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Held at Headquarters, New York,
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President:	Mr. MORENO-SALCEDO (Vice-President)	(Philippines)
later:	Mr. DE PINIÉS (President)	(Spain)
later:	Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Vice-President)	(Costa Rica)
later:	Mr. AGIUS (Vice-President)	(Malta)

United Nations World Conference for the International Youth Year
(plenary meetings devoted to policies and programmes relating to
youth in accordance with resolution 39/22 of 23 November 1984)

- International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace: report of the Third Committee [89] (continued)
- Policies and programmes relating to youth: report of the Third Committee [95] (continued)

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Moreno-Salcedo (Philippines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

— UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR
(PLENARY MEETINGS DEVOTED TO POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO
YOUTH IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 39/22 OF 23 NOVEMBER 1984)

AGENDA ITEMS 89 AND 95 (continued)

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE (A/40/855)

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE (A/40/856)

Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil): It is only fitting that, on the occasion of its fortieth anniversary, and at a time of crisis marked by international conflicts which tend to aggravate persistent structural problems, the United Nations should focus its attention and concern on youth. International Youth Year, by providing the international community, governments and young people themselves with an opportunity to concentrate on the problems, needs, and aspirations of youth, and by calling on young people all over the world to play a more active role in shaping the future of society, has both symbolic and pragmatic value. It reaffirms the international consensus concerning the commitment to youth and encourages the perception of youth as a driving force in the process of social change. For, indeed, the zeal and enthusiasm of youth, its idealism, creativity and faith constitute an invaluable asset that can and should be translated into a positive contribution to the search for the universal causes of peace and development.

(Mr. Calero Rodrigues, Brazil)

The problems confronting youth, as cultural distinctions tend to lessen, are becoming more universal in character. Among them, education and employment represent a major concern. Education holds the key to individual growth and future participation in social life, and enhances the ability of individuals to improve the well-being of society as a whole. Employment, on the other hand, by enabling the young to contribute with their work to the economic life of their society, should represent not only a means of survival but a tool for the concrete participation of youngsters in the attainment of societal goals. By anchoring the youngsters more firmly in the community to which they belong, employment gives them deeper social roots, enhances future prospects and opportunities and should, in theory at least, instil feelings of dignity and usefulness. It is through employment that the young person fully realizes his potential and contributes to the advancement of society.

Education and employment raise the themes of participation and development. In developing countries, by the sheer weight of numbers, political influence and the responsibility for the destiny of the nation will lie mainly with the young. Yet, in many of these countries, rising expectations and the hopes for the fuller participation of young people in society, after a period of transformation and modernization, have been threatened by the persistence of economic hardships and structural imbalances. In rural areas, limited educational opportunities and the consequent lack of professional training tend to perpetuate the poverty cycle which, in turn, stimulates migration to already crowded urban centres. In the cities, unemployment and under-employment prevent large segments of the young population from participating in economic life, thus creating the conditions that ultimately lead to violence, juvenile delinquency, drug abuse and prostitution. A qualitative improvement of the situation of youth therefore largely depends on our

(Mr. Calero Rodrigues, Brazil)

capacity to address those issues effectively at the international, regional and national levels. The current adverse trends in the economic and social situation in most developing countries, as shown in the 1985 Report on the World Social Situation, give little cause for optimism. Only through renewed efforts towards more intensive international co-operation can we hope to achieve the medium and long-term goals of growth, development and social progress.

The interdependence between development and peace is often stressed. In fact, threats to peace and security and violations of the principles of the United Nations are seriously detrimental to the achievement of the goals of development, since social and economic changes cannot be realized under conditions of unrest, instability and violence. In this regard, the Brazilian Government reiterates the need for the faithful observance of the principles of non-interference and self-determination, and stresses that negotiation is the only way to arrive at a valid solution to the conflicts affecting the international community.

In spite of the enormous task still ahead of us, the successful outcome of International Youth Year is unanimously recognized. Preparations for the event and its observance clearly demonstrate that young people throughout the world are willing to play an active role in society. The multitude of activities during the Year has resulted in an increased awareness of the situation of youth and has led to a rich exchange of information and experience.

As we approach the end of the Year, we realize the importance of keeping the momentum that this event generated and of ensuring the continuity of efforts towards consolidating and further extending the progress achieved. In this connection, the Guidelines for Further Planning and Suitable Follow-up in the Field of Youth, recently endorsed by the General Assembly, provide useful assistance to Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in undertaking

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programmes and activities designed to improve the situation of youth. The Guidelines emphasize that priority should be given to action at the national and local levels, thus highlighting the major role of co-ordinating committees or similar structures in providing assistance for governmental policies for youth. At the regional level, increased co-operation and the exchange of information among countries that are linked by geographical, historical and cultural similarities should contribute and supplement each Government's individual actions. Initiatives at the national and regional levels would also benefit from the support of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Such a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach will ensure that our commitment to improving the situation of youth will not weaken as we close the celebrations of 1985.

Brazil has committed itself to International Youth Year with special interest since it is a country where youth constitutes one fifth of the population, one fourth of the urban, and one third of the rural, work force.

At the official inauguration of the National Commission for the International Youth Year, President Sarney stressed the importance of the active participation of youth in the struggle for economic, social and political development, stating that "the problems of youth cannot be overlooked, at the risk of seriously jeopardizing the future of the nation itself."

The Brazilian National Commission for International Youth Year is composed of representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions, as well as of youth organizations, being co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education. The Commission aims at developing two kinds of work, one of short-term work consisting of raising the consciousness of society on the problems faced by youth, and the other, of long-term work, that of furnishing input subsidies for the formulation of permanent policies, programmes and strategies for youth.

(Mr. Calero Rodrigues, Brazil)

Among the activities organized by the National Commission, a National Symposium on Education and Labour for Young People was held, last September, with the participation of ministries, non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The objective of that meeting was to provide assistance to the Brazilian Government in order to formulate policies for young people who need to work and to study simultaneously.

In addition, in most of the Brazilian state capitals, the National Commission organized an important cycle of debates, now being held, on the subject of youth and the National Constituent Assembly, which is now being convened. The objective is to stimulate youth to express their viewpoints about their participation and conception of what the process of Brazilian constitutional reorganization represents and must constitute in moving towards a more free, just and democratic society.

At the international level, Brazil participated in the regional meetings on International Youth Year promoted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in San José, Costa Rica, in 1983, and in Montevideo last August. In addition, Brazil was present this year, as an observer, at the World Congress on Youth promoted by UNESCO in Barcelona, as well as at the World Conference of the National Commissions for the International Youth Year, which was held in Bucharest.

(Mr. Calero Rodrigues, Brazil)

Since youth constitutes the most tangible source for the renovation of all societies, it is our common goal to help it find more favourable conditions to expand its potentialities. International Youth Year has undoubtedly made an important contribution to that aim by reinvigorating the awareness of society in general and Governments in particular about the problems and aspirations of young people. Considering the attention youth is now receiving at national, regional and interregional levels, it is now incumbent on the international community to ensure adequate global conditions of peace and development to enable the young to participate in all aspects of social life.

Mrs. TNANI (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): First of all, with regard to the painful events in Colombia I wish to address to the Government and the people of Colombia the heartfelt condolences of my country on the tragedy that has descended upon them.

Since we have just celebrated the fortieth anniversary of our Organization, which was set up for the maintenance of peace and the strengthening of co-operation between peoples, it is particularly timely to speak on International Youth Year, with its triple theme: "Participation, Development, Peace".

While for 40 years mankind has managed to preserve a fragile peace interrupted by regional conflicts, some of which have lasted for more than 30 years now, as the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar has said:

"We face today a world of almost infinite promise which is also a world of potentially terminal danger. The choice between these alternatives is ours."

Before making that choice, we must reflect upon the future we all share, that is, the future of our children and of our youth, who, as the Secretary-General has reminded us, constitute a major international resource, since young people dispose of a vast reservoir of knowledge which, if put to good use, would allow for the

(Mrs. Tnani, Tunisia)

creation of a world with an unprecedented living standard; today's young people have a role to play in the service of peace, as well as international co-operation, which is vital for peace.

We have stressed the importance of international peace because to a large extent it determines the domestic peace within countries. In a climate where the arms race has become the rule, fewer resources are devoted to the development of third-world countries and to our youth, whom we are inviting to ponder and to participate in the future while everywhere, and particularly in the developing countries, it is living in deep anxiety about its own future and that of all mankind. Let us remember that these young people make up 80 per cent of the populations of developing countries and that that is where most problems arise, although the developed countries themselves are not free of this major concern.

For its part Tunisia, despite economic constraints, has since its independence concentrated on what people and the young in particular can do. On the occasion of International Youth Year the President of the Republic of Tunisia, Mr. Habib Bourguiba, stated in an address that

"Young people represent a spirit, an energy, a stake in the future in the sense that they constitute a fountain of hope bracing the conscience of the people through their vigour, their idealism, their generosity and their faith in a radiant future."

Our country has always allocated a major proportion of its resources and its energy to this segment of the population, which in our country makes up more than 50 per cent of the total population, providing youth with various tools for its blossoming, since we feel that it is entitled to a privileged place in our development plans.

Indeed, we give broad priority to education in the preparation and execution of our development plans, and we have set up schools in the remotest corners of our

(Mrs. Tnani, Tunisia)

country. Our young people receive free primary, secondary and higher education, which is open to all - boys and girls - without distinction. Every year new schools and universities are built to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of young people.

This educational effort is supplemented by professional training provided to young people who have not been able to complete the second education cycle, so as to enable them to acquire the skills needed for the development of the country.

Furthermore, employment is one of the constant concerns of our policy, since the education and the training of young people would not be feasible without an adequate employment policy for youth.

Every year the Tunisian State creates 50,000 jobs to meet the needs of its youth. Also, encouragement and assistance is provided to young people with professional training who wish to set up on their own account; and agricultural land belonging to the State is handed over on a priority basis to young people who have graduated from agricultural institutions.

All of this educational effort is also extended to the public health sector. Mothers and children beginning at infancy benefit from public services provided in maternal and infant protection centres in towns and villages.

With regard to culture, we would mention clubs for young people to be found in various parts of the country, particularly those emphasizing culture and science, clubs providing training towards apprenticeships and sports clubs throughout the country.

I could not end this listing without referring to two major programmes currently under way. On the one hand, there is the major project of the Ministry for the Family and the Advancement of Women, a new Ministry which is dealing with the "productive family" and aims to keep young rural people on the land, offering the female rural population the possibility of improving family income through

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handicrafts. Consequently, the Ministry is distributing appropriate machinery and tools to families requesting such assistance. On the other, there is the jobs programme for young people, launched by the Ministry of Labour, which is intended for young people under the age of 25 and aimed at guaranteeing them stable employment by providing them, in the form of gifts or interest-free loans, the equipment they need to set up their own workshops. The only condition is that they must take on a certain number of unemployed young people which, of course, is dependent upon the size of the enterprise.

Those are the major examples of the efforts we are making for young people. However, I should also like to make clear that young people are associated in the decision-making process at all political and administrative levels. National organizations and constituent bodies are largely made up of younger segments of the population who initiate and implement new ideas.

