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GENERAL

E/CONF.76/PC/7
27 July 1983

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON POPULATION, 1984
23-27 January 1984

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON POPULATION DISTRIBUTION,
MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

In response to resolution 1981/87 of the Economic and Social Council, the Expert Group on Population Distribution, Migration and Development was convened at Hammamet, Tunisia, from 21 to 25 March 1983 as part of the preparations for the International Conference on Population to be convened in Mexico from 6 to 13 August 1984. The findings of the Expert Group are summarized in this document as part of the background documentation to be submitted to the Population Commission acting as the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.

The Expert Group examined factors affecting population distribution and internal and international migration, their consequences and their relationships with development. The discussions covered conceptual approaches to internal and international migration, migration in relation to rural development and urbanization in developing and developed countries, population distribution policies and international migration trends and policies. The deliberations had as an essential perspective the goals of the World Population Plan of Action and specific policy measures that would promote the achievement of those goals. The recommendations covered: (a) population distribution and internal migration; (b) international migration; and (c) promotion of knowledge and policies.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1981/87 of 25 November 1981, decided to convene an international conference on population under the auspices of the United Nations to be devoted to the discussion of selected issues of the highest priority, giving full recognition to the relationships between population and social and economic development with the aim of contributing to the process of review and appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action and to its further implementation. ^{1/} The Council also authorized the Secretary-General to convene four expert groups as part of the preparatory activities.
2. Pursuant to that resolution the Secretary-General convened the Expert Group on Population Distribution, Migration and Development from 21 to 25 March 1983. At the invitation of the Government of Tunisia, the Expert Group meeting was held at Hammamet. The participants included 13 experts invited by the Secretary-General in their individual capacity; representatives of five regional commissions; the International Labour Organisation (ILO); the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS); the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the World Health Organization (WHO); the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); and representatives of five intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations: the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM), the Population Council Inc., the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) and the Population Institute. There were three observers. The participants represented a broad range of geographic regions, scientific disciplines and institutions concerned with questions of population distribution, migration and development.
3. As bases for discussion, six experts prepared papers on the main items of the agenda, indicated by the section headings below. They also led the discussion on each item. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs prepared, in addition to other background papers, the background document for the meeting, "Population distribution, migration and development: highlights of the issues in the context of the World Population Plan of Action", which was intended to provide an overview of the topics to be taken up at the meeting. Other background papers were provided by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the regional commissions, several specialized agencies, the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration and the Population Council.
4. Following a welcoming statement by the Governor of Nabeul, Bechir Lahmadi, S. Chater, President Director General of Tunisia's Office of Family Planning and Population, also greeted the participants. Rafael M. Salas, Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population, 1984, and Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, highlighted the need to update the World Population Plan of Action adopted at Bucharest nearly 10 years ago. P. N. Dhar, Assistant Secretary-General and head of the Office for Development Research and Policy Analysis, Department of International Economic and Social

Affairs of the United Nations, welcomed the experts. Léon Tabah, Deputy Secretary-General of the International Conference and Director of the Population Division of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, addressed the participants. Mr. Tabah associated himself with Mr. Salas' remarks and outlined the substantive questions which the participants were to address.

5. The central task of the Expert Group Meeting was to examine critical, high priority issues relevant to population distribution, internal and international migration and, on the basis of the deliberations, to make recommendations for action by Governments and international and non-governmental agencies that would enhance the effectiveness of and compliance with the World Population Plan of Action. The views expressed by the experts at the meeting were made in their individual capacities and did not represent the views of the Governments of their countries.

I. CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO INTERNAL AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

6. Interest in migration and population distribution has increased since the adoption of the World Population Plan of Action. Indeed, an overwhelming majority of Governments have expressed recently their perception of internal migration and population distribution as one of their explicit demographic concerns. The Expert Group welcomed this change in government attitudes, voicing the hope that migration and population distribution would be interpreted as reflecting socio-economic inequity and inefficiency - both internally and internationally - and not merely as a cause of social and economic problems.

7. The need was underlined to see internal and international migration in their historical contexts, within the "development styles" of individual countries and regions. Such a broad view of migration processes should make it easier to evaluate the determinants and consequences of the various types of migration when formulating, implementing and reviewing policy in the area of migration and population distribution.

8. Over the past decade, actual experience and scientific research were said to have revealed a great variety of long-term and temporary migratory movements. In view of the many types of migration and of their close association with local development styles, participants encouraged individual countries to examine their own experiences more closely. It was deemed advisable to focus on different aspects of migration, approached at the most appropriate levels of analysis (the individual, the family and household, the social structure) and at different levels of geographic aggregation (the subnational area, the nation and international state-systems). Although internal and international migration were judged to resemble each other in many ways, account must be taken of the effects that international frontiers might have on the types, causes and effects not only of international but also of internal migration.

II. MIGRATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

9. Participants noted that the complex interrelations between migration and rural development precluded the formulation of simple generalizations on the subject. Thus, similar levels and/or types of migration had been observed in association with quite disparate economic and social effects, depending on the specific development context. It was suggested that, in the formulation of policy regarding migration and rural development, the particular development context should be taken into account, including, among others, a thorough analysis of the relations of production, the institutional practices surrounding work and the distribution of rural income, the access to land and other non-labour factors of production, and the linkage between rural and urban areas in terms of labour absorption.

10. Rural migration in developing countries should be seen in relation to other fundamental issues, such as rural productivity, employment and underemployment, health, education and inequities of class and geography. The challenge was judged to be the implementation of development policies that would reduce the negative effects of movements between town and country and within rural areas, while encouraging their positive contributions.

11. The need to consider the interactions between rural and urban areas when formulating policies on rural migration and rural development was stressed. For example, the importance of learning more about the distribution of rural land and about the extent to which inadequate net returns to farm activity impelled smallholders and landless peasants to engage in off-farm labour to augment their income was noted. Frequently, food prices in developing countries were judged to be too low for peasants to recover their costs. Peasants were then subsidizing the cost of urban labour, as low food prices reduced the real wages required to reproduce the urban labour force. Rural populations might further subsidize the city through circular migration between rural and urban areas. Yet, in other cases, migration could have a positive effect on rural development and could be used as a vehicle to promote it.

III. MIGRATION, URBANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

12. A common theme expressed by participants was the need for a more balanced approach to urbanization and migration than was evident in the World Population Plan of Action. A careful review of experience and research over the last 10 years was judged to favour a view of migration and urbanization as elements of a wider process of unequal regional and sectoral development. Migration should not be blamed for urban problems, nor should it be ignored that migrants and cities contributed in many ways to national development.

13. Long-term rural-urban migration was recognized to be only one of the flows nourishing city growth in developing countries. Temporary moves from rural areas and small urban centres were also very important in many cases. In this regard, it was remarked that sending areas subsidized receiving cities by bearing much of the cost of reproduction of migrant labour, although the sending areas might benefit through remittances and return migration. It was also mentioned that temporary

migrants were often very important for firms in large cities that depended on short-term contracts, high labour turnover, labour-intensive technology and low wages. These firms were sometimes crucial for the profitability of firms of greater size that made use of modern technology and management techniques. Participants underlined the need for policies that would harness the potential contributions to development of both migrants and the "informal" sector.

14. It was noted that the potential for continuing urbanization and the further growth of large cities through internal migration existed in many developing countries. International migration was recognized as being sometimes the major migratory component of urbanization. Thus, some cities' labour markets exerted an attraction that spanned national boundaries. The expansion of such cities might, in some cases, depress the rates of urban growth in sending nations.

15. The health and housing problems faced by migrants in the cities of developing countries were also underscored. Some studies had shown migrants to suffer from higher rates of venereal and cardiovascular diseases, mental disorders and industrial accidents. Frequently migrants were known to make less intensive use of health services than natives.

16. Participants pointed to family and kinship networks as key elements in the decision to migrate, the incorporation of migrants into receiving areas, and in the ties between sending and receiving areas. The role of the family in migration and urbanization was judged to deserve more attention, in order to improve understanding of these processes with a view to more effective policy interventions.

17. The Expert Group urged that policy measures be encouraged that would improve women's working conditions and their social status. It was noted that throughout the developing world women were being brought into labour markets, although often at the lowest rungs of the ladder. Participants emphasized the need to focus attention on the effects of migration on the condition of women in urban and rural areas. Not to be forgotten were the women who did not migrate themselves, but stayed behind in sending areas. Their numbers were judged to be significant in certain developing countries, and the problems they faced were often very serious.

18. Participants underlined that migrants, especially temporary migrants, were very vulnerable to exploitation, and required protection of their human and labour rights. They urged the encouragement of community, neighbourhood and labour groups - including organizations that might defend and promote the interests of migrants, and of temporary migrants in particular - so that policy makers concerned with migration and urbanization might receive advice and recommendations from migrants themselves concerning their problems.

IV. MIGRATION, URBANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

19. The Expert Group noted that it had become apparent over the past decade that the United States and Western Europe were experiencing a spatial deconcentration of settlement, as their biggest cities slowed their pace of growth, sometimes even shrinking in size. These cities had lagged behind medium-sized urban centres and

formerly peripheral areas and regions, which had grown more vigorously. At the time of the 1974 World Population Conference, this "urban turnaround" had barely been perceived, much less named. In the early 1970s, it was the prospect of continued growth in the largest metropolitan areas that dominated the attention of observers.

