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Meeting of Ministers
7-8 April 1993
Amman

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS

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I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The Ministerial Meeting of the Arab Population Conference was held at Amman, Jordan, from 7 to 8 April 1993, under the auspices of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Bin Talal. It was organized jointly by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the League of Arab States, and the United Nations Population Fund.

A. Attendance

2. The Meeting was attended by the following Arab States: Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

3. The Meeting was also attended by observers from the following States: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, France, Greece, the Holy See, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States.

4. Representatives from the following United Nations organizations and bodies attended the Meeting: Department of Economic and Social Development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNHCR, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

5. The Meeting was also attended by representatives of the following specialized agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Bank.

6. Two observers from the following two intergovernmental organizations attended the Meeting: the European Community and IMO.

7. The Meeting was attended by observers from the following Arab governmental organizations: Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs in GCC States, and the Council of Arab Economic Unity.

8. The Meeting was attended by the following non-governmental organizations: Alberto Valmer Foundation, Inc., Association of Health and Environmental Development (Egypt), Arab Council for Childhood and Development, Arab Demographers Association, Awal Women's Society (Bahrain), Arab Women Centre for Training and Research, Arab Women Organization of Jordan, Arab Thought Forum (Jordan), Ford Foundation, Association of Palestinian Family Planning and Protection, Business and Professional Women's Club (Jordan), the Environment Protection Council, Family Planning Association (Egypt), Family Planning Association (Sudan), Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, General Federation of Iraqi Women, General Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for the Arab Countries, General Federation of Jordanian Women, General Federation of Syrian Women, Hawa Society, Independent Commission on Population and Quality of Life, International Planned Parenthood Federation, Islamic Relief Agency (Jordan), International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, Jordanian Association for Family Planning and Protection, Almanar Consultants, National Women Union of Tunisia, NGO Planning

Committee for the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, Path Finder International, Population Action International, Secours Populaire Libanais, Third World Association of Economists, Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Communities, Noor Al-Hussein Foundation and Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund.

9. The following official and private institutions participated in the Meeting: Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, Arab Planning Institute, Cairo Demographic Centre, Centre for Economic, Legal and Social Studies and Documentation, Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le Muyen - Orient Contemporain (CERMOC) (Jordan), Economic Research Centre (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Blida University (Algeria), Department of Statistics (Jordan), Al Kutba Publishers (Jordan), Municipality of Greater Amman, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources, Royal Scientific Society (Jordan), the Population Council, the Population Institute, the Population Reference Bureau, Inc., Union of Arab Banks, Sana'a University, University of Jordan, and Yarmouk University (Jordan).

B. Opening of the Ministerial Meeting

10. Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Bint Talal opened the Meeting, followed by Mr. Mahdi Mustafa Al-Hadi, Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Sabah Bakjaji, Executive Secretary of ESCWA, and Dr. Nafis Sadiq, Executive Director of UNFPA and Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development for 1994. It was decided that the texts of their statements be included as official documents of the Conference (annexes).

C. Election of Officers

11. Mr. Ziad Fareez, Jordan's Minister of Planning, was elected Chairman of the Meeting.

12. Delegates elected the following as Chairpersons: Mrs. Mariam bint Ahmad Aisha, Mauritania's Secretary of State for Women's Affairs, Mr. Tawfiq Bakkar, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Planning and Development in Tunisia, Mr. Abdul-Rahman bin Saad al-Dirham, Qatar's Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Housing, Mr. Samal Majid Faraj, Iraq's Minister of Planning, Mr. Maher Mehran, Rapporteur of the National Council for Housing in Egypt, and Mr. Abdul-Rahim al-Subayi, Syrian Minister of Planning.

13. Mr. Maher Mehran was also elected Rapporteur of the Meeting.

D. Agenda

14. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Election of Officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Report of the Meeting of Senior Officials and Experts, including the draft of the Second Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World.

5. Adoption of the Final Report and the Second Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World.

6. Closing of the Meeting.

II. STATEMENTS BY DELEGATES

15. The second session of the Ministerial Meeting was devoted to statements by participants. Representatives of the following Arab States spoke: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Palestine, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen. Speakers underlined the significance of the population issue in all its dimensions and its social, economic, political, environmental and developmental impact.

16. The representatives of the Holy See and the United States made statements.

17. Representatives of the following five organizations made statements: International Planned Parenthood Federation, AGFUND, the World Bank, FAO, IMO. A representative of Arab non-governmental organizations also made a statement.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE FINAL REPORT OF THE MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS AND OF THE DRAFT OF THE SECOND AMMAN DECLARATION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD

18. The Meeting considered the report of the Meeting of Senior Officials and Experts and discussed the draft of the Second Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World. The Meeting then adopted the final report of the Conference as well as the Second Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World.

IV. SECOND AMMAN DECLARATION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD

INTRODUCTION

The Arab world is contributing to the common efforts of the countries of the developing world in the quest for a cultural renaissance aimed at establishing the requirements of socio-economic development and enabling the Arab people to participate in the shaping of their destiny on their land now and in the future within a framework of justice, democracy and respect for human rights and to contribute to the endeavours of the international community to achieve peace, progress and prosperity.

In its efforts to achieve these goals, the Arab world is experiencing socio-economic changes and facing challenges, problems and dangers which make it necessary to mobilize the efforts, capabilities and potential of society and to satisfy the basic needs of the population within the framework of development.

In this connection, the last decade witnessed a decline in oil revenues, on which the Arab world depends heavily, the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War and the Gulf War, and continued tension in the region as a result of the failure to reach a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Furthermore, the external debt crisis was exacerbated in a large number of Arab countries, producing its own effects and pressures. In addition, the world economic recession of the last decade and the tendency to create large economic blocs have adversely affected the Arab countries, as indicated by the decline of Arab export prices, the problem of the trend towards protectionism, fluctuations in exchange and interest rates in international money markets, return migration and the decrease in private remittances.

The population question constitutes a primary factor with dimensions interlinked with the various challenges and dangers. During the last four decades, the Arab region has undergone tremendous demographic changes, the most significant of which was remarkable population growth. The population of the Arab world increased from about 132 million in 1974 to about 237 million in 1992, a figure expected to reach 449 million in 2020 (according to United Nations estimates). All this has led and will lead to increased resource and environmental challenges.

This rapid and continuous increase in the population has necessitated the formulation of the requisite plans and policies to meet needs in regard to employment opportunities, education, health, housing, food and public services. The region has also witnessed a huge movement of labour among its various countries and also to countries outside the region. Consequently, the population question was closely linked to the economic and social aspects of development issues and to the interrelationship between development requirements, on the one hand, and the environment and the outside world, on the other.

In order to express the Arab point of view on the population question within the context of the interrelated development concerned with economic, social, cultural and environmental affairs, the Arab Governments welcomed the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in September 1994 at Cairo. In preparation for that Conference, the Arab Population Conference was held from 4 to 8 April 1993 at Amman in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

For all the assistance and support rendered in regard to programmes, policies and projects in the field of population in the Arab world, the participants in the Conference extend their gratitude and appreciation to the Arab Governments, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the League of Arab States, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and all the international and regional bodies concerned with population issues. The participants also wish to express their gratitude and appreciation to the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for generously hosting the Arab Population Conference and for providing it with so much support and assistance.

