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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1 - 4	3
II. ACTIVITIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS . . . . .	5 - 6	4
III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE YEAR . . . . .	7 - 17	4
IV. ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL . . . . .	18 - 50	7
A. National plans of action . . . . .	25 - 27	8
B. Social issues . . . . .	28 - 34	9
C. Participation . . . . .	35 - 36	10
D. Statistics and research . . . . .	37 - 40	11
E. Legislation . . . . .	41 - 44	11
F. Decentralization . . . . .	45 - 46	12
G. Assistance to developing countries . . . . .	47 - 49	12
H. Promotion of national weeks and days . . . . .	50	13
V. ACTIVITIES AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL . . . . .	51 - 75	13
A. Asia and the Pacific . . . . .	53 - 55	14
B. Africa . . . . .	56 - 60	14
C. Latin America . . . . .	61 - 65	15
D. Western Asia . . . . .	66 - 68	16
E. Europe . . . . .	69 - 75	18

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
VI. ACTIVITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM OTHER THAN THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS . . . . .	76 - 117	19
A. United Nations . . . . .	76 - 102	19
B. Specialized agencies . . . . .	103 - 117	25
VII. ACTIVITIES OF INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM . . . . .	118 - 128	28
VIII. ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS . . . . .	129 - 150	30

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 31/123 of 16 December 1976, proclaimed the year 1981 International Year of Disabled Persons. Activities relating to the preparations for the Year were subsequently considered by the Assembly at its thirty-second, thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions 1/ and a Plan of Action for the International Year of Disabled Persons was adopted. 2/

2. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 35/133 of 11 December 1980, inter alia, noted with satisfaction the steps already taken in the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Year, encouraged Member States and organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations Systems to intensify their action and co-ordination during the Year and recommended that particular attention should be given to the participation of disabled persons themselves and of their organizations in the activities undertaken in connexion with the Year and its follow-up. In the same resolution, the Assembly also invited Member States which had not yet done so to establish national committees or similar bodies and to give higher priority to development assistance projects in developing countries in the fields of rehabilitation services, technical aids and training of appropriate personnel, including disabled persons themselves. In addition, the Assembly welcomed the voluntary contributions made by Governments to the International Year of Disabled Persons and appealed for further contributions to the Year. The Assembly further requested the regional commissions to formulate appropriate programmes for implementing the recommendations contained in the Plan of Action and requested the Secretary-General to examine the question of access to United Nations buildings, documents and information for persons with sensorial disabilities, to strengthen the information activities and to provide the secretariat of the International Year of Disabled Persons with all the resources and personnel necessary for carrying out its work and to convene a session of the Advisory Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981.

3. In response to General Assembly resolution 35/133, the present report highlights the activities relating to the world-wide observance of the Year at the national, regional and international levels to the end of July 1981.

4. In accordance with General Assembly 34/154, an International Symposium of Experts on Technical Assistance in the Field of Disability and Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries was held at Vienna from 12 to 23 October 1981. The Secretary-General will inform the Assembly of the results of the discussions at the Symposium as soon as they become available.

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1/ Resolutions 32/133 of 16 December 1977, 33/170 of 20 December 1978 and 34/154 of 17 December 1979.

2/ The Plan of Action adopted by the General Assembly consists of the text appearing in paragraphs 57 to 76 of the annex to document A/34/158 and Corr.1, with the deletion of the phrase following the words "(See subpara. (i) below)" in paragraph 74 (c), of paragraph 74 (u) and of the words following the word "nationally" in paragraph 75 (b).

## II. ACTIVITIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS

5. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/170, the Advisory Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons is composed of the representatives of 23 Member States appointed on the basis of equitable geographical distribution and in concurrence with the regional groups. The Secretary-General wishes to point out that a number of disabled persons were among the members of the delegations at the meetings of the Advisory Committee.

6. During its first session held from 19 to 23 March 1979, the Advisory Committee recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the Plan of Action (see A/34/158 and Corr.1, annex). At its second session, held at Vienna from 20 to 29 August 1980, the Committee considered the implementation of the Plan of Action and its public information programme, ways of improving participation of disabled persons and their organizations in the International Year of Disabled Persons and a long-term world plan of action to follow up the Year (A/35/444, annex). The main items examined by the Committee at its third session, held at Vienna from 3 to 12 August 1981, related to the follow-up activities of the Year, including the establishment of a long-term World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the possibility of continuing the activities of the International Institute for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons in Developing Countries (see A/36/471/Add.1, annex).

## III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE YEAR

7. The International Year of Disabled Persons was proclaimed with the theme of "full participation and equality". The basic objectives of the Year, as contained in General Assembly resolution 31/123, are:

- (a) To help disabled persons in their physical and psychological adjustment to society;
- (b) To promote all national and international efforts aiming at providing disabled persons with proper assistance, training, care and guidance, and with opportunities for suitable work, and at ensuring their full integration in society;
- (c) To encourage study and research projects designed to facilitate the practical participation of disabled persons in daily life;
- (d) To educate and inform the public of the rights of disabled persons to participate in and contribute to various aspects of economic, social and political life;
- (e) To promote effective measures for the prevention of disability and for the rehabilitation of disabled persons.

8. In order to underline the importance of the Year's objectives, the Secretary-General appointed, in February 1981, the Assistant Secretary-General of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the International Year of Disabled Persons.
9. This report was completed at the end of July 1981. Consequently, a comprehensive picture of activities for the Year at the national, regional and international levels will not emerge until the results of the implementation of the Plan of Action for the remainder of 1981 become available. It already appears, however, that the implementation of the objectives of the Year has led to intensified and fruitful international co-operation. In addition, the work of the United Nations and of the organizations of the United Nations system has benefited from the full co-operation of both governmental and non-governmental organizations of all regions of the world.
10. The organization of services for the disabled and the improvement of their position in society still pose essential problems calling for urgent solutions. The observance of the Year has, nevertheless, created greater public awareness of the capacity and abilities of disabled persons to participate in economic, cultural and other aspects of social life. The Secretary-General is of the opinion that this development constitutes an important step towards the removal of obstacles in the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons.
11. As stressed in the recommendation adopted by the Advisory Committee at its first session, it is an important objective of the Year to ensure for the disabled an equal share in the benefits resulting from social and economic development. These questions have been dealt with primarily at the national level and are described in section III of the present report.
12. Activities relating to the Year have drawn attention to such specific groups of disabled persons as disabled children and youth, women with disabilities that impede their social functions, <sup>3/</sup> disabled aged persons, refugees and victims of crime. The various problems encountered by these groups are now better known but still require further study.
13. The three sessions of the Advisory Committee, the regional seminars and a number of other national and international meetings dealt with the problems of the direct participation of the disabled and their organizations in decision-making processes at the local, national and international levels. The Centre for Social

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<sup>3/</sup> The World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held at Copenhagen in July 1980, adopted a resolution entitled "Improving the situation of disabled women of all ages" which, among other things, encourages special attention to be given to the particular problems of disabled women of all ages in study and research projects designed to facilitate their practical participation in daily life (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.IV.3 and corrigendum, chap. I, sect. B).

Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs is currently involved in the preparation of a special study on the full participation of disabled persons, which will reflect the experience and knowledge acquired on this subject in the course of the Year.