20. The urban turnaround should not be interpreted as a presage of the decline and fall of the great city. It was recognized not to represent even an abrupt break with the past, but rather the fruition of a gradual slowing down of growth rates in the metropolitan cores that had begun several decades ago. Generally, it was the old industrial cities that had experienced a slowdown or absolute decline, while newer cities - sometimes of substantial size - were continuing to grow.

21. When the largest cities were growing very fast, demographic slowdown was looked to as a way of easing the social and economic consequences of rapid urbanization. However, recent experience was judged to have shown that slow population growth or population decline presented difficulties of their own. In many cities, selective out-migration and a shrinking economic base were creating problems as complex as those faced during the rush of growth. It was remarked that urban turnaround in developed nations was making urbanization and urban ways of life so pervasive spatially that a re-evaluation of the rural-urban distinction seemed to be in order in these countries.

22. It was noted that the urban turnaround observed in developed market economies had not yet occurred in the developed centrally planned economies, whose Governments had always discouraged high degrees of urban concentration.

23. The recent experience of many developed countries did not seem likely to be repeated in developing nations in the short or medium term. The economic and demographic prerequisites for such spatial deconcentration were not judged to be present, whereas the momentum for continued expansion was very strong. The young age structures of their cities made for continued growth, even if urban fertility declined. Although growth might shift from the primate city to the next largest category of cities, primate cities would continue to expand at a substantial pace for several decades to come. It was, therefore, not clear whether any government intervention at that time, in order to counter such trends, was a good use of scarce public resources.

V. POPULATION DISTRIBUTION POLICIES

24. It was generally agreed that, from the standpoint of population distribution policies, the World Population Plan of Action overemphasized the adverse effects of urbanization and migration. The Plan should be modified to make it more precise with regard to population distribution policies and to present a more balanced approach, taking into account the positive as well as the negative effects that migration and urban development could have on individual migrants and on society.

25. Participants stressed that population distribution policies should not be considered in isolation, as ends in themselves. Rather, they should be seen as means to wider goals, such as improving per capita income, attaining an efficient

use of scarce resources, redressing economic inequities, and preserving environmental quality and national security. It was suggested that, as a general goal, population distribution policies should seek to maximize the current and prospective welfare of a nation's inhabitants, regardless of their place of residence. This, in turn, was judged to require the identification, evaluation and ranking of the competing goals of different groups (divided along economic, social, geographic and ethnic lines, among others).

26. The co-ordination of governments' spatial and sectoral planning was emphasized by the Expert Group. Such co-ordination should reveal the contradictions and complementarities between explicitly desired population distribution objectives and the spatial effects of other government actions. These effects were often sizable and might sometimes be in opposition to announced population distribution goals. Governments were urged to review their major programmes in order to make explicit their effects on the geographic distribution of population. Such review should improve the coherence and efficiency of government intervention.

27. Participants focused particular attention on the equity aspects of population distribution and of policies affecting population distribution. It was suggested that priority should be given to policies that promote interpersonal rather than interregional equity, for the latter might well be achieved at the expense of certain disadvantaged groups. Indeed, in the opinion of some participants, a society's existing population distribution, and its policies regarding population distribution, expressed chiefly the fundamental objectives of society's more powerful groups. It was also pointed out that the ethnic and cultural heterogeneity of many countries might greatly influence population distribution policies. For example, a ruling ethnic group might adopt a population distribution policy with the implicit objective of reinforcing its own political control over the country as a whole.

28. It was advanced that population distribution policies should be comprehensive in order to succeed. Thus, rural and urban development strategies should be combined into a coherent whole that would address, particularly in developing countries, the problems of primate cities and core metropolitan areas, of medium-sized cities and other urban centres and of rural areas. The desirability was particularly underlined of combining rural development strategies with policies to promote small towns and other urban centres smaller than the national metropolises. These urban centres could become vigorous points of interaction with rural economic growth, through activities such as agro-processing, small-scale industry, marketing facilities for rural products and agricultural extension services. It was remarked that earlier experiences suggest that population distribution strategies that do not take such a comprehensive approach - such as relocation of the national capital, construction of new towns, government-financed land colonization schemes and government investment in geographically isolated border regions - turned out to be costly and to have negligible effects on the distribution of population.

29. In connection with the advisability of co-ordinating population distribution policies with other government programmes, participants mentioned that migration and population distribution policies might complement programmes aimed at reducing

fertility. The complex relationships among such factors as fertility, age structure and migration should be clearly understood when formulating and evaluating population distribution policies.