On the basis of the principles, objectives and orientations that emerged at the Arab Population Conference with regard to population questions, the participating Arab delegations adopt the following:

I. PREAMBLE

The Arab Population Conference,

Adhering to the Charter of the League of Arab States and the statutes of its specialized organizations and councils, as well as to the principles, objectives and policies set forth in pan-Arab and sectoral instruments and strategies,

Recalling the provisions of the Charter of Arab Economic Action adopted by the Arab kings and heads of State at the Eleventh Arab Summit Conference held at Amman in 1980, expressing their conviction that Arab men and women were both the instrument and the objective of development,

Adhering to the Charter of the United Nations, which seeks to promote humanitarian causes, guarantee human freedoms and needs and provide the basic requirements and conditions for a better life for mankind as a whole,

Recognizing the importance of achieving Arab comprehensive development that will satisfy the needs and aspirations of present generations, without jeopardizing the rights and aspirations of future generations, by mobilizing Arab resources, developing productive forces and satisfying the social needs, both material and moral, of the Arab person in the light of modern patterns of development appropriate for and protective of the environment,

Convinced that the Arab region, given its great human, natural and financial resources, as well as the elements of homogeneity of the Arab countries, namely language, heritage, common history, common destiny, and geographical location, possesses great potential for numerous forms of cooperation, coordination and joint Arab action in various development fields,

Believing that a just peace is an essential requirement for the realization of comprehensive development,

Believing also that the continued occupation by Israel of Arab territories constitutes an insurmountable obstacle to the achievement and maintenance of such peace,

Acknowledging the right of the Arab nation to live in security in its homeland and the right of each of its peoples to live in freedom, security and peace of mind in their respective countries,

Affirming the right of the Palestinian Arab people to rid themselves of the occupation and to establish their own independent State on their national soil and to resist such practices as settlement, expulsion, deportation, detention, repression, environmental destruction, dissipation of resources and denial of basic human rights, all of which obstruct their progress towards the realization of comprehensive development, and also affirming the rights of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland pursuant to the relevant United Nations resolutions,

Acknowledging the influence of international economic relations on comprehensive development in the Arab States, particularly in the light of the termination of the cold war and the emergence of radical changes in the international order, and in recognition of the importance of equitable interdependence in such relations, and of the need to enhance and develop those relations to serve the goals of development and socio-economic progress in the various parts of the world,

Recognizing that the realization of Arab comprehensive development--given the need to take human development into careful consideration--will require that a balance be struck between the rights of the individual and society, bearing in mind that the success of the development process depends largely on the prevalence of an appropriate external climate,

Believing in the ability of the Arab person, enjoying democracy, social equality and human rights, and given objective conditions favourable to progress and effectiveness in development efforts, to confront the challenges and dangers facing the Arab world,

Acknowledging that the creation of those objective conditions requires a comprehensive evaluation of past development efforts and their achievements, and particularly an evaluation of human development efforts and of population conditions and policies in the countries of the Arab world in accordance with the development strategies adopted by Arab States and in Arab and international instruments,

Conscious that the past decade witnessed commendable efforts in population policies and human development in the Arab world, although those efforts fell short of the aspirations expressed in the Amman Declaration on Population in the Arab World adopted by the Regional Population Conference in the Arab World held from 25 to 29 March 1984,

Convinced that the countries of the Arab world have witnessed many new developments and changes over the past 10 years, which necessitated the formulation of comprehensive population policies integrated with overall Arab development in its various dimensions during the coming decade,

Aware that, in spite of the varying priorities of population policies from one Arab State to another, there is a need to formulate a clearly defined Arab population strategy to ensure optimal utilization and distribution of human resources, integrated into development,

Believing that the Pan-Arab Perspective can serve as a significant approach when addressing population issues and challenges in the Arab world,

Recognizing the importance of cultural and religious dimensions in determining population behaviour patterns,

Pursuant to the provisions of the World Population Plan of Action (Bucharest, 1974) and the recommendations of the Mexico Conference of 1984 designed to promote a more intensive and rapid implementation of that Plan, as well as the provisions of the World Conference on Women (Nairobi, 1985), the World Declaration on Children issued by the World Summit on Childhood (New York, 1990) and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992),

Pursuant also to the Amman Declaration on Population in the Arab World (1984), the Arab Declaration on Environment, Development and Future Prospects (Cairo, 1991), the Arab Plan for the Protection, Care and Development of Childhood (Tunis, 1992) and the resolutions of specialized Arab ministerial meetings, and on the basis of the achievements of the Arab world in the light of the principles and objectives contained in all those instruments,

Invoking United Nations resolutions (General Assembly resolution 47/176 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 93/1991, 37/1992 and 4/1993) concerning the convening of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 5-13 September 1994) which emphasize that the question of population and sustained economic growth and continuous development will constitute the overall topics of the Conference,

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Firmly establishes the following general principles for population policies:

1. Human development is the starting point of development efforts aimed at achieving a satisfactory quality of life in the Arab world, with all that this implies by way of socio-economic progress, justice, democracy and protection of human rights.
2. The family is the basic unit of society and it is therefore necessary to create all the appropriate conditions needed to preserve its integrity, raise its standard of living, protect its values and cohesion and provide its members with opportunities for a decent life.
3. Women, like men, play a crucial role in society. They do so not only as mothers but as essential factors in resource management, economic activity and national development. Development cannot be realized without ensuring women's participation therein, improving women's quality of life in all its aspects and securing the economic, social, educational, cultural, psychological and health conditions needed to enable them to play their role fully as citizens.

4. Children have a basic right to a healthy, happy and secure life through the provision of health care, modern education and other appropriate services and conditions.

5. The population issue is closely interrelated with socio-economic changes, the cultural environment and the political framework, and hence with the development process. Population variables are determined by the broader social environment, and the social, economic, cultural, political and environmental components of the actual conditions dictate the attitudes of individuals towards population dynamics, thereby determining population dimensions. Population variables, in turn, affect those dimensions at the national, regional and international levels.

6. An integrated approach to the population issue requires consideration of its various dimensions, such as population size and structure, growth rates, geographical distribution, national and pan-Arab security and other characteristics, as well as recognition of the fact that these dimensions interact and, consequently, should not be treated separately as isolated aspects in any population policy; it should also be recognized that these population dimensions are influenced by the processes of reproduction, mortality and internal and external migration.

7. In view of the special conditions in the Arab territories under Israeli occupation and the ensuing displacement and forcible migration of their population, the latter's population problems need to be addressed from a special perspective which gives priority to those dimensions that relate to steadfastness, national security, political considerations and the need to counter the aggressive demographic schemes of the occupation authorities.

8. One of the basic human rights recognized in the 1974 World Population Plan of Action is the right of couples to choose freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children. To enable them to exercise this right, they must have access to the necessary education, information and services. Present and future demand for family planning must be met. The Arab States should be called upon, regardless of their stand on population growth, to provide for family planning services as a basic human right of couples.

9. The Arab States which adopt a policy of modifying population growth rates should integrate population policies into the framework of national development plans.

10. Arab successful and continuous development depends on the levels of economic growth and social progress, including diversification of productive capacities and increasing rates of production through reliance on the optimal rational utilization of material and human resources, as well as the use of environmentally safe technology, and the integration of environmental considerations in planning operations and economic policies with a view to improving the quality of life for the present generations, without jeopardizing the rights of future generations, as well as achieving equitable distribution, creating job opportunities and satisfying the basic material and moral needs of Arab men and women.

11. Effective measures to overcome current population problems in the Arab world through diligent efforts to achieve development will be severely affected by the increasingly rapid and radical changes that have taken place on the world stage in recent years and which necessitate the adoption of a collective self-reliance strategy within the Arab world, as well as close cooperation with the developing countries. They also necessitate diligent efforts to change the status of the Arab economy in the present world economy with a view to attaining further self-reliance, mutual equitable interdependence and active and positive involvement in international economic relations.

12. Since some economic and social conditions in many Arab countries interact strongly with population problems, reforms are needed to rectify those conditions and the imbalances that they reflect. However, these reforms have economic and social dimensions that differ from one Arab country to another, and special attention must therefore be paid to the social effects of those reforms, disregard of which would be detrimental to human development as one of the kingpins of development.

13. Since the Arab economy forms part of the world economy and is affected by the changes and disruptions to which the latter is prone, there is a need to promote forms of inter-Arab and Arab-international cooperation, as well as endeavours to overcome international problems and restructure the world economy in such a way as to ensure greater North-South balance and equality in order to improve terms of trade.

14. The mounting indebtedness of some Arab countries tends to obstruct the implementation of population policies and programmes. Therefore, efforts should be made, in coordination with the creditor countries, to devise appropriate formulas for the rescheduling of debt servicing, particularly that of an inter-Arab nature, for purposes of investment for the benefit of these policies and programmes.