14. The regional seminars organized during the course of the Year have identified a number of major problems related to disability prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities for the disabled. These issues are particularly striking in the developing countries and the least developed areas. For example, in some regions of Asia, a vast majority of disabled persons have no access to rehabilitation facilities. The problems resulting from this situation are further aggravated by the fact that most disabled persons live in poverty. Also, it has been estimated that over 45 million people in Africa are affected by disabling conditions. In this respect, it is believed that the magnitude of the disability problems could be reduced considerably by the adoption of more efficient preventive measures and the organization of more effective basic services in rural areas.

15. Famine, malnutrition, river blindness, traffic, industrial and domestic accidents, infectious, genetic and chronic diseases are some of the causes of disability which could be acted upon to decrease the incidence of disability.

16. It is too early to ascertain a substantial change in the situation of disabled persons. The theme of the Year - "full participation and equality" - and its objectives remain a long-term goal to be reached. This is especially true for the developing regions of the world where the vast majority of some 500 million disabled persons live. Although particular attention has been paid to the needs of developing countries in the implementation of the Plan of Action, the fact remains that improvements largely depend on the creation of a favourable international environment and mechanisms conducive to an accelerated socio-economic development of these countries.

17. At its third session, the Advisory Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons adopted a draft World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/36/471/Add.1, annex, sect. IV). A revised text of the draft World Programme of Action prepared on the basis of comments received from Member States and international organizations will be submitted to the Advisory Committee at its fourth session and, subsequently, considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 35/133. The follow-up activities to be undertaken upon completion of the Year in the context of the preparation of the draft World Programme of Action have therefore a particular importance. In this connexion, the Secretary-General wishes to appeal to all Member States as well as all international governmental and non-governmental organizations to take an active part in the elaboration of the World Programme of Action.

#### IV. ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

18. The activities organized by the national committees aimed at improving the social and economic conditions of disabled persons and at equalizing opportunities for them, have been decisive for the achievements of the Year. In order to stress the importance of the implementation of the objectives of the Year, heads of States and high-ranking personalities in a number of countries have issued messages to introduce the Year, opened national debates on related issues, attended special events devoted to the Year or have accepted to serve on the national committees.

19. As at 15 September 1981, national committees had been set up in 125 countries and territories. <sup>4/</sup>

20. Countries in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe are primarily concerned with the improvement of the social situation and the level of participation of disabled persons, with improving legislation and with the vocational and employment situation. Problems of prevention and rehabilitation of disability are dealt with among many other aspects related to the problem of disability.

21. The information received from countries (19 in all) in the other four regions is far too limited to allow any meaningful analysis on a regional basis. The over-all impression is that the developing countries are, on the one hand, well aware of the social implications and, on the other, are urgently in need of the basic services for the prevention and rehabilitation of disability. They lack information and data, trained personnel, equipment, services, the domestic production of aids, legislation concerning social security, safety laws and regulations in various fields and services for children in general. These problems reflect the needs of countries in earlier stages of economic and social development.

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<sup>4/</sup> Algeria, Antigua, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrein, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bermuda, Botswana, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Luxembourg, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint-Kitts Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, United Araba Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

22. These committees have prepared national programmes for the equalization of opportunities, disability prevention and the rehabilitation of disabled persons, have created working groups, selected priority areas and initiated new projects or reactivated existing programmes which will serve as a basis for future activities and policies concerning the social integration of disabled persons. The Year has also been an opportunity for these committees to review the implementation of the General Assembly declarations 5/ concerning the rights of disabled persons and to adapt existing legislations accordingly. A number of them have been in need of additional financial means or technical information in order to implement their programmes.

23. The activities of the national committees can be grouped under the following topics, although the priority accorded to each item varies from country to country:

- (a) National plans of action
- (b) Social issues
- (c) Participation
- (d) Statistics and research
- (e) Legislation
- (f) Decentralization
- (g) Assistance to developing countries
- (h) Promotion of national weeks and days

24. In the light of the work accomplished by the national committees, the Secretary-General is of the opinion that the continuation of their activities beyond 1981 would be most useful in order to maintain public interest and momentum created by the Year and to secure extended co-operation of the various bodies and organizations working in this field.

#### A. National plans of action

25. Most national committees have established national plans of action. Barbados, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Guyana, Iceland, Nepal, the Philippines, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Yugoslavia report establishing plans with short and long-term objectives or specifically mention the need for activities to continue beyond 1981.

26. The objectives of national plans are sometimes stated in general terms such as disability prevention and rehabilitation in accordance with the objectives of the Year. In other cases they are stated in more detail, such as improving the social position of the disabled (Belgium, Zaire); improving vocational rehabilitation and the employment conditions of the disabled (Bulgaria, Ghana, Luxembourg, Somalia); promoting local technology and facilitating the delivery of prosthetic devices and services (China, Guyana, Philippines); removing environmental barriers (Iceland,

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5/ Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (resolution 3447 (XXX)) and the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons' (resolution 2856 (XXIV)).



Luxembourg, Norway, Trinidad and Tobago); changing attitudes and creating public awareness (Denmark, Netherlands, Thailand, Upper Volta); ensuring for disabled persons the right to normal life, equality, independent living and full participation in public life (Barbados, Cyprus, Egypt, Finland, Portugal); improving legislation, including social security, traffic and work safety regulations (Bulgaria, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Iceland, Luxembourg, Philippines, Portugal, Thailand, Turkey); securing education opportunities (China, German Democratic Republic, Guyana, Luxembourg, Thailand); training of personnel (Barbados, China, Portugal); collection of statistics (France, Guyana, Zaire).

27. Several countries have stressed the interest stimulated by the International Year of Disabled Persons and the great benefit derived from the Year by disabled persons themselves.

#### B. Social issues

28. The issues raised in this section include problems of social integration, equalization of opportunities, vocational rehabilitation and employment, institutionalization, changes in attitude and physical and other environmental barriers. They are considered as crucial by many national committees.

29. The national committee for the Year in the Netherlands finds that one of the problems encountered in the field of rehabilitation of disabled persons is that the so-called medical model still dominates and that society will have to make a change in its way of thinking from "handicap-oriented" to "human-oriented". From the information received it can be assumed that the awareness of this problem is growing and the observance of the Year has undoubtedly played a role in this.

30. In some countries, national conferences or other meetings have been organized within the framework of the Year to consider future policies concerning the social integration of disabled persons. In Belgium, the Year has been observed by adopting various concrete measures aimed at improving the social position of the disabled. In Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, additional measures to improve the material and social conditions of war-disabled persons have been implemented as part of the activities for the Year. A conference organized by the Egyptian Federation for the Agencies working in the Field of Welfare and Rehabilitation of the Handicapped on the occasion of the International Year of Disabled Persons proclaimed the national motto "Normal life is the right of disabled persons".

31. The welfare approach to disability seems to be giving way to an approach that emphasizes full participation of disabled persons in social life and equalization of opportunities. The Governmental Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons of the German Democratic Republic views the securing of higher education opportunities for the disabled, the improvement of training of special education staff and an emphasis on vocational rehabilitation and employment as tools for furthering participation and equalizing opportunities.

32. The integration of disabled persons into the work process is considered very important for their social integration. At a seminar held in Austria in 1981 on the integration of the disabled person into society, vocational rehabilitation was particularly emphasized. The Netherlands Committee points out that part of the answer lies in stimulating discussion within society about work opportunities for the disabled and also in initiating experiments in relation to work alternatives. Remarks to this effect are also found in the reports of the national committee of Austria, Bulgaria and the Federal Republic of Germany.