(Mrs. Tnani, Tunisia)

Tunisia, like other Members of the United Nations, established a National Committee for the International Youth Year. This consisted of 60 members representing all the national departments and organizations concerned with youth activities and was presided over by the Minister of Youth and Sports. The Committee divided its work among six major sub-committees, which co-ordinated activities in the following fields: legislation, regional activities, national activities, international activities, publications and information.

The work of the Committee made it possible to establish a very varied programme of activities, of which I shall mention only the following: participation by Tunisia in international youth assemblies; the construction in 1985 of 1,000 stadiums for young people - called "the 1,000 stadium-project"; and national competitions in the areas of technical and educational activities. Furthermore, the annual national youth festival, which is held on 2 June in Tunisia, was a particularly striking success this year.

This has been the Tunisian participation in the International Youth Year, as my country, like others, is aware of the importance of young people as a major driving force in our society on the political and economic levels as well as in terms of the values and the building of the future world.

International Youth Year will make it possible to make international public opinion aware of the concerns of the young people who will be the adults of tomorrow. But we must pursue this objective in the years to come. Furthermore, the right of young people to education, vocational training and employment, which have been dealt with in relevant United Nations resolutions, is not confined to this year, but rather represents the starting point for a long-term exercise which deserves the interest and support of our Organization and our Governments.

My delegation was happy to support the draft resolution entitled International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace" in document A/40/855. We support

(Mrs. Thani, Tunisia)

the guidelines established by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, which are consistent with our policy for the promotion and development of young people.

However, at the end of International Youth Year and on the threshold of the International Year for Peace, should we not be concerned with the young people who are deprived of their most fundamental right to life, freedom and education? Above all, we should not forget the young people in occupied Palestine, South Africa and Namibia, who are deprived of their rights and condemned to live an uprooted, expatriate existence.

As a mother, I protest at this state of affairs and hope that those young people too will soon enjoy the freedom and peace to which, like all the young people of the world, they are entitled. The attainment of the objectives of International Youth Year, which we wish to be dedicated to the youth of the world, must not be blocked and frustrated by Israel and South Africa.

On the threshold of the International Year of Peace, we must work to eliminate focal points of tension, and to strengthen international détente and for the attainment of the purposes set forth in the United Nations Charter in order to bring about an international order that is more just for everyone. Our work has only begun, but may we leave to young people everywhere a better world where hope and life are denied to none.

Mr. MIRONENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The initiative that led to the holding of the International Youth Year is important and urgent. The need for the participation of youth in resolving the problems facing mankind and the participation of all mankind in resolving specific youth problems is perfectly obvious.

The holding of International Youth Year during the year of the fortieth anniversary of the victory over fascism is in our view significant and symbolic.

(Mr. Mironenko, Ukrainian SSR)

First, that victory made possible the creation of the United Nations as a universal international Organization with the purpose of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Secondly, the future belongs to youth and therefore it is particularly interested in achieving the main task of our time, namely, averting a nuclear war.

Peace is a condition of the resolution of social and economic problems. It is particularly important to understand this now in conditions of the serious aggravation of the international situation and the growth of the threat of nuclear war brought about by the aggressive policies of imperialism. The imperialist plans to accelerate the arms race and to extend it to outer space are particularly dangerous for peace and the security of peoples. The peaceful proposals of the Soviet Union, are important and timely steps towards averting the drift of mankind towards a nuclear catastrophe. Among these are the Soviet Union's most recent initiatives on a unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions and the proposal submitted for consideration at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly on international co-operation on the peaceful exploitation of outer space in conditions of its non-militarization.

The Soviet proposal regarding a mutual rejection by the Soviet Union and the United States of space-strike weapons is sweeping in nature, as is the proposal for a 50 per cent reduction of nuclear weapons capable of striking each other's territory. These acts of good will realistically open the way towards maintaining peace, strengthening international security and eliminating the nuclear threat that looms over mankind. The need to avert a nuclear catastrophe is acknowledged by an ever-growing number of young men and women in all regions of the globe.

It is no accident that youth makes up a significant part of the international anti-war movement. It is perfectly clear that today the campaign for peace is inseparable from the struggle for the recognition of political, social and economic rights.

(Mr. Mironenko, Ukrainian SSR)

The campaign for peace remains one of the most important concerns of the youth of our Republic. An important manifestation of this is the participation of Soviet youth in the march for peace, which was an integral part of the campaign of the universal federations of youth and the universal actions of youth against nuclear war and for peace and disarmament. In the course of the march for peace, during the past two years alone in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, there have been more than 40,000 anti-war demonstrations, in which approximately 12 million people have participated. On the initiative of the youth of the Ukrainian Republic, there have been campaigns of solidarity with the peoples and youth of Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Nicaragua, who are struggling against imperialism and for independence, freedom and social progress.

An extremely important role in the cause of strengthening peace and friendship among nations is being played by the international youth movement. A clear example of this was the XII World Festival of Youth and Students, which took place this summer in Moscow in the framework of the International Youth Year. That representative forum served to unite democratic youth of the entire world and promoted a further stepping up of the struggle of the younger generation of our planet against imperialism and the threat of nuclear war and for peace and co-operation among peoples.

Unfortunately, today a number of hotbeds of tension continue to exist and in a number of regions of the world youth is encountering obstacles in trying to exercise its rights, as may be noted from United Nations documents. The major obstacles to achieving the objective of the International Youth Year are colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and racial discrimination in all its forms, apartheid, aggression and interference in the internal affairs of States.

(Mr. Mironenko, Ukrainian SSR)

A cause of serious concern is the situation of youth in the Middle East and southern Africa. Palestinian young men and women share the tragic plight of their people who, as a result of Israeli aggression, are deprived of their homeland and forced to live in exile. There can be no achievement of the objectives of International Youth Year without a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. Termination of the Israeli occupation, restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and the establishment of its own State, will create necessary conditions for a genuine improvement of the situation of youth in that part of the world.

The most inflammatory form of racism is the policy and practice of apartheid pursued by the Pretoria régime towards the people of southern Africa. The stubborn continuation by the racists of South Africa of that criminal policy of crude and mass violations of human rights, the continuation of the illegal occupation of Namibia and unceasing acts of aggression against neighbouring States are the elements of the dangerous situation that exists in the southern part of the African continent. Intimidated by the unprecedented surge of anti-racist demonstrations on the part of the indigenous population, the Pretoria régime has, during the past few months, stepped up a campaign of terror and bloody acts of repression.

It is perfectly obvious that that rotten régime is clinging to power solely thanks to the economic, financial and military assistance rendered it by its Western protectors. In this connection, I draw attention to the following recent statement of the Special Committee against Apartheid, of which our Republic is a member:

"Responsibility for the tragic death of people lies not only with the terrorist Pretoria régime but also with those Powers which continue to hamper and undermine effective international action aimed at forcing that régime to renounce the system of apartheid and repression."

(Mr. Mironenko, Ukrainian SSR)

We express our solidarity with the just struggle of the youth and the entire people of South Africa against the apartheid régime and for freedom and social progress, and we support the immediate cessation of the occupation of Namibia and the transfer of power to the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the legitimate representative of the Namibian people.

The speedy elimination of apartheid, which creates a serious threat to peace and security and is hampering the development of the people of southern Africa, requires the imposition by the Security Council of comprehensive sanctions, in accordance with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, and the cessation of all co-operation with the South African régime.

Achievement of the objectives of International Youth Year are threatened in another region as well, namely, Central America. Continued interference by imperialist circles in the internal affairs of States, this support of oppressive régimes, subversive actions and the preparation of armed aggression against Nicaragua aimed at perpetuating their domination in the region undermine the process of independent social and economic development.

Nor can we fail to be concerned about the situation of youth in other parts of the world, in particular in Northern Ireland where the number of victims since 1972 is almost 3,000. Continued bloodshed in Ulster is the result of the brutal suppression of the democratic rights of the population of that Province, where political, social and cultural discrimination deprives nearly one in four Irishmen of the possibility of working and puts hundreds of thousands of them in the position of foreigners in their own country.

(Mr. Mironenko, Ukrainian SSR)

Extremely relevant and topical today is yet another of the objectives of International Youth Year, namely, development. Youth in the developing countries today continue to encounter the problems of hunger, poverty, illiteracy and insufficient medical care. It is precisely those countries which are home to the majority of young men and women on our planet. What is required to overcome those problems and create favourable conditions for development is, first and foremost, a radical restructuring of international economic relations on a just, democratic basis, and the establishment of a new international economic order.

However, it is not only in the developing countries that young people find it difficult to participate fully in development. One of the most acute and complex problems of youth in the developed capitalist societies is still unemployment. Statistics indicate that a significant proportion of the unemployed are precisely persons who do not have adequate experience or skills, namely, young persons. It is they who are fired first and hired last. This problem is particularly acute for national minorities for whom social discrimination is often compounded by racial discrimination.

As noted in the report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the "Situation of youth in the 1980s" (A/40/64), in Western Europe and North America unemployment among young people is growing ever more swiftly; in 1981 it amounted to 40 to 50 per cent in a number of countries.

Mass chronic unemployment also afflicts those who have been able to find work, for the threat of being thrown out onto the streets forces them to accept the arbitrary will of employers. For example, according to statistics of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), employers as a rule pay young workers 40 to 55 per cent of the wages received by adults for similar work.

(Mr. Mironenko, Ukrainian SSR)

The unemployment of a significant proportion of the younger generation is a major cause of many social ills. Deprived of the possibility of working, young people begin to feel alienated and useless in society and, in the final analysis, that leads to an increase in drug addiction, crime and prostitution.

This situation is further aggravated by the continuing arms race. The militarization of economies and the increase of military expenditures lead to a reduction of jobs, and a decline in expenditures on health, education and social needs. And it is precisely those problems that have been pointed out in United Nations reports as being among the most acute for young people. Those who today favour a continuation of the pernicious process of the arms race should recall that the children of the 1980s, deprived of the opportunity to study and to have enough to eat while ever newer weapons of destruction are being created, will be the sick and illiterate people of the forthcoming third millenium, our future.

It has been correctly pointed out in the report "International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace" that

"Youth cannot participate meaningfully where they are the objects of any form of exploitation. Yet the full participation of youth in the life of the nation is important to the achievement of social justice and the attainment of the objectives of national development." (A/40/256, para. 4)

That conclusion is unquestionably justified.

As indicated by the experience of socialism, where young people are given greater trust and more opportunities of using their faculties, they play a major and active role in the social, political and economic life of society. At the same time, such trust shown in young people allows society to resolve, in the best possible manner, topical problems relating to the comprehensive development of the younger generation. Only a socially active youth, working for social progress, can become a truly creative force for civilization.

(Mr. Mironenko, Ukrainian SSR)

Today young people in our country have been freed from exploitation and all forms of inequality. They are guaranteed real political and socio-economic rights. They are given broad access to work, education and culture, regardless of their race, national affiliation, sex, language and religion.

Youth is a truly creative force. Its influence makes itself felt in all spheres of the life of society.

