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POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH

Channels of communication between the United Nations
and youth and youth organizationsReport of the Secretary-General

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* A/38/150.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 37/50 of 3 December 1982, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to give special attention to developing additional channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations through such means as the mass media and educational institutions in order to reach the largest possible number of young people in different regions of the world and requested him to report to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session on the implementation of the guidelines and additional guidelines for the improvement of the channels of communications between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations, and to include information on measures being taken to that effect. Guidelines for this communication have been previously set out. 1/ The Advisory Committee on the International Youth Year has also recommended a series of measures to strengthen channels of communication, which are contained in its report to the Assembly (A/36/215, annex); attention is called, in particular, to paragraphs 35, 38, 39, 42, 45, 47 and 48 of that report.

2. The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 37/50 and is mainly based on information provided by Member States, 2/ United Nations agencies and bodies 3/ as well as by youth-related non-governmental organizations. 4/

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADOPTED GUIDELINES

A. National

3. The strategy for the International Youth Year is to integrate young people in all aspects of community life, with particular emphasis placed on development-oriented activities. In order to obtain the most far-reaching results, activities at the national and local levels must be encouraged. Therefore, the United Nations has recommended that each Member State establish a national co-ordinating committee or other form of co-ordinating mechanism to assist its Government in activities for the planning and observance of the Year at the national level. Preparations for the Year have already been initiated by a significant number of countries since 1982 and will continue until 1985 when evaluations will be done, with a view to formulating long-term plans for the integration of youth in the development of their societies.

4. In pursuance of the goals of the International Youth Year, 58 Member States 5/ have formed national mechanisms. Generally, these are high-level committees, composed of representatives of interested ministries and youth organizations. A few are of a non-governmental nature, but have been designated by the appropriate national authorities.

5. These national mechanisms play an important role, inter alia, in publicizing the goals and objectives of the International Youth Year and the work of the United Nations among young people at the grass-roots level. This task is undertaken in co-operation with domestic information networks through a wide range of activities

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including radio and television programmes, newspaper articles, film presentations, exhibitions, lectures, conferences and public rallies. A number of national co-ordinating committees have started issuing newsletters that generate awareness of the work of the United Nations in the field of youth.

6. In addition, the national co-ordinating committees of the Gambia, the Philippines and Romania have set up structures throughout their countries through which information is forwarded to and received from localities. These national mechanisms interact with the United Nations and other organizations regarding activities carried out in the framework of the International Youth Year. They have thus become a major channel for two-way communication between the United Nations and young people at the grass-roots level.

7. In several countries, including Australia, the Maldives, Qatar and Zambia, offices have been designated as focal points to secure proper co-ordination of youth activities and dissemination of United Nations information on youth.

8. Because of the instrumental role of the national co-ordinating structures in promoting communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations, the International Youth Year secretariat is compiling a directory of national co-ordinator committees for the International Youth Year intended to provide reference to and promote communication among the existing national co-ordinating committees, and to foster a better understanding of their activities. The directory would also provide a systematic exchange of national experiences. A questionnaire has been sent to the national co-ordinating committees to request the necessary information on their activities. The directory may encourage those countries that have not yet established such a co-ordinating structure to do so.

9. In its resolution 37/50 of 3 December 1982, the General Assembly, inter alia, invited Member States, specialized agencies, regional commissions, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental youth organizations to communicate and further promote the guidelines and additional guidelines for the improvement of channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations. Reports from a number of countries indicate that appropriate mechanisms have been set up in secondary schools and universities which make students acquainted with the work of the United Nations on youth. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, a recently formed committee for the co-ordination of the university sector regroups representatives of the kingdom's seven universities. Its chairman is a representative of the Ministry of Education. The committee is part of the co-ordination system established by the International Youth Year High Committee, which includes 10 ministries.

10. Several Member States, in compliance with United Nations recommendations pertaining to youth, have revised or developed youth policies stressing, among other things, the dissemination of information on United Nations work in the field of youth. One of the measures taken was the inclusion or strengthening in school curricula of teaching about the United Nations.