15. The industrialized countries are called upon to adopt policies aimed at the achievement of a better balance between the population size and resources of this planet by reducing the huge expenditures on armament and curbing excessive consumerism, which is squandering the resources of the entire world. They are also called upon to adopt more effective orientations in an effort to conserve resources, protect the environment and achieve a higher level of well-being for all mankind.

16. The population problems in the Arab countries might appear less acute if viewed from a pan-Arab perspective. This requires the formulation of an Arab population policy based on current conditions. It should seek solutions to population problems in each individual country within a comprehensive development framework. Such a policy should constitute a pan-Arab framework for the population policies of individual Arab countries.

17. Population growth is a factor in socio-economic development. Accordingly, population policies should be formulated not on an individual basis but rather within the context of an integrated development policy. Account should be taken of the periods of time needed to influence population variables. Population growth policies should therefore be based on the economic, social, cultural and health situation in each country.

18. A spirit of democracy, collective endeavour and individual initiative should be promoted and fostered in the life of the Arab person by respecting his will and his creative capacities under appropriate laws and legislation that ensure protection of his achievements and respect for his human dignity and rights.

III. OBJECTIVES

In the light of the preceding preamble and general principles, the Conference establishes the following objectives:

19. The formulation and implementation of integrated population policies, programmes and activities in the Arab countries within the framework of development efforts aimed at:

(a) Achieving appropriate population growth rates through provision of the services needed to attain national policy goals. In the case of countries wishing to reduce their population growth rates, this requires provision of the services needed to develop and enhance family planning and family protection services, including maternal and child health care, and the formulation of economic, social, health and education policies to help create the requisite climate in which couples will accept and react to these objectives;

(b) Reducing mortality rates to the lowest possible level, especially maternal, child and infant mortality;

(c) Reaching a geographical distribution of the population in keeping with the requirements of development and healthy environment by rationalizing urban growth and paying attention to rural areas in order to improve the quality of life.

20. The establishment of general principles to coordinate the population policies of the Arab countries, and the provision of the means for their implementation and monitoring. Endeavours should also be made to implement Arab agreements regulating the movement of labour among the Arab countries in such a way as to ensure maximum developmental benefits for both the Arab countries of origin and the Arab host countries, and grant priority to Arab labour in the latter.

21. Efforts should be made to counter the methods that Israel is employing to violate human rights, impose forced migration on the Palestinian Arab people and disrupt the natural course of life in the occupied Lebanese territories and in the occupied Golan Heights in the Syrian Arab Republic.

22. The granting of high priority to human development through an enhancement of population characteristics in the context of population policy and its developmental aspects. Care should also be taken to meet the needs in regard to nutrition, health care, the eradication of illiteracy, the provision of means of education and endeavours to combat unemployment. There is a need to ensure a more equitable distribution of income, to combat poverty and to provide basic commodities and public services. Efforts should be made to

enhance the situation and status of women and improve child welfare, care of the disabled, arrangements for grass-roots participation and the protection of democracy and human rights.

23. To further sound religious orientations and understanding of population issues in general, and of the spacing of births in particular.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the principles set forth in this Declaration, and with a view to achieving the objectives contained herein, the Conference calls upon the Governments of the Arab States to observe the following guidelines:

A. Human development and its relationship to development

24. Population policies should be formulated within the framework of a comprehensive strategy for development, paying due regard to the mutual interaction among them.

25. Special attention should be paid to human development and the necessary resources should be allocated to its achievement in a manner consistent with population policies, since human development is an objective in itself. Resources should be allocated to achieve human development, especially in social sectors such as health, education, training, housing and healthy environment.

26. Regional non-governmental organizations and the private sector should be encouraged to play an increasing role in the achievement of population objectives and to contribute to the implementation of population policies.

27. Human development should be viewed as relating to human requirements, activities and aspirations, including production and distribution, culture and the arts, enjoyment of democracy, protection of human rights and participation by all male and female members of society in decision making.

28. Regard should be shown for considerations of justice and equal opportunity for the present and future generations and the right of each of them to enjoy the resources of the Arab world. This requires the ongoing development of such resources in a manner that meets the needs of the present generations without diminishing the possibility of meeting the needs of future generations: the welfare of the present generations should not be based on additional economic and environmental loans to be repaid by future generations.

29. The Palestinian people should be enabled to recover their freedom and sovereignty over their natural resources so that they can not only formulate a population policy in keeping with their national interests and consistent with their development aspirations but also implement real development projects, stressing their need for international protection.

B. Population, environment and development

30. There is a need for a more thorough understanding of the interrelationship between population, resources, environment and development. The conduct of

further research should therefore be encouraged with a view to developing such understanding, as well as new conceptual frameworks and appropriate analytical tools and indicators, and exchanging the findings of such research.

31. Data and information networks on environmental, population and development variables should be established to facilitate the decision-making needed for the achievement of compatibility among these variables within each individual Arab country. An Arab programme should be prepared to link these networks for the purpose of coordinating common population, environment and development issues among the Arab countries.

32. The environmental effects of new projects and activities must be examined as a basic component of the evaluation study of these projects and activities so that the phenomenon of worldwide industrial relocation does not lead to a concentration of pollutant industries in the third world, of which the Arab countries form part.

33. Pan-Arab development policies should be formulated to meet present needs, without prejudicing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. There is a need to speed up the implementation of the Arab development programmes approved by the Council of Arab Ministers for Environmental Affairs in 1991, the aim of which is to address the various environmental and natural resource issues in the Arab world, particularly land degradation and measures to combat all forms of environmental pollution.

34. Pan-Arab plans should be formulated to ensure the rational use of land, water and other resources and prevent their depletion and deterioration in order to promote human well-being.

35. Measures should be taken to combat poverty and unemployment and to improve the quality of life in urban and rural environments and industrial areas. Special priority should be accorded to the implementation of low-income housing schemes, the provision of clean water and sanitation in densely populated areas and the adoption of appropriate technologies to that end.

36. National non-governmental organizations should be consulted prior to the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in the field of population, development and environmental protection. These organizations should be given material, technical and administrative support, and their relations with official government institutions and international and Arab organizations in connection with the various development programmes and services that they undertake should be coordinated.

37. The Arab person should be protected through the promulgation of legislation and the adoption of the measures needed to prevent the use of the coastal land and territorial waters of the countries of the Arab region as a dumping ground for toxic wastes from the industrialized countries. Such dumping should be regarded as a violation of the principles of international relations, which call for respect for ethical concepts in such relations. Appropriate national control bodies should be established to monitor this matter in order to limit its long-term detrimental effects on individuals and the environment.

38. Efforts should be made to counter the policies of settlement, confiscation of land, demolition of houses, restriction of building permits, seizure of water resources, burial of dangerous wastes and cutting down of trees, which Israel has been pursuing in the occupied Palestinian territories since 1967.

C. Population distribution and urbanization

39. Special attention should be paid to policies aimed at improving the quality of life in rural areas by promoting the economic, social and environmental dimensions of integrated rural development endeavours in such a way as to achieve population stability in these areas and curb rural-urban migration.

40. Facilities for production and life in small and medium-sized urban areas should be promoted in such a way as to secure the continued economic and social vitality of these areas, enable them to retain their populations and provide them with opportunities for development and population stability.

41. New sites for production should be located, whenever possible, away from present densely populated areas, within the framework of country planning, in order to achieve a better distribution of the population in the geographical area of the Arab countries and to achieve equitable and harmonious regional development.

42. Greater endeavours should be made to obtain reliable data on population movements, on factors associated therewith and on population needs through population censuses, socio-demographic surveys on migration and special migration and area studies.

43. Studies should be undertaken for the purpose of understanding the factors and motives underlying internal migration with a view to planning, implementing and evaluating population distribution programmes.

D. International migration

44. The Arab States should coordinate and cooperate in planning Arab labour mobility among them in order to maximize the benefit to both the sending States and the receiving States, giving consideration to the accordance of priority to the employment of Arab labour and endeavouring to implement bilateral and multilateral Arab agreements in this regard.

