

UNITED NATIONS  
**General Assembly**

FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

*Official Records*

THIRD COMMITTEE  
20th meeting  
held on  
Thursday, 26 October 1989  
at 3 p.m.  
New York

---

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KABORE (Burkina Faso)

CONTENTS

- AGENDA ITEM 90: WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 91: TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION OF THE DECLARATION ON SOCIAL PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 92: NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ACHIEVING FAR-REACHING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 93: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES INVOLVING YOUTH (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 97: INTERREGIONAL CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 99: QUESTION OF AGING (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 101: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 102: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 113: FAMILIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (continued)

---

This record is subject to correction.  
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned  
within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750,  
2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.3/44/SR.20  
1 November 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

89-56630 1760S (E)

/...

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

AGENDA ITEM 90: WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION (continued) (E/CN.5/1989/2 and ST/ESA/213)

AGENDA ITEM 91: TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION OF THE DECLARATION ON SOCIAL PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/44/116-E/1989/15 and Corr.1 and A/44/116-E/1989/15/Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 92: NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ACHIEVING FAR-REACHING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS (continued) (A/44/79-E/1989/8, A/44/86-E/1989/14, A/44/448 and A/44/499)

AGENDA ITEM 93: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES INVOLVING YOUTH (continued) (A/44/387)

AGENDA ITEM 97: INTERREGIONAL CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES (continued) (A/44/206-E/1989/69 and Corr.1 and A/44/206-E/1989/69/Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 99: QUESTION OF AGING (continued) (A/44/3, A/44/420 and A/44/420/Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 101: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS (continued) (A/44/406 and A/44/406/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 102: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/44/400)

AGENDA ITEM 113: FAMILIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (continued) (A/44/407)

1. Miss ZEB (Pakistan) said that 20 years after the adoption of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, it was time to take stock of achievements and failures. Sadly, despite the wide-ranging scope and noble objectives of the Declaration, the improvement in social conditions had slowed down or been reversed in the 1980s in a large number of countries, particularly in Africa and Latin America, and the number of people living in extreme poverty had increased. Average income in Africa was 40 per cent lower than it had been at the beginning of the last Development Decade and was now reduced to the level reached in the early 1970s. Economic decline and structural adjustment had placed an intolerable social burden on many of the developing countries. An integrated approach was needed to the serious social and economic challenges of today and it was essential to make sure that the International Development Strategy for the coming Fourth United Nations Development Decade dealt adequately with social as well as economic matters. While commending the Secretariat on the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation, her delegation found it lacking in concrete recommendations for improving the world social situation.

2. Her delegation had studied with interest the reports on national experience in promoting the co-operative movement (A/44/79) and national experience in achieving far-reaching social and economic changes for the purpose of social progress

/...

(Miss Zeb, Pakistan)

(A/44/86). Pakistan attached great importance to social development and the Government had launched the People's Programme, a wide-ranging, multi-dimensional development programme covering all spheres of national life.

3. Recognizing the importance of youth in society, as the nucleus of social, economic and political change, the Prime Minister had established a Ministry for Youth Affairs and a National Youth Policy to ensure that young people were adequately prepared for the twenty-first century. Her delegation had noted the Secretary-General's Report on Policies and Programmes Involving Youth (A/44/387) and supported the recommendations contained in it.

4. Pakistan welcomed the progress made in implementing the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons but felt that more could be done in translating the objectives of the Programme of Action into reality. Integrating disabled persons into social, economic, political and cultural life was as important today as it had been when the Programme was adopted. The determination of disabled persons to be productive members of society must be recognized and supported. Her delegation was distressed to learn that approximately 80 per cent of the world's disabled population lived in developing areas and about 60 per cent of their disabling conditions could have been avoided by effective, low-cost measures such as immunization, advice or health information programmes. It was essential for the situation to be given immediate attention, with adequate resources.

5. Her Government continued to give high priority to the problem of disabled persons. The contents of the World Programme of Action had been integrated in the National Plan of Action to Meet the Needs of the Disabled in Pakistan, under which a National Trust Fund for the Disabled had been established and the period 1982-1991 had been declared the Decade for Disabled Persons in Pakistan.