During recent years entire sectors of the Ukraine's economy have become areas where youth predominates; they include the nuclear power industry, the coal industry, agriculture, construction, light industries, the services sector and trade. Young people are also actively participating in the administration of State affairs. Eighteen per cent of the deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR are young people and representatives of practically all segments of the population. Young people are also members of the Presidium of the Ukrainian Council of Trade Unions, the highest trade union body of the Republic, and the Committee of State Control; they also work in ministries and agencies of the Ukrainian SSR.

The intensive social activity of our youth is the result of the constant concern shown by the State for the needs of youth. For us, this is not a temporary campaign but rather one of the major areas of social policy.

In conclusion, I should like to express confidence that the observance of International Youth Year will allow us to draw attention to the situation of young people throughout the world and promote the search for means to ensure favourable conditions for implementing the right to life, work and education.

Mr. MEDINA (Portugal) (interpretation from French): The celebration of International Youth Year gives us an opportunity to express our interest in the future generations and the confidence we have placed in them. In this respect, the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, in an address to the Assembly on behalf of the European Community and its member States, as well as Spain and Portugal, declared that:

"Youth symbolizes the future, and there is no wiser investment than in that future in the hope that future generations will finally realize the eternal ideals of mankind ... " (A/40/PV.75, p. 27)

My delegation hopes that the world conference as well as the other activities taking place within the framework of International Youth Year, can make a fundamental contribution to promoting solidarity and international co-operation in this major area.

The difficulties experienced by young people in their quest for equality and for the right to participation may to a large extent be overcome nationally and internationally if the existing instruments for human rights were to be respected.

Problems of the young as a whole, cannot be dissociated from the problems facing society as a whole; hence it is up to the entire population to try to integrate young people and the generations they represent into society, with a view to thus achieving human rights, equality and justice.

The importance of the participation by young people, as the future leaders of society, in the elaboration of various policies and in the decision-making process this implies, has often been clearly emphasized in preparatory meetings for International Youth Year. The role of young people in the development process is a question which concerns and affects all nations more than ever. It is an established fact that young people are more sensitive and more open to social questions than their elders; and they attach special importance to

problems such as freedom of expression and association, the maintenance of peace, protection of the environment and the prevention of the harmful effects often associated with technological progress. Hence, the organization at the national level of educational and other programmes and other initiatives is all the more important.

However, young people experience certain difficulties which are specific to them, and which must be dealt with in a special way. According to the Portuguese Constitution, it is up to the State to define, develop and promote policy for youth, in co-operation with private entities. The purpose of this priority policy, which is free from any authoritarian or tutelary tone, is to offer young people ways and means of facilitating their passage into adult life and to enable them to become fully integrated consciously and usefully into society. Portugal has attempted an overall approach to the definition and execution of that policy, to make possible the co-ordination of initiatives in various departments of public administration active in that area.

Following the deep changes which took place in Portuguese society, young people were called upon to play an increased role; they were expected to voice their views on questions which, in the past, could scarcely have been considered in such a free and open way. Those changes sometimes produced traumatic experiences which only the normal functioning of a democratic régime made it possible to overcome.

This phase of intense participation was followed by another, characterized by more individualistic competitive behaviour which left its mark on the present generation of young people. Hence the need to establish among young people the habits of dialogue and the need for discussion, which are necessary to provide young people with a greater sense of participation in Portuguese society.

Around the world, young people suffer most severely from the economic and political crises when these affect a whole society, with consequent problems.

(Mr. Medina, Portugal)

Portugal has therefore tried to take steps, particularly in the area of vocational training, to improve the situation resulting from short-term difficulties, particularly to deal with unemployment among young people. Although such steps are recent, it is hoped that they can produce positive results.

In Portugal, like in most countries, we have followed the recommendations of the United Nations Advisory Committee for International Youth Year. In that connection, an executive committee to prepare, co-ordinate and promote measures to commemorate the Year was set up under the President of the Council of Ministers.

The primary objectives of that organization with respect to the Portuguese International Youth Year, are as follows: to promote participation among young people and youth organizations in the definition of models for the socio-economic development of the country; to disseminate to young people the ideals of peace and co-operation among peoples; to analyse the situation of Portuguese youth with special attention paid to the proposals by young people in order to help them to achieve these and to bring them to fruition as quickly as possible; to make public opinion aware of the problems of young people; and lastly, to provide continuity over the years to come for activities already under way.

The central Government and regional authorities have implemented a great many programmes around the country, as well as in the Portuguese community around the world, and the positive results are already being felt. Those programmes concern several areas, particularly education, culture and the arts, employment, housing, social communications, information, health, sport and tourism. They were developed in the light of the need for greater participation by a large number of young people in those activities. They also represent an effort to ensure debate and discussion about young people's problems, and in particular, with respect to questions which have arisen and opportunities which are offered as a result of the forthcoming membership by Portugal in the European Communities.

(Mr. Medina, Portugal)

The commemoration of International Youth Year is a matter of considerable importance. If 1985 is the year of young people, and has been commemorated as such around the world, we should nevertheless not forget that the problems of young people go far beyond that. We must ensure there is continuity so that something positive results over the long term.

This is an event which requires careful consideration since, if it is not approached in a critical, analytical fashion, it will be all too short-lived. This exercise of reflection and analysis must thus lead to a set of carefully structured initiatives, so that young people are brought closer together, and that their future prospects are improved.

If youth is the hope of mankind, then we must work with them to build a different future, one which is fairer to all. As such, 1985 will truly represent a year to be celebrated.

Mr. OLZVOY (Mongolia): My delegation joins previous speakers in expressing deep condolences and sympathy to the people of Colombia, who suffered enormous loss of human life and material destruction as a result of the volcanic activity of Nevado del Ruiz.

(continued in Russian)

The Mongolian People's Republic supported from the very outset the holding of International Youth Year, with the themes "Participation, Development, Peace", because concern for youth is the focus of attention of our State. This United Nations initiative has given all countries and international organizations concerned an additional opportunity to give attention to the situation of youth, their needs and aspirations, and to adopt wide-ranging measures to resolve socio-economic problems which the younger generation is encountering in many countries. An important objective of the holding of International Youth Year was the involvement of young people in resolving crucial international and national problems and in the struggle to curb the arms race and avert the threat of nuclear war.

In the light of the themes of International Youth Year, and in keeping with the provisions of the programmes of measures and actions for International Youth Year and the period preceding it, the Mongolian People's Republic carried out, and is continuing to carry out, a large number of activities aimed at further satisfying the growing spiritual and cultural needs of its youth, and bringing about even more active participation by young people in the life and development of a socialist society and in the administration of the State.

Moreover, it should be noted that as a result of the victory of the People's Revolution of 1921 and the implementation in succeeding years of fundamental socio-economic changes, the Mongolian People's Republic created a long time ago guaranteed favourable conditions for the comprehensive development of the younger generation. The most important fact is that our country eliminated the basis for

(Mr. Olzvoy, Mongolia)

the existence of exploitation of man by man, inequality and discrimination. Mongolian young men and women, like all other groups in the population, enjoy the right to work, free education at all levels, social security and medical care. For a long time now parents in our country have had no need for concern about the future of their children, since we do not have, and cannot have, such social ills as unemployment, drug addiction and loss of jobs.

The year 1982 saw the creation in the Mongolian People's Republic of a national committee to prepare and implement International Youth Year. Its membership included representatives of government and social organizations. Sub-committees were set up in all State organizations and institutions, and they are still operating. A most active part is played by the Mongolian Revolutionary Youth Union in the activities of the national committee and the sub-committees. The Union plays a direct role in the government of the country. For example, youth accounts for more than 12 per cent of the deputies of the Great People's Hural, the Parliament, and for 20.4 per cent of the deputies of the local Parliaments. The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Youth Union is a member of the Presidium of the Great People's Hural. The Union has the right to initiate legislation.

As I have already said, many activities were carried out in the country in the context of International Youth Year. A significant place in the national committee's plan of work was taken by measures to expand and strengthen the educational and material base of child and youth organizations and to improve cultural and living conditions for rural youth. In the cities and provinces new pioneers' palaces have been built, as well as young people's cultural and educational centres, centres for technical creativity and centres for young naturalists, youth tourist camps, pioneer camps and other vacation centres. In the capital we are finishing construction of a new youth cultural centre.

(Mr. Olzvoy, Mongolia)

The education of the younger generation in a spirit of peace and friendship among peoples and international co-operation on an equal footing has always been, and remains, the most important task of the Revolutionary Youth Union. Therefore, in actions taken during International Youth Year at the national level great importance was given by the Mongolian youth movement to averting the nuclear threat and maintaining peace and stability throughout the world and in particular in Asia. Bearing in mind the present alarming situation in the world created as a result of the aggressive actions of imperialist circles, the Mongolian National Committee for International Youth Year is continuing to pay great attention to explaining to the younger generation the significance of disarmament and the cessation of the arms race, and the necessity for united action, together with progressive world forces, working for a peaceful, non-nuclear future for mankind, for it is in such conditions of calm and security that we can solve those problems facing all peoples, including youth.

Mongolian youth supports the view of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year that:

"Young people must join in the efforts to halt and reverse the arms race, in the nuclear field in particular, to promote measures that will enhance confidence between States and to channel towards peaceful economic, social and cultural development many of those resources now being used for the acquisition of weapons." (A/40/256, p. 18)

The holding of International Youth Year during the year of the fortieth anniversary of the historic victory over Hitlerite fascism and Japanese militarism and the creation of the United Nations gave a new impetus to the cause of stepping up the struggle against fascism, nazism, neo-nazism, colonialism, neo-colonialism,

(Mr. Olzvoy, Mongolia)

racism and apartheid and the aggressive policy of the imperialist Powers. That is what is required by our concern for the future and our memory of the past.

Mongolian youth favours active co-operation between youth organizations of the world, with extensive dialogue between them and exchange of views in order to resolve crucial problems of the youth movement. Our youth has firmly condemned the policy of reactionary circles of using some international activities for purposes that run counter to the objectives and themes of International Youth Year. All of Mongolian youth, through great successes in work, study and creative activity, thus marked one of the most important events during International Youth Year, the XIIth World Festival of Youth and Students. More than 500 young people of the most varied professions represented Mongolian youth at the Festival. As a participant in that major forum of the world's youth, I want in particular to point out that the Moscow Festival made a great contribution to consolidating the ranks of the world's youth and the cause of achieving the noble purposes of the United Nations and implementing the tasks carried out under its auspices in International Youth Year.

The Mongolian People's Republic shares the view that it is necessary to make new efforts and take effective measures to improve the situation of youth in many parts of the world.

(Mr. Olzvoy, Mongolia)

On the whole, it supports the "Guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth". We believe that within the United Nations system, there are a great number of bodies which will be competent and in the future to consider issues which are of concern to the youth of our planet. There are many such issues, particularly for those who live in conditions of diktat imposed by monopoly forces, economic and financial dependence of one country on another, and exploitation by transnational corporations.

In this context, I should like to emphasize the enormous importance of national measures to resolve problems facing youth and to intensify the struggle for their rights. The situation of young people in many parts of the world remains difficult, and has not noticeably improved during the Year. For example, more than 50 per cent of the entire army of the unemployed is made up of young people, and young workers from Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries in the United States get 10 to 15 times less for their labour than do local citizens.