11. The National Association for the United Nations, the national commissions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and

of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which include young people, have been instrumental in publicizing United Nations work, particularly youth activities, in their countries in collaboration with United Nations information centres or field offices of United Nations specialized agencies and bodies. As a result of such publicity, young people have become increasingly involved in the activities of these bodies.

12. Another channel to disseminate information among youth at the national level has been the various youth-related projects undertaken by Member States, United Nations specialized agencies and bodies. For example, the National Council on Youth of Mexico, the governmental body responsible for the co-ordination of all youth-related programmes, has been particularly active in encouraging studies on youth, youth encounters and youth participation in political, cultural, recreational and sports activities. The Council also serves as a major channel for distribution and dissemination of materials related to the International Youth Year. Similarly, Costa Rica and Venezuela have played important roles in distributing materials related to the Year to other countries of their region through national research centres on youth.

13. Many Member States have taken concrete steps to develop youth participation in decision-making at the national level. Youth representatives have been appointed to major government bodies in charge of policy formulation. Communications from the United Nations system are channelled through these young members of the government bodies who have direct relations with youth at the grass-roots level. Likewise, the contributions of youth to policy or important matters relating to the United Nations is sent to the government, which in turn considers it in national policy.

14. For example, of the 1,500 deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the country's highest government body, 317 are young people. In addition, the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League (KOMSOMOL), the broadest youth organization with a membership of 42 million young people, serves as a major channel of communication between the Government of the USSR and youth. Similar types of representation were also reported in the Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Romania, Zaire and Zimbabwe.

15. Other countries, particularly in Western Europe and North America, receive the contributions of young people to the nation's overall policy through a number of umbrella organizations of a non-governmental nature, in consultative status with the Government.

16. In the United States of America, for instance, the Youth Council established in 1982 an International Youth Year Commission, which was composed of 56 member organizations and which has been recognized by the Government as the country's non-governmental organizations co-ordinating committee for the Year. The Commission works closely with the Federal Interagency Task Force on the International Youth Year in a series of activities including: the observance of an International Youth Year Day in 1985; nation-wide photo, debate and poster contests related to the Year; the issuance of an International Youth Year commemorative stamp; and monthly newsletters.

17. The international youth work in the Federal Republic of Germany is aimed at promoting common understanding, at reducing any kind of discrimination, at promoting international co-operation and thus helping to create a lasting order for peace by meetings, information, education and joint action. The member organizations of the Federal Youth Council and the Council of Political Youth are internationally represented by the German National Committee for International Youth Work at the European Youth Council, the European Co-ordination Bureau, the Youth Forum of the European Communities and the Geneva Informal Meeting.

B. Regional

18. A wide range of activities was undertaken or planned at the regional level to disseminate information about the work of the United Nations system in the field of youth, particularly within the context of International Youth Year. These activities were carried out under the aegis of the United Nations regional commissions, intergovernmental and non-governmental regional organizations.

19. The regional commissions and the secretariat for International Youth Year have organized regional meetings during 1983 devoted to the preparations for the Year. In Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa organized, from 20 to 24 June 1983, the African regional meeting on International Youth Year. The participants were government officials in charge of youth activities. The meeting afforded an excellent opportunity for youth representatives to address youth issues in Africa and formulate a plan of action reflecting the aspirations, needs and responsibilities of African youth in the development of their respective countries. Participants were informed of the work of the United Nations system in the field of youth, particularly in the light of the International Youth Year. It is expected that they will disseminate information about United Nations activities in their own countries. The meeting served as a channel through which youth were informed of the United Nations work on youth.

20. Also in Africa, the Second Panafrican Youth Festival, held in August 1983 at Tripoli, Libya, publicized the goals and objectives of the International Youth Year. The festival was considered as a preparatory activity for the Year, undertaken by the Panafrican Youth Movement.

21. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), through its advisory services, has informed Governments of the region about the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the International Youth Year. ESCAP, through its quarterly Youth Development Newsletter, has disseminated information on the Year-related activities of Governments and non-governmental organizations in the region. This medium has also been helpful to concerned youth officials by showing them how to prepare and observe the Year through an exchange of experiences with other countries. The newsletter has elicited a positive response from readers and many non-governmental youth organizations and has prompted them to contribute to the observance of the Year.