33. The Czechoslovak Committee has dealt with questions relating to the removal of architectural barriers in public buildings, transport systems and disabled persons' apartments. The elimination of various environmental barriers is among the objectives of the National Committee of Iceland. One of the three sub-committees set up by the National Committee of Trinidad and Tobago deals with the problem of architectural and other barriers.

34. The report of the National Committee of the Federal Republic of Germany entitled "Understanding Each Other and Getting On With Each Other", 6/ mentioned that there are also barriers in the minds of men. The National Committee of Finland emphasizes the long-term effects of the Year's programme in order to improve co-operation between various sectors of society and also to attain equality for disabled persons. The National Committee of Trinidad and Tobago deals with the problems of public awareness of the issue of disability in society. One of the objectives of activities of the Year in the local communities in Denmark and the Netherlands is the changing of public attitudes towards disabled persons. A prominent feature in the programme of activities of the National Committee of the Upper Volta has been to sensitize and give correct information to the population concerning the social integration of disabled persons.

### C. Participation

35. The information received from the national committees shows that organizations of disabled persons in many countries have been taking an active part in the observance of the Year and have been involved in issues and decisions that affect the lives of the disabled. The programmes of the national committees of Austria, Barbados, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Japan, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States of America and Yugoslavia are based on the principle of direct participation by organizations of disabled persons.

36. Some national committees point out selected areas where participation is of special importance. In a number of Government-financed projects devised by the Canadian National Committee, there is significant participation by disabled persons. In Norway, where local communities are responsible for carrying out

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6/ Published by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Secretariat of the National Committee of the International Year of Disabled Persons, Cologne, 1981.

activities relating to the Year in collaboration with disabled persons' organizations, such collaboration is considered particularly important in the adaptation of dwellings, the accessibility of playgrounds, recreational facilities, kindergartens and schools. The National Committee of the Philippines has appointed a commissioner to strengthen the representation of disabled persons in identifying priority programmes. In Somalia, the national plan of action for the disabled has been circulated to all organs and organizations concerned in order to secure its implementation.

#### D. Statistics and research

37. The need for reliable data on which policies can be based is being increasingly felt. The national committees in France and the Federal Republic of Germany supply some statistical data concerning the disabled in their communities. The French Committee also provides some figures on disabilities caused by traffic accidents and alcoholism.

38. Iceland and Nepal have organized, or asked university departments to carry out, sample surveys of disabled persons. The plans of action of Guyana, the Philippines, Portugal, Turkey and Zaire include in their short-and long-term objectives the organization of national censuses of disabled persons.

39. Research is sometimes extended to the use of locally available materials and domestic production of technical aids for disabled persons (Philippines). The National Committee of Nepal has developed a questionnaire with the aim of collecting such data on a more systematic basis. It is reported that the existing facilities and services can satisfy the needs of only a minority of disabled persons.

40. The National Committee of Qatar reports that a major problem in that country is related to the lack of reliable studies on the causes of disabilities.

#### E. Legislation

41. Legal provisions are considered a crucial factor for the equalization of opportunities, rehabilitation and social integration of the disabled and in the prevention of disability. This issue is mentioned by the national committees of Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Luxembourg, the Philippines, Romania, Thailand and Trinidad and Tobago. The information from Qatar mentions the necessity of adequate legislation to improve the social conditions of disabled persons.

42. One of the main recommendations of the report of the National Committee of the Federal Republic of Germany concerns unemployed severely disabled persons. It advocates that social security for these persons be provided over and above the existing arrangements under the social assistance schemes so as to enable them to lead a life as independent as possible.

43. The programme in Ghana covers, among other things, measures to promote a bill of rights for disabled persons with the aim of improving their employment conditions and increased road safety and of preventing childhood diseases and other causes of disability.

44. The National Committee in Trinidad and Tobago reports that one of the obstacles to the prevention of disability is insufficient legal provisions.

#### F. Decentralization

45. There is definitely a tendency by the national committees to decentralize activities and to delegate responsibilities to local communities in order to reach as many people as possible. In some cases this has posed some problems. In Brazil, for example, the National Committee finds it difficult to secure efficient supervision of the implementation of various rehabilitation programmes throughout the vast territory of the country.

46. The Organizing Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons of Canada is working in close co-operation with the organizational structures in the provinces. About half of the 275 local communities in Denmark have established their own committees. In Finland, local committees have been established in over 100 communities. In Japan, in addition to the national headquarters, each of the 47 prefectures has its own committee. The Norwegian Committee considers that the majority of tasks relating to the Year should find their solutions locally and committees have been established in almost all local communities in Norway. In the United States of America, programme activities are being conducted at the local, national and federal levels. In Yugoslavia, a number of activities have been developed at the local and national levels to observe the Year in all parts of the country.

#### G. Assistance to developing countries

47. The special needs of developing countries have been mentioned by many national committees. The need for different forms of international assistance has also been underlined by them.

48. For example, the National Committee of Cyprus recommends that programmes of the organizations of the United Nations system should be strengthened in order to promote technical co-operation measures in favour of disabled persons living in the third world. The United Nations Trust Fund is seen as a means to support the activities of the National Committee. Reports from the Ghana National Committee indicate that the assistance given by the United Nations agencies to the work of different organizations involved in rehabilitation activities in that country should continue. The Haitian Association for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons and the Centre for Special Education in Haiti have difficulties in financing their projects and have requested the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs for assistance. In Somalia, the lack of resources and "know-how" for the training

of rehabilitation personnel or for the development of prosthetic and physiotherapy units, is a problem which would require international assistance. The National Committee of Zaire indicates a number of problems, in particular, the lack of equipment needed for rehabilitation services and insufficient sanitary education, which create difficulties for the prevention of disabilities.

49. In the industrialized countries, there is an awareness of the special problems faced by developing countries in the area of disability-related issues. During a seminar in Denmark in 1981 on technical co-operation, it was decided to make the concern for disabled persons an integral part of planning any bilateral assistance programme. A part of the proceeds of fund-raising activities of the Japanese Council for the International Year of Disabled Persons will be used to assist projects for disabled persons in the developing regions of the world. The activities of the Netherlands National Committee include national projects as well as projects concerned with disabled persons in the third world. The Norwegian Committee has expressed its intention to support the work in the area of disability carried out under the auspices of the United Nations. In Sweden, there is increasing interest in the problems of disabled persons in developing countries. The National Committee of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has a "Third World Group" whose main purpose is to make the public more aware of the problems faced by the disabled people in developing countries and to explore ways and means to give assistance to projects.

#### H. Promotion of national weeks and days

50. In several countries the organization of national weeks and national days can be considered another facet of "popularization" efforts. Such weeks were organized in France, Ghana and Saudi Arabia. In the latter country, the Riyadh Officer for Disabled Persons arranged that the national health week, organized by the Department for Health Education in 1981, put special emphasis on disabled persons. In the Upper Volta, three days were selected in May 1981 as national days of disabled persons.

#### V. ACTIVITIES AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

51. The Plan of Action of the International Year of Disabled Persons recommended that regional commissions, other regional intergovernmental organizations and/or interested Governments should be invited to convene regional or subregional meetings or seminars relating to the objectives of the Year. (A/34/158 and Corr. 1, annex, para. 70).

52. Regional meetings were held during 1980 and 1981 in all regions of the world on matters relating to the implementation of the Plan of Action and to exploring long-term solutions to the problems of prevention of disability, rehabilitation of disabled persons and equalization of opportunities for them. In this connexion, the regional meetings also discussed a number of relevant technical co-operation problems.