6. International, national and regional action concerning the aging in recent years had been encouraging. Her delegation supported the recommendations of the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the international Plan of Action on Aging (E/1989/13) and continued to implement the recommendations contained in the Plan of Action. A National Committee on Aging had been formed and had prepared a National Plan of Action which the Government was implementing in collaboration with non-governmental officials.

7. With regard to agenda item 102, Pakistan was in favour of increased international co-operation on crime prevention and control. Social and economic inequities were often the underlying cause or a contributory factor in crime; developing countries should therefore be helped with their economic and social development programmes and also in improving their national machinery for crime prevention and control. Their special requirements should be borne in mind in formulating standards of criminal justice.

/...

8. Mrs. SYAHRUDDIN (Indonesia) said that, despite the drastic changes that had taken place in the twenty years since its adoption, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development was still valid and would serve to guide the world into the next century.
9. In connection with agenda item 92, her delegation noted with satisfaction the conclusions and recommendations in chapter VII of the report of the Secretary-General on national experience in promoting the co-operative movement (A/44/79). Indonesia was promoting the growth of co-operatives into major vehicles for developing economic activities so that they could be used to enhance the situation of the economically weaker sector of society.
10. On the question of aging, her delegation took note of the report of the Secretary-General in document A/44/420 and Add.1 and the suggestions in paragraph 7 for additional measures to further implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging. Indonesia followed the traditional way of caring for - and learning from - its older members in the family and the community and although the population was relatively young, senior citizens had always been accorded respect and understanding.
11. It must be recognized, however, that an aging society called for adjustments in social welfare policy which would have profound consequences on health, law and manpower. In an interdependent world, such changes would be widespread and would require international attention.
12. With reference to the report in document A/44/406/Rev.1, it was discouraging to read that the expectations of the Decade of Disabled Persons were not being met and that the Decade might end without accomplishing its purpose. Her delegation noted in paragraph 66 of the report that guidelines were being developed for the establishment and strengthening of organizations of disabled persons; and in paragraph 6 that a project document was in preparation, including suggestions for training programmes to assist non-governmental organizations. Her delegation welcomed the plan referred to in paragraph 13 to improve employment opportunities for disabled persons in the United Nations.
13. Her delegation welcomed the progress made in preparing for the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The theme of the Congress was particularly relevant in view of the increasingly transnational character of crime and the vast resources acquired by criminal enterprises.
14. Mr. OSMAN (Brunei Darussalam) said that the report on policies and programmes involving youth (A/44/387) had identified a number of major problems affecting youth, among them the continuous growth of the youth population, the lack of adequate policies in countries with high population growth, the high rate of drug abuse and the increasing number of AIDS carriers in the youth population.
15. On the problem of drug abuse, his delegation supported the suggestion in the report that greater emphasis should be placed on education, rehabilitation,

(Mr. Osman, Brunei Darussalam)

interdiction and law enforcement. His delegation agreed that emphasis should be placed on curbing the effects of AIDS through the promotion of health and moral education for youth.

16. His country would continue to give full support to efforts and measures aimed at benefiting youth, so that their energies could be used for nation-building. Mutual understanding and respect could help to promote peace and stability among nations and his Government was organizing and carrying out activities and programmes aimed at promoting friendship and understanding among young people in Brunei Darussalam as well as between its young people and those of other nations. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, the Government agency responsible for all youth programmes, provided a wide range of facilities, services and grants for students and young people and its youth training programme included projects aimed at promoting technical development and development of leadership potential. Education and medical and health services were provided free of charge for all citizens.

17. Mr. ALRAWAS (Oman) said that, in his country, youth represented the cornerstone of all development projects and young people were given every opportunity to develop their abilities and talents in the service of society. Over the past 19 years, enormous efforts had been made for the cultural and social enrichment of young people by means of a network of youth clubs and youth centres, in addition to free education at all levels. Young people had been encouraged to assume their responsibilities towards society through local community development projects carried out by the youth clubs. In order to encourage sports among young people, a sports complex had been built with facilities that met Olympic standards.

18. In keeping with the country's nautical heritage, the youth sailing vessel Shabab Oman had made one of its longest voyages ever, to ports in India and China. In 1986, it had participated in the review of sailing ships in New York and, in July 1989, had visited the port of Rouen in order to participate in the celebrations marking the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution.