22. ESCAP has been requested to serve as a clearing-house of information on youth development and youth mobilization activities in the region by the second ad hoc

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meeting of agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned with youth development in the region, held from 23 to 26 November 1982. ESCAP also intends to publish an International Youth Year Information Sheet, on a quarterly basis, which will provide a comprehensive coverage of activities related to the Year in the region and through which concerned individuals and organizations can express their views on the Year.

23. In co-operation with the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement International, ESCAP organized a regional meeting of non-governmental organizations devoted to the Year from 20 to 25 July 1983. The main purpose of the meeting of non-governmental organizations was to provide national and regional youth organizations with opportunities to exchange information on national plans of action for the Year as well as to seek ways and means to establish co-operation among them at regional or subregional levels. Emphasis was placed on the implementation of the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities to be undertaken prior to and during the Year which, among other things, encouraged the active participation of youth and youth organizations as a basic prerequisite for achieving the objectives of the Year.

24. In conjunction with the Latin American regional preparatory meeting for the International Youth Year, scheduled to be held in Costa Rica from 3 to 7 October, the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) will hold a meeting of youth and youth-related non-governmental organizations to examine the situation and needs of youth in Latin America and to exchange views on regional activities. In co-operation with representatives of various youth organizations, ECLA is exploring ways and means to hold several meetings at the subregional level designed to strengthen the channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations within the context of the Year. Through ongoing collaboration with the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations for Development, located at Santiago, Chile, meetings on youth-related problems have been held and joint programme activities at the national and local levels are being developed in preparation for the Year.

25. ECLA has encouraged the dissemination of information to Ibero-American youth through the publication of books on the results of the regional project on education and the development executed in co-operation with UNESCO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). A study entitled "Youth as a Social Movement", which deals with the history, the present challenges and future scenarios of youth movements in Latin America, has been completed.

26. The Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) has continued its efforts to improve channels of communication with youth and youth organizations in the region. The endeavours of ECWA have been aimed mainly at generating public awareness of the objectives of the International Youth Year contained in the specific Programme of Measures and Activities to be undertaken prior to and during the Year (A/36/215). In this connection, ECWA is planning and organizing the regional meeting devoted to the International Youth Year to be held at Baghdad from 9 to 13 October 1983.

27. The secretariat for the International Youth Year undertook a series of activities in lieu of the Economic Commission for Europe, which does not have a social development component in its work programme. The secretariat collaborated with a number of youth-related organizations through its representation at meetings on youth throughout Europe. It has briefed many youth leaders on developments in the preparation of the Year. The secretariat has also supported the creation of a Vienna committee of non-governmental organizations for the Year and participates in their meetings. It further participated in the briefing and orientation sessions on the activities of the Year for the United Nations guides newly recruited by the United Nations Visitors Section at the Vienna International Centre. This section receives annually about 30,000 visitors, the majority of which are young people.

28. The Non-Governmental Liaison Service at Geneva, which was established by the Joint United Nations Information Committee, carried out many consultations with youth-related non-governmental organizations at the European level concerning development-related issues promoted by the United Nations system.

C. International

29. At the international level, considerable efforts were made by the United Nations system, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to implement the guidelines for the improvement of channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations.

30. The second session of the informal inter-agency group at the technical level on the International Youth Year met early this year at Vienna to assess progress made in the co-ordination of efforts for the preparation and observance of the Year within the United Nations system. The working group formulated a number of concrete proposals on ways and means to increase dissemination of information on the Year. To this end, a press kit and an information note were suggested as joint activities. The group also committed themselves to an increased contribution to the quarterly Youth Information Bulletin. Participating agencies have requested their field offices to publicize the goals and objectives of the Year and to encourage the establishment of national co-ordination committees for the Year.