We could also cite figures illustrating how, in the capitalistic countries, many are forced to renounce the hope of higher education because of high tuition costs, and how many people who join the labour market are not able to find work.

It is indeed heart-breaking to see how difficult life is for young people living under the racist régime of Pretoria, or for those who are subjected to the aggressive policies and practices of Israel.

Mongolian youth expresses wholehearted solidarity with its young contemporaries in Asia, Africa and Latin America who are struggling against the imperialist policy of aggression, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Mongolian young men and women have great understanding for the just demands of the developing countries regarding the creation of a new international economic and information order.

(Mr. Olzvoy, Mongolia)

In conclusion, I should like to voice the hope that the present Conference will give new stimulus to international and national efforts aimed at improving the situation of the youth of the world, enhancing their role in the life of society and protecting the rights of peoples to peace.

Ms. HILLYER (New Zealand): Several decades ago, the Maori Chief Tamehau Mahupuku made the following observation: Ra pu te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi - the old net is cast aside while the young net goes out catching. These were prescient words.

They represent the shift between the generations, and imply that the older generation must pass, that the present and the future belong also to the young. Tamehau Mahupuku's wisdom is still not universally accepted. If the voice of young people is to be heard, there must be a time of listening. This is such a time in the history of the United Nations. The fortieth anniversary has given us the opportunity to take stock of the past, to strengthen our resolve for what lies ahead. It is a time for a rededication to the ideals of the Charter and also for new beginnings.

If a rejuvenation of this Organisation is to take place, the commitment of the world's youth is required. So is their active participation in the process. Young people are ultimately the ones for whom the United Nations will "create a better world". They will live with the success - or the failure. As the Secretary-General has said in his report, young people:

"... should not be considered merely as resources for development but equally as participants in the decision-making process which enhances the process of development". (A/40/701, para.25)

This is also true for the other International Youth Year theme of "peace".

The youth of New Zealand are as aware and as concerned as those of other countries about the threat to survival posed by nuclear armaments. New Zealand is

(Ms. Hillyer, New Zealand)

a small country. We are spectators rather than actors in global disarmament negotiations. Yet we have the right to be heard. So have the young people of this world. Just as small countries, especially if acting together, can hope to play a constructive role in international efforts for peace, so too can the youth of the world.

This is Youth Year. Next year is the International Year of Peace. New Zealand is a co-sponsor of the General Assembly resolution on the International Year of Peace. In commemorating this International Year in 1986, we will have the ideals of Youth Year firmly in mind.

One of the groups singled out in the Advisory Committee's guidelines as requiring special attention was young women. In 1893 New Zealand became the first country to give women the vote. The input of New Zealand women into the decision-making process of their society has continued to grow since that time. The two New Zealand representatives to the Pan-Commonwealth Conference for Young People held in June of this year were both young women. Furthermore, in line with the Advisory Committee's guideline concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparation and implementation of policies concerning youth, both New Zealand representatives were from youth organizations rather than from government.

It is the practice of the New Zealand Government to include young diplomats in New Zealand delegations to General Assembly sessions. This provides them with a valuable opportunity to learn at first-hand about the operation and concerns of the United Nations. This year many States have included young people in their delegations, so that the United Nations, through the World Conference for International Youth Year, can learn more about the hopes and ideas of young people. This exchange can only be constructive in its effect.

(Ms. Hillyer, New Zealand)

Before coming to the United Nations for this General Assembly session, one of my responsibilities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Wellington was to act as the liaison officer on national and international activities for International Youth Year. I am particularly pleased, therefore, to be able to talk to you in person about New Zealand's experience of International Youth Year, although I have no mandate to speak on behalf of the non-governmental youth organizations of New Zealand. Observance of the Year has been a positive and productive exercise. The emphasis has been on the "participation" element of the International Youth Year slogan. Much remains to be done, but much has been achieved. New Zealand is fortunate in that to a degree a youth perspective was already incorporated in many areas of our social fabric. There are special programmes for youth in such areas as continuing education, justice, labour and cultural awareness. Moreover, since 1981 a special branch within the Department of Internal Affairs has published two major studies: "Youth: A Statistical Profile" and "Youth and the Law", in recognition of International Youth Year. A positive environment was therefore already present in which International Youth Year could take place.

International Youth Year activities in the voluntary sector have been co-ordinated by the New Zealand National Youth Council. The Council's focus for International Youth Year has been on stimulating activity within local organizations and communities. A financial grant from the Government in November 1983 enabled the Council to appoint an officer to liaise with non-government organizations and to co-ordinate International Youth Year activities up to the end of 1986. The National Youth Council magazine, Poutama, has served as another important communication channel on activities for International Youth Year. It is distributed to schools and youth organisations and centres. The title of this magazine is taken from a Maori wall panel design in which the rising steps of the

(Ms. Hillyer, New Zealand)

poutama represent higher achievement, learning and development. The Youth Services Distribution Committee, in addition to its usual operations, received a special grant of \$100,000 from the New Zealand Lottery Board to fund International Youth Year projects. Some of the projects that have been undertaken in New Zealand by non-governmental organizations to celebrate International Youth Year include a National Youth Poster and Photography Competition, youth forums, radio training courses for young people and young women's leadership courses. A highly successful telethon was held in June this year for the Child and Youth Development Trust. It raised upwards of \$NZ 6 million, representing \$2 for every man, woman and child in New Zealand.*

* The President took the Chair.

(Ms. Hillyer, New Zealand)

Te runanga rangatahi is a Government programme to promote the networking of Maori youth. Networking for youth has been the major thrust of the Government for International Youth Year. It involves improving the channels of communication between young people. 1985 has seen the approval of the establishment of a network of regional youth councils. The Government expects that these regional youth councils, some 12 to 15 in number, will eventually be operating in all parts of the country. These councils should serve to establish a system by which local Government can become more aware of youth needs and youth issues in their regions. The councils will advise the Government on channelling financial assistance to youth projects. The membership of the councils will consist of young people representative of the local area in terms of sex and ethnic groups, and the membership of structured and unstructured youth organizations. The establishment of these councils will be an important and enduring monument to International Youth Year. They will assist the flow of information between the Government and youth organizations and promote co-operation to improve the lives of young people.

The way has already been paved by the founding, late last year, of the Youth Advisory Committee by the Minister of Internal Affairs. Consisting of 10 members from the voluntary youth sector and two representatives from local government, its purpose is to consult and advise the Government and its agencies on issues of concern to youth, to promote, in fact, greater participation by young people in the decision-making process.

The ultimate test of the efficacy of International Youth Year will not be what took place in 1985. It will be what endures in each country beyond the calendar observance of the Year - not just in terms of institutions or activities, but in terms of changed attitudes to the place of youth in our societies.

I began by quoting an observation which recognized the changing balance of strengths between the generations. If the prescience of Tamehau Mahupuku becomes widely accepted, the observance of this Youth Year will have been justified.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Before I give the floor to the next speaker, I would like to announce a matter of true urgency and gravity. Consequently, I would request permission of the Assembly to interrupt this meeting on International Youth Year to move on to a matter of considerable urgency. If there is no objection I shall proceed in that way.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND
ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: FOURTH REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/40/250/Add.3)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The General Assembly will now consider the fourth report of the General Committee, which has been circulated in document A/40/250/Add.3. In paragraph 2 (a) of the report, the General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled "International relief to Colombia". May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include that item in its agenda?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Consequently, this afternoon the Assembly will take up as its first item this question, the urgent nature of which is a matter of which all representatives are aware as a result of the eruption of the volcano Nevado del Ruiz. I hope the discussion will not take very long and that we will be able to adopt the relevant draft resolution.

I should like to thank the Assembly for permitting this brief interruption of our debate on International Youth Year.

UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR
(PLENARY MEETINGS DEVOTED TO POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO
YOUTH IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 39/22 OF 23 NOVEMBER 1984)

AGENDA ITEMS 89 AND 95 (continued)

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE; REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE (A/40/855)

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH; REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE (A/40/856)

Mr. KABANDA (Rwanda) (interpretation from French): On behalf of the delegation of Rwanda and of my Government, allow me to express our deep condolences to the delegation and people of Colombia on the disaster which has just stricken Colombia - a second disaster, barely a fortnight after the attack on the Colombian Court of Justice, in which many people died. Yesterday the volcano Nevado del Ruiz erupted and many people have been killed.

International Youth Year, with its slogan "Participation, Development, Peace," is coming to an end. Its record has been a positive one.

The problems of young people have been dealt with in discussions among Governments and among young people themselves. There can be no doubt that International Youth Year has made it possible for both groups to be more aware of the political, economic, social and cultural contributions which young people can make to the development of our societies. This greater awareness is itself a substantial result.

We have thus gone beyond the conservative attitude of certain adults who previously considered young people to be merely making demands or challenging institutions, and to be irresponsible reformists or simply trouble-makers.

This conservative attitude led to unthinking judgements on the "natural" tendencies of young people throughout history and at all levels of society; sometimes this was based on isolated facts, but it resulted in a defensive reaction

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

among young people, and when this defensive reaction becomes collective, confrontation between young people and adults, or between young people and Governments, becomes inevitable. Those responsible for this refuse to pay the proper attention to young people; it is the society of those who wish to protect the hallowed order, the political, economic, social or cultural "establishment", as the case may be, or all of these at the same time.

When they are not understood or feel snubbed, young people attempt to make themselves heard by other means and the results are often to be deplored.

Each generation can count its martyrs, it is true, and conflicts between generations have produced a sizable number of martyrs in good causes throughout history.

If conflicts between generations are inevitable in view of the nature of society and the difference between the scales of values involved, nevertheless everything should be done to reduce these conflicts to the minimum.

When considered properly, the claims and criticisms uttered by young people often reflect deep aspirations which are not being satisfied by societies or Governments; they often have a basis of truth, which can be a source of inspiration for adults, particularly for those in positions of authority.

The policies of adults and our economic orientation, indeed our institutions, sometimes require new light and fresh blood.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

When they enjoy the confidence of the adults and have the wherewithal, young people can often show that they can be useful to themselves and to society. International Youth Year, with its theme "Participation, Development, Peace", will have made it possible for us to recognize this fact.

It is not my intention to defend young people in the face of conservatism and the outdated attitudes of certain adults but to emphasize the complementarity of relations that should exist between generations.

While one can say that adults are now more aware of the role young people can play in national life, it can also be said that young people for their part - thanks especially to the theme of the Year, "Participation, Development, Peace" - have come to understand that they cannot build upon the ashes of the past or the present but, rather, that they must draw maximum benefit from the wise counsels and advice of adults according to the old saying: experience is the mother of science. Thus both will be working to build solid nations the structures of which will be renewed as its component segments are regenerated.

As a member of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, Rwanda has stepped up its activities to intensify and diversify its actions for young people. In spite of the inherent difficulties in the limited resources at our disposal, we can affirm that the record is positive and that follow-up action is assured.

Young people have been involved at all levels. Those who are still in secondary, higher or university level training institutions, those who live in urban centres or in rural areas - all have in one way or another been involved in the activities scheduled for International Youth Year in the design, planning and execution of projects or programmes. Young people's workshops have been set up around the country to supplement already existing facilities. Charitable institutions and non-governmental organizations have provided support for youth

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

activities in rural areas, since it is the young people in these areas who are the most numerous and whose problems are the most complex.