A. Asia and the Pacific

53. In response to General Assembly resolution 34/154, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), at its thirty-sixth session, adopted resolution 207 (XXXVI) entitled "International Year of Disabled Persons". In accordance with that resolution, ESCAP convened a technical meeting and a regional seminar on the objectives and plan of action of the International Year of Disabled Persons at Bangkok from 9 to 19 September 1980. (ESCAP document SD/PAIYDP/5 of 6 October 1980).

54. The two meetings identified the following problems:

- (a) Inappropriate medical and related services and insufficient resources for the early detection and prevention of disability and rehabilitation of disabled persons;
- (b) Lack of trained personnel;
- (c) Need for more research dealing with newer and more effective rehabilitation strategies and approaches, and the development of aids and equipment for the disabled;
- (d) General lack of facilities for disabled persons.

55. The technical meeting and the regional seminar resulted in, among others, the following conclusions and recommendations:

- (a) In view of the lack of reliable and comprehensive statistical data in most countries, considerable interest was expressed in the concept of establishing a data bank and scientific information system on disabled persons;
- (b) The major areas for action identified were preventive measures; the integration of the disabled into the main stream of society; measures to bring about changes of attitude at all levels through mass media campaigns; assessment of the incidence of disablement; and the setting up of appropriate governmental machinery for the implementation and co-ordination of policies and action;
- (c) With regard to regional co-operation, an organizational unit should be established within the Social Development Division of ESCAP in which competent disabled persons should be employed and adequate resources should be made available to enable ESCAP to undertake that additional responsibility; a regional institute was considered desirable as a long-term objective.

B. Africa

56. The African regional seminar on the International Year of Disabled Persons was held at Addis Ababa on 6 and 7 October 1980. It was organized under the joint auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

57. The report of the African regional technical meeting, which had been held at Addis Ababa from 1 to 5 October, was considered and adopted at the seminar. This report showed that the scope and magnitude of the problem of disability in Africa necessitated the development of a concerted plan of action to cope with a situation affecting over 45 million persons. Progress had been limited in the areas of disability prevention and the rehabilitation of the disabled, and African Governments needed to take concerted action to combat effectively the causes of disability. The five major areas on which the experts focused their attention and exchanged views were disability prevention, equal rights and opportunity, appropriate technology for the disabled, technical co-operation and follow-up action to the activities undertaken during the Year.

58. Those attending the seminar felt that co-ordination and co-operation should include the preparation of an inventory of national, subregional and regional technical resources and material and human potential, which would lead to the establishment of a regional research and training institute or the reinforcement of existing institutes; the establishment of factories for assembling or manufacturing rehabilitation equipment and technical aids (canes, crutches, prosthetic devices, wheelchairs) using local materials; the manufacture of Braille paper making it possible to develop a Braille press and Braille literature for the visually handicapped; and the establishment of laboratories for vaccine production and control. Such co-operation would help to avoid duplication and waste of human and financial resources at the regional level.

59. It was felt that the principles which would serve as a basis for means of co-operation with the United Nations agencies needed to be defined. It was recommended that United Nations agencies should offer technical advice and contribute to the financing of projects and that such projects should be designed and planned by countries themselves on the basis of their specific needs under national development plans; foreign experts should have detailed knowledge of the realities and needs of countries to which they lent their services; and non-governmental organizations should integrate their activities and programmes into national plans for economic, social and cultural development.

60. The Third Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs, which met at Addis Ababa from 8 to 10 October 1980, considered and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the regional seminar (E/CN.14/785, resolution 3 (III) and ECA/OAU/IYDPRPT.2).

### C. Latin America

61. The Latin American regional technical meeting and the regional seminar were convened under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) and were held at ECLA Headquarters at Santiago, Chile, from 5 to 11 November 1980. The technical meeting took place from 5 to 7 November and the seminar on 10 and 11 November (E/CEPAL/G.1177 and E/CEPAL/Conf. 72/L.9/Rev.1).

62. A consensus was reached on the need for more information concerning the problem of disabled persons which would at the same time involve the formulation of accurate definitions applicable to the implementation of action relating to their problems. In that regard, it was considered essential to have appropriate and comparable statistics.

63. Consensus was expressed on the various forms of barriers and the need for legislation to deal with them.

64. Among the main causes of disablement in the region were accidents, neurovirus diseases, diabetes, silicosis, malnutrition, accidents and congenital diseases. The importance of early detection and prevention of disabilities was stressed during the discussions.

65. Eleven recommendations were adopted at the seminar, including those submitted by the Regional Technical Committee. These recommendations constituted the response of the Member States represented at both these meetings to the problems and questions raised by the respective agenda submitted for their consideration. They called for the following actions:

(a) Member States were urged to comply, insofar as possible, with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and its organs and specialized agencies, and with those of regional intergovernmental bodies, regarding the rehabilitation of disabled persons, including international instruments which refer to the rights of the citizens of each country;

(b) Training of rehabilitation personnel should be promoted in such a way that the entire region can benefit from it;

(c) Member States, after the conclusion of the International Year of Disabled Persons, should pursue their action through permanent bodies for the co-ordination of all activities relating to the process of prevention of disability and rehabilitation of disabled persons; these bodies should consult the associations and confederations of the disabled as regard their needs and priorities;

(d) Considering that there is a need for an exchange of technological information and experts in Latin America, the competent bodies in each field should assist the programmes on training and exchange of experts; the information centres should constitute a network to collect and disseminate information, organize surveys or workshops and seminars and prepare specialized consultation publications; the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system should give clearly defined and specific support to these aims.

#### D. Western Asia

66. The Regional Seminar on the Vocational and Social Integration of Disabled Persons was held at Tunis between 14 and 18 October 1980 with the participation of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA). The seminar was organized by the secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs (the Social Development Section of the Department of Social and Cultural Affairs of the League of Arab States). The ECWA secretariat provided Kuwait, at its request,

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with technical assistance in the organization of the Kuwait Regional Conference for the International Year of Disabled Persons, which was organized by the National Committee of Kuwait from 2 to 4 April 1981. Among the main documents issued by the Conference was the Arab Declaration of Action concerning the Disabled, a draft resolution presented by the Kuwait delegation and adopted by the Conference. This document sets forth principles, objectives and modes of action and also deals with co-operation at the regional and international levels.

67. Owing to certain problems in the region, it was not possible to hold the regional seminar for policy-making officials in the field of disabled persons scheduled to take place at Baghdad in the autumn of 1980. The ECWA secretariat, however, prepared a study entitled "Assessment of the situation and needs of disabled persons in the region of Western Asia". Based on this study, a second document, entitled "International Year of Disabled Persons: Disabled persons in the ECWA region: features and dimensions of the problem and a regional plan of action" (E/ECWA/119 of 9 April 1981) was prepared by the ECWA secretariat and adopted by the Economic Commission for Western Asia at its eighth session, held in Yemen in May 1981. It lays down the general guidelines of a plan of action for the Western Asian region. In ECWA resolutions 91/8, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to transmit this document to the secretariat of the International Year of Disabled Persons as a regional contribution to the long-term programme of action for the disabled.

68. The information provided by the ECWA secretariat outlines a number of problems in the field of disability, prevention and rehabilitation including the following:

(a) Planning for the disabled is limited by the nature of the data available for the Western Asia region. Much more research is needed in order to provide an adequate assessment of the situation of disabled persons. In particular, more information is needed on the role of the family in providing care, training and facilities for the disabled.