30. Implementation difficulties were recognized as being a serious obstacle to the realization of population distribution policies. The need was underlined for technical co-operation to improve the developing countries' capabilities to formulate, evaluate and implement population distribution policies. The training of the required personnel was judged to merit high priority, especially in view of the prospects for the continued growth of large metropolitan areas in developing countries, where city management capabilities were currently scarce. Other measures were suggested, such as a certain degree of administrative decentralization, which should improve the information that the national Government obtains from local areas, while providing it with more flexible instruments for implementing policy in a variety of locales. Greater financial autonomy for local areas, and population participation through local groups and other organizations, could also contribute to improved implementation. None the less, it was noted that an important obstacle to the implementation of population distribution policies was the inherent contradiction between the long-run character of comprehensive population distribution policies and the short- or medium-term nature of many government programmes that had implicit or explicit spatial effects.

31. In the discussion of measures to be used in influencing the migration decisions of individuals and families, participants recommended the avoidance of measures that depended upon administrative restrictions on spatial mobility. Not only were these a violation of a fundamental human right, but they might encourage an inefficient use of scarce resources. Experience suggested that there were more effective measures for influencing the location decisions of businesses and migrants, and guiding them to medium-sized and small cities in developing countries. Among these measures were price and fiscal incentives, public infrastructure expenditures and location subsidies for migrants.

32. Individual countries were urged to study their own experience in order to tailor migration and population distribution policies to their social, economic and political situation. It was felt that policy instruments should not be transferred from one country to another without adapting them to specific national contexts.

VI. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

33. The session on international migration focused on four topics: "regular" migration, "irregular" migration, "brain drain" and refugees, as suggested by the discussion leader. Regular migrants were defined as non-national workers and members of their families who had obtained the legally required authorizations for admission, stay or exercise of economic activity of the State in which they found themselves, or who fulfilled the conditions to which their admission, stay or economic activity were subject. Irregular migrants, in contrast, were considered to be persons who had not fulfilled all the legal requirements or conditions. Refugees, were defined as in United Nations instruments, as persons who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality,

membership of a particular social group or political opinion, were outside the country of their nationality and were unable or, owing to such fear, were unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country.

34. Although these categories were used to structure the discussion, it was pointed out that they were neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive. In addition, it was noted that the data gathered by countries often did not conform to these categories, so that their practical use was difficult. It was recognized that no single classification could summarize all the traits of international migration that were of interest to policy makers and researchers.

A. Regular migration

35. The diversity of such flows was noted. Regular migration was said to include movements between countries that had abolished the usual entry, stay or work controls for persons of certain nationalities (as in the European Economic Community); migrants admitted without restrictions other than those concerned with public order or national security; contract migration; and official or business migration, which comprised transfers of personnel by transnational corporations and the movement of own-account workers and other types of businessmen.

36. Among the regular migrants, those whose stay or employment in the receiving country was subject to restrictions were judged to be especially vulnerable. They were known to be exposed often to unfair treatment in terms of remuneration, working conditions and entitlements to social security. Receiving countries should take steps to ensure that such migrants were accorded the same basic rights as those granted to migrants admitted without restrictions. The ILO Convention No. 97 concerning Migration for Employment (Revised 1949) 2/ was suggested as a guideline for the treatment of non-national workers whose stay or employment was subject to restrictions. In addition, mention was made of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, at present under discussion by a working group of the General Assembly in pursuance of resolution 34/172 of 17 December 1979. Should this Convention be adopted, its use as a guideline for countries admitting non-national workers was also recommended.

37. In discussing the impact of regular migration on sending and receiving countries, studies documenting a variety of effects were cited. The existence of contrasting and sometimes contradictory results was explained in terms of the strong influence exerted by the varying nature of the specific contexts in which migration took place. For that reason, it was judged to be in the interest of each country to promote research on the international migration flows that it was experiencing, since only by such means could adequate information for the formulation of policy be obtained. In the absence of solid evidence, care should be taken not to attribute the unemployment and other economic and social problems of receiving countries exclusively to international migration.

38. Attention was drawn to the problems faced in several countries by the children of migrants who were known to be living with their parents abroad and whose legal status did not permit them to participate fully in the economic, social and

cultural life of the country in which they resided. It was suggested that greater emphasis should be given to the search for mechanisms that facilitated the socio-cultural and economic integration of migrants and their families into the receiving communities.

39. With regard to the needs of migrants and their families, it was proposed that an international network of social service agencies concerned with the welfare of migrants be set up. The agencies would help the migrants to maintain family ties and would promote their adjustment and their integration into the receiving societies or the successful return of those who were abroad only temporarily. The agencies would operate in all the sending and receiving countries, maintaining close contact with each other. It was suggested that Governments and international organizations aid in the establishment of such a network.