45. The Arab labour-sending countries should diligently endeavour to provide employment opportunities by diversifying their sources of production and formulating training and development plans and programmes to promote stability of their labour force in its country of origin.

46. There is a need to protect the human rights of Arab migrant workers and their families in the labour-sending and labour-receiving countries.

47. There is a need for international support for development endeavours in the labour-sending Arab countries in order to help to curb labour migration, particularly informal migration.

48. All possible Arab and international action and measures should be taken to put an end to hostile behaviour towards Arab migrants, particularly Maghrebis, to safeguard all their workers' and human rights and to regulate their situation within the context of the Euro-Arab dialogue.

49. Endeavours should be made to facilitate the integration of returning Arab labour in their societies of origin, to solve their problems and to integrate them in productive and social activity in their new areas of residence in such a way as to enhance their contribution to national development endeavours.

50. All ways and means should be adopted to protect migrants, refugees and persons forced to move by upheavals and wars, especially women and children. International support should be extended to the receiving countries in order to accommodate them until such time as they return to their home countries, especially if the host countries are among the least developed countries, with a view to easing the resulting burden placed upon them.

51. Arab and international cooperation plans and programmes should be formulated to support the Arab States that are suffering from the problem of an influx of refugees from neighbouring States.

52. Specialized studies on international migration should pay due regard to national priorities. Regional and international donors are called upon to support surveys, research and policies concerning external migration in the Arab countries in view of the developmental significance of such migration. The earlier recommendations concerning the need to provide the requisite support for the conduct of a world migration survey, along the lines of the world fertility survey, are reaffirmed.

53. The requisite Arab measures should be taken to secure the immediate cessation of all inhuman Israeli practices against the Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese peoples, particularly those involving forced migration, deportation and violations of human rights.

54. Endeavours should be made to halt Jewish immigration aimed at bringing about radical changes in the region, including disruption of the demographic balance, as these changes constitute a direct and indirect danger to the occupied Arab territories through the intensification of settlement operations and exploitation of the resources of these territories for the benefit of the new immigrants; they also constitute a destabilizing factor in the region.

55. International and Arab support should be provided for the Palestinian national economy in the occupied territories to help end its dependence on the Israeli economy; the productive sectors should be encouraged; Israeli exploitation of the markets of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip should be limited; the exploitation of workers from the West Bank and Gaza forced by deteriorating economic conditions in the occupied territories to work in the various economic sectors within Israel should also be limited.

E. Women, population and development

56. In view of the crucial importance of the role and status of women in development and their effects on demographic behaviour, age at marriage,

fertility, and infant, child and maternal mortality rates, policies and programmes should seek to improve the status of women as one of the goals of national development plans.

57. The Arab States that have not yet ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are called upon to ratify and implement that Convention in a manner consistent with their domestic legislation. Efforts should also be made to develop legislation to improve the situation of women, particularly in regard to relations within the family, employment, social security, health insurance, pensions, maternity leave, appointments, job promotion opportunities and education, etc. Distinction should be made between mistaken social ideas and the accurate understanding of religion.

58. The reproductive role of women should in no way be used as a reason for limiting women's right to work, education and participation in public life.

59. Policies and programmes should be formulated to help to:

(a) Ensure the contribution of Arab women in regard to work in the various societal activities, at all levels in order to promote equality between women and men and provide the conditions and services that are conducive to such contribution;

(b) Increase the economic potential of women by providing them with opportunities for education, training, literacy programmes and employment in the various production sectors;

(c) Promote the participation of women in public life at all levels, including decision making;

(d) Provide an opportunity for women to exercise an informed choice regarding birth control and facilitate their access to the services necessary for that exercise.

60. There is a need to adopt programmes that accord priority to rural women, and the Arab countries should be urged to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Summit on the Economic Advancement of Rural Women held at Geneva in 1992.

61. Efforts should be made, at the country and regional levels and through specialized centres, to establish an adequate database concerning the various aspects of the life of Arab women in order to facilitate research and in-depth studies to identify the everyday problems and difficulties with which they are faced, with a view to the formulation of policies and programmes conducive to the solution of such problems and difficulties and to the enhancement of their status and quality of life.

62. Support should be given to national non-governmental organizations, women's federations and associations concerned with women, population and development in order to help them to play their role in enhancing women's awareness so that they can contribute to development and participate in all spheres of life. Support should also be given to programmes of research,

studies and training concerning women and their role in development. Use should be made of Arab training and research centres for women, the activities of which should also be coordinated.

F. Maternal and child health and family planning

63. Programmes relating to maternal and child health (MCH) and family planning should be designed in such a way as to ensure:

(a) Acceptance of the question of family planning, in its broad sense, as a right of couples within the framework of its role in enhancing the various aspects of family health;

(b) The integration of family planning services into other family health services, including the expansion and streamlining of a system for the provision of MCH and family planning services, as well as health education programmes, within the framework of primary health care.

64. In Arab countries where fertility levels are high:

(a) Efforts should be made to set appropriate fertility and family planning targets consistent with the development goals of each country;

(b) Health and nutrition education activities related to MCH and family planning should be strengthened;

(c) The quality and accessibility of family planning services should be improved by arrangements for well-trained persons to respond to the needs of the beneficiaries and offer a wide choice of family planning services in keeping with the broader reproductive health needs of the population, including prenatal and postnatal care;

(d) The provision of an appropriate socio-economic environment for the achievement of reproduction rates consistent with the desired population growth rates.

65. There is a need to formulate and implement appropriate programmes to lower infant, child and maternal mortality rates.

66. Programmes should take full advantage of the potential contributions of NGOs, including women's NGOs, so that they can continue to support national programmes in the fields of MCH and family planning. In particular, greater use should be made of the resources, experience and expertise of local non-governmental organizations in order to strengthen their role. There is also a need to actively advocate the use of their services and improve the availability, social acceptability and effectiveness of family planning services.

67. Issues concerning Arab children should be accorded priority in development plans and the availability of child services should be increased, including health, nutrition and education services. Measures should also be taken to combat the phenomena of child labour and school drop-outs and public awareness programmes should be formulated to counter the phenomenon of sexual discrimination.

68. Information, education and communication (IEC) programmes should include MCH and family planning messages, with particular emphasis on the following:

- (a) Agricultural extension programmes;
- (b) Activities of professional and trade unions, cooperatives, etc.;
- (c) Women's programmes and federations;
- (d) Youth programmes for both sexes;
- (e) Sexual and mental health programmes.

69. There is a need to upgrade management information systems (MIS), so that they can provide timely and high-quality information, and to adopt suitable strategies for the use of comprehensive, rapid and low-cost surveys for the purposes of appropriate monitoring and evaluation programmes. There is also a need for appropriate training to ensure the proper use of such information by MCH service providers and instructors.

70. Concerted efforts should be made to undertake relevant research on the improvement of reproductive and mental health and to put the findings of such research into practice through their incorporation in ongoing policies and programmes. There is a particular need to promote research on the socio-cultural factors that influence fertility and associated factors related to the use of methods of contraception and their incorporation in preventive health and MCH programmes in a manner consistent with socio-cultural and administrative conditions.

71. There should be closer inter-Arab cooperation in the manufacture, promotion and distribution of family planning aids. Use should be made of the experience gained by the Arab countries that have played a pioneering role in this field.

72. There is a need to relieve the sufferings of Palestinian families in the occupied territories, which are directly attributable to the practices of the Israeli occupation authorities and which have led to a deterioration in the standard of public health, a lack of MCH and family protection programmes and high mortality rates, particularly among infants and children.

G. Information, education and communication (IEC)

73. IEC programmes in the field of population should become basic components of national education and information systems.

74. IEC messages and curricula should be socially rooted and readily acceptable to the various population target groups, particularly in rural areas. Hence, these programmes and materials should be based on the results and findings of field research aimed at determining the values, attitudes and behavioural patterns needed to define the objectives and contents of effective IEC programmes and activities in the field of population.

75. IEC programmes should be designed within the framework of an integrated approach so that they can play a major role in facilitating the understanding of women's issues in order for women to make an informed choice regarding birth control and gain access to the requisite aids therefore, and also in promoting the status of women and their full participation in population and development affairs.

