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COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS:
PROCLAMATION OF INTERNATIONAL YEARS

Japan: draft resolution

International Year of Volunteers, 2001

The Economic and Social Council

Recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

International Year of Volunteers, 2001

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 2659 (XXV) of 17 December 1970, in which it decided to establish within the existing framework of the United Nations system, with effect from 1 January 1971, an international group of volunteers, the members of which should be designated collectively and individually as United Nations Volunteers,

"Recalling also its resolution 31/131 of 16 December 1976, in which it requested the Secretary-General and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, inter alia, to study the best ways and means to ensure the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of youth and youth organizations in the planning and implementation of youth programmes launched by the United Nations Volunteers,

"Recalling further its resolution 31/166 of 21 December 1976, in which it requested the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to develop further the activities of the United Nations Volunteers in the field of domestic development services,

"Recalling its resolution 40/212 of 17 December 1985, in which it recognized the desirability of stimulating the work of all volunteers both in the field and in organizations - multilateral, bilateral or national, non-governmental or government-supported - and of giving encouragement to those volunteers, many of whom engage in volunteer service at considerable personal sacrifice, and inviting Governments to observe annually, on 5 December, an International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to promote worldwide publicity on the important role of volunteer service,

"Bearing in mind the conclusion of the Fourth World Conference on Women that women should be enabled to benefit from an ongoing acquisition of knowledge and skills beyond those acquired during youth, and that this concept of lifelong learning includes knowledge and skills gained in formal education and training, as well as learning that occurs in informal ways, including volunteer activity, unremunerated work and traditional knowledge, ¹

"Bearing in mind also the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development ² and the emphasis placed on the importance of new players taking initiative at the local, national and international levels, particularly individuals and organizations of civil society, and on the need to promote socially-useful volunteer work, and to allocate appropriate resources to support such work,

¹Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 96.IV.13 (A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, para. 73).

²Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 96.IV.8 (A/CONF.166/9)).

"Bearing in mind decision 96/32 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, in which the Executive Board acknowledged the importance of the contribution made by volunteers worldwide and expressed its support for United Nations Volunteers efforts to promote further volunteer work,

"Noting the significant contribution that volunteers make in their own countries to the improvement of the welfare and the realization of the aspirations of their fellow citizens to improved economic and social well-being,

"Noting also the major achievements of volunteers assigned internationally to the attainment of the development goals of Member States,

"Noting further the assistance of United Nations Volunteers, in particular to United Nations agencies and operations, in the fields of social and economic development, humanitarian aid and the promotion of peace, and democracy and respect for human rights, and above all, in helping to link these efforts closely to the populations for whom they are intended,

"Convinced that the need for volunteer effort is greater than ever, given the adverse impact of global problems such as environmental degradation, drug abuse and HIV/AIDS on the more vulnerable sectors of societies, and the contemporary trend for civil society - in partnership with Government and the private sector - to assume ever greater responsibilities in the development process,

"Convinced also that a year designed to enhance the recognition, facilitation, networking, and promotion of volunteer service, with particular emphasis upon activity at the local level, could make a significant contribution to generating increased awareness of the achievement and the further potential of volunteer service, to encouraging offers of service from a greatly expanded number of individuals, and to channelling resources to enable the even greater effectiveness of such service,

"Noting with satisfaction that the proposal for the year has gained widespread support,

"Taking into account its resolution 35/424 of 5 December 1980 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 concerning guidelines for international years and anniversaries,

"1. Proclaims 2001 the International Year of Volunteers;

"2. Invites Governments, United Nations specialized agencies and bodies, intergovernmental, volunteer and non-governmental organizations, and community-based organizations to collaborate and identify ways and means to enhance the recognition, facilitation, networking, and promotion of volunteer service in the preparations for and observance of the Year;

"3. Designates the United Nations Volunteers programme/United Nations Development Programme to act as the focal point for preparations, implementation and follow-up of the Year within the United Nations system and encourages the United Nations Volunteers to continue the process of close collaboration and partnership with Governments, United Nations bodies and international volunteer and non-governmental organizations, in particular, as regards preparations for and implementation for the Year;

"4. Invites policy-making organs and secretariats of specialized agencies, organizations and other bodies in the United Nations system to consider and to make special efforts to achieve the objectives of the Year during the period 1998 to 2001, and to pursue follow-up action to the Year for the benefit of all countries and peoples in the context of their substantive mandates;

"5. Appeals to Member States as well as to other participants in the observance of the Year to highlight 2001 as a special occasion benefiting the peoples of the world in their quest for a better life for all, based on the voluntary commitment of individuals and groups to make available their time and share their resources and skills in favour of those less advantaged;

"6. Calls for a concerted promotional and information campaign on behalf of the Year at the national, regional and international levels, with strong participation of the mass media;

"7. Requests the Secretary-General:

"(a) To take specific measures, through all the communication media at his disposal, particularly within the mandates of the

Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, to give widespread publicity to the preparations for and observance of the Year and to disseminate information on the subject;

"(b) To report on the observance of the Year at the national, regional and international levels, and to submit specific proposals on the follow-up to the Year, including a draft plan of action, if appropriate, to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session."