B. Irregular migration

40. The number of irregular migrants world-wide was estimated at 12 or 13 million. Their situation was judged to be rife with problems, in social and economic terms and from the standpoint of human rights. The World Population Plan of Action referred to this category by the term illegal migration and called for Governments to be guided by humanitarian considerations in the treatment of aliens living illegally in their territory. A number of participants felt that that recommendation should be maintained and supplemented by more specific recommendations for its implementation.

41. From an abstract and logical standpoint only three types of strategies for dealing with illegal migrants were judged to exist: to prevent their entry, deport them or regularize their status. In practice Governments' responses to illegal migration were known to have ranged from a laissez-faire attitude, through loose applications of the three strategies just mentioned, to mass expulsions. Preventive measures adopted by the sending country might not be sufficiently effective because, on the one hand, they might be development strategies whose effects would be noticeable only in the long run, and on the other, because sending countries must respect their citizens' right to emigrate. Hence, prevention had usually been the task of the receiving country. However, short of adopting draconian measures that would seal its borders, the receiving nation was thought not to be able to prevent all possible illegal entries. It must, then, either deport illegal migrants or regularize their status. Deportation measures that respected fundamental human rights (i.e. had recourse to due process of law) were judged to be difficult to administer effectively and humanely. Therefore, participants thought that, to the extent possible, measures should be adopted that, by safeguarding the fundamental rights of illegal immigrants, permitted an amelioration of their situation and contributed to end the socially undesirable roles that they often played.

42. It was noted that, since in drafting the Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Governments were giving careful consideration to the minimum set of rights that illegal migrants were to be granted, it was again suggested that, when adopted, this Convention should be used as a guideline for the treatment of all migrants.

43. The ultimate cause of illegal migration was judged to be the established international economic order. Therefore, a definitive solution to the problems related to illegal migration flows depended on the successful promotion of effective development strategies.

C. The "brain drain"

44. The expression "brain drain" should be understood to encompass the international movement of people with all kinds of needed skills, and not just of professionals. It was noted that the departure of skilled workers could be a significant resource transfer, particularly for a developing country. However, note was taken of the fact that skilled personnel were moving not only from developing to developed nations, but also between developing countries and from developed to developing countries.

45. It was remarked that policies directed at the international migration of skilled personnel must respect two internationally recognized principles: the sovereign right of each State to decide who might enter its territory, and the individual's right to emigrate. In receiving countries, Governments could impose restrictions on entry. In sending countries, they could encourage people having the needed skills and already in the country to remain there, or try to attract such people from abroad. It was noted that the World Population Plan of Action already contained a fairly complete set of recommendations regarding the incentives that the sending countries might adopt. The Plan also contained suggestions about ways for receiving nations to abet such efforts. Participants thought it unwise to introduce into the Plan recommendations favouring restrictions on the entry of skilled personnel into receiving countries, for this might lead to undesirable discrimination against potential immigrants.

46. Participants emphasized the responsibility that developed countries had to aid developing nations in retaining or attracting needed skilled personnel. The role of international organizations and agencies in this area was highlighted, as were the efforts made by international organizations and by governmental and non-governmental organizations to promote transfers of needed skills from developed to developing nations.

D. Refugees

47. It was noted that the World Population Plan of Action already called for the resolution of problems related to refugees in accordance with United Nations instruments. However, up to 1982, less than two thirds of all member nations had acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 3/ and even fewer to the 1967 Protocol. 4/ It was urged that all nations that had not already done so should be encouraged to become parties to these international instruments.

48. The definition of refugee as it appeared in United Nations instruments was found to be generally adequate. Any attempt to enlarge its scope in order to include migrants who had been loosely characterized as "economic refugees" should

be discouraged. The introduction of economic considerations into the definition would only weaken its acceptability, since countries concerned about the new commitments it might entail would probably reject it.

49. It was underscored that the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees prevented its Office from providing development aid to integrate refugees into the countries of asylum. It was noted that because the successful settlement of refugees often demanded more than mere relief or even than the attainment of self-sufficiency, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was prepared to act as a catalyst to promote the involvement of other agencies concerned directly with development projects.

50. Three main strategies were recognized as providing hope for durable solutions to the problems of refugees: voluntary repatriation, integration into countries of first asylum, or permanent resettlement in third countries. Voluntary repatriation was to be preferred and had occurred in the case of many refugees, generally with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

51. Lastly, problems related to the granting of asylum were discussed. It was noted that although the right to request asylum was contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 5/ and in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 3/ international instruments gave insufficient guidance with respect to the status or treatment of persons requesting asylum during the period between the request for asylum and the juridical decision on that request. The migrant's status during that period should be clarified.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

52. The Expert Group reiterated the full validity of the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action. Following intensive discussions of the state of knowledge about population distribution, internal and international migration, their interrelationships with socio-economic development and the changes that had occurred over the past decade, the Expert Group recommended a variety of actions that, in its view, would lead towards the achievement of the objectives specified in the Plan of Action.