76. Population education should be more fully incorporated in all stages of formal and informal education with a view to stimulating awareness of population and development issues and promoting positive attitudes and rational behaviour among the target groups in regard to such issues, thereby achieving a balance between population and available material resources at the household and community levels.

77. When formulating and designing population communication programmes, due regard should be shown for the principle of integration and harmonization, i.e. the need to coordinate these programmes with a view to achieving their objectives in a manner consistent with their different materials, concepts and contents relating to the issues of population and development.

78. It is important to ensure the availability of human resources capable of playing their roles in IEC population programmes, which requires the training of personnel in this domain.

H. The role of national non-governmental organizations
in the achievement of development

79. In view of the substantial Arab non-governmental contribution to development over the past two decades, and in the light of the growing Arab and international interest in the role of national non-governmental organizations in development, the Conference stresses the need to:

(a) Promote Arab coordination among national non-governmental organizations active in the field of population in the Arab countries and enable them to participate in country and pan-Arab programmes through the establishment of the requisite technical structures for that purpose;

(b) Strengthen the role of Arab national non-governmental organizations, as partners, in order to enable them to support and supplement government efforts to implement the Second Amman Declaration on Population and Development in the Arab World;

(c) Invite Arab and international financing bodies and funds to provide financial support for projects implemented by Arab national non-governmental organizations in the field of population, environment and development;

(d) Invite international financing organizations, the United Nations, the European Community and international and regional agencies, bodies and funds to provide financial and technical support for Arab national non-governmental organizations and encourage their participation in regional and international meetings and conferences;

(e) Encourage the endeavours and initiatives that are being undertaken in the Arab region with a view to coordinating cooperation and interlinkage among Arab national non-governmental organizations between them, on the one hand, and official and popular bodies and regional and international organizations and agencies, on the other hand;

(f) Encourage the participation of representatives of national non-governmental organizations in official delegations to national, Arab and international conferences in view of the positive results of such participation;

(g) Support and finance training programmes and projects for the administrative and institutional development of Arab national non-governmental organizations, with a view to enhancing the performance of such organizations on an effective scientific basis.

I. Special categories

80. Special attention should be directed towards juveniles and young people through the provision of education, contemporary culture, arts, sports, and all forms of social welfare to protect them from falling prey to the dangers of addiction, violence and extremism. Young people should be provided with employment opportunities to combat unemployment among them.

81. Particular care and attention should be given to talented individuals through the formulation of special programmes to develop their potential in various fields.

82. Special protection should be afforded to special groups such as orphans, the homeless, foundlings, victims of disasters and wars and juvenile delinquents.

83. Special care should be given to elderly and aged men and women, and efforts should be made to facilitate their access to health and social services. The role played by the family and local community institutions in this regard should be intensified.

84. The population of the Arab world, particularly mothers, children, the elderly, and the sick should not be subjected to any negative or inhuman effects, contrary to human rights, as a result of political or any other decisions.

85. Special policies should be formulated to cater for the welfare and rehabilitation of disabled members of the population, including provision of the resources required for health infrastructure and personnel and of the appliances and equipment needed to enhance their quality of life and integrate them in society.

J. Structural adjustment and population policies

86. In order to unleash development forces, including manpower, it will be necessary to pay special attention to raising real economic growth rates, correcting structural imbalances in the Arab States and formulating appropriate policies with due regard for the maintenance of a balance between country-specific economic, demographic, and social considerations.

87. The adjustment policies applied by some Arab States are having recessionary and other detrimental consequences, such as a reduction in public spending on social services and abolition of subsidies, which have had adverse

effects on human development, increased unemployment and lowered the standard of living. Therefore, economic policy should focus on giving priority to social services, particularly in the field of health and education. The cost of such policies must also be distributed among all social categories and groups, in accordance with their respective ability to bear such costs and with due regard for the principle of social justice and for the circumstances of each Arab State. Population development policies must be consistent with adjustment policies in order to avoid any increase in the adverse effects of adjustment.

88. The Arab world possesses enormous potential resources, material and non-material, which could be used for purposes of economic reform and development through inter-Arab cooperation in order to alleviate the burdens resulting from structural adjustment policies and achieve human development.

K. Data, research, exchange of information and training

89. Efforts should be made to develop an integrated system of population censuses, civil registration procedures, household surveys, in-depth studies and other related sources of data with a view to providing high-quality and timely information for population policies and monitoring, supporting national agencies responsible for the provision of such data. The Arab States should be called upon to undertake periodic population censuses on the understanding that expertise and support will be provided by regional and international sources to those countries lacking the material and technical means to achieve that end.

90. The availability of the technical skills needed for the collection, processing and analysis of population data must be ensured. In this connection, efforts should be intensified to train and upgrade national technical capabilities at all levels in order to achieve maximum benefit from the utilization and application of modern data-management technologies.

91. Research programmes should be undertaken and coordinated to study the principal population issues and their relationship with environment and development. In particular, heavy emphasis should be placed on the promotion of specialized research on population measures and policies. The Arab States should be urged to attach high priority to population research, to provide material and technical support for country and pan-Arab statistical agencies, and to establish, support and strengthen population research centres.

92. The establishment and maintenance of modern database systems, both numerical and bibliographic, should be encouraged at the country and regional levels in order to disseminate population data and information more efficiently and effectively and to ensure coordination among them.

93. There is a need to encourage the exchange of technical expertise and visits among national governmental and non-governmental parties engaged in research, training and programmes relating to population activities in the Arab countries.

94. Endeavours to standardize the definitions and terminology used in population research in the Arab world should be supported in order to ensure data comparability.

95. The Palestinian people should be enabled to undertake a general population and housing census in the occupied territories and to establish a national statistical department there in view of the inaccuracy of Israeli statistics.

L. Arab and international cooperation

96. International cooperation within the framework of the United Nations system has to continue to provide technical and financial support for population activities to assist the Arab States in their efforts to achieve population and development goals.

97. ESCWA and the League of Arab States are called upon to increase and expand the scope of their contributions to a closer understanding of Arab population issues and to promote regional cooperation in the field of population.

98. Support should be given to UNFPA to enable it to play a leading and effective role in providing assistance in the field of population policies, programmes and projects in the broader sense. States Members of the United Nations are invited to make financial contributions to UNFPA in a manner commensurate with the increasing needs of population projects.

99. UNFPA is requested to intensify its support for population programmes and activities in the Arab region through bilateral and regional mechanisms in order to:

(a) Expand and enhance its technical cooperation programmes with each Arab country, especially the least developed among them, with a view to helping them to address their population problems, deal with the causes of those problems and implement their population policies effectively;

(b) Intensify its cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Economic Commission for Africa, and the League of Arab States in order to support their ongoing endeavours to implement regional population programmes and projects;

(c) Maintain and increase its efforts to provide technical support for national population programmes and projects through the newly-established Country Support Team/Regional Office for the Arab States;

(d) Resume its activities in Lebanon and finance population activities as part of the process of reconstruction, including data collection and the preparation of population studies and policies aimed at restoring normal life in Lebanon;

(e) Support the efforts of those countries that have achieved good results in the field of population policies, in order to enable them to continue the implementation of their programmes and safeguard their achievements in this field;

100. International and Arab organizations should support the efforts of regional training centres and should utilize their expertise and capabilities.

101. Donor States, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations are urged to mobilize additional resources to assist the Arab countries in achieving their national population goals, particularly in the least developed Arab countries, since the emerging population issues in the region will become more diverse and complex in the coming decade. Every effort should be made to reach the target of \$US 9 billion for world-wide population activities from all sources--domestic and international--by the year 2000.

102. Emphasis should be placed on the role of Arab funds in financing country and regional projects and research relating to population activities within the framework of the development plans of the Arab countries and joint Arab action, as well as the role of those funds in supporting research and training institutions in the fields of population statistics and planning.