(b) The social welfare legislation of a number of countries provides that a certain proportion of posts in the civil service and the public sector should be allocated to persons with disabilities.

(c) The situation of mentally disabled persons requires special attention as only limited facilities are available.

(d) At the international level, the following recommendations are of particular importance:

- (i) Encouragement of the establishment of an international fund for disabled persons, with the participation of the countries of the region, this fund would provide aid for disabled persons in the developing countries;
- (ii) Establishment of training institutes, research centres, national and regional industries for the production of aids and equipment for the disabled should be encouraged within the technical and financial aid programmes provided by the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

E. Europe

69. The European regional seminar on the International Year of Disabled Persons was held at Siilinjärvi, at the invitation of the Government of Finland, from 27 May to 2 June 1981. It was organized by the United Nations in co-operation with the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. 7/

70. During the discussions at the seminar, it was recognized that participation and equality were not solely the product of benefits and services, but that their achievement relied upon an informed public consciousness of disabled persons' needs, abilities and aspirations.

71. It was stressed that circumstances and priorities differed from region to region and that many problems faced by disabled persons were of a purely local nature. Nevertheless, where services were decentralized, Governments should ensure that the local community had sufficient resources to keep up the level of services and that there was an adequate incentive to promote genuine participation.

72. It was agreed that simple methods existed to provide rehabilitation services and to produce indigenous aids and devices. Integrated services and housing for the disabled, including integrated education, was given preference compared to the building of large institutions. However, it was noted that under certain conditions, institutional care was necessary.

73. Reference was made to the need for further contributions to the Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons, including contributions from private sources, to enable the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs to carry on its tasks, particularly in developing regions of the world.

74. In addition to barriers in the physical environment, serious obstacles were often found in social habits and norms, ignorance and uncertainty, everyday attitudes, the way institutions were organized and in social relationships. Therefore, a simultaneous effort to change attitudes in societies was important. The process of creating independence in living implied the removal of barriers of all kinds. All citizens would benefit from a barrier-free society.

75. The following are the main recommendations of the seminar:

(a) The specific structures created for the International Year of Disabled Persons should be evaluated as possible structures for continuing collaboration at the national and at all other levels in the areas concerned;

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7/ The proceedings of the seminar are currently being prepared for publication. However, an abridged version of these proceedings in English, which includes the seminar's recommendations, is available from the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (P. O. Box 500, A-1400, Vienna, Austria).

(b) Governmental and non-governmental technical co-operation agencies in the European region should accord higher priority to technical assistance projects which relate to national or regional rehabilitation development plans for the disabled; disabled persons should have an opportunity to participate in this effort;

(c) The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and the appropriate agencies of the United Nations should organize, in co-operation with non-governmental organizations, research and exchange of results in the fields of:

- (i) Prevention of disability, including first-level prevention of diseases and impairments, early detection, registration and other measures;
- (ii) The total rehabilitation process: social, medical, educational and vocational, including appropriate rehabilitation technologies;

(d) The participants in the seminar expressed the hope that the results of the implementation of the Plan of Action, for the International Year of Disabled Persons in different countries and regions of the world would be compiled and published by the end of 1982.

## VI. ACTIVITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM OTHER THAN THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

### A. United Nations

76. The main activities undertaken by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs relating to the International Year of Disabled Persons include:

(a) Preparation of a draft World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, which was considered by the Advisory Committee at its third session, the report on which is before the current session of the General Assembly (A/36/471/Add.1, annex).

(b) Organization of an action-oriented International Symposium of Experts on Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries and Technical Assistance in the Field of Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, to be held at United Nations headquarters at Vienna from 12 to 23 October 1981;

(c) Preparation of publications and studies, including those dealing with the problems of architectural barriers and the participation of disabled persons in socio-economic life; and substantive inputs for the World Conference on Actions and Strategies on Education, Prevention and Integration to be held at Madrid in November 1981;

(d) Liaison with national committees, including the preparation of a news periodical offering a forum for the exchange of information.

77. The Trust Fund for the International Year of Disabled Persons, established under General Assembly resolution 32/133, is designed to provide extra-budgetary resources to implement the Plan of Action. As at 9 October 1981, the Fund had received contributions from the following Member States:

Belgium	\$US	25,000
Canada	\$Can	100,000
Chile	\$US	5,000
Ethiopia	\$US	5,000
Germany, Federal Republic of	DM	500,000
India	\$US	10,000
Japan	\$US	100,000
Kuwait	\$US	5,000
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	\$US	100,000
Malta	\$US	250
Norway	\$US	100,000
Oman	\$US	5,000
Philippines	\$US	5,000
Portugal	\$US	1,000
Sweden	\$US	10,000

In addition to these contributions, some donations have been received from private sources. Pledges have also been made by Austria (\$ 400,000) and by the United Republic of Cameroon (\$US 1,000).

78. Following the establishment of the Trust Fund, several requests for assistance have been received from Member States and national and international non-governmental organizations. These requests range from the organization of seminars and symposia to promote the objectives of the Year at the international level to the establishment of medical and vocational rehabilitation centres and the eradication of disabling diseases at the community level. To date, six requests have been financed from the Trust Fund. More than 60 major project requests, valued at over 9 million dollars, are pending owing to the lack of resources. The availability of funds permitting, priority will be given to requests for promotional activities at the international level, including the establishment of organizations of disabled persons, and to requests from Member States for advisory services for the purpose of establishing activities of the national committees.

79. As regards the question of access to buildings, facilities and information for the disabled, it will be recalled that the Secretary-General informed the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session that he had commissioned a consultant who was herself handicapped to undertake a study of modifications required to meet the needs of disabled persons in regard to physical access to and within the United Nations buildings in New York, Geneva and Vienna (A/35/444/Add.3, para. 3). At United Nations Headquarters, a number of activities have been undertaken to implement some of the consultant's recommendations. For example, curb cuts have been installed around and within the building to facilitate access to the three main entrances of the United Nations. Portable ramps have been built which provide access to the podia in several of the conference rooms and toilet facilities are being remodeled. Similar alterations have been introduced in the United Nations in

Geneva and the Vienna International Centre. However, further changes recommended by the consultant still remain to be undertaken for the full accessibility and freedom of mobility for the disabled within United Nations headquarters. In response to paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 35/133, the Secretary-General has prepared the outline of a study dealing with the question of access to United Nations buildings, documents and information for persons with sensorial disabilities. Arrangements are currently being made to hire a consultant for the purpose of preparing this study, which should be completed in early 1982.

80. Public information activities for the International Year of Disabled Persons have been greatly aided by the response from Governments, the media, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, communities and individuals - particularly the disabled themselves. Thousands of requests for moral and financial support have been received both in New York and Vienna.

81. The information programme for the Year has been able to stimulate and support certain actions at the national level by providing "core" material, acting as a clearing-house for the exchange of information from national committees, and co-ordinating activities of the agencies of the United Nations system.

82. The core material includes a "flyer", features, background notes, a booklet on the history, aims and objectives of the Year, reprints of relevant United Nations declarations and decisions including the Plan of Action, press releases from the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs at Vienna, an issue of the Newsletter for the Year in English, French and Spanish and a press kit prepared in co-operation with the New Internationalist Group. The material has been distributed world-wide and widely used as the basis for broadcasts, panel discussions, educational campaigns and projects by non-governmental organizations.