A. Population distribution and internal migration

(1) Policies aimed at influencing population distribution should be based on a comprehensive evaluation of costs and benefits for individuals, families, different socio-economic groups, communities, regions and the country as a whole.

(2) Population distribution goals (e.g. target growth rates for primate cities or rural population retention goals) should not be adopted for their own sake. They should help achieve broader societal goals such as greater per capita income, efficiency and equity. Priority should go to those population distribution policies that promote interpersonal and inter-group equity, and especially to those that improve the welfare and the opportunities of vulnerable groups.

(3) The freedom to choose one's residence is a fundamental human right. Policies that restrict or compel the mobility of individuals in predefined ways should not be encouraged, for population distribution policies should not embody an anti-migration bias if they are to be efficient and equitable. The human rights of migrants must be safeguarded, especially where ethnic problems and the dominance of one group by another are factors in a country's development.

(4) Long-term rural-urban migration is only one form of population mobility. Other types of migration are more important in many countries. A comprehensive evaluation of population mobility, therefore, must take into account the full range of movements in terms of their direction, duration and characteristics. Population distribution and migration policies should take this variety into account, and generally tailor themselves to the specific needs of a country's political, economic and institutional structure.

(5) Governments should improve the integration of spatial and sectoral planning, particularly in the sectors concerned with human settlements. Public investments should be allocated spatially in ways consistent with desirable population distribution goals, as reflected in national economic plans and similar official statements.

(6) Since population distribution policies take considerable time to become fully effective, Governments should avoid abandoning or reversing them in response to purely short-term exigencies.

(7) Urban and rural development strategies are complementary. Rural development policies should be framed in the context of a national development strategy, emphasizing rural-urban linkages. Rural development programmes should be aimed at increasing rural incomes and welfare rather than aiming exclusively at rural population mobility objectives.

(8) Governments wishing to influence the distribution of population and economic activity should consider a balanced approach that includes rural development strategies, policies concerned with small towns and medium-sized cities, and measures addressed to primate and large cities.

(9) Rural development programmes should not seek population retention alone. They should be primarily directed towards increasing agricultural and other rural production and efficiency, rural income and rural welfare, particularly among small producers. Regularization of land ownership claims, land reform, policies facilitating access to credit and to new technology and other needed inputs, and output price policies geared to the needs of smallholders should be of great help in absorbing rural labour and achieving rural development goals.

(10) Assistance, information and community action activities should be undertaken in support of migrants. In particular:

(a) In the formulation of population distribution policies, Governments should include, to the maximum extent possible, programmes of assistance for migrants and their families in areas such as housing, health, training and information;

(b) Migrants should be encouraged to form associations in communities of in-migration so that they may more effectively participate in the various aspects of formulation and implementation of population distribution policies;

(c) Networks of labour exchanges could allow potential migrants and return migrants to have adequate information about labour opportunities in sending and receiving areas.

(11) Women face specific problems in the migration process, which have received little attention. The problems of women migrants are often acute, especially those of seasonal agricultural workers, refugees and also of women and dependants (such as the elderly and children) left behind unsupported in rural areas. Effective policies should be formulated to assist these women. Special attention should be paid to the difficulties of adaptation encountered by migrant women of rural origin.

(12) Governments in developed countries should formulate policy responses to the economically, socially or fiscally problematic aspects of several emerging trends in the spatial distribution of their population, such as the relative or absolute decline of population in core metropolitan areas, interregional shifts in population and the depopulation of certain rural areas.

(13) In the context of a balanced approach to the distribution of population and economic activity, the following considerations should be kept in mind:

(a) Policies promoting small towns and medium-sized cities should emphasize their economic strengths rather than attempt to attract capital-intensive and large-scale industry;

(b) To mitigate the costs involved, Governments could phase their investments so as to give priority to different groups of medium-sized cities in different time periods;

(c) Governments should not try to implement decentralization policies at a time when urban centralization may still contribute positively to the overall process of development;

(d) Governments considering population distribution measures such as new towns, relocation of the national capital and government-financed land colonization schemes should be aware that such measures are likely to have small impacts on population distribution and to be very costly, whatever other goals they might be intended to achieve.

(14) Measures to reduce primate city growth should not include direct controls on in-migration, which infringe on human rights and are difficult to enforce. It would be preferable, for example, to modify the implicit spatial impact of economic and social policies; to eliminate price distortions that favour big cities, such as heavily subsidized urban services; to impose taxes on metropolitan living; to favour investments in the urban infrastructure of smaller centres and in rural development, along with migration subsidies and incentives to help people move to or remain in desired areas.