It is fitting to note here that young people under 25 in Rwanda make up more than half the total population of 6 million. Approximately 40 per cent of these young people are at school, others are employed in the public or private sector, in education or in business. But the bulk of the young people, who have not been to school or have left school, are living in rural areas. The school population does not in reality pose a problem, since they have the facilities that enable them to prepare to meet the responsibility they will have to bear in the society of the future.

The contributions of students in secondary, higher and university learning institutions on the occasion of International Youth Year have shown that young people have a wealth of imagination and can produce commendable initiatives. Over and above their school and academic activities, many of them have concerned themselves with problems of the environment: the protection of nature and hygienic conditions. Others have been involved in literacy campaigns to help young people who have not been to school while others still are helping in activities for young people in the rural areas. During the holidays the majority of young people remain with their parents; they work in the fields or they observe their parents who are in business in order to learn and familiarize themselves.

To direct the activities of the rural youth population, the Government has set up in each regional and local administration officials experienced in questions concerning young people, particularly agricultural co-operatives or arts and craft, not to mention leisure activities.

Young people in the rural areas are active in the fight against deforestation. This is a phenomenon that has become widespread in Rwanda, as in several other African countries. It should be noted here that in 1976 the Government set up a

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

"National Day of the Tree". Thus the last day of October each year is devoted to involving all the citizens of Rwanda, men and women, in planting at least one tree in their field or in areas set aside for community participation. This reforestation campaign is gradually spreading, and we are happy to mention that the diplomatic corps accredited to Rwanda has voluntarily associated itself with this national effort to combat deforestation. We very much appreciate this significant gesture of international solidarity.

During International Youth Year - "Participation, Development, Peace" - the Ministry of Youth and the co-operative movement organized, inter alia, competitions for our young people. The results have been outstanding. The competitions were in the fields of agriculture, handicrafts, culture and sports. The best results were rewarded by prizes that were as varied as they were interesting.

In the agricultural sphere - for Rwanda's economy is primarily agricultural - the objective of the competition was to inspire young people to produce more and thus contribute to an increase in national production, above all during International Youth Year. All young people both individually and in groups have been involved.

An exhibit-sale of non-perishable products was organized with a triple objective in mind: to show other young people, parents and the public at large the fruits of the efforts of youth in the agricultural and handicraft areas; to allow the competitors to sell their products; and to award prizes to the best producers.*

The Ministry of Youth and the co-operative movement organized with young people during International Youth Year folklore activities designed to stress the beauty and variety of the culture of Rwanda. Selective groups on the local level went to the major cities of the regions to receive prizes rewarding the best groups.

* Mr. Agius (Malta), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

There exist in Rwanda a national ballet and private ballet groups bringing together young people and adults of both sexes who sometimes go on tours abroad as part of exchange programmes with young people of other countries.

Indeed, participation should not be limited to local, regional or even national levels but should also exist in a broader framework. Thus, by making it possible for our young people to fraternize with young people of other countries, we are contributing to the creation of a more open and more united world where fraternity among peoples and the ideal of peace must prevail.

A great spirit of creativity was shown in a literature competition which was begun among the young people as early as April 1984.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

This competition took place in the national language or in French, and was designed to extol the tripartite theme of the International Youth Year: "Participation, Development, Peace". To ensure spontaneity and creativity each young competitor had to choose the literary genre which most suited him. The results more than met our hopes; they were simply outstanding.

A music competition was also organized in April 1984, and the prize-winning songs on the theme of the year, "Participation, Development, Peace", were not only appropriately rewarded but also broadcast on the national radio stations, and that was done throughout International Youth Year.

Sport, that favourite activity of young people, was given high priority, and the Department of Youth took pains to act as a trail-blazer by introducing completely new sports disciplines, in particular those in which adults could participate as well. Mass sports were given priority.

Finally, Youth Day this year coincided with the harvest holiday, which, in Rwanda is celebrated on 1 August each year and has been for three years now. On that day, 1 August, parents and children share at home the traditional offerings and, as a gesture of gratitude, the children offer to their parents the first fruits of their harvest or of their work.

While ensuring promotion and encouragement of the activities of young people, the Government of Rwanda is aware of the danger of turning young people into an isolated group as regards development. The Government, duly taking into account the nature and structure of our society, is asking regional and national planners to integrate the activities of young people in development into overall programmes. That will allow us to avoid or reduce to a minimum any discrepancies between various sectors of the population thus resulting in a single people, a single faith, a single programme. This programme, as regards Rwanda, can be

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

summed up as follows: better food; better clothing; better housing; and better opportunities for physical, intellectual and moral development.

Whether we are dealing with young people enrolled in schools, young people working in public agencies, young people in the job market or engaged in professional activities, whether we are speaking of rural workers or the unemployed in urban centres, everyone now has become aware or is becoming aware of the problems of his own group. But none of these problems can be resolved without the involvement of the young people themselves. For this reason, the dialogue set up during International Youth Year, which is now coming to a close, must be pursued, for any slackening would clearly be extremely harmful.

In some areas the needs have been clearly pinpointed. Youth has become aware of its opportunities and of the importance of its role in economic, social and cultural development, but often it does not have the means to act. Its projects also often remain mere cherished hopes. It is for public agencies, but also for all who can do so, to make such means available, for the challenge of reducing the unemployment of young people to a minimum must be met; for such unemployment results in those social ills of our time that we so deplore, such as drug addiction, banditry, crime, vagrancy, social unrest and so forth.

Young people have become aware of their duties, but also of their rights. No effort should be spared to ensure that young people have the opportunity for education. Here I must note, however, that some countries have limited means. One such is Rwanda, which, in addition to being among the least developed countries, has an extremely serious demographic problem. Despite our will to do so, we are not able to enrol in school all children of school age or to train all those young people who drop out of school. Assistance by the international community in the area of education and training, as of course in other areas, remains essential.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

While, despite that, we can say that in Rwanda International Youth Year was a success and that we achieved the objective which we set for that Year, we are aware that we need to preserve the gains of the Year so that its close will not mark the end of an ideal but rather the beginning of a new era, an era of collective and integrated development.

On both the national and the international level, it is important to provide for or to maintain follow-up machinery and periodic meetings to take stock of the situation regarding the application of the guiding principles - those principles to which our Government, in response to the appeal of the General Assembly, which no doubt will adopt them, is committed to give effect.

Mr. COHEN (United States of America): Before I begin my prepared statement, I should like to state, on behalf of the United States Government and people, that our hearts today go out to the people of Colombia at this time of immense calamity. The United States, along with others we are very sure, is sending help today - helicopters, tents, disaster relief experts. We know that all wish to assist the Government and people of Colombia in overcoming this enormous tragedy at this time.

What my delegation has to say today will perhaps be a little different from some of the statements we have heard over the past several days in the plenary meetings. My statement will not be filled with reams of statistics about the numbers of soccer fields or libraries or how many young people are in graduate school in the United States. The opportunities offered to young people in the United States are universally known and attested to by the hundreds of thousands of people who come each year to build a future for themselves and their families. Instead, my delegation wants to talk about the aspirations of America's young people and our thoughts about the themes of International Youth Year: peace, participation, development.

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

In making these remarks, I am not only speaking for myself and my colleagues on this delegation; I am also speaking as the President of the United States Youth Council and the Chairman of the United States Commission for International Youth Year, which collectively represent over 200 American youth organizations and nearly 50 million young people.

Unlike many other countries, youth organizations in the United States are largely private, not Government-sponsored. This means they are privately funded, privately organized and privately controlled. Their leadership represents the views of their individual members. They are not dictated to from above. Our delegation, therefore, feels that a conference about youth at the United Nations should be a conference by youth.

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

We begin by recalling that International Youth Year was an initiative brought to the United Nations by the Government of Romania, and we owe it a debt of gratitude. We do thank it.

In thinking about this Conference, what strikes us as most important is the crucial link between the three basic themes and individual human freedoms. In fact, this link is so strong as to be indivisible. The freedom of the individual human person is so crucial to economic development and international understanding that it becomes the basis for peace. Young people have as great, if not greater, a stake in these goals more than anyone else, because it is for the young people that the future will be built.

Young people in the United States believe that the basis for peace in the world is international understanding and freedom, and we would like to continue to do our part to achieve those ideals. Understanding among young people is best fostered by the freest kind of information and exchange. This kind of freedom means the freedom to associate with whomever one chooses. It means the ability voluntarily to join student associations, trade unions and religious organizations. It includes the opportunity to express views freely - not only political viewpoints but to express freely artistically and religiously as well. It means education without indoctrination, to prepare young people to make free choices. And, finally, it means freedom of movement in and out of one's country, so that young people can meet others and learn to appreciate for themselves the diverse cultures and heritage that the world has to offer.

In the United States those freedoms are not the prerogatives of just a chosen few, but are the universal right of each individual person - nurtured and protected for over 200 years of our history. Those concepts are certainly not unique to the

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

United States; they are easily recognized and understood by every person, regardless of his or her place in life or country of origin. People naturally seek liberty and free expression; it can never be forced upon them.

Indeed, my delegation is heartened to see those concepts referred to in paragraph 7 of the "Guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth", which points out that the basis of peace is educating young people

"... in the spirit of respect for the dignity and worth of the human person, for tolerance, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion..." (A/40/256, p. 18)

There are some people who find such a system which permits each person to go his own way an invitation to chaos. We believe, however, that this diversity is far from being a problem; it is an opportunity. It is an opportunity for each person to develop and grow to his fullest potential.

Nowhere are the benefits of this approach more evident than in the area of economic development. As President Reagan said to a delegation of American youth in a ceremony for International Youth Year at the White House:

"History shows that progress takes its greatest strides when people are free to worship, create, build and invest - when they can decide their own destiny and benefit from their own risks. The dream of human progress through freedom is still the most revolutionary idea in the world today. And it is also the most successful."

Young people everywhere naturally are concerned with the future. It does no good to talk about lofty principles for the future if those same principles do not promote a better life. There are many places in the world today where the standard of living never changes from one generation to another. Yet we in the United States double the standard of living for our people every 25 years. That is the result of a free market economy which seeks to allow and indeed encourages individual human enterprise to the greatest possible extent.

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

To some, it may seem contradictory, but it is nevertheless true that by relying so much on individual initiative we actually create the greatest benefit for society as a whole.

Reliance on individual initiative and achievement is not the basis for economic development only but for political participation in society as well. This means that to participate fully in society each person must be free to make his own choices - not merely to participate in decisions made for him by others.

Participation by command or order, participation which is scripted and controlled is for puppets; it is not for people. As the youth guidelines before us state:

"Participation means the recognition throughout society that each person has the potential of judging and deciding matters that concern his or her life and has every opportunity of doing so." (Ibid., p. 17, para. 4)

Young people everywhere are particularly concerned about that. They are extremely sensitive to manipulation and exploitation. They want to participate in society through organizations which they themselves create and run - not those created or managed for them by the State.

As we reach the conclusion of International Youth Year with its theme "Participation, development, peace", we are indeed inspired by the meetings that we have attended, the ideas we have exchanged and the experiences we have shared.