103. The Arab States are called upon to formulate plans and programmes based on the present Declaration and to establish a mechanism for their implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In order to achieve that, emphasis is placed on the need for the provision of technical and material services by UNFPA, ESCWA, the League of Arab States, Arab and international funds and other Arab and international federations and financial institutions.

104. Support should be given to the endeavours of the secretariat of the League of Arab States in the field of population surveys and studies. Its coordinating role among Arab bodies active in the field of population should be strengthened and its activities should be supported in order to enable it to meet the needs of joint Arab action in the field of population and to continue its monitoring and implementation of the recommendations of the Arab Population Conference.

105. Support should be given to the endeavours of ESCWA in socio-economic development fields, particularly in regard to population issues. Arab and international funds, and especially UNFPA, are invited to provide ESCWA with the support required to enable it to play its role fully in the field of population.

ANNEXES

STATEMENT BY HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
PRINCESS BASMA BINT TALAL
AT
THE ARAB POPULATION CONFERENCE
AMMAN
7 APRIL 1993

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to address this august assembly of Arab personalities and international experts for the opening of this conference. The convening of this conference in Jordan denotes the attached by this country, its King, Government and people to Arab meetings aiming at achieving the supreme interests of the Arab nation and reaching a unified position toward present and future issues.

Amman already played host to the Regional Conference on Population in the Arab World in March 1984; and today, nine years later, it is renewing the encounter, making the beginning of a new cycle to study the regional population issues with a new enlightened spirit, and a determination to solve population-related issues in a practical way. The objective of this exercise is to bring about an Arab perception of the issues which will be discussed at the International Population Conference due to be held in Cairo in 1994.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The 1994 Amman Declaration on Population in the Arab world embodied an Arab position towards a clearly defined population policy based on the optimal use and distribution of human resources within an overall integrated development strategy. The Amman Declaration on Population was conceived on the basis of the main guidelines embodied in the charter of national economic action issued by the eleventh Arab Summit held in Amman in 1980 and in which the Arab Leaders stated their firm belief that the Arab individual is both the artisan and target of development, and that the overall development is a responsibility derived from the principle of self-reliance, the development of productive forces and the satisfaction of social, material, and spiritual needs of the individual. With a solid understanding of the international relations they also expressed their adherence to the Charter of the League of Arab States, the Charter of the United Nations and its agencies, and the necessity to preserve the international relations due to the impacts they have on overall development in the Arab world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A careful examination of the population situation in the Arab world clearly shows the challenges and problems confronting us. The internal migration from rural to urban areas put more pressure on urban centers, already suffering from insufficient health, education and population services, as well as from environmental problems, the imbalance between population and resources, rising rates of poverty and unemployment and poor living conditions. Despite agricultural development plans in the Arab world, food shortages still persist, turning into one of the greatest challenges facing

us. Furthermore, social justice which has not been achieved so far, is considered an important factor in dealing with population issues; since achieving economic growth becomes meaningless if benefits only a small portion of the population.

Dealing with population problems in the Arab world from a narrow, country-specific perspectives is one of the most outstanding reasons which lead to the exacerbation of these problems. Although we believe that it is necessary for each Arab country to have its own population policy, according to its aspirations, it is essential to establish common grounds between country policies based on an Arab population strategy as part of an international population strategy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

While we consider establishing an Arab population strategy, we place ourselves in the international perspective of the global population issue. We look forward to a genuine cooperation and coordination in this field with all the countries of the world and with the United Nations organizations and specialized agencies, as we are convinced that solving world population problems requires common international efforts in order to achieve a sound population and a clear environment in which the whole Arab society can live according to the principles of justice, freedom, security and peace.

I welcome you once again, and extend my gratitude and appreciation to the League of Arab States, the United Nations Population Fund and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for holding the present conference. May God Almighty crown your endeavours with success for the good, progress and prosperity of our nation.

STATEMENT BY MR. MUSTAFA MAHDI AL-HADI
ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES
AT THE
ARAB POPULATION CONFERENCE
AMMAN, JORDAN
7 APRIL 1993

Your Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Talal,

It is a great honour for us to have Your Royal Highness among us today acting in the service of your people and your nation and for the advancement of the status of modern women. We salute in you Jordanian women and Arab women in general. We salute their struggle for a better life for themselves and for their nations. As always, Your Highness, we appreciate your well-known generosity in the vanguard of Arab women, who include our grandmothers, our mothers, our wives, our sisters and our daughters.

It is also a pleasure for us to meet, 10 years after our first conference in Amman, the capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, under the patronage of its King and in the bosom of its people. This is an opportunity for us to embrace our people in Jordan and convey to them our true love and best wishes and to witness this renaissance taking shape so elaborately in a marvellous blending of originality and contemporaneity, which allows life to continue on this good Earth, in a continuous relating back to the past, without isolation from the present and without fear of transcending the future.

We must put on record our admiration with regard to this progress which is taking place in international and regional circumstances so difficult for the people. This progress is paralleled by steadfastness in the face of Israeli aggression, a steadfastness which has resulted in serious consequences and immense sacrifices for the Jordanian people, yet they have not bent or yielded. The people of Jordan have remained strong, holding their heads up high and maintaining vigilance in the face of aggression.

Your Royal Highness,
Your Excellency, Mr. Ziad Fariz, Minister of Planning of Jordan,
Ministers and Ambassadors,
Mrs. Nafis Sadek, Executive Director of the
United Nations Fund for Population Activities,
Mr. Sabah Bakjaji, Executive Secretary for the
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,
Distinguished delegates, members of delegations, Governments and
official and national organizations,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the League of Arab States, I welcome you and wish you success in your work. Our meeting at Amman in the heart of the Arab world is a vantage point from which we can survey our land, our people and our holy places and observe the tragedy with all that it involves in the way of injustice, pain and sorrow.

We can see our trees being uprooted, the water of our rivers stolen, our houses demolished, and our people beaten and expelled. Martyrs are falling, wounded are bleeding, mothers are suffering miscarriages, and children are being killed before the eyes of the whole world in an age of human rights.

We proudly salute our children in occupied Palestine, who are resisting occupation, regression and persecution through their intifadah, which by any standards is a contemporary miracle; its soldiers are children, their weapons are their hands and their ammunition is stones to confront a barbaric army that is totally devoid of human feeling. Its flame will not die down; it is like a fiery hurricane, stubborn in its steadfastness, certain of its victory.

We are meeting today in the midst of extremely complex international circumstances in which a new international order is rapidly taking shape. We cannot stand by and allow it to encircle and strangle us to an ever-increasing extent with its political and economic groupings with which it is protecting its interests, without acknowledging a new role for us on this new stage. We must close our ranks and speak with a single voice, expressing a single will to choose our place and determine our standpoint in order to defend our interests from a position of strength and ability. The only way to do this is through solidarity, concord and brotherhood.

In this spirit, we are meeting today to address population issues in our homeland with a profound Arab feeling that our lives and destinies are indivisible. Our meeting has been made possible by endeavours by the part of the League of Arab States, acting in close collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, whose Executive Secretary, Dr. Sabah Bakjaji. We are delighted to welcome, also in collaboration with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, whose Director-General, Mrs. Nafis Sadek, we are also happy to welcome.

It will therefore constitute a fruitful meeting between Arab States and their organizations, and the United Nations and its organizations. We are confident that the outcome of this Arab conference will find its way into the international document that will be issued by the International Conference on Population which is due to be held at Cairo in September 1994.

We hope that the presence of our national and international organizations, both official and private, will reflect a spirit of sincere international cooperation in which people will be treated with respect and esteem.

The scholarly studies that have been presented to your Conference have been prepared by elite members of your nation in order to help your Conference to take carefully considered final decisions.

The population of our Arab world constitutes its true wealth through the development of which it will achieve comprehensive socio-economic development through interaction with the natural resources which are so plentiful in the Arab world. In fact, the population of the Arab world today is estimated at about 222 million persons and is expected to reach 449 million by the year 2020.