31. The secretariat for the Year has continued to provide technical support for the Geneva Informal Meeting of international non-governmental organizations and a number of other youth-related non-governmental organizations. Representatives of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs have addressed many young people and members of youth-related non-governmental organizations on the occasion of conferences, seminars or special briefing sessions held at Vienna and elsewhere. Working relationships with interested circles have been maintained or developed by answering written or oral queries.

32. In an effort to improve channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations within the context of the International Youth Year, the secretariat for the Year has initiated a three-phase project: (a) a study on measures to strengthen the channels of communication; (b) an expert group

meeting to elaborate further on the measures proposed by the study; and (c) a final technical publication based on the study and expert meeting due for completion in 1983.

33. In addition, the secretariat for the Year, has co-sponsored or arranged meetings with individual non-governmental organizations. Similarly, the Secretariat has been negotiating with interested non-governmental organizations regarding the tree project mentioned in document A/37/348, the international film competition mentioned in document A/36/215, and other relevant subjects, such as an international youth chorale and activities relating to intergenerational art, as a means of increasing youth awareness of the various topics of the Year and United Nations youth work in general. In these various endeavours the secretariat for the Year has been assisted to a great extent through the efforts of the Department of Public Information, in particular its Division for Economic and Social Information and the United Nations Information Service at Vienna.

34. The Youth Information Bulletin, in its new format and content, has served as a major channel of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations. It has played an important part in generating awareness of the objectives of the International Youth Year, promoting the exchange of information among youth groups and the establishment of co-ordinating structures for the Year. Feedback received from Bulletin readers confirms its particular role and requires new and innovative approaches to meet the increasing requirements of its audience.

35. The activities of the Division for Economic and Social Information involve both information and co-ordination activities in the field of youth; youth is one of the Division's principal target audiences. Among the materials that the Division has produced, or with which it has been associated, are an information kit on the new international economic order and a booklet entitled Global Dialogue, both of which are widely used by schools and colleges; a film, "The Big Village", presenting a boy's eye view of global economic and social issues, and a number of wall charts to be used as teaching aids. Youth groups and young people are an important part of the workshops, encounters and other meetings organized periodically to promote understanding of these issues.

36. Through the non-governmental organizations liaison service, an inter-agency project for which the Division for Economic and Social Information is the lead agency, youth and youth-serving non-governmental organizations are involved in the whole process of "development education". The non-governmental organizations liaison offices at United Nations Headquarters and Geneva are engaged in the preparation of seminars, workshops and briefings for school and college groups; the offices work closely with national youth-serving agencies and maintain an informal internship programme for young graduates or senior undergraduate students.

37. The Division for Economic and Social Information is holding consultations with the secretariat for the Year on the planning and implementation of an information programme for the Year, encompassing activities in which young people will take a prominent part. In its capacity as the secretariat of the Joint United Nations Information Committee, the Division is also setting up a task force on youth to plan a system-wide and co-ordinated information programme for the Year.

38. For the past 21 years, the United Nations, through its Geneva Information Service, has organized annually a Graduate Study Programme as a parallel exercise to the Graduate Intern Programme at United Nations Headquarters. The Graduate Study Programme is a three-week summer course of lectures, workshops and report writing by individual participants. Since its inception, the programme, which is run without any specific budgetary allocation, has benefited over 1,000 graduates. About 70 young post-graduates from 50 countries were selected to participate in the programme held at Geneva from 27 June to 22 July 1983.

39. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has continued its annual Collective Consultation with international youth-related non-governmental organizations, whereby they are involved in the design and implementation of the youth programme. Special efforts have been made to encourage the participation of regional youth organizations in this consultation. The draft programme budget for 1984-1985 foresees continued consolidation of consultation and co-ordination with youth organizations to ensure the successful preparation and observance of the International Youth Year.

40. The major channels of communication between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and youth are the extension services of ministries of agriculture. A considerable number of rural youth programmes in developing countries have, over the years, received assistance from FAO through these channels. In recent years, support to the rural youth sector has been mainly through training components of larger and more comprehensive FAO (United Nations Development Programme) and/or Trust Fund projects. Umbrella-programmes, such as "Peoples' Participation in Development" and "Women in Development", are examples of programmes that also cater to rural youth and therefore aim at establishing channels of communication with this group. In this framework, a feature since 1981, World Food Day, falling on 16 October, provides each year an opportunity to strengthen communications with rural youth organizations.

