilities.

66. As the end of the Decade approached, the world was faced with a global economic situation in which overall growth would be substantially lower than that of the 1960s and early 1970s. The food crisis, the population crisis, the debt crisis and flagrant violation of human rights were signs of the future which threatened all. However, with the will to overcome those problems and the requisite political leadership, the outlook for the future could be made brighter, and that was where women had an emerging and crucial role to play. In 1984, there was no doubt that women the world over, within the context of their respective cultures, were more aware of their rightful place in society than they had been when the Mexico City Conference had taken place in 1975. The increased awareness of that role was fortified by the existence of a spirit of sisterhood among women throughout the world, within their own cultural traditions and beyond them. In that connection, women had still to make a much-needed contribution to the North-South and East-West dialogues, as well as to South-South co-operation.

67. While the Secretariat would facilitate and co-ordinate the work of the World Conference, it was Member States that would make the major decisions and determine the extent of the Conference's success. There was therefore a need for regular dialogue and exchanges of views among Member States, including those with different political positions, before the Conference took place. The concerns of women throughout the world reflected the concerns of their respective countries, and the Conference would inevitably mirror those concerns. There was a need in a global conference of that kind to find a common basis on which to develop further the women's programme at the national, regional and international levels beyond 1985 to the year 2000.

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68. Mrs. PASTIZZI-FERENCIC (Director, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)) said that the statute of INSTRAW would provide a firm legal and organizational framework for an autonomous international institution that would undertake research and establish training programmes for the advancement of women. The Fifth Committee had considered the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the INSTRAW statute (A/39/568) and had decided that the statute should be endorsed by the General Assembly. It was to be hoped that the Third Committee would also support a sound statutory basis for the future functioning of the Institute.

69. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 36/128, the majority of the work programmes of INSTRAW were carried out in co-operation with other United Nations bodies and agencies. Under its statute, INSTRAW would operate through a network of co-operative arrangements with institutions at the international, regional and national levels. That network would ensure a constant inflow and feedback of information on current and future research and training activities. The statute also provided that INSTRAW would be entirely financed by voluntary contributions from Member States and other possible sources to the special United Nations Trust Fund for the Institute. Although that arrangement imposed certain financial constraints on the Institute, they should be regarded as a challenge to devise effective means of co-operating with United Nations bodies and other organizations and thus minimizing the cost of joint programmes. She expressed her thanks to the 46 Member States which had already made contributions and urged the others to do so in order to enable the Institute to plan its future development on a long-term basis.

70. Since the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the staff and officers of INSTRAW had moved to its permanent headquarters in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Thanks to support received from the United Nations Secretariat and from the host country, it had been possible to make the transition without any interruption of its operations. A very successful international competition had also been held to find a suitable emblem for the Institute, the first and second prizes being awarded to artists from Kenya and Suriname.

71. The Institute, through its past and current work programmes, was contributing to a better understanding of the role of women in development. A large body of knowledge existed on the complex issue of women and development and on the economic significance of the role of women as part of the labour force and in their reproductive and household functions. Efforts made to assist women in the past, frequently through welfare or income-generating programmes and projects, had focused attention on the need to develop special methods to compensate for the disadvantaged position of women but had also often tended to isolate them from the mainstream of development activities. However, as stated in the report of the mid-Decade Conference held at Copenhagen, no measures for women which were isolated from the major priorities, strategies and sectors of development could result in any substantial progress towards the goals of the Decade. The basic orientation of the Institute was therefore not to advocate the creation of a separate body of knowledge about women but rather to view women in the context of an overall development trend. What was required was a systems approach to development, which would value the contribution of women as an important asset and an integral part of international and national development strategies.

(Mrs. Pastizzi-Ferencic)

72. The current crisis in the world economy called for changes and improvements in the existing relations among countries and within countries. INSTRAW was trying to contribute to those efforts by examining the interrelationship between international approaches to development and national policies as they affected women's role in society. A series of research studies had been completed in that area, and the findings had been reviewed at a consultative meeting held in September 1984 at Santo Domingo. That research would be consolidated in a final report on women and international co-operation, which could contribute to the ongoing debate on development and international economic co-operation and to the search for integrated development for the benefit of both men and women.

73. Basing its programme on a policy of individual and collective self-reliance, INSTRAW had prepared a number of studies on the principles of self-reliance and the development of the role and status of women in developing countries. It had always attached great importance to improving indicators, basic statistics and data on women in order to identify women's needs and quantify their contribution to development. Such information, which would support the documentation prepared for the Nairobi Conference, would in the long run serve as a basis for planning and programming with a view to making qualitative changes in women's participation in development. The Institute was also active in such development fields as water supply and sanitation, industry, agriculture and energy. Its training policy included a variety of approaches ranging from conventional to participatory training and focused on innovative training strategies, the stimulation of grass-roots participation and the training of trainers. The aim of the Institute was to establish firm and lasting links between women and development processes at all levels.

74. Mrs. de ALVAREZ (Dominican Republic) said that it was deeply gratifying for her country, a developing country, to be host to INSTRAW, an organization which would be working for the development of all countries by promoting the systematic development of an occasionally forgotten and undervalued but indispensable potential resource, namely, women. Her country's support, however, was of necessity minimal; all countries would have to share the commitment to the achievement of integral development.

75. It was fortunate that the United Nations had had the vision to establish an organization to identify the most urgent priorities of development in terms of women, and translate them, through a network of focal points, into action-oriented programmes. Her country could bear witness to the catalytic role played by INSTRAW in the areas of research, training and public information. It might be said that other organizations promoting the integration of women in the development process carried out similar programmes, but there was a fundamental difference between them and INSTRAW, which was that the latter had the advantage of being able to channel its programmes through the decision-making sector in each State Member of the United Nations, a factor which would contribute greatly to the success of the Institute's programmes. The efforts of the Institute to help women fulfil their potential would ultimately serve the interests of each Member State. It was therefore important for each country to make its contribution, however modest, to INSTRAW's work.

(Mrs. de Alvarez, Dominican Republic)

76. Of particular interest was the Institute's work on women in international economic relations, especially the analysis of the relationship between macro-economic and micro-economic factors and their impact on the role and status of women. INSTRAW also played a valuable role in obtaining new information on the current status of women and the role that they should play in the development process at all levels. The Institute was making efforts to support all sectors working for women not only locally but also internationally in such important areas as rural development, drinking water and environmental sanitation, industrialization and energy.

77. If the States Members of the United Nations were sincerely committed to the development of their peoples and institutions, they would also have to be genuinely committed to women. If they remained indifferent to the projects which promoted the status of women, they would be encouraging greater inequality in the world and imposing increasingly heavy burdens on the current and future generations of young people.

The meeting adjourned at 6.40 p.m.