(15) In most developing countries, primate cities will become much larger than they are already. Managing big city growth is one of the most critical issues facing policymakers, and great efforts should be made to improve metropolitan management and public service delivery systems. These efforts should involve the citizens themselves.

(16) National development strategies and macro-economic and sectoral policies have spatial impacts that are usually stronger than the effects of explicit population distribution measures and that often work against explicitly formulated spatial distribution objectives. Governments should review their socio-economic policies to minimize any adverse implicit spatial consequences.

(17) Technical co-operation in the area of population distribution and internal migration should continue to be strengthened and expanded.

B. International migration

(18) All policies on international migration adopted by Governments should respect the fundamental human rights of individuals as set out in the International Bill of Human Rights. 5/ In addition, countries should adopt measures to safeguard the fundamental human rights of all non-nationals in their territories.

(19) In formulating policies on international migration, receiving countries should take into account not only their own economic and social needs, but also the well-being of the migrants concerned, the needs of the sending countries and the long-term implications of migration.

(20) Countries should work towards ensuring that non-nationals present in their territory have appropriate access to health and social services.

(21) If adopted, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, at present under discussion by a Working Group of the General Assembly (pursuant to General Assembly resolution 34/172), should be used as a guideline for the treatment of all non-national workers and the dependants that accompany them. For this reason, if the said convention is adopted, countries are invited to ratify it and to take the necessary measures to enforce it at the national level.

(22) Countries admitting foreign workers, including those entering under collective contract agreements, should, in addition to safeguarding their fundamental human rights, respect their basic economic and social rights as set out in the conventions of the International Labour Organisation. In particular, foreign workers and members of their families should not be treated less favourably than nationals, and family reunification should be permitted whenever possible.

(23) Sending and receiving communities should undertake information, education and communication campaigns to create an awareness of the issues involved in international migration and to increase the awareness of migrants regarding the legal position and rights they have. Governments of both sending and receiving

countries should establish or encourage the creation of specialized social service agencies for migrant workers and members of their families that would play a positive, supportive role towards these migrants.

(24) Countries affected by significant numbers of migrant workers are urged, if they have not yet done so, to conclude bilateral or multilateral agreements which would regulate migration, protect and assist migrant workers, and protect the interest of the countries concerned. The International Labour Organisation should promote concerted action to protect migrant workers, and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights should help, as appropriate, to ensure that the fundamental rights of migrants are safeguarded.

(25) Given the benefits that developed countries derive from the inflow of skilled manpower from developing countries, they should contribute to strengthening the technological capacity of those sending countries.

(26) Developing countries that wish to reattract citizens from abroad who possess scarce skills or needed qualifications should provide the necessary incentives for their voluntary return and appropriate working and living conditions for their resettlement on a durable basis. International organizations should lend the necessary technical assistance to that end.

(27) All measures adopted or implemented by countries of departure and of arrival to reduce the illegal entry, stay or employment of international migrants (including amnesties, other regularization schemes, border controls and deportations) should respect the fundamental human rights of both citizens and non-nationals.

(28) In treating non-nationals whose status is illegal, countries should use as a guideline the ILO Convention No. 143 concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers (1975) 6/ and respect the basic human rights laid down in it.

(29) It is recommended that the following fundamental rights be granted to migrants whose status is illegal:

(a) The illegality of a non-national's status should always be established by a judge in order to avoid that the non-national be subjected to arbitrary police action;

(b) Immigrants, even when their status is illegal, have the right to protection against the abuse and exploitation by those who take advantage of their vulnerable situation;

(c) Even though the State has the sovereign right to expel any person who illegally resides or works in its territory, this right cannot relieve the State of the obligation to follow due process of law in any deportation proceedings and to provide the migrant, in the meantime, with the assistance that his state of health or destitution may require.

(30) Receiving and sending countries concerned about illegal migration are urged to find solutions to the problems faced by these migrants via bilateral or multilateral negotiations, as may be appropriate.

(31) States Member of the United Nations that have not already done so are urged to accede to the international instruments concerning refugees.

(32) Recognizing the success of the efforts made by the international community to improve the condition of refugees, it is recommended that measures to ensure not only the respect of their fundamental human rights, but also their physical, mental, material and social well-being and the achievement of durable solutions to their plight continue to be implemented.

(33) Countries should participate fully in the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and of the international community in general to find durable solutions to the problems of refugees by continuing to promote, whenever appropriate, voluntary repatriation to countries of origin, by adopting measures to ensure that the conditions exist in which such repatriation can successfully take place, and by promoting both resettlement and integration in countries of first asylum or in third countries.