This population problem is common to most third-world countries, particularly those with a high population density, and would place increasing pressures on resources and the environment, necessitating ongoing scientific development as a realistic and urgent solution. However, it must be emphasized that this development, with the urgent and pressing obligations that it entails, is taking place at a time when the world is divided into a wealthy North and a poor South, i.e., a situation that requires an economic order characterized by justice and humanitarian relations between peoples acting in creative cooperation, since peace and prosperity are indivisible. It is indeed regrettable that the population literature in the Western world portrays the population increase in the third world as the growth of a ferocious beast that is threatening to destroy European civilization, thereby giving rise to extremist, violent terrorist movements against Arab migrants in Europe and to the public adoption by some European parties of racist slogans in their election platforms. The issue of migration therefore dominated the work of the European Population Conference.

Our Conference must attach the greatest importance to the protection of Arab migrants in Europe, as well as their rights to a decent life in which they can retain their cultural identity.

Every people has the right to live in security and stability in its homeland. Our nation also has the right to live in security and stability in its homeland. However, the people of Palestine have been condemned to make room on their national soil for immigrants arriving from abroad. The Palestinian people has found itself besieged and encompassed by occupation, debasement, settlement, expulsion and deportation, on which our Conference must express a categorical and resolute opinion: it is the primary Arab issue.

The issue of women occupies a distinctive place among population issues, in keeping with women's special role as the family pivot and as real contributors to economic development and social progress. It follows that they are entitled to a share of education, health care and social rights to enable them to contribute effectively to social development, particularly in the case of rural women who have an effective role to play in environmental conservation and social development, provided they are properly qualified therefor.

However, we note that the coverage of Arab women in the cultural literature of some foreign countries is both unfair and dishonest; it is characterized by prejudice and distortion of the true picture, deliberately or unknowingly showing Arab women as kept at home with no social status but to serve man.

Such portrayal which sometimes fills Western media and education cannot lead to friendly relations, understanding and true cooperation among people. Our concern for women emanates from appreciation and respect deeply seated in conscience, conviction, civilization and culture of our people, a point many people are unaware of. It is unfortunate that some endorse women's rights because they doubt our ability and sense of responsibility vis-a-vis our societies. We have long hoped that this view would disappear from relations among people who need to cooperate in order to face extremely difficult world problems.

We greatly hope that non-governmental organizations participating in our meetings will truly reflect our condition and will serve as a medium for interaction between us and their constituencies

The agenda of this conference is replete with issues relating to: internal, inter-Arab and international immigration; Arab labour and its freedom of movement among the Arab countries; human development--education, health, pure water and sound environment for all. The resolution of these issues is required for the creation of the Arab individual capable of dealing with the mysteries of life on the basis of faith and science. Let Arab genius be combined with the strategic location and the abundant potentialities for a cultural awakening to compensate for what we missed and to build a great present and a greater future.

In this connection, balanced human development, mental, physical, and moral, would constitute a call for truth, justice and virtue in a society free of vanity, injustice and sin. In such a society man would be characterized by honesty, good conduct and moral integrity. There would be no perversion, corruption, or vice.

It is the human responsibility to give and take; people should cooperate in a friendly manner to understand their own problems and solve them. It is one world; it should be based on equality among members of the same people and among different people of different countries; it should be based on international cooperation and joint action to face the issues and find solutions for them for the benefit of all, without discrimination or exclusion.

Your Royal Highness,

The Arab world is not only a geographical region but also has a history; it is not only soil but heritage, too. This beloved land witnessed the greatest interaction in history between man and land, producing everlasting springs of civilization and culture that constitute a solid foundation and a framework which secures us against pillage and alienation. It was an interaction among people and cultures, not provinces. Your declaration should truly reflect those noble values which are deeply established in the conscience of the nation.

Your Royal Highness,

Again, to you we extend our thanks and appreciation. We ask you to convey to His Majesty the King our respect and appreciation for his kind sponsorship of this conference. May God keep him for his people and nation. We appreciate his call for Arab solidarity and reconciliation. We shall be guided at this conference by his genuine call for the unity, progress and welfare of this nation.

Peace upon you. God bless you.

STATEMENT BY
MR. SABAH BAKJAJI, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA
AT
THE ARAB POPULATION CONFERENCE
4-8 April 1993
Amman

Your Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Talal,

Your Excellency Dr. Ziad Fariz
Minister of Planning,

Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director
of the United Nations Population Fund and
Secretary-General of the International
Conference on Population and Development,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am particularly pleased to welcome you to Amman, under the auspices of His Majesty King Hussein, and thus to have an opportunity to exchange views with you on population issues with the aim of arriving at a formula for issuing the Second Amman Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development in the Arab World. This Declaration, we hope, will express the specificity of the population question and its relationship to all the other comprehensive social and economic development issues in our region and that its wording will reflect its particular importance, since the Declaration will be submitted for discussion at the World Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo in September of next year.

It has already been 10 years since the issuance of the Amman Declaration on Population in the Arab World, 10 years during which the world has witnessed major events on all political, economic and social levels, including the collapse of the socialist camp and the appearance of the features of a new world order into which many countries are still trying to fit. These phenomena have added to the crises which have hit the region and jeopardized the process of economic development of more than one ESCWA country. And despite a ray of hope for comprehensive peace in the area, the peoples of the countries of the region continue to live in a state of uncertainty because of Israel's obstinate refusal to implement United Nations resolutions.

The world economic recession of the past decade and the tendency to create various economic blocs have had adverse effects on the area, as reflected by the decline in the prices of basic commodities and the volume of exports and by an exacerbation of the debt crisis, creating huge inflationary pressures.

Fortunately, researchers have realized the need to focus on human development in the broad sense of the term, for man, the maker of development, must also be its target. Efforts have therefore been directed towards combating poverty and unemployment and providing for the basic needs of the individual. Similarly, emphasis has been placed, by all available means, on the need to respect fundamental human rights and the importance of popular participation through the creative exercise of democracy. The achievements of the eminent country in which we are now meeting, and of other countries of the region, are ample evidence of this trend.

All peoples should endeavour to attain these goals, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, underlined in his Agenda for Peace, when he stated that the principles of the United Nations Charter "must be applied consistently, not selectively".

Your Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Talal,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is within such a context of political, economic and social change that our Arab Population Conference is being held.

There are 237 million people living in the Arab world and in 1992 they represented almost 4 per cent of the total world population. They are likely to number 300 million by the beginning of the next century, and nearly half a billion by the year 2030, when they will make up 6 per cent of the world's population.

Normal population growth rates in the Arab world, despite a downward trend, are today relatively high (approximately 29 per 1,000). The age structure of the Arab population is a young one. Children under 15 account for about 42 per cent, while the elderly (aged 65 and above) account for about 4 per cent. All demographic indicators show relatively high levels of fertility and medium levels of mortality. Undoubtedly, the fertility of Arab women is decreasing constantly. Estimates point to a drop in the overall fertility rate, which was more than seven children per Arab woman in the ESCWA region in the early 1960s but has begun to decline and is expected to fall below three by the end of the first quarter of the next century.

The infant mortality rate in the Arab world today is about 68 per 1,000 and is expected to drop to 50 per 1,000 early in the next century.

However, if the Arab world is similar to other third-world countries in more than one of the above demographic phenomena, with regard to population composition and, with time, reduced fertility and mortality rates, it has been more exposed to all forms of internal and external migration seeking better economic and scientific employment opportunities. We have also recently witnessed some new features of migration due to changes in the political situation in and around the region.

Your Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Talal,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

These are the main features of the population situation in the Arab world in general and in the ESCWA region in particular. I chose to touch upon them out of the conviction that an integrated perspective on the population question requires the treatment of all its dimensions as well as an awareness that these dimensions interact and that, consequently, they ought to be addressed as a whole for the purpose of formulating population policies.

However, several important questions remain, questions that should be taken into consideration when formulating appropriate population policies within the framework of comprehensive social and economic development in the Arab world.

The first of these questions relates to the need to ensure the stability of the Arab citizen in the Arab world, which would greatly facilitate the formulation of population policies. This can take various forms, such as inter-country movements and the creation of employment opportunities. There is also a need to safeguard material and moral rights in all spheres in a manner consistent with the conditions and nature of each part of the Arab world.