19. For the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981, a national committee had been established in Oman to oversee the care and rehabilitation of disabled persons and promote their self-reliance and participation in the development of the country. The progress made since 1983 in attaining the main goals of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons had been slow and frustrating at all levels. The mid-Decade review in 1987 had clearly indicated that only limited progress had been made throughout the world, especially in the developing countries. Without regional and international co-ordination and co-operation in implementing the World Programme of Action, the Decade would come to an end without having accomplished its purpose.

20. Oman was making every effort for the care and rehabilitation of disabled persons and their integration in society through training and guidance programmes, and it was promoting public education in preventive measures. A comprehensive survey of disabled persons was to be carried out in co-ordination with the

(Mr. Alrawas, Oman)

Voluntary Fund for the Decade. Employment opportunities were provided to disabled persons, whether skilled or unskilled, and special individual services were provided to a number of those not enrolled in vocational training programmes. Disabled persons were encouraged to take part in cultural, social and sporting activities such as scout camps and the special Olympics. Social security was extended to disabled persons who were unable to work and had been unable to learn a trade or profession.

21. Ms. ARUNGU-OLENDE (Kenya) said that social progress did not necessarily follow economic progress and that, without proper planning, very fast economic progress could have negative social implications. The best approach was to give economic and social progress equal attention.

22. Despite adverse developments during the 1980s, socio-economic progress had been made that needed to be sustained and promoted by the Member States. Developing countries would be helped in their efforts if funds diverted away from military activities were used for such purposes as writing off bilateral public debts, reducing interest rates, rescheduling debts owed to multilateral agencies and increasing the net inflow of resources.

23. Although its resources were limited, Kenya was attempting to provide uniform public services and benefits throughout the country as recommended in the 1989 Report on the World Social Situation (ST/ESA/213), through its district-focus approach to development. In that connection, it wished to reiterate its belief that the Report should be widely distributed to Governments, non-governmental organizations, schools and institutions of learning, particularly in developing countries. Also, with respect to the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, it wished to express the hope that the United Nations Office at Vienna would incorporate into that strategy the main goals of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, which had not been universally realized.

24. The Government of Kenya was attempting to create rural development options that would stem the mass migration of the most able-bodied - the majority of whom were young people - from rural areas to urban centres, where gainful employment had become hard to find. In a related effort, it had introduced skills training in schools at an early stage in order to encourage young people to get into income generating self-employment in the informal sectors as an alternative means of employment. Over 30 per cent of Kenya's national budget was spent on youth programmes of an educational nature.

25. Kenya was very much aware that the ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons lay with the Governments. In 1989 it had held its second marathon fund raising drive for disabled persons, during which approximately \$US 3.5 million had been collected. The Government of Kenya was committed to the development of preventive, educative and rehabilitative services at home and believed in the total integration of the disabled into society. At the international level, Kenya considered it

(Ms. Arungu-Olende, Kenya)

important to organize a final conference on the Decade, subsequent to each country's evaluation of its own implementation of the World Programme of Action.

26. For the most part, the elderly were still the responsibility of the family in Kenya. However, in cases in which there was no family or support from a family, care was provided through co-operation between the Government and voluntary organizations, especially religious organizations.

27. Bearing all of the foregoing in mind, Kenya hoped that the International Family Year would pay particular attention to the difficulties faced by families caring for the disabled and the elderly.

28. Mr. HON (Observer for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his country placed education ahead of all other work and enforced universal 11-year compulsory education. Conditions had been created in which young people could participate freely in political, economic, social and cultural life and could enjoy the rights to education, employment, food, housing and health. In July the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had hosted the eight-day Thirteenth International Youth and Students Festival, the largest ever in the history of that festival. It wished to thank the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs for its leadership role in youth issues, especially with regard to global efforts to achieve the objectives of the International Youth Year.

29. Mr. RALEBITSO (Lesotho) said that Lesotho had established a Department of Youth and Women's Affairs, which had introduced a comprehensive programme for integrating young people into the socio-economic development of the country. The programme provided skills training, encouraged participation in constructive recreational activities, and promoted economic entrepreneurship and stable family life. Owing to the considerable resources required to achieve the objectives of involving young people in development, the United Nations agencies should give favourable consideration to requests for increased funding for youth projects. In that regard, Lesotho welcomed the decision of the Commission for Social Development to consider the integration of young people into society as a priority subject at its 1991 session.