83. A report on the activities for the Year is prepared fortnightly at Vienna for distribution to national committees, permanent missions in New York and Vienna and to interested non-governmental organizations.

84. A special supplement of the magazine Development Forum has been reprinted and distributed in three languages and is made available to non-governmental organizations at their request.

85. The International Year of Disabled Persons has been featured on "World Chronicle", a weekly United Nations television and radio programme which is broadcast by some 1,700 cable television outlets and 800 radio stations in the United States.

86. A photo display set entitled "Access to Life", produced in English, Arabic, French, Spanish and German, has met with great demand. Three special photo-features have been produced and more are planned.

87. A travelling exhibit of photos, to which many United Nations agencies have contributed, has been produced in several language versions for distribution to United Nations headquarters in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, as well as to the headquarters of the regional commissions in Bangkok, Addis Ababa and Santiago. It has also been distributed to the larger United Nations information Centres, such as those in Copenhagen, Paris, New Delhi, Beirut, Prague and Buenos Aires, and to the World Bank headquarters at Washington.

88. With minimal seed money (a maximum of \$1,000 per centre), United Nations information centres have carried out a wide range of activities designed to increase awareness of the aims of the International Year of Disabled Persons, involve the disabled themselves and stimulate or support national projects with a long-term approach. The centres have organized public debates, competitions, television spots and interviews with disabled persons. Some have used the funds allotted to them to translate the basic documentation into local languages.

89. United Nations Radio has produced a programme on the International Year of Disabled Persons in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and several non-official languages for world-wide distribution. The weekly quarter-hour programme "Scope" had devoted ten editions, in whole or in part, to the International Year of Disabled Persons by mid-year and a series of twelve special programmes are scheduled for distribution in several languages before the end of the Year.

90. A task force of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), set up to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations System for the International Year of Disabled Persons, has held four meetings. The various members of the United Nations system are carrying out a wide range of information activities in their own fields, including special issues of their regular publications or new publications, press kits, posters, slide sets, radio features, educational projects, seminars and round-table discussions, promotional events, film and television co-production and special programmes stressing the prevention of disability and the rehabilitation of the disabled.

91. Ten United Nations agencies have contributed to the joint production of a feature film entitled "It's the Same World". The film vividly portrays some of the many human and economic aspects of the problem of disability and shows how, in many communities around the world, simple means have been found to prevent or deal with disability and the disabled. It has generated numerous awards and has been widely shown in almost every region of the world.

92. Members of the JUNIC Working Group on Development Education, in co-operation with a number of non-governmental organizations and women's groups, are producing a kit on women's disabilities which is to be launched at a one-day meeting in Geneva in October 1981. The kit deals not only with physical and mental disability, but also with the economic and social aspects of the problem.

93. Special co-operation with non-governmental organizations involved in various aspects of disability prevention, rehabilitation, education, employment, advocacy, etc., has generated countless requests for information material on the Year, speakers, specially tailored articles and personal appearances, sponsorship of social events or contributions to exhibitions, prizes, technical papers for expert meetings and "seals of approval" which would enable funds to be raised for special projects.

94. The Division of Human Rights as contributed substantive comments regarding the rights of disabled persons to the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons.

95. The Division of Narcotic Drugs has contributed views concerning disability resulting from the morbidity of infants born to drug-dependent mothers and from accidents due to drug use and dysfunctional behaviour arising from the abuse of drugs. Part of the work of the Division is directed towards the prevention of drug abuse. In 1981, the Division embarked on the implementation of pilot projects on the use of community resources for the reduction of the illicit demand for drugs and made statements concerning drug abuse at various meetings relating to the Year.

96. The Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator has started a comparative research project with disabled victims of natural disasters and with medical personnel that have worked at the site of disasters. The data from this research project are expected to throw light on certain aspects of disaster preparedness, relief and follow-up procedures and their effectiveness. Furthermore, the results are expected to show whether permanent disabilities could have been prevented.

97. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has developed, among other activities, the following programmes and projects relating to the Year:

(a) Through its pharmaceutical programme, UNIDO aims to expand and promote the development of preventative medicine by assisting the developing countries in the production of vaccine sera in the most economical way;

(b) In the curative area, technical assistance is being provided for the use of traditional medicine in combination with advanced technology, giving priority to diseases leading to disability;

(c) Furthermore, UNIDO has developed a programme of simple biomedical equipment for an earlier diagnosis and identification of diseases. It has also considered expanding existing approved industrial engineering projects to include the manufacture of aids needed by disabled persons. Proposals have been sent through official channels to Governments of developing countries for consideration. UNIDO is expanding its sources of information to provide developing countries with information on production, quality control, standards, etc., of products needed by disabled persons.

98. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements has prepared a report entitled "The Disabled in Human Settlements: International Year of Disabled Persons" (HS/C/4/Inf.11 of 20 February 1981) which deals with the ways in which human settlements can be organized in order to remove physical barriers and provide the disabled with access to infrastructure and services within a built environment. The report was considered by the Commission on Human Settlements at its fourth session held at Manila from 27 April to 6 May 1981. The Commission adopted a resolution entitled "Human settlements and the International Year of Disabled Persons".

99. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has started a programme of measures for the prevention of disability and rehabilitation of disabled children. It includes the appointment of a senior adviser on childhood disabilities to co-ordinate these activities in particular with the measures taken by UNICEF regional and field offices. Because of the growing problem of disabled children around the world, the Executive Board of UNICEF, at its 1980 session, endorsed a much more active role for the Fund in helping countries to improve their national capabilities for the prevention and rehabilitation of childhood disabilities. A programme officer of UNICEF was seconded to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs on 1 January 1981. A three-year agreement has been concluded with Rehabilitation International on co-operation concerning childhood disabilities and a committee of non-governmental organizations on disabled children has been formed at UNICEF headquarters, New York. A number of public information measures have been taken by UNICEF during the Year. The Fund plans to continue co-operating with the World Health Organization on various projects concerning childhood disabilities. The agendas of six UNICEF regional seminars in 1981 also cover activities concerning children's disabilities.

100. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is giving support to the Year by mobilizing its world-wide network of field officers in order to promote the objectives of the Year, as well as by funding Government-requested projects and financing certain activities related to the Year. In 1980, a technical advisory note on disability prevention and rehabilitation was distributed to appropriate Government officials. At the same time, the Administrator requested the resident representatives to consult Governments on project developments in this area. UNDP has given considerable support to the organization of the World Symposium of Experts on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries and Technical Assistance in the Field of Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation and has seconded one staff member to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

101. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has concentrated its activities on the problems of disabled refugees and the serious difficulties they face in the process of rehabilitation and resettlement. The number of refugees has risen steadily. A survey of handicapped refugees and of treatment and training facilities in the countries of asylum is being undertaken. The Office continues its efforts to reinforce measures to eliminate malnutrition and health hazards and to increase the general welfare of refugees in camps and settlements. A film on handicapped refugees has been produced in co-operation with a Swiss television network.



102. The United Nations Postal Administration has issued special stamps to commemorate the Year.

## B. Specialized agencies

### 1. International Labour Organization

103. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has developed a number of activities related to the Year, in particular in the field of prevention of disability and vocational rehabilitation of the disabled. At its sixty-fifth session, in June 1979, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution concerning the disabled in which it invited its Governing Body to instruct the Director-General to mark the International Year of Disabled Persons by emphasizing activities designed to contribute to the Year. A declaration fully endorsing the supporting the aims and objectives of the Year has been issued by the Director-General of ILO.