In April of this year many attended a very unique event. Young people from democratic countries all over the world gathered in Kingston, Jamaica, to affirm their belief in democratic principles. If there is one message that summarizes the hundreds of statements made at this Conference it is: What distinguishes a State based on freedom is the ability of its citizens, old and young, to choose. In such a State there is a special social contract between people and Government, a

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

contract that enables the people to enjoy the right to self-determination - a right enshrined in the United Nations Charter - through a political, legal and social system which protects the inherent dignity of all. That kind of Government need never fear what its people will do with its freedoms. Under that kind of Government prisons will be for those who commit crimes and asylums for those who are mentally ill - they would not become the home of writers, poets, artists and teachers.

As we reach the end of International Youth Year, we are indeed inspired by the meetings that we have attended, the ideas we have exchanged and the experiences we have shared. At the same time, we are deeply saddened by the knowledge that in many parts of the world there are young people who cannot freely take part in the celebrations of International Youth Year. They cannot share their hopes and dreams with us because their spiritual and even physical survival is threatened.

I am thinking about millions of Afghans in refugee camps in Pakistan, driven from their homes and country by military invasion and occupation, driven from their places of worship in fear. These Afghans now create the single largest concentration of refugees anywhere in the world today.

I have thoughts about the young Khmer, who live perilously from day to day in refugee camps along the Thai-Cambodian border, shelled by the artillery of a foreign Power colonizing their country.

I am deeply concerned and thinking about the brutal treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union who have been arrested, harassed and imprisoned for trying to practise and teach their religion and language to their children. My concern extends to the Pentecostals, Baptists and others, harassed, arrested and imprisoned - action which is completely in violation of the United Nations Declaration against All Forms of Religious Intolerance, adopted here by the General Assembly, in this very hall, but a short three years ago.

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

The young people of the United States - the first anti-colonialist Power in history - have had passed down to them through generations a belief in the right of the people to define their own destiny. Because of that heritage our hearts go out especially to the young people of South Africa, the victims of apartheid. They have not inherited one of the most basic rights that we know - the right to citizenship in their own country.

While I cannot speak as a member of any one of those groups, surely I can speak on behalf of what I know are their aspirations, because they are the same as our aspirations: freedom, justice, participation, development, and peace.

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

I cannot think of a better way to end my remarks than by quoting the words of Andrei Sakharov, a Noble laureate held in the highest esteem by the young people of America, who very neatly summed up our aspiration for peace so well when he said:

"International trust, mutual understanding, disarmament and international security are inconceivable without an open society with freedom of information, conscience, the right to publish, travel, and choose the country in which one wishes to live."

Mr. KURACHI (Japan): The twenty-first century is approaching, and I think it timely and profoundly meaningful that the United Nations decided to designate this year, 1985, as International Youth Year in order to draw world-wide attention to the various problems relating to youth, on whose shoulders rest the future of mankind.

The situation of youth varies from country to country, but I am confident that exchanging experiences and views relating to youth at this conference will be of value to us when we consider policies and programmes in our own countries, and that it will therefore contribute greatly to the promotion of activities relating to youth problems.

I should like to refer briefly to Japan's policies and programmes for youth. Surrounded by the sea and with few natural resources, Japan desires world peace and freedom, and desires also that its human resources might be endowed with a spirit of independence, with creativity, aspirations, and diligence, in order that it may make progress in many fields. With this in mind, the Government of Japan, in close co-operation with local governments and non-governmental organizations, has developed its youth-related policies and programmes in various fields such as education, labour, employment, health, sanitation, moral education, prevention of juvenile delinquency, and international exchange.

(Mr. Kurachi, Japan)

As a result, opportunities for youth to receive an appropriate education and to be employed have greatly increased, and working and educational conditions have also been greatly improved. The situation of youth in Japan, together with economic growth, has undergone major changes, and the living standards for young people, including their level of income and consumption, has therefore risen in many fields.

For example, in the field of education, it has become possible to increase the number of years of education most young people receive. Educational institutions and the very content of education have been improved. As a result, opportunities for youth to develop their abilities have increased remarkably. For example, the proportion of lower secondary school graduates entering upper secondary schools rose to 94 per cent in 1983 from 70.7 per cent in 1965.

In the field of health and sanitation, various improvements have been made. For example, the low death rate, the number of deaths per 1,000 population, of 15 to 19-year-olds, decreased from .68 in 1965 to .501 in 1983.

In the field of labour and employment, in addition to its previous programmes and policies, the Government of Japan adopted the Working Youth Welfare Law in 1970. On the basis of that law, we have been taking administrative measures to promote the welfare of working youth, such as the promotion of vocational training and the establishment and enlargement of welfare institutions. We have been improving institutions relating to youth other than schools and workshops in the fields of sport, public education, and recreation, in order to make it possible for young people to educate themselves and to be more conscious of their role as citizens of Japan.

Furthermore, in the field of international exchange activities, we have been carrying out an increasing number of programmes, in addition to supporting activities conducted by youth organizations themselves. Those programmes are

(Mr. Kurachi, Japan)

designed to promote international understanding and co-operation and a deepening of mutual understanding among the youth of the world.

For example, we have been inviting foreign students and technical trainees to Japan, and dispatching Japan overseas co-operation volunteers.

As I mentioned before, youth policy covers a wide range of activities and has many dimensions, but those activities must be planned and conducted in a unified and well-organized way.

To accomplish this, we have established a Youth Affairs Administration headed by a Cabinet Minister.

International Youth Year should be regarded as part of the continuing concern every country feels for its youth.

I have already mentioned youth policies and programmes that have been promoted in Japan. I think International Youth Year presents an opportunity to continue and develop those activities. My Government established a National Coordinating Committee in February 1984 in accordance with the guidelines for the specific programmes of International Youth Year, established by the Advisory Committee, in which Japan has taken part as a member.

The Co-ordinating Committee, headed by the Prime Minister, is made up of some 30 private members, including representatives of youth and youth organizations and government members.

(Mr. Kurachi, Japan)

Local governments have also actively participated in the activities of International Youth Year this year. In every prefecture an organization for the promotion of International Youth Year was established with its own particular characteristics and priorities, and various programmes have been held for the revitalization of the prefecture and the promotion of the participation of youth in the development of their own society.

Youth organizations, considering International Youth Year an opportunity to strengthen their activities, have participated in the preparations for and observance of International Youth Year. In particular, a non-governmental organization consisting of 54 major youth organizations was established for the promotion of International Youth Year.

The co-ordinating committee drew up a set of basic guidelines for the activities for International Youth Year. Since the theme of International Youth Year is "participation, development and peace", the major objectives of that set of guidelines are: promotion of the participation of youth in social activities; promotion of medical, physical and education programmes for youth; promotion of concern and understanding among youth for the development of science, technology and culture; promotion of mutual understanding among youth through international exchange activities and co-operation.

In accordance with that set of guidelines, a number of programmes have been planned and carried out with creativity and ingenuity by young people themselves. All over Japan forums and campaigns have been held relating to youth, focusing especially on its role as we approach the twenty-first century.

"International Youth Village", a 10-day assembly of 800 young people from 40 countries, held in Tokyo in July of this year, was hailed as the most significant event held in Japan in connection with International Youth Year.

(Mr. Kurachi, Japan)

Later this month a central youth forum will be held with the aim of reviewing and appraising the activities of International Youth Year. I can already say, however, that International Youth Year has been a great success because it has contributed to the awareness of young people of how vital their activities are to their society and because it has strengthened co-operation among youth organizations.

The United Nations Trust Fund for International Youth Year was established to provide financial assistance to projects relating to youth in developing countries. My Government, which is actively involved in international co-operation activities, regards the goals of the Fund as most important, and it is therefore making a contribution of \$100,000.

To repeat, the twenty-first century is drawing near, and we are already experiencing rapid and unprecedented changes such as the aging of society, the advancement of science and technology, with the resultant changes in industrial and employment structure, and a process of internationalization that has occurred along with the expansion of international trade. We must meet the challenge of those changes and establish a vigorous and prosperous society.

Japan has been actively engaged in the activities of International Youth Year, both national and international. With the objectives of International Youth Year fully in mind, we should like to promote the participation of youth in the development of human society and the realization of world peace, and thus contribute to the establishment of a more prosperous international society through international co-operation.

In conclusion, Japan has high expectations of this United Nations World Conference, and I hope and trust that the outcome of the Conference will lead every country to take appropriate and constructive measures in this very important field.

Mr. AHMED (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation wishes to join other delegations in expressing condolences to the Government and people of Colombia on the tremendous loss that has befallen them as a result of the volcanic eruption.

This year we are all celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the victory over fascism as well as the establishment of the United Nations - two events that were simultaneous and intertwined. The consequences of the war, the material and human devastation, provided a strong motivation for the international community at the time to push forward for the establishment of this cardinal international organization, by whose principles and purposes we firmly abide. Our Organization was founded to ward off the threat of war, to find a language of common understanding that would help spare humanity another war. The celebrations of this year have now been crowned by the World Conference for the International Youth Year, an event that reaffirms the heightened importance of youth in the world.

(Mr. Ahmed, Democratic Yemen)

The Year has been marked by many varied events, activities and festivals. The numerous countries that have participated in those activities include my own, which acted as host to a regional meeting of Arab youth and students last March. We also participated actively and effectively in the twelfth World Festival of Youth and Students held in Moscow in August this year.

The preparations for, and commemoration of, the Year have created a useful and important opportunity to direct attention to the situation of youth, their needs and aspirations. International Youth Year has made possible efforts at the national, regional and international levels, and we must follow up the practical implementation of its results.

Brother Ali Nasser Mohammed, Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Yemen Socialist Party and Chairman of the Presidium of the People's Supreme Council, said in his statement on the occasion of International Youth Year:

"My country reaffirms the fact that the rights of youth are closely linked to the right of peoples to self-determination, national independence and social progress. This is a close link that cannot be separated from the struggle for peace and ensuring a peaceful and happy future for youth."

If we accept the increasing importance of youth's direct participation in the task of shaping the future of mankind, in such a way as to allow youth to participate in all aspects of life and all sectors, the world of today imposes urgent tasks. We cannot foresee the future when the present is affected by unemployment, ignorance, disease, displacement, oppression, discrimination and despair, a present which reaffirms that the future cannot be bright if it is based on foundations of that kind. Therefore, we have a series of tasks and principles which must be taken seriously so that youth may participate with all their potential creativity and energy in forging the future and achieving progress.

(Mr. Ahmed, Democratic Yemen)

The most obvious of these tasks involve achievement of the right to self-determination and national independence, respect for the sovereignty of all countries, non-interference or intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, the consolidation of international understanding and co-operation and the establishment of the basis of the new international economic order, so as to create fair international economic relations that can bridge the gap between countries and bring about the economic development of the developing world. That would ensure economic, social and cultural progress for all the peoples and allow youth to play their role in society in a peaceful manner, today and in the future.

