to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council in 1999. The recommendations contained in the two documents were expected to form the basis for the discussion on youth policies and programmes at the February 1999 meeting of the Commission for Social Development.

**Ageing persons**

**International Year of Older Persons (1999)**

In a Proclamation on Ageing contained in its resolution 47/5 of 1992 [YUN 1992, p. 889], the General Assembly designated 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons. The overall objective of the Year was the promotion of the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, adopted by the Assembly in resolution 46/91 [YUN 1991, p. 698], which provided guidance in the areas of independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity. On 1 October 1998, the International Year was officially launched by the Secretary-General during a special ceremony at Headquarters.

**Report of Secretary-General.** In response to General Assembly resolution 52/80 [YUN 1997, p. 1227], the Secretary-General, in August [A/53/294], summarized preparations for observance of the International Year, including events planned by States, UN bodies and NGOs at the national and international levels. The report reviewed the core concepts behind the Year and explored issues to help develop further the concept of the Year's theme, "A society for all ages".

Worldwide events planned for the Year were highlighted according to an operational framework encompassing four dimensions: raising awareness; looking beyond 1999; reaching out to non-traditional actors; and networking, research and information exchange. Observance of the Year was to be guided by concepts and strategies based on recommendations contained in the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted in 1982 at the World Assembly on Ageing [YUN 1982, p. 1182]. Four main facets for debate and action during the Year were the situation of older persons, lifelong individual development, multigenerational relationships and the interplay of population ageing and development.

At the time of the report, 78 Governments had established focal points and/or national committees to prepare activities, and focal points had been established in a number of UN agencies and bodies. Within the UN system, the gender dimensions of a society for all ages were being mainstreamed in all agencies.

Regarding the Year's theme, the Secretary-General concluded that moving to a society for all ages would require policies that simultaneously strengthened individual lifelong development into late life, focused on self-help and independence, and fostered enabling environments of families, neighbourhoods, communities of interest and broad societal institutions based on principles of reciprocity and interdependence. The basic idea behind a society for all ages was that all age groups were equally worthy and that no age group should be discriminated against or especially favoured by society.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION**

The Economic and Social Council, by decision 1998/225 of 28 July, decided that the ad hoc informal open-ended support group to assist the Commission for Social Development in preparations for the International Year—in addition to its activities of promoting awareness and information exchange on preparations for the Year between States, the UN system and NGOs—would serve as an informal consultative forum for discussing national and international proposals and initiatives to help lay the groundwork for the discussion of the Year at the Commission's thirty-seventh (1999) session. The Council changed the support group's name to the Consultative Group for the International Year of Older Persons, keeping its informal and open-ended nature. The Council adopted the decision on the Commission's recommendation [E/1998/26].

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 9 December [meeting 85], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee [A/53/615], adopted resolution 53/109 without vote [agenda item 100].

**International Year of Older Persons, 1999**

The General Assembly,
Recalling its Proclamation on Ageing, in which, inter alia, it designated the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons,
Recalling also the conceptual and operational frameworks for the Year,
Convinced of the need to implement the International Plan of Action on Ageing and to promote adherence to the United Nations Principles for Older Persons,
Mindful of its resolution 40/30 of 29 November 1985, in which it expressed its conviction that older persons must be considered an important and necessary element in the development process at all levels within a given society,