104. Particular attention has been given to the prevention of industrial accidents, to the special problems of vocational rehabilitation of disabled women and to the initiative to organize a regional centre for research and training of staff in the field of rehabilitation in Africa in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa. The following regional seminars and training courses were planned for 1981 in co-operation with the Danish International Development Agency: a Middle East regional training course for managers of vocational rehabilitation centres and sheltered workshops, a training course for Latin America and a seminar on the vocational rehabilitation of leprosy patients. The Organization also initiated a study on national legislation concerning the vocational rehabilitation of the disabled and kept in contact with the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs concerning its scheduled and more comprehensive study on legislation on social integration and on the rights of the disabled.

105. A leaflet entitled "ILO Programme Activities to mark the International Year" was printed outlining the main features of both the Organization's activities relating to the Year and its regular programmes, including a summary of its technical co-operation programme. A publication entitled Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled - Full Participation and Equality was issued as an offprint of part one of the report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference held at Geneva in June 1981.

106. The Governing Body of ILO, at its 214th session in November 1980, decided to include the item entitled "Vocational rehabilitation of the disabled" in the agenda of the International Labour Conference of 1982 with a view to preparing, in 1983, a supplementary instrument to the existing Recommendation No. 99 of 1955 on vocational rehabilitation.

2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

107. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has organized specific activities in observance of the Year. In addition to press and radio coverage, the Money and Medals Programme of the Organization issued a medal designed by a disabled artist illustrating the participation of the disabled in agriculture. At the end of this year, consideration will be given to the possibility of using the net proceeds from the sale of these medals for supporting a field project to facilitate and encourage the participation of the disabled in agriculture.

108. An ad hoc working group discussed measures which could be taken to improve the situation for disabled staff and visitors. Moreover, recommendations were made concerning disabled people already employed in FAO and the recruitment of the disabled. As regards the accessibility of the Organizations's premises, various measures have already been implemented.

3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

109. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has developed various public relations activities and special programmes concerning the education of the disabled. At the UNESCO Conference held in 1980 at Belgrade, a special resolution on the Year was adopted in which the Director-General, among others, was invited to disseminate and promote the objectives and activities of the Year by all means available to the Organization and, in particular, to promote and assist the Year's activities at the national level (resolution 1/08).

110. A committee on the International Year of Disabled Persons was formed to carry out the Organization's programmes. A special issue of the UNESCO Courier, published in January 1981, was devoted to the Year and to the problems of implementing the declarations of the rights of disabled persons, eliminating prejudice and discrimination, special education and the disabled in the developing countries. The specialized agencies and other organizations were invited to take part in the UNESCO conference on special education to be held at Madrid in November 1981. UNESCO has begun research on the elaboration of social indicators on the disabled as has the International Brain Research Organization in the field of prevention of mental disabilities.

111. Some other features of the UNESCO programme include:

- (a) A regional project launched in 1981 to stimulate the creation of educational facilities for the handicapped in English-speaking countries of Africa;
- (b) A series of activities aimed at encouraging the participation of disabled persons in cultural life and at developing their creative talents;
- (c) A series of special activities at the local and regional levels organized by UNESCO clubs which exist in 77 countries;

(d) A number of publications relating to the Year;

(e) An exhibition of posters designed by European artists was held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

#### 4. International Civil Aviation Organization

112. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has taken a number of measures to assist disabled persons using international airports. In November 1979, the Council of ICAO approved the recommendation concerning this problem and requested the Secretary-General to initiate the necessary action. Accordingly, ICAO has gathered from States and representative organizations of airports and airlines any guidance material that they may have developed to facilitate the movement of the physically handicapped within airport terminals and during embarkation and disembarkation from aircraft.

#### 5. World Health Organization

113. Basic information on the involvement of the World Health Organization (WHO) in the Year is provided by the Director-General's report on its co-operative activities within the United Nations system for disability prevention and rehabilitation, submitted at the last session of its Executive Board in January 1981 (EB 67/31). At the thirty-fourth World Health Assembly, held in May 1981, WHO adopted a resolution which specifically recommends to Member States that permanent programmes in the field of disability prevention and rehabilitation should be developed as an integral part of strategies to attain "Health for All by the year 2000" and requests the Director-General to collaborate with Member States in support of such programmes within the context of primary health care.

114. An expert committee on disability prevention and rehabilitation met in February 1981 at Geneva and fully endorsed the strategies of the Organization for implementing disability prevention and rehabilitation measures. It also provided guidelines and recommendations for integrating disability prevention and rehabilitation aspects into existing national health systems. In the specific area of blindness prevention, a programme advisory group met at New Delhi in January 1981 to develop global research strategies.

115. At a meeting held in February 1981 at WHO headquarters, the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy drew up an outline for a joint programme regarding childhood disabilities. The programme covers field testing of the WHO manual "Training the Disabled in the Community" as well as assistance in community-based disability prevention and rehabilitation services.

116. The January 1981 issue of World Health was devoted entirely to the Year. Other issues in 1981 contained articles on the specific problems of disabled persons. Special radio programmes in English and French as well as a photo exhibit, pamphlets and a poster have been prepared.

117. WHO regional offices have actively collaborated with the United Nations regional economic commissions on activities related to the Year and have provided technical documentation serving as background material for recommendations and actions taken by the commission. Moreover, WHO regional offices have provided consultants to several countries to assist in the formulation of national programmes on disability prevention and rehabilitation and of plans of action related to the Year and its follow-up.

#### VII. ACTIVITIES OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

118. The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe sent a message to the European regional seminar on the International Year of Disabled Persons in which he emphasized that the protection of the rights of disabled persons and the promotion of their social, cultural and economic interests fell within the framework of safeguarding human rights and fundamental freedoms and that these were the primary objectives assigned to the Council of Europe by its member States.

119. The European Parliament of the European Community is setting up an all-party, all-country disablement group to mark the Year. At its meeting on 11 March 1981, the European Parliament adopted a resolution related to the Year which, among other things, invited the Commission under article 122 of the Treaty of the European Community to draw up reports on the social and economic conditions of the disabled in each of the member States.

120. The Commission of the European Community through its Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, sponsored a conference on the preparation of handicapped children and young people for adult life, scheduled to take place in the Netherlands from 19 to 23 October 1981.

121. In accordance with resolution IX adopted by the Ministers for Health of the socialist countries, a Commission for Public Health within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is responsible for co-ordination and co-operation at the State level in the field of disability prevention and rehabilitation.

122. The Commonwealth Secretariat has prepared a survey of legal measures in the Commonwealth countries designed to assist the disabled as a contribution towards the activities for the Year.

123. The Inter-American Children's Institute has prepared a special programme of activities during 1981 which is designed to assist instructors in special education for children with mental retardation, cerebral palsy and communication handicaps. The Organization partners of the Americas will co-operate with the Institute in establishing five centres in the Americas in the field of special education. A project entitled "PATH 81" (Partners Appropriate Technology for the Handicapped) is designed to assist the development of such technology at low cost.

124. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) includes in its work programme the testing and classification of a number of aids used by disabled persons. Its technical committees are considering various technical systems for disabled persons including lifting platforms. The Organization is collaborating with the International Commission for Technical Aids, Housing and Transport, a sub-commission of Rehabilitation International. Conscious of the important contribution that international standardization can make to the International Year of Disabled Persons, the ISO Council approved, in September 1980, resolution 39/1980, in which the Council requested the ISO technical committees to devote special attention in their work to the needs of disabled and handicapped persons.