41. "Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development", a FAO special programme, has, over the years, organized a number of meetings and consultations at the national, regional and international levels that have enabled youth organizations to participate actively in development activities. Although youth is no longer a specific target group of the programme, the programme continues to maintain relations with a large number of youth organizations and has expanded its activities and its partner organizations to include a variety of non-governmental and national institutions, both in developing and developed countries, that are working closely with grass-roots groups.

42. In addition, communications between the United Nations and youth are maintained and developed through various training schemes for development work either at United Nations Headquarters or in the field. These are the Associate Expert Programme, the United Nations Volunteer Programme, the In-Service Training Award Programme and the Professional Training for Agricultural Development.

43. The projects and activities of UNDP and the United Nations Volunteers related to organized and unorganized youth have included co-operation with local and national youth groups, organizations and communities, with an emphasis on promoting

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youth participation in national development activities and programmes. Recently, there has been an increase of contacts between UNDP field offices and local and national youth groups and organizations, both governmental and non-governmental.

44. There has also been increased co-operation between United Nations Volunteers and youth through the Domestic Development Service organizations in Asia and Africa in particular, both at the level of ongoing mutual technical assistance and at the level of planning. An increased number of national youth organizations and youth authorities are participating in these efforts. Regional-level endeavours involving youth organizations and officials engaged in youth activities are now finding an expression in joint programme development with several youth related institutions in Africa and Asia.

45. In April 1983, the United Nations Volunteers organized a first United Nations Consultative Meeting on Volunteer Service and Development, involving organizations from industrialized and developing countries. Most of the participants were from organizations working with young people.

46. To improve the channels of communication with youth and create opportunities for their effective participation in the International Youth Year, UNICEF proposed to work through youth-related non-governmental organizations, wherever it was possible within the overall framework of government policies. In addition, UNICEF has published and will continue to publish articles on the Year in its Ideas Forum, a publication which has wide circulation among many groups, including non-governmental organizations.

47. As a contribution to International Youth Year, a publication entitled Youth in Service to Children will be issued by UNICEF in 1985; the publication will document experience in this field both within and outside UNICEF-supported programmes. A detailed report on the activities of UNICEF related to the Year will be submitted to the 1984 and 1985 meetings of the Executive Board of UNICEF. UNICEF will devote special attention to certain activities for encouraging youth participation, such as training of youth volunteers, orientation and training of staff, development of pilot projects and providing incentives to youth volunteers.

48. In co-operation with the Vienna branch of the Institute of European Studies, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is conducting an internship programme under which interns are required to work 100 hours per semester. UNIDO is also undertaking another internship programme designed for junior professionals selected from among advanced-degree candidates in academic institutions and junior civil servants in various government agencies. Interns develop independent research projects on topics relating to problems of industrial development of developing countries. Furthermore, a junior consultancy programme aiming to provide research assistance to in-house research activities is under way.

49. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is making available to Governments advisory services on all aspects relating to young people's professional life. It has collected and disseminated information on measures taken at the national level and organized regional or subregional meetings on priority areas of employment policies concerning youth. It has encouraged increased participation of young

people in the decision-making process concerning their work through trade unions. ILO publications or information material have contributed to the sensitization of Governments and public opinion about youth employment.

50. The Universal Postal Union has requested postal administrations all over the world to issue in 1985 special stamps in observance of the International Youth Year. There has been a general positive response to this request, and this is seen as a particularly good way to publicize the observance of the Year.

51. The International Telecommunication Union has been designated as the lead agency within the United Nations system for activities undertaken in the context of the World Communications Year (1983), the purpose of which is to increase the scope and effectiveness of communications as a force for economic, cultural and social development, which supports the objective of enhancing channels of communications with youth.