We must not ignore the suffering of peoples, especially youth, in South Africa, Namibia and Palestine, under foreign occupation, which has resulted in the denial of freedoms, violence, arbitrariness, wanton killing, displacement and repression. The Conference cannot disregard the struggle waged by the Arab and African peoples of those regions to regain their right to self-determination. It must condemn such acts, stand up against inhuman practices and support the struggle of the Arab and African peoples of those regions. Nor can we ignore the shows of force by the United States - in the form of aggression and political, economic and military blockades - and its interference with the people's choices and with the people's insistence on their independence and the right to chart their future course of development. Events in Central America bear witness to that. It represents not only interference in the internal affairs of other countries, but also a violation of the right of those peoples to life.

Since one of the objectives of International Youth Year is peace, we wish to reaffirm the importance of that objective, without prejudice to, or sacrifice of, the two other objectives, because the realization of international peace and security is of paramount importance for the development and progress of peoples and

(Mr. Ahmed, Democratic Yemen)

for their stability. The factors causing most alarm include steps taken by imperialist countries to press ahead persistently with the arms race and open up new areas for it, including outer space. The arms race is a tremendous drain on the resources of peoples, and prejudices their development. It is also a danger to mankind as a whole, threatening a horrifying catastrophe in which youth would constitute the cannon fodder.

The youth of the world, especially in Europe, are demonstrating a growing awareness, as shown by their understanding that the arms race threatens international peace and security. Their response has been to establish wide-scale movements to oppose such threats. The peace movements which are sweeping Western Europe are a conscious and mature response by youth to the arms race and its consequences. Therefore, our Conference must denounce and condemn the arms race and call for averting its consequences. The international community must redouble its efforts to avoid such a danger to our world, especially when we are on the threshold of the International Year of Peace.

Youth in my country are an inexhaustible resource and the backbone of our transformation. The creative potential of the youth of our country, their perseverance, their struggle and their firm belief in our cause have helped us to take our future in hand. Furthermore, the youth movement of Democratic Yemen has been able to mobilize tens of thousands of our young people. We have organized them and directed their energies towards social, economic and cultural development. The Youth Union of Democratic Yemen participates in the Presidium of the People's Supreme Council and local organizations, side by side with the trade unions and popular organizations. Thus youth have accumulated a wealth of experience, especially in youth activities, their implementation and diversification, as well as in voluntary participation in all walks of life.

(Mr. Ahmed, Democratic Yemen)

Yemeni youth have contributed significantly to a large-scale campaign to stamp out illiteracy, which was recently crowned with success. Although resources are scarce in my country, we still guarantee the right to free education at all levels, as well as vocational and technical training, as well as the right to work and participate in organizations, without discrimination or any form of exploitation.

The Youth Union of Democratic Yemen succeeded in enhancing its role in various development fields within the country alongside trade unions and popular organizations, and externally it maintains wide-ranging ties with many regional and international organizations as well as fraternal and friendly youth organizations. That enables our Union to engage in broad exchanges of experience with such organizations in the field of youth, and opens up new possibilities of co-operation.

Finally, I wish to refer to the important document adopted by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year at its fourth session in Vienna, which provided a series of important guidelines and constructive proposals for future action to improve the situation of youth and ensure their rights and interests and effective participation in social development.

(Mr. Ahmed, Democratic Yemen)

It is of paramount importance that International Youth Year signal the genuine start of an examination of the problems, concerns and hardships of youth. That will come about only if there is a true understanding of the purposes and goals of International Youth Year and if efforts are made to translate them into action.

Mr. MAHMOUD (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I wish at the outset to convey to the Colombian delegation my delegation's sincere condolences upon the hardships caused by yesterday's volcanic eruption, which caused the death or displacement of thousands of people.

This World Conference for the International Youth Year coincides with the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations, an Organization committed to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to uniting the strength of its Members to maintain international peace and security. But when we review the painful world situation over these 40 years, especially as regards young people, we can see that young people are the most vulnerable to that scourge.

Young people as a group are exposed more than others to a world situation beset by pain and pessimism, characterized by happiness or hardship, prosperity or destitution, freedom or oppression. Since they are better qualified than others to bear the burden of maintaining world stability, it is they who must shoulder the responsibility of nation-building to ensure a creative contribution to the transformation and construction of their societies and to unleash their own potentialities to that end.

It was in that vein that the President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, addressed the youth of the world when he inaugurated our national programme on International Youth Year.

My delegation firmly believes that in no society can the process of development be divorced from the process of peace. It is on that that I shall

(Mr. Mahmoud, Iraq)

focus, for the young people of my country are paying their share of the price in the war thrust upon them more than five years ago. That war has entered its sixth year, and our young people have no choice but to defend the sanctity and sovereignty of their country in the face of Iran's insistence on continuing the war and on disregarding all appeals for peace from the peace-loving circles of the world.

Iraq believes that all countries have the right to live in peace based on justice and freedom. No people can live in peace when it toils under the yoke of repression and occupation.

This Conference should call upon Iran to respond to appeals for peace, and to put a rapid end to the war, the main victims of which are the youth of both countries.

Our Arab region has long been an arena for bloody conflicts exacerbated by bloodthirsty racist interests. Israel persists in its expansionist policies, its displacement of the Arab people of Palestine, and its liquidation of that people through mass murder and inhuman persecution. These have lately reached as far as Tunisia.

Such suffering is the lot also of the black majority in South Africa and Namibia. Young people in those places suffer the oppression of abominable white racism; they are banished from their own land, which is occupied; they are harassed. Such actions have spread as far as Angola, Mozambique and Botswana.

In our view, the youth of those areas cannot participate in International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace, when they are denied their most fundamental rights, including their right to live in peace in their own homeland. How can we speak of participation when they undergo the worst forms of exploitation? Just, lasting and comprehensive peace is a prerequisite for

(Mr. Mahmoud, Iraq)

progress, and a basic condition for assuring the rights and interests of young people in all countries.

It is the responsibility of the United Nations to find solutions to all these problems. We call for solidarity among the young people of the world. All of us, especially in the third world, must join ranks to foster conditions propitious for justice, freedom and peace.

My delegation is among the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/40/L.3, for it reflects our strong conviction that youth is important to all societies. That draft resolution, which the Third Committee adopted by consensus a few days ago, stresses the importance of active participation by youth in activities organized on the local and national levels. We in Iraq believe that young people are the builders of the future. As President Saddam Hussein has said, we must win youth over in order to secure the future.

In recent years, the situation of young people in Iraq has undergone a major transformation, thanks to the great efforts of the General Union of Iraqi Students and Youth and the Ministry of Youth, both of which have provided the necessary cadres, facilities and means for carrying out mobilization and educational activities for youth. This has led to active participation by Iraqi youth in all the activities organized in observance of International Youth Year by Iraq's national committee on the subject. Moreover, my country has participated in various international activities and festivals.

Iraq believes that channels of communication should be kept active to strengthen the bond among the youth of the world, so that they may gain a better understanding of one another's problems and thus work to reach the lofty goals of this international Organization.

We must make every effort to protect the Organization, so that we may build a better world, in which friendship, harmony and peace prevail.

Mr. NYAMUDAHONDO (Zimbabwe): It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to address the Assembly on the very important subject before us. This is indeed a historic occasion, in that we are gathered here today from all over the world to pay a special tribute to all our young people, to share their problems and aspirations and to develop further the spirit of co-operation and unity which our young people are trying tirelessly to foster amongst all our peoples.

For my country, Zimbabwe, the 1980s differ qualitatively from the 1960s and the 1970s. Those were the decades of our armed struggle for national independence, a struggle in which so many of our young people took part so prominently and heroically. We are glad that the goal has now been achieved. Our youth is now faced with the great challenge of consolidating our independence and effecting the process of transformation that is necessary for our country's social and economic development. The role of youth in the social and economic transformation of my country is as vital now as it was during our national liberation struggle.

(Mr. Nyamudahondo, Zimbabwe)

Realizing the importance of youth, the Government of Zimbabwe created a Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture and entrusted it with several important tasks, chief among which are the following: one, to mould our young people into more responsible and productive members of our young nation; two, to bring young people into Youth Brigades and effectively to set sound tasks for them, with their full participation; three, to give realistic and practical instructions geared to achieving the quick transformation of our rural population; four, to teach the Youth Brigades the policies of Government to equip them for their roles among the rural people; five, to broaden, improve and develop the skills of youth people for all aspects of development; six, to train young people to improve, assist and increase our agricultural ability to feed our people; and, seven, to engage young people in finding modalities to enhance the political will of our people always to defend their hard-won independence.

The Youth Brigades are also engaged in building houses, bridges and dams, in brick moulding, pig raising, dressmaking, well-digging, carpentry and plumbing. It is through such projects that we can hope to impart the necessary skills and provide employment for the large number of our unemployed young people in order that they can walk in dignity throughout their lives. As the Chinese proverb says, "If you give someone a fish, he will eat for a day, but if you teach him how to fish, he will eat for ever." With that in mind, we do not intend to give hand-outs to our young people, but we strongly believe in equipping them with all the necessary skills so that they can sustain themselves and their families for ever.

Our revolution has been - and, indeed, continues to be - a challenge to our young people. Our Youth League has a vital role to play in the development of our system of Government. The importance of the role youth must and does play in any given society requires no emphasis. I should like to take this opportunity to recall that a society that neglects its youth does so at its own peril. In Zimbabwe

(Mr. Nyamudahondo, Zimbabwe)

young people have already secured for themselves a prestigious place in our history through the decisive role they played in the national liberation struggle. They were the vanguard of our armed struggle and they also comprised the main body of our cadres. Without them, there would never have been freedom fighters, without freedom fighters there would never have been a struggle and without their struggle, freedom and independence would never have come as early as 18 April 1980.

The establishment of our Government through a democratic election was a very important step towards the laying of a firm foundation for the socio-economic transformation to follow. But a firm foundation by itself, however strong, does not constitute a complete whole. Thus, in the same way that young people were yesterday the vanguard of our national liberation struggle, so must they remain today and tomorrow the vanguard of our socio-economic transformation. I honestly cannot visualize any social, economic or political change - and I mean meaningful change - taking place without the full participation of young people. We must involve our young people in all issues that concern them and the society in which they live. The International Youth Year, whose theme is "Participation, Development, Peace", should be seen clearly as representing the wishes, desires and aspirations of youth. Let us address all issues and problems, including their causes, affecting the youth of today and seek some modalities for solving them.

The existing political climate that has been generated by youth should be exploited to the advantage of youth. That approach is particularly necessary since the Year has managed to focus attention of decision-making bodies and public opinion at all levels on the specific needs of youth and to undertake solutions to its problems. We hope that this World Conference for International Youth Year will offer all Member States the opportunity to consider in depth, for the first time, specific youth problems. We should address ourselves to issues such as drug addiction, immorality, violence, alcoholism, ignorance, unemployment and many other

(Mr. Lyanudahondo, Zimbabwe)

practices associated with juvenile delinquency. As youth will inherit the future and build on the foundation of the present, youth must be a full participant in laying that foundation. Education and training are therefore a necessity.