125. The International Social Security Association (ISSA) organized a research conference at Vienna in April 1981 on the implications for social security of research into disability. An Asian expert meeting organized at New Delhi in July 1981, was devoted to the role of insurance schemes in the rehabilitation programmes of work-related injuries. In 1981, one of the issues of the International Social Security Review dealt with the role of social security in disability prevention and rehabilitation. At its forty-first session, the Association's Bureau considered a note prepared by its General Secretariat on the contribution of ISSA and its member organizations to the International Year of Disabled Persons.

126. The Nordic Committee on Disability started preparing a booklet on technical aids for handicapped children, which will be published in autumn 1981.

127. The Inter-parliamentary Union, during its spring session held in the Philippines in April 1981, unanimously adopted a resolution on its association with United Nations activities during the Year. The resolution asked Governments to examine favourably the possibility of creating, within the United Nations, a special permanent organization with the task of co-ordinating all international programmes and activities.

128. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has organized activities for the Year through its Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). They include the following events:

(a) An international symposium, held at the University of Freidbourg from 12 to 14 March 1981, in collaboration with the Swiss authorities, on the issue of the transition of handicapped adolescents to working life;

(b) An international seminar entitled "Disabled Persons - Access to the Enhancement of Living and Contributing Citizenship through Education and Technology" was held at Melbourne in 1981, organized by the Australian Department and CERI;

(c) An international conference sponsored by the United Kingdom authorities was held at Cardiff in September 1981 as a major contribution to the Year;

(d) An international film entitled "The Integration of Handicapped Young People in Ordinary Schools and their Transition to Work" prepared in collaboration with French, Italian and Norwegian television.

#### VIII. ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

129. The activities related to the Year of international non-governmental organizations working in the field of disability, particularly the activities of the organizations of disabled persons themselves, were at their peak when this report was drafted. Only a number of examples, which have been prepared either on the basis of the contributions sent especially for this report or by using published information, can be presented here. Two meetings of representatives of non-governmental organizations, held at Vienna in May and July 1981, contributed to this information.

130. The research section of the International Bureau of Social Tourism will initiate a programme of research to review the way in which a number of leading industrialized countries have tackled the problem of providing holiday opportunities for disabled persons.

131. In preparation for the Year, the Council of World Organizations interested in the Handicapped unanimously approved a resolution at its 1979 annual meeting in which it urged all organizers of international meetings to assure that the facilities being used were accessible to disabled persons and that the necessary equipment and personnel were supplied to ensure communication with individuals with impairments of vision or hearing.

132. Disabled People's International, a world coalition of persons with disabilities formed during 1980, is organizing its first international congress which will be held in Singapore in December 1981.

133. The European Centre for Social Welfare and Research has participated actively in the European regional seminar in Finland and is doing research work into the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons.

134. Helen Keller International has produced a film entitled "The New Miracle Workers", portraying the struggles of the world's 42 million blind persons. It has launched two new prevention and treatment projects in the Philippines and in Fiji.

135. The International Air Transport Association has prepared guidelines to make air transportation more accessible for passengers with disabilities. The member airlines of the Association have agreed to a more comprehensive and liberal resolution for the provision of services to disabled passengers.

136. International Centre of Films for Children and Young People has made the theme of this year's international film exhibition, to be held in Spain in October 1981, "the integration of handicapped persons in society".

137. The International Co-operative Alliance, at its twenty-seventh congress, adopted a special resolution on the Year in which all member organizations were requested to take an active part in the Year.

138. The International Council on Social Welfare held its eleventh regional symposium at Rennes, in July 1981 on the theme of the implementation of social policy in favour of the better integration of handicapped people in society.
139. The International Federation of Multiple Sclerosis Societies adopted a resolution on its proposed projects for the Year. It also hosted a workshop on the Year at the Multiple Sclerosis World Conference held at Stockholm in September 1980 and held a special workshop on multiple sclerosis and the year at the third European regional conference of Rehabilitation International at Vienna in April 1981.
140. The International Federation of Wounded and Civil Disabled organized a meeting in March 1981 to commemorate the Year. On that occasion, nearly 1,900 disabled persons from 30 nations gathered at the Palais de Nations at Geneva and adopted the Geneva Appeal which called for increased technical co-operation to developing countries in the areas of medical and vocational rehabilitation, more active research in the field of rehabilitation, recognition of the symbol of access, the removal of architectural barriers and universal disarmament.
141. The International League of Societies for the Mentally Handicapped, as a part of its programme during the Year, is organizing an international workshop entitled "Family management of problems arising from mental retardation and related disabilities" in Hong Kong in early December. The League is also making preparations for its congress to be held in early November 1982 at Nairobi.
142. The International Round Table for the Advancement of Counselling has organized its second international consultation dealing with the development of a coherent system of educational and psychological counselling as one of the conditions for integrating the disabled in social life.
143. The League of Red Cross Societies has encouraged its members to develop programmes in the area of disability. The following are some examples of national activities: the Somalia Red Crescent Society, assisted by the Norwegian Red Cross, is planning an extension of a prosthesis workshop and rehabilitation centre for disabled individuals in Mogadishu; Fiji is working with the Australian Red Cross Society to establish a project to train youth to provide technical aids to disabled persons; the Uruguayan Red Cross plans to open a vocational training workshop for physically and mentally disabled young people. The League is also making a photo reportage of Red Cross activities for the disabled in seven selected nations.
144. The International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics, at its world assembly held in October 1980 in Italy, agreed to the improvement of prosthetic, orthotic and related rehabilitation services throughout the world, and especially in the developing countries.
145. The Lutheran World Federation has distributed a special issue of "Lutheran World Information" which contains background information on disability and on the Year on activities for the disabled engaged in by the Lutheran Church around the world and other relevant subjects.

146. Rehabilitation International has designed a support programme for the Year to assist other organizations in their planning and implementation of projects relating to the disabled. The main components of the support programme are as follows:

- (a) Public awareness including promotional materials;
- (b) Speakers' Bureau - a body of more than 150 qualified speakers from over 45 countries;
- (c) Specific project promotion including Abilympics;
- (d) Charter for the 1980s which contains guidelines for a decade of progress in the area of disability prevention and rehabilitation;
- (e) International festival of films on themes relating to the Year to be held towards the end of 1981, in co-operation with the Division of Economic and Social Information of the Department of Public Information.

147. The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts devoted their October-December 1980 issue of Council Fire to the Year. The journal places special emphasis on primary health care, rehabilitation and the prevention of disabilities.

148. The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind has circulated the Plan of Action for the International Year of Disabled Persons to its 219 national members in 77 countries, sent letters to all the national committees to draw their attention to the urgent need for efforts in favour of the blind and has drawn up plans for activities by its regional and standing committees.

149. The World Federation for the Deaf held an international conference on "Deafness and the International Year for Disabled Persons" in Italy in January 1981. The topics covered at the conference were the human and civil rights of the deaf, facilitating communication of the deaf and their access to information, prevention, diagnosis and health care, educational methods especially for children born deaf and vocational instruction and the problems of employment for the deaf. The week of 28 September to 4 October has been declared International Week of Deafness.

150. The World Veterans Federation, at its sixteenth general assembly held in Italy in October 1979, adopted a special resolution on the Year and has carried out activities concerning legislation and environmental barriers.

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