30. Since the declaration of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons in 1983, Lesotho had sent disabled individuals to training courses, workshops and leadership seminars in order to encourage the formation of associations of disabled persons. Those efforts had resulted in the establishment of several organizations of the disabled which, with the assistance of various international organizations, had set up a vocational rehabilitation centre and a co-ordination office for the visually impaired, both administered by disabled persons. In addition, Lesotho had initiated a revolving loan fund to enable the disabled to establish self-help projects and had taken steps to institute income-generating programmes. It urged Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to work together in implementing the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons.

(Mr. Ralebitso, Lesotho)

31. Services were urgently needed to ensure the welfare of the elderly. He wished to point out, however, that in his country the elderly were cared for by their families or within the extended family, so that there was no need for homes for the aged.

32. Mr. ALFARO-PINEDA (El Salvador) said that the problems facing youth, particularly in developing countries, were linked to the economic and social turmoil in the world. The increased number of young people, limited financial resources and the lack of suitable youth policies in national development programmes had given rise to an alarming situation. In that connection, he noted with satisfaction the efforts by the international community and United Nations bodies, particularly the United Nations Office at Vienna/Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, to achieve the objectives of the International Youth Year. It was also encouraging to see that the international community had understood the need for joint action by all Governments to tackle serious social problems. Efforts must be made at the international, national and regional level to mobilize more resources for that purpose.

33. Participation by young people in building the future of El Salvador had increased to an unprecedented level. In spite of the many obstacles to such participation, including the war in that country, the political awareness of young people was rooted in a commitment to work for the good of the entire nation. His Government promoted the involvement of young people in the decision-making process in order to find solutions to existing problems and establish a system based on equal opportunity, respect for human rights and stable living conditions with guaranteed freedom for all.

34. El Salvador sought to initiate a general exchange with all organizations and countries that wished to co-operate in its development effort. His Government had set up organizations and launched campaigns to combat drug abuse and trafficking. It was determined to promote respect for human rights and the true realization of the right of peoples to self-determination.

35. Mr. KOTEY (Ghana) said that, although not all of the objectives of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development had been achieved in the past two decades, much had been done to focus international attention on and deal with social issues. The 1989 Report on the World Social Situation (ST/ESA/213) was a useful tool for evaluating progress in social development, and preparing an international development strategy for the 1990s. The situation in Africa was a matter of serious concern to the international community. Per-capita output and average living standards had seriously declined. The unfavourable economic situation had given rise to very serious social problems. Social hardships had been imposed on developing countries through a conscious policy of maintaining economic inequalities. Until that situation changed, developing countries would continue to require maximum support and co-operation from the international community in order to carry out their social programmes.

(Mr. Kotey, Ghana)

36. His delegation had taken careful note of the report on national experience in achieving far-reaching social and economic changes for the purpose of social progress (A/44/86). In 1983 his Government had undertaken a structural adjustment programme to improve economic management and ensure that the benefits were shared by all. Aware that economic recovery and development involved painful decisions and sacrifices, Ghana had undertaken a programme to mitigate the social cost of adjustment through projects aimed at meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups and improving access to education.

37. Economic and social development required the active participation of youth. The international community should continue its efforts to channel youthful energy into productive pursuits. Ghana had set up structures and programmes to promote the participation of young people in economically viable and socially necessary activities. The emphasis was on individual initiative as a means of complementing the national development effort. His Government had established vocational centres for delinquent youth where trades and agricultural sciences were taught. There had been considerable success in the training of school dropouts and unemployed youth.

38. By the year 2000, 60 per cent of the world's aging population would be in developing countries. The implications for socio-economic development were clear. Accordingly, his delegation urged the international community to continue its search for ways to deal with that situation. Interregional consultations and co-ordination efforts were useful tools for planning developmental social welfare programmes. In Ghana, the extended family and the community still provided basic care for the aged. However, the traditional family structure was being weakened by rapid socio-economic changes. The Government of Ghana, therefore, had instituted a programme to assist voluntary organizations which helped the elderly.

39. The Decade of Disabled Persons had made countries more aware of the problems and potential of the disabled. Ghana's disabled population was estimated at 1.4 million. Its programmes for such persons generally focused on rehabilitation and included vocational training, training in self-care activities, the provision of technical aids and social counselling.