Family planning ought to be viewed within such a context, and the integration of population variables in development planning will remain one of the major issues in comprehensive development planning. Therefore, all international and regional agencies concerned, particularly the United Nations Population Fund, are called upon to give adequate attention to the question in view of its priority position in the economic and social development process.

Finally, reference must be made to the need to establish a solid database for population policies. Such a base is a prerequisite for the proper formulation of any rational population policy.

Your Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Talal,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The tasks set for our Conference are not easy ones, for some of their dimensions interlink with many other social and economic policy issues. Arab countries may have come to realize the importance of formulating appropriate population policies, but the greatest challenge lying ahead for them is the implementation, evaluation and updating of such policies. This calls for the consolidation of the efforts of all individuals and Governments, and of the international community.

We hope and trust that this Conference will contribute to the formulation of the appropriate population policies for the various countries of the Arab world with a view to the consolidation of the progressive social and economic development of this great nation.

STATEMENT BY
DR. NAFIS SADIK,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
AND
SECRETARY-GENERAL, INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION
AND DEVELOPMENT, 1994
AT THE ARAB POPULATION CONFERENCE
AMMAN - JORDAN
7 APRIL 1993

Your Royal Highness, Princess Basma bint Talal,
Your Excellency, Dr. Zaid Farez, Minister of Planning,
Your Excellency, Dr. Sabah Bakjaji, Executive Secretary,
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,
Your Excellency, Mr. Mahdi Moustafa Al-Hadi, Assistant Secretary-General
for Social Affairs, League of Arab States,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of UNFPA and the Secretariat of the International Conference on Population and Development, may I express my warmest thanks to His Majesty King Hussein, to Queen Noor and to your Royal Highness, and to the Government and people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, for your warm welcome and your magnificent hospitality in Amman. No one could wish for more generous hosts.

May I also express my personal thanks, and the thanks of UNFPA, to our colleagues in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the League of Arab States for the admirable organization of the proceedings during the last few days. Thanks are due also to the drafting committee and to the delegates who have worked so hard and so effectively for the success of this Conference.

This Conference offers a rare opportunity for the region as a whole to discuss questions of population and development, and to agree on common goals and directions. Although your states vary widely in their economies, populations and social conditions, your peoples share a rich cultural heritage. This heritage offers a firm basis for policies appropriate for a rapidly changing world.

Many pressing issues face the region. Among the most important is the balance between a growing population and the resources to sustain it. Key questions concern the distribution of populations between rural and urban areas; the rate and direction of migration, including urban growth and international migration; the rate of population growth; trends in fertility and mortality; and the role and status of women.

The region's population is growing at an average rate of over 2.8 per cent, faster than any region except Africa. According to United Nations figures, the region's population grew by 90 million between 1974 and 1990. It was about 222 million in 1990; by 2020 it may be 449 million, more than twice what it is today.

Birth rates are gradually declining, and average population densities are still low throughout the region. Yet rapid population increases are cause for concern in many countries of the region, firstly, because of the current level of social and economic development; secondly because of increasing demands on natural resources; and finally because of increasing concentrations of population in urban areas. Migration combined with natural increase will make 72 per cent of the region urban dwellers by the end of the century, compared with 56 per cent today. The combination of rapid population growth and urbanization will increase environmental stress in many countries.

This alone would command close attention to population issues: but there are other reasons for concern. There has been considerable progress in recent years in health and education status of women. However, further efforts are needed to reduce maternal mortality; and to increase the use of modern family planning methods.

The 1993 Arab Population Conference

Measures to improve all these indicators of social development were agreed in the Amman Declaration adopted by the last Regional Population Conference in 1984. They are important for their own sake, because as we agreed in 1984, they are a matter of human rights.

The 1984 Conference also pointed out the central importance of the social dimension of development in building a solid foundation for economic growth. Human rights and human development go hand in hand.

Status of women

With protection and encouragement for their personal and individual development, women will be free to make their greatest contribution to development in the nation and the region. Their place at the heart of the family will be strengthened; their value to the community and the economy will be redoubled. Regardless of overall national population goals, strengthening the position of women in the community and the country will strengthen the drive for sustainable development.

Family planning

Improving access to reproductive health care is the keystone of all measures to improve the status of women. The 1984 Amman Conference endorsed the human right to choose freely and responsibly the size and spacing of the family, and to the information and the means to do so.

Since that time, progress has been made in many areas. In particular, the use of modern family planning methods is increasing. Yet family planning remains a largely urban phenomenon, with wide variations in use between the urban and the rural areas. Rural women now know about modern family planning, but they are not yet able to use it, either because it is not available or because some cultural factors may inhibit its use. The incidence of male contraceptive use remains very low, despite clear evidence that all family planning programmes are more successful when men are fully involved.

The failure of men to take responsibility for their actions also helps to explain the persistently high level of maternal mortality in the region. Maternal mortality can very easily be prevented. It could be reduced by 40 per cent simply by allowing women to delay childbirth until they are out of their teens, to space their births, and to stop having children before they became too weak to bear the strain of pregnancy. In good part, this is a decision for the man, both to allow his wife to practise family planning and to practise it himself. Programmes should address women and men individually, and as members of the wider community. They should ensure that unnecessary barriers to child spacing are removed and that women have only the number of children they want. Greater efforts need to be made to involve men fully in family planning.

However, it is pleasant to note in this context that infant and child mortality is falling in the region. One reason certainly is the growing number of mothers who space their births and can therefore devote time and attention to bringing up a smaller but healthier family. In this sense family planning is the welcome renewal of a tradition which calls for responsible behaviour in marriage by women and men alike. Now programmes have to ensure that a safe, effective and appropriate method of family planning is available to everyone who wants it.

Rural development and internal migration

The countries of the region are still largely rural, though urbanization is progressing rapidly. I think we would all agree that historically, urbanization has been the symbol of development. Perhaps today we would add that urbanization helps development only if the agricultural sector remains strong. In an era of heightened expectations, the flow of rural migrations has become a flood in many countries. That may bring about the very opposite of what we want a weakened, overburdened urban sector, with a weakened and depleted rural sector.

In this region, the rural sector is still vibrant, carrying not only the bulk of the population, but much of the tradition and culture of society. It is vital to preserve and strengthen it, while at the same time seeking to ensure that the urban base has scope to grow and flourish. The aim of population programmes should be to narrow the gap between urban and rural sectors so that they support and nourish each other.

International migration

International migration is becoming a concern for several countries in the region, in part because it may be difficult to protect the human rights of migrants once they are abroad, and in part because migration has become a one-way street, with an increasing proportion of migrants living permanently outside their home countries. Permanent settlement reduces the flow of remittances and draws off skills and talent from the sending country.

At the same time it is clear that the statistical base for information on international migration, whether legal or informal, leaves a great deal to be desired. Informed debate would be greatly assisted by the adoption of common definitions and classifications, as well as some means of regular discussion

and exchange of information between host and sending countries. Exaggerated and distorted information will only feed prejudice and ignorance, and make it more difficult to find policy solutions to the problems of both host and sending countries.

Like urban migration, international movement can be a sign of dynamism and development, but if it becomes too large in scale it can also overwhelm and weaken the society concerned. It will be essential in both cases to limit the potential for migration. This means reducing high fertility rates which are responsible for demographic pressure in the next generation. It also means widening the range of economic opportunity. Our aim should be to ensure that no one is forced into migration by poverty or environmental degradation; but that women and men alike have the choice of moving in search of a better life.

International Conference on Population and Development

This is the fourth in the series of regional population conferences to be held in preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo next year. The findings of the regional conferences will be reported to the second Preparatory Committee in New York in May, and will have a strong influence on the Committee's outcome.

This meeting is also the opportunity to arrive at a regional consensus on approaches to common problems. We are hoping that the document being discussed and approved here in the next two days will be strong and precise in its recommendations, giving a clear regional perspective and at the same time offering strategic suggestions for action in the future. It should protect the rights of the individual, and the sovereign right of nations to determine their own policies. But it should also reflect our common goals and our unity as to the means of achieving them.