The youth of Zimbabwe will strengthen its solidarity with all other youth groups the world over. It will, as it has done in the past, work closely with all liberation movements still engaged in the forefront of the fight against racism, colonialism and imperialism. We have the experience of what it means to be a colony of another country. On its southern border Zimbabwe has a hostile neighbour, the racist régime of South Africa, which has arrogantly denied our brothers in Namibia and South Africa many fundamental human rights, including the right to self-determination. The recent senseless massacres of numerous civilians, women and children alike, in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town are clear testimony to Pretoria's ruthlessness, brutality and barbarism, designed to suppress the majority of the citizens of South Africa and finally liquidate the liberation movements in Namibia and South Africa. Such a strategy, moreover, will stop at nothing short of total entrenchment of the policies and practices of apartheid. Zimbabwe cannot but be outraged by those barbaric massacres and the mutilation of women and children whose only crime, if it be a crime at all, is the desire to enjoy the basic freedoms which, furthermore, are the backbone of our Organization. With this in mind, it is not enough for our young people to espouse pious intentions and engage in daydreams. They must therefore be bound together by a unity of purpose. They must be full participants in all issues that concern the world, including the eradication of apartheid, and they should at all costs be discouraged from being bystanders.

Governments should encourage and facilitate the training, education and participation of youth in both the Government and the private sectors. The experience of young people in all areas of development is of great importance to

(Mr. Nyamudahondo, Zimbabwe)

the development of our world. I should also mention briefly that exchange visits between young people are very vital, because it is only through such exchanges that mutual suspicion can be done away with. Zimbabwe deeply believes that if we pool our resources and our enormous scientific and technical know-how, we shall undoubtedly achieve our goal of maintaining peace, as was clearly stated by the founding fathers of the United Nations in the Charter of our Organization. We will do whatever we can to make the Organization a success.

We will play our part by extending our support to liberation movements throughout the world. My Government will continue to support the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), and we will continue to support our brothers in Namibia through their authentic liberation movement, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). We will continue to support the Saharaoui Democratic Republic and East Timor. Zimbabwe will also continue to support the Palestine Liberation Organization, whose efforts to establish a Palestinian homeland have been frustrated by Israel and its allies.

The young people of Zimbabwe strongly urge the two super-Powers to stop the arms race. The present capacity for total destruction of bombs in the possession of the two super-Powers alone, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is more than enough to wipe out every living organism, not only once but many times over. Yet the stockpiling, the perfecting and developing of such weapons of mass destruction is continuing, with some plans to base some of them in outer space. We hope this exercise will be stopped and that those vital resources will be channelled to more meaningful areas, such as the development of youth and other projects, in all our countries.

(Mr. Nyamudahondo, Zimbabwe)

My delegation is very much disturbed by the damage being done to youth by drugs. We urge all youth organizations, Government agencies and all enforcement agencies in all our countries and all related agencies to assist in disseminating information, including school textbooks, with a view to promoting understanding among the general public of the harmful effects of drugs and of the risks associated with drug abuse, particularly among young people, as well as discouragement of publications which stimulate drug abuse. There is a great need to collect and analyse all the information pertaining to this subject at the national, regional and international levels. Our joint effort to combat drug abuse in all its aspects will go a long way in serving our youth. Physicians, nurses and pharmacists also should encourage and use their influence with patients to support efforts to cope with psychic and social stress without recourse to drugs.

Allow me to place on record my delegation's appreciation to the Government of Romania for the vigour with which it has pursued its initiative for this International Youth Year, 1985. My delegation hopes that this firm foundation we have successfully established will be further enhanced in order to facilitate fully the youth programmes and projects under way throughout the world.

My statement would be incomplete if I failed to thank sincerely all youth organizations, agencies and Governments which have generously extended aid and expertise to our Youth League to enable it to build not only the infrastructure desperately needed but also education for youth.

I want to appeal to all, big and small, rich and poor, old and young, to pool their resources to make our world a better place for all. I would like to urge us all in marking the end of International Youth Year not to allow our ideological differences to retard progress. It is my delegation's hope that this meeting will not be the last of such meetings on important subjects like this. The young are the leaders of tomorrow. Their participation in all areas of development

(Mr. Nyamudahondo, Zimbabwe)

will undoubtedly enable us to develop our respective countries. Its youth is everything a country needs, provided its potentials and skills in all areas are put to practical, positive use to serve mankind.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIV) of 22 November 1974, I now call on the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mrs. BARGHOUT (Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)): First allow me to convey my delegation's condolences to the Government and people of Colombia in their recent tragedy.

It is a great pleasure for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to participate in the United Nations forum in connection with International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace.

The subject of youth, their activities and their future, is considered by the Palestinian people and their representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to be of immense importance and strategic value. Our main national resource is the human element, thus one of our investments has been and continues to be the advancement and welfare of our Palestinian youth. Of the Palestinian people in the areas under Israeli occupation, our youth constitutes a high percentage in comparison with that in other countries of the world: 78 per cent of our population is below the age of 34 and 58 per cent below 19 years of age, as indicated by the Statistical Abstract of Israel in occupied territories in 1984.

Due to the continuous displacement of the Palestinian people as a result of unceasing Israeli aggression, it is the younger generation, together with the elderly, which suffers most. The suffering of our Palestinian youth has deepened during the years of Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza Strip, where about half of the Palestinian population lives. Although the Palestinian community places great importance on education and the welfare of our

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youth - which, I would like to add, has often been reported by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other international institutions - Israel's racist policies work increasingly against our Palestinian youth. Israeli practices and policies against our people in the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly against our youth, have been reported by the United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices, and by other bodies such as UNRWA, Amnesty International and the International Red Cross. Dealing with the educational conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories, the report of the Group of Experts noted:

"It would appear that the occupying authorities through their action have created and sustained a feeling of insecurity among teachers and students in all educational institutions. The Experts were told of constant harassment of students and staff. These harassments took the form of frequent arrests, beatings, administrative detention and closure of schools."

The Israeli occupation authorities wage a systematic campaign of aggression and harassment against Palestinian youth. Their policy is geared towards the destruction of the political, economic and social infrastructure of Palestinian society. The closure of schools and universities is a common practice of the Israeli authorities. During last year alone, Al-Majah University was closed for four months on 30 July 1984; Bethlehem University was closed for four days on 31 October 1984; Ibn Sina Nursing College in Ramallah was closed for a week on 3 November 1984. On 21 November 1984, a Bir Zeit University student was shot and killed by the Israeli Army. On 1 and 2 March 1985 a large force of the Israeli Army attacked Bir Zeit University. Many students were injured. Fifty students and members of the faculty were arrested and taken to Fara'a prison. The area was declared a closed military zone. A few days later the new campus was ordered closed for two months. On 18 March 1985 the UNRWA training school in Qalandiya was

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ordered closed for a month. On 5 April 1985, 400 Border police stormed Ibrahimiyyeh College in Jerusalem and arrested 132 students. On 18 April 1985, Bethlehem University was again closed for four days. More than 3,000 books are banned from publication and circulation from the Palestinian market.

As another example of Israel's oppressive practices against our Palestinian youth, I would like to mention that since 1982, the Israeli occupation forces have maintained Fara'a prison - near the Palestinian city of Nablus - as a centre for the torture and interrogation of Palestinian students of all ages. I would refer here to the Palestine Liberation Organization's letter to the Secretary-General, circulated as an official document of the United Nations (A/39/548) on 4 October 1984. Under cover of our letter was an appeal, a cry from the heart, from our Palestinian youth imprisoned in Fara'a to the international community to pay heed to the inhuman conditions in which they are kept and the physical abuse to which they are subjected.

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According to the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz of 26 March 1984, the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights accused the Israeli occupation authorities of torture and brutality against Palestinian students in Fara'a Prison. They called the prison "A factory for extracting confessions". Yousef Al-Gazi, the Secretary of the League, told the press conference that during that week 23 Palestinian youths between 13 to 18 years of age from the Dheisheh refugee camp had been arrested and tortured during interrogation following a demonstration in the camp. The prison, more appropriately called a torture centre, was established by the former Chief of Staff, Rafael Eitan, as a punitive detention centre and placed under the supervision of the Israeli occupation forces.

In spite of all the difficult conditions and numerous problems confronting the Palestinian people, they have attained a high level of education. The total number of students enrolled in universities during 1984 was 13,108. One of the reasons for this high demand for education stems from the fact that the acts of oppression of 1948 and 1967 showed the Palestinian people that their education was about the only "capital" investment available for their future and for the welfare of their children. This has been well expressed by the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in his report, which states:

"Palestine refugee children's motivation to learn is remarkable; so are the support they receive from their parents and the dedication of the teachers."

With the co-operation of the World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Association, youth activities have been carried out in 38 refugee camps. During the past year, 13,654 young Palestinian refugees participated in these activities; 1,334 were boys under 16 years of age, who took part in self-improvement projects

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and recreation programmes. In the Israeli-occupied Palestinian West Bank five such centres were closed by the Israeli occupation authorities, and in the Gaza Strip one centre has been closed.

These practices and policies directed against our youth are accompanied by an equally racist economic policy aimed at increasing the burden and suffering of Palestinians living in the Israeli-occupied territories. The subject of the exploitation and abuses by the Israeli Government and enterprises of the Palestinian labour force and, in particular, of minors, has been discussed and reported by several international bodies. Recently, the International Labour Conference at its seventieth session reported on some of the Israeli practices against minor workers. Paragraph 58 of the report's appendices states:

"The phenomenon of irregular employment inevitably raises the problem of the employment of young people, to which previous reports of the Director-General have consistently given special attention. The authorities reminded the mission of the regulation stipulating that work permits may not be granted in Israel to young persons under 17 years of age. However, it is commonly held that the irregular employment of young persons far below this age is widespread, especially in agriculture and small undertakings. Arab sources refer to the employment of children aged 12 years and upwards from the occupied territories and estimate that 20 per cent of irregular workers are minors who entered the labour market without having received a secondary education." (International Labour Conference, 70th session, 1984: Report of the Director-General - Appendices, Appendix 3).

Moreover, paragraph 60 of the same report indicates that there is a wage differential of at least 50 per cent between Palestinian workers and Israeli workers doing the same job.

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The situation of Palestinian workers from the Israeli occupied territories employed in Israel is rapidly deteriorating. An examination of the developments since the last report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization suggests that:

"The extent of the phenomenon of irregular employment in Israel of Arab workers from the occupied territories remains disturbing, casting doubt on the aptness of the measures already adopted to combat it. There should be a reassessment of the efficacy of the preventive and repressive action taken so far and the necessary additional resources should be set aside for this purpose, especially with regard to the illegal employment of young Arab workers from the occupied territories."

The Secretary-General's report (A/40/256, para. 33) informs us Members of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year believed that the difficult situation of young people who lived under circumstances and institutionalized barriers beyond their control should be recognized. They expressed concern for youth suffering from war, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, apartheid, foreign aggression and occupation.

Consistent with this spirit, the Palestine Liberation Organization trusts that the Secretary-General will conduct a thorough study on Palestinian youth in the Israeli occupied territories with the purpose of alleviating their suffering and improving their economic, political and social conditions.

In spite of Israel's racist policies and practices, the Palestinian people will not be deterred from investing in a better future for its Palestinian youth.

The Palestine Liberation Organization will persevere in its efforts to help its youth attain their aspirations, and will continue its struggle to eliminate one of the obstacles, namely, Israeli occupation of its homeland.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.