40. Mr. BURCUOGLU (Turkey) said that his delegation welcomed the conclusions and recommendations set forth in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (A/44/116). Turkey, which was experiencing high population growth and rapid urbanization, sought to develop its human resources to promote economic and social development. His Government had taken steps to strengthen the family to enable it to adapt to the profound changes taking place in Turkish society and attached particular importance to the recommendation by the Secretary-General that the year 1994 should be proclaimed International Family Year.

41. Turkey had elaborated a national youth policy which included educational programmes for out-of-school young people, vocational training, and cultural and sport activities to enable young people to participate actively in the everyday life of the country. Particular attention was given to the need to combat drug abuse, delinquency and the spread of AIDS.

(Mr. Burcuoglu, Turkey)

42. His Government sought to increase public awareness of the question of aging and was organizing health services and rehabilitation for the elderly. Turkey had a national organization which dealt with the question of aging and had participated in international activities in that field. His Government had taken steps to ensure the development of health services and rehabilitation centres for disabled persons. The State encouraged employers to hire the disabled and the number of young disabled persons attending universities was increasing. Lastly, within the framework of agenda item 92, he wished to draw attention to a large-scale project designed to develop south-east Anatolia through the construction of an immense system of dams and irrigation networks to bring about a rapid increase in agricultural production throughout the region.

43. Mr. MEHNAT (Afghanistan) said that his country's impressive social and economic achievements had been made despite the devastation caused by war in what was in any case an economically backward country. Despite the continuation of that war, his Government was promoting greater political democracy in the country as part of a national reconciliation effort aimed at reviving the nation's economy and diverting resources to peaceful ends. Generous funds were being allocated to education, health care, pensions and job creation in the public and private sectors, and land reform was being carried out with due regard for the interests of all peasants. Technical vocational schools had been increased so as to improve vocational skills and provide the country with the national cadres it needed. Protection of the family was reflected in the country's legislation, with particular focus on mother and child care.

44. Afghanistan was a multinational country and the Government ensured democratic freedoms and rights to all ethnic groups and promoted popular participation in government.

45. In Afghanistan particular attention was paid to the creative potential of youth, and the State bore responsibility for providing youth with education, training, jobs and recreational and cultural opportunities. The country's 200,000-strong youth organization was engaged in medical, social and production activities and in the fight against substance abuse. With a view to promoting peace and understanding, it also had friendly relations with 250 youth organizations in more than 100 countries and participated in international youth gatherings. Afghan youth supported the initiatives of the International Youth Year and had taken steps to promote the goals of the year and to disseminate information on United Nations youth-related activities.

46. Had there been no war, those achievements would have been greater. The desired social and economic programmes could be implemented only under conditions of peace, but his country would work in any circumstances to ensure economic, social and cultural progress for all Afghans on the basis of social justice and equality.

47. Mr. ELIADES (Cyprus) said that social development was crucial to progress in many other areas and that it had suffered in many developing countries because such economic problems as foreign debt, trade deficit, inflation and unemployment had reduced funds earmarked for social development programmes. Fortunately, international co-operation on social issues had achieved some success, and he welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (A/44/166, E/1989/15).

48. He stressed the link between social and economic issues and urged more constructive co-ordination of the work done in those fields by United Nations bodies. His delegation also supported the proposal for an International Family Year and welcomed the Secretary-General's report on that subject. The United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons had drawn much attention to an important issue and the recent report of the Special Representative for the Promotion of the Decade was a notable contribution in that connection.

49. He hoped that recent progress towards détente and in the peaceful solution of conflicts would be followed by a corresponding improvement in the quality of life of people. The international community should concentrate not only on the pursuit of peace and security but also on establishing a just social and economic order that would make it possible to enjoy a peaceful and secure world.

50. Mr. CRUZ (Chile) said that his country was engaged in the process of overcoming its recent economic and political crisis by a realistic policy designed to improve its economy, and hence social welfare, through greater participation in world trade and stress on private initiative and market mechanisms. To alleviate the effects of economic adjustment and protect the welfare of the most vulnerable, the Government had set up job programmes to help those adversely affected by the structural transformations that had been required to ensure economic recovery and reduce the external debt. With support from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, Chile had achieved an economic growth rate that enabled it to increase substantially the resources allocated to social programmes to which it attached priority, covering such areas as education, housing, health and social welfare, and with impressive results, particularly in improving a vast range of social services for the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of the population.

