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UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle
for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and
against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial
Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms
of Foreign Domination

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, in resolution 32/142 of 16 December 1977, entitled "Women's participation in the strengthening of international peace and security and in the struggle against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression and occupation and all forms of foreign domination", requested the Commission on the Status of Women to consider, as a contribution to the preparation of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, the elaboration of a draft declaration on the subject.

2. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly, in resolution 34/158 of 17 December 1979 entitled "World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women", urged the Commission on the Status of Women to consider at its twenty-eighth session the question of elaborating a draft declaration, in accordance with its resolution 32/142, taking into account the views of Governments thereon and views expressed during the thirty-fourth session of the Assembly.

3. At its first regular session of 1978, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1978/29 of 5 May 1978 on the question of elaborating a draft declaration, the operative paragraphs of which read as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"...

"1. Invites all Governments, the specialized agencies and other international intergovernmental organizations, as well as concerned non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council, to transmit to the Secretary-General their views and/or proposals concerning the nature and content of a draft declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression and occupation and all forms of foreign domination;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to submit the views and/or proposals received to the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-eighth session;

"3. Requests the Commission on the Status of Women to consider at its twenty-eighth session, in the light of those views and/or proposals, the question of elaborating a draft declaration, with a view to submitting it to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women."

4. On 29 January 1979, the Secretary-General invited States, the specialized agencies and other international intergovernmental organizations and concerned non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to furnish views and/or proposals on the nature and content of a draft declaration on the subject.

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5. The report of the Secretary-General which was submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-eighth session (E/CN.6/626 and Add.1) was based on replies from 19 Member States, three specialized agencies and a number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

6. On the recommendation of the Commission, the Economic and Social Council, at its first regular session of 1980, adopted resolution 1980/36 of 2 May 1980 on the question of elaborating a draft declaration, the operative parts of which read as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"...

"1. Refers to the General Assembly the question of elaborating a draft declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression and occupation and all forms of foreign domination;

"2. Invites the General Assembly to consider this question at its thirty-fifth session."

7. The World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, which met at Copenhagen from 14 to 30 July 1980, requested the General Assembly, in conformity with Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/36 of 2 May 1980, to further at its thirty-fifth session the elaboration of a draft declaration "on the basis of the views and proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report 1/ concerning the nature and the content of such a draft declaration". 2/

8. At the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, a draft resolution which contained a text of a draft declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression, occupation and all forms of foreign domination 3/ was submitted by Afghanistan, Angola, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, the German Democratic Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iraq, the Lao People's Democratic Republic,

1/ E/CN.6/626 and Add.1 (see para. 5 above).

2/ A/CONF.94/35, chap. I, B. resolution 11.

3/ The text of the draft declaration was identical with that proposed by the German Democratic Republic in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1978/29 and contained in the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women (see paras. 3-5 above).

the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, the Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe (A/C.3/35/L.17), subsequently joined by the Congo, the Dominican Republic and Mali. During its consideration in the Third Committee, several amendments to the draft resolution were introduced. 4/

9. On the recommendation of the Third Committee, the General Assembly, in decision 35/429, decided:

"(a) To request the Secretary-General to seek the views of the Governments of Member States on a draft declaration entitled 'Draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination' and to report to it at its thirty-sixth session;

"(b) To consider at its thirty-sixth session this draft Declaration, as well as the amendments which have been submitted, with the view to adopting it;

"(c) To postpone the consideration of document A/C.3/35/L.17 to its thirty-sixth session."

10. In accordance with this decision, the Secretary-General on 27 January 1981 invited the Governments of Member States to submit their views on the draft declaration.

11. At the time of the preparation of this report, replies have been received from the Governments of the following 19 Member States: Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and Viet Nam.

4/ For the text of the draft resolution (A/C.3/35/L.17) and the amendments submitted thereto, see the report of the Third Committee to the General Assembly (Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Annexes, agenda item 80, document A/35/639, sect. II A).

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM MEMBER STATES

CUBA

[Original: Spanish]

[31 March 1981]

1. Considering paragraph 76 of the Programme of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women, adopted in Copenhagen on 30 July 1980, on the occasion of the World Conference, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its Resolution 35/136 of 11 December 1980, which states that women all over the world should participate, on the widest possible scale, in the efforts to strengthen peace and international security ..., as well as in the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, apartheid and domination, oppression and foreign occupation, the Republic of Cuba confirms its judgement in the sense of giving special importance to and to elaborate a Declaration of this nature.
2. A survey of the present international situation shows the persistence of serious and dangerous conflict centres.
3. Because of this situation the struggle for peace converts into the task of the international order, most important and decisive, and to which one ought to continue to pay a great deal of attention.
4. In this struggle for peace the women, who constitute half of the world population, have an important role to play in order to help to achieve economic, social and cultural development without which it is impossible to achieve peace.
5. The Government and the Cuban people have worked persistently for more than two decades for a fair and universal peace, for the national liberation and against all forms of aggression and foreign domination and will not give up this pledge.
6. Finally, the Government is of the opinion that the elaboration of this declaration constitutes a very valuable effort in order to achieve the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women: equality, development and peace and a better world where the human dignity, justice and social progress will prevail.
7. Likewise, the Government believes that the draft Declaration (A/C.3/35/L.17) constitutes a good basis on which one will be able to work during the next thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

[Original: English]

[14 April 1981]

1. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic as one of the co-authors of the draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for Peace, against Colonialism, Racism and Apartheid, submitted by the German Democratic Republic, replying to the United Nations Secretary-General's note 3022/2 of 27 January, wishes to express the position set forth below.
2. The struggle for peace continues to remain the most important and most urgent question for mankind, in particular under the present complicated international situation when the reactionary militarist forces, interested in the worsening of international relations, have been activated to a considerable extent in the world, the question of active struggle for peace is of prior significance. This vitally important aim cannot be attained without full and active participation of women as has been confirmed by the course and results of The World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. And what is more, women as mothers always suffer most painfully by war events and racial oppression in any form is extraordinarily cruel for them.
3. In the spirit of the United Nations Charter the main aim of which is the preservation of international peace and security in the world the United Nations Organization should, therefore, fully support all those proposals aimed