(34) Whenever voluntary repatriation or resettlement in third countries appear to be unfeasible, the international community should accept its full responsibility to support the countries of first asylum, subject to their full approval, in developing the capacity of the national economic and social infrastructure to sustain and, whenever possible, to integrate refugees. International organizations, particularly UNHCR, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations should assist in this task.

(35) The right of asylum is guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, no universal instrument addresses the status of the beneficiary of asylum during the interval between the time when the applicant enters the country of asylum and the time when a definite decision is taken by the competent authorities on whether to grant or refuse refugee status. It is important that the international community deal definitively with the insecurity resulting from this situation and take the appropriate measures.

(36) The competent international organizations should seek to improve their monitoring of the respect shown by Governments for migrants' human rights and of Governments' implementation of the international instruments concerning international migration.

C. Promotion of knowledge and policies

(37) In view of the concern repeatedly expressed by Governments with regard to population distribution and migration, both internal and international, Governments and the international community should support and promote the collection of data and the undertaking of analyses relevant to the formulation and evaluation of policies on population distribution and on international migration.

(38) Governments and international organizations should support institutional development so as to provide training in the special skills required for the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies on population distribution and on migration, both internal and international.

(39) Since the monitoring of trends is essential for the formulation and evaluation of policies, countries are urged to make every effort to improve the quality, timeliness, quantity and comparability through time of the information they gather on the migration process, including its causes and consequences. In particular, countries that already collect relevant information on either internal or international migration, but that do not publish it on a regular basis, should take the necessary measures to improve its timely availability.

(40) Countries for which international migration is important are invited to share information regarding the flows or the stocks of international migrants, and to work towards achieving the comparability of their respective data sources. International organizations should continue to play an active role in this exchange of information and provide the technical assistance necessary to achieve comparability.

(41) The formulation of policy requires an in-depth understanding of the types of migration flows exhibited by a given population and of the interrelationships existing between them. For example, knowledge of the trends in different types of movements, such as, circular migration, seasonal migration or migration leading to a long-term change of residence, or about the extent to which commuting is a substitute for migration, or about the causes leading to the different types of migration movements is essential for the sound formulation of policy. Governments should therefore promote research aimed at advancing this understanding.

(42) Governments should give high priority to the study of the consequences of migration (both internal and international) taking into account their various styles of development. Research on this area should not focus exclusively on the migrant. From the policy perspective all elements in the migration process are important. Thus, the consequences of migration should be assessed in terms of both sending and receiving communities, as well as from the perspective of migrants and their families.

(43) The research available so far indicates that the role of the family in the migration process has considerable importance in determining the modality of migration and its socio-economic and political consequences. It is recommended therefore that migration be also studied from a family perspective. Such an approach will contribute to the achievement of an integrated view of the migration process, better suited for the formulation of policy than that focusing mainly on individuals.

(44) Because of their importance in the formulation of policy, the following topics should be given priority in the research agenda of Governments and international organizations: the role of migration (whether internal or international) in modifying labour force participation and structure in sending and in receiving areas, its impact on employment, its influence on the redistribution of wealth via, inter alia, the use of remittances, and its effects on the status of women.

/...

(45) Governments and international organizations should promote the development of methods to evaluate the effectiveness of population distribution policies.

(46) In order to assess the potential impact of migration on the redistribution of the population and to evaluate the performance of population distribution policies, national planners need flexible and realistic demographic models that, by incorporating migration variables explicitly, permit the simulation and forecasting of its demographic consequences. The development of such models and their use for planning purposes should be supported by both Governments and the international community.

(47) Migration is not the sole demographic component of population redistribution. Subnational differentials in fertility and/or mortality also contribute to changes of the population distribution through time. Given that many national populations exhibit marked subnational differentials in mortality or are experiencing important changes in fertility, special attention should be accorded to the study of the impact of mortality differential and fertility change on population redistribution and to the analysis of the interrelations between migration and mortality and between migration and fertility.

(48) Since policies adopted for purposes other than the modification of population distribution often have substantial effects on the latter, Governments should promote objective evaluation of these policies in terms of their population distribution and migration effects.

(49) Whenever appropriate, the international community should promote research into the specific implications of refugee movements, giving particular attention to their impact on population distribution, on the labour market, and on rural development programmes. International organizations should aid in devising better schemes for the provision of community services, for the planning of human settlements and for the promotion of integration whenever the latter is desirable.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

2/ See International Labour Office, Conventions and Recommendations, 1919-1981 (Geneva, 1982).

3/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545, p. 137.

4/ Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791, p. 267.

5/ Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.XIV.2), pp. 1-17.

6/ See International Labour Office, Conventions and Recommendations, 1919-1981 (Geneva, 1982).