51. One thing was certain: further social improvements were predicated upon continued economic growth.

52. Mr. ALLAFI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that there was almost universal dissatisfaction with the manner in which the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons was being implemented. Although his delegation shared that dissatisfaction, it believed that it might serve as an incentive to the Committee to redouble its efforts for the achievement of the goals of the Decade and to ensure that it would have a positive and lasting effect. The revival of the Decade was the responsibility of all, and his delegation therefore called upon all Member States to intensify their efforts and to co-operate with each other and with the Secretariat in order to ensure its success. Although only a few years of the Decade remained, much could still be done to make up for lost time.

(Mr. Allafi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

53. His delegation had great respect for the proposal made in the Committee for the elaboration of an international convention on the rights of disabled persons. There could be no doubt of its worthy motives or of the humanitarian record of its sponsor, namely Sweden. There was, however, no pressing and immediate need for such a step. The existing human rights instruments automatically guaranteed the rights of disabled persons since they acknowledged no distinction on grounds of disability. The rights of disabled persons could also be reaffirmed and strengthened through support for the World Programme of Action and the full implementation of its priorities, and the opportunity for such action still remained. The idea itself was nevertheless a valuable one, and there might be a need for such a step if the goals of the Decade were not ultimately attained.

54. In his report on the item, the Secretary-General had indicated that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was one of those countries which had been late in submitting the information requested in General Assembly resolution 43/98. The delay had not been intentional, and an endeavour would be made to ensure that it was not repeated. His country had been among the original sponsors of the United Nations Year of Disabled Persons, and it was most anxious that the Decade should be a success and should meet the expectations of the international community and, in particular, of disabled persons themselves.

55. In 1979, his country had established a national committee to prepare for the International Year, and it had subsequently been transformed into a national disability committee and entrusted with a wide range of functions. Among its achievements had been the promulgation of Act No. 3 of 1981 concerning disabled persons, which had been enlarged and amended by Act No. 5 of 1987. The new Act guaranteed disabled persons such rights and privileges as would ensure their full integration into society and enhance their status. A new national disability committee had recently been established under the chairmanship of the Secretary of the Social Security Fund in his capacity as co-ordinator of activities and programmes relating to disabled persons. A special department had recently been established at the Fund which would have a positive impact on developing further programmes for the disabled.

56. Promotional activities relating to disabled persons had been undertaken in the local information media, and the Social Security Fund presented a weekly television programme largely devoted to disabled persons and their activities at the local and international levels.

57. His country was endeavouring to profit from the technical expertise provided by international organizations, in particular the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNESCO and UNICEF. Experts from those organizations had visited the country at the invitation of the Social Security Fund and the national disability committee. It was expected that a training centre would soon be established in co-operation with ILO for specialists in working with disabled persons, and a number of local training courses would be held in co-operation with UNESCO. The Social Security Fund intended to establish a computerized data base on disabled persons which would be used in the elaboration of future plans and programmes.

/...

(Mr. Allafi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

58. His country was particularly interested in the idea of self-reliance in terms of local materials, expertise and facilities for the production and maintenance of the equipment and devices needed by disabled persons, and its practical implementation would soon begin. There was an ambitious programme for the expansion of existing centres and institutions for disabled persons and the construction of new rehabilitation and treatment centres.

59. His country was committed to the World Programme of Action and would co-operate fully with all the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and with other Member States in its implementation.

60. The CHAIRMAN invited those delegations that wished to do so to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

61. Mr. CENKO (Albania) said that he categorically rejected the comments made by the representative of Yugoslavia concerning the Slavic minority in Albania. The census of the Albanian population was accurate and national minorities in Albania enjoyed the rights of all other citizens.

62. Ms. DU (China) said that she rejected the attack against China made by the representative of Denmark. The recent protests in her country had been intended to subvert the Government and undermine the country's socialist system. They were stopped only when they turned into a rebellion. The Government had acted lawfully at all times and its policy had been to educate the young protesters. The criticism leveled against her Government was arbitrary and based on lies and false information.

63. Mr. KOTEVSKI (Yugoslavia) said that by pointing to the inaccurate statistics concerning Albania's population he had wished only to indicate the facts, which were that a population of 100,000 Slavs had been reduced to some 4,000. His country had reacted to official population statistics and was concerned over the fate of nearly 100,000 people.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.