52. The Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which was held at Vienna from 9 to 21 August 1982, recommended, inter alia, the development of a fellowship programme for in-depth training of space technologists and applications specialists, with the help of Member States and relevant international organizations: the establishment and regular updating of lists containing available fellowships in all States and relevant international organizations. 6/

53. Through its Space Applications Programme, the United Nations is prepared to assist Member States, if they so request, in designing and developing appropriate training programmes and associated education curricula that can be implemented locally. Since the inception of the Programme in 1969, over 1,400 participants, including young scientists, from the developing countries have participated in United Nations-sponsored courses and seminars which have been held at the national, regional and international levels in various parts of the world.

54. International non-governmental youth-related organizations have played a key role in promoting the expansion of channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations. The Geneva Informal Meeting of youth-related non-governmental organizations has undertaken a series of activities aimed at encouraging its member organizations to implement the adopted guidelines on channels of communication. These activities include seminars, workshops, meetings, statement of intent and a review of the work programme of the Geneva Informal Meeting for the period 1983-1985.

55. In 1982, a non-governmental organization Committee on Youth was established at Vienna to provide a co-ordinating mechanism for encouraging member organizations to implement United Nations resolutions pertaining to youth. The Committee, which is composed of 35 international youth-related organizations, works in close co-operation with the secretariat for the International Youth Year. A similar structure exists at United Nations Headquarters, where the Committee endeavours to promote the objectives of the Year through its member organizations.

56. The International Planned Parenthood Federation has prepared an extensive information campaign on the Year. Along with the other member organizations of the Geneva Informal Meeting, the Federation has established a Working Group on Family Life Education in the context of the Year. The conveners are the League of Red Cross Societies and the World Scout Bureau. A preparatory committee meeting was held at Geneva in November 1982. On 24 and 25 February 1983, the first full meeting of the Informal Working Group on Family Life Education was held in London. The meeting, hosted by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and sponsored by the International Planned Parenthood Federation was attended by representatives of 10 international youth-related non-governmental organizations and an observer from the secretariat for the Year.

57. The IPPF Open File, an information bulletin issued fortnightly, has published several articles on preparations for the International Youth Year, thereby contributing to the dissemination of information about the Year among its young readers. The Federation has also provided United Nations agencies, such as WHO, FAO and UNESCO, with information on its youth-related activities.

58. The World Federation of Democratic Youth has initiated several activities designed to increase involvement in the preparatory work for the Year at all levels, such as the expansion of publicity through the Federation's publications and the establishment of a monitoring system through which the Federation can follow the various steps taken by its member organizations in preparation for and observance of the Year.

59. The International Federation of Musical Youth has prepared a draft work programme encompassing the highlights of the Federation's activities in observance of the Year for the consideration of its general assembly, to be convened on 9 August 1983.

60. The World Assembly of Youth has launched an International Youth Press Service to highlight the constructive contribution of youth to the life of society through youth newspapers and the general media. The Youth Press Service is primarily a channel through which information related to the Year and prepared by the United Nations system is disseminated to young people at the grass-roots level. In addition, the World Assembly of Youth has set up an International Youth Year Working Group, composed of youth leaders from Fiji, the Gambia, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Nigeria and Tunisia, which will design the World Assembly's preparatory programme for the Year. In co-operation with the secretariat for the International Youth Year, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the Global Committee of Parliamentarians and UNICEF, the World Assembly is planning to organize at Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 10 to 14 October 1983, an international youth workshop on participation, development and population issues.

61. In fulfilling the main mandate entrusted to it, on 13 October 1981, by a number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and associated with the Department of Public Information, the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on Peace and Peace Education launched a world-wide survey on the activities of non-governmental organizations in the area of peace and peace education, with special attention given to the needs and aspirations of young people.

62. The World Association of Former United Nations Internes and Fellows, Inc., held at Vienna, from 2 to 4 June 1983, a seminar on United Nations internship and fellowship programmes: modalities for strengthening channels of communication between the United Nations and youth, particularly from and within developing countries.

63. In pursuance of the General Assembly's request for a greater involvement of educational institutions in United Nations work, the United Nations International School held a Student Conference on Disarmament on 24 and 25 February 1983 at United Nations Headquarters. The Conference was attended by some 300 students from the International School and eight other schools.

III. CONCLUSION

64. Many innovative approaches have been suggested by Member States, in recent times, which have indicated new directions for the United Nations programmes. Greater emphasis is being placed on the developmental aspects of the socio-economic situation of various population groups. Youth policies and programmes, the preparation for the International Youth Year and the approach to improving channels of communication with youth should be perceived in this context. Implementation of new approaches is, however, subject, inter alia, to the constraints imposed by limited resources and by disparities in the communication of countries.

65. Thus, despite the numerous positive actions mentioned in this report, much remains to be done, subject to the availability of resources, to strengthen channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations. For example, existing channels require qualitative strengthening and should be extended to reach more people with relevant information. New and innovative approaches need to be developed to better utilize existing resources in more effective ways. There is a need to broaden the investigation of channels which may already exist but have not yet been identified or exploited because of a lack of sufficient information.

66. As an important part of public opinion and in view of their recognized potentials in the overall development process, young people should not only be properly informed about the activities of the United Nations but also encouraged to participate in the elaboration of its programmes. The main channels used so far to communicate with youth and youth organizations are publications, radio and television programmes, exhibitions, correspondence, briefings of individuals and groups. During the International Youth Year, the scope of these activities should be expanded. This will require extrabudgetary resources which until now have not been forthcoming. Efforts need to be made in the field of public information in order to bring about widespread awareness of the objectives and goals of the International Youth Year at the national, regional and international levels.

67. The following measures are suggested to expand and expedite the flow of information:

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(a) Governments and government agencies and organizations could assign higher priority to expediting the redistribution of or taking action on information or substantive materials received from the United Nations on the subject of youth. The political will of national authorities is therefore of paramount importance;

(b) Non-governmental organizations interested in youth, including those at the national and local levels, could make increased efforts to bring information about United Nations youth activities to their membership at the grass-roots level. They should co-ordinate such activities with other interested parties to maximize the efficiency of this process;

(c) Mass media representatives should be encouraged to devote greater attention to publicity on United Nations activities at all levels. Efforts should also be made to use mass media to improve the image of youth in society and to promote their positive contribution to the development of their countries;

(d) The role of the family in the education of young people should be strengthened. Parents that are well-informed about the work of the United Nations can serve as disseminators of United Nations information among their young children. Governments and all concerned organizations may wish to consider developing appropriate programmes aimed at heightening public awareness of the crucial role that families have as the principal informal educators of young people; families can act as spokesmen for bringing forward the views and aspirations of their young members into the mainstream of social discussion.

68. Feedback from the grass-roots level to the United Nations system has been minimal. Response to communications from the United Nations system inviting comments on or contributions to reports and other documents from Governments and the community of non-governmental organizations has been slow. Proper information on youth and youth organizations and their effective participation in the work of the United Nations at all levels form a basic prerequisite for the successful preparation, observation and follow-up of the International Youth Year. Therefore, in addition to the existing practice of voicing grass-roots opinion through umbrella or international organizations, direct communication, wherever possible, from local and national youth and youth organizations to United Nations Headquarters and to regional and local offices of the United Nations system should be encouraged.

Notes

1/ See annexes to General Assembly resolutions 32/135 of 16 December 1977 and 36/17 of 9 November 1981.

2/ Contributions were received from the following Member States: Australia, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Federal Republic of, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Maldives, Mexico, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Qatar, Romania, El Salvador, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Venezuela and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

3/ United Nations specialized agencies and bodies: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic Commission for Latin America, Economic Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Volunteers, World Food Programme, International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Universal Postal Union and United Nations Information Service at Geneva.

4/ Youth-related organizations or institutions: International Association of Community Development, International Federation of Musical Youth, International Planned Parenthood Federation, World Assembly of Youth and World Federation of Democratic Youth.

5/ As at 1 July 1983, the following Member States had formed or were in the process of establishing national co-ordinating committees for the International Youth Year: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Botswana, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mongolian People's Republic, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

6/ Report of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/CONF.101/10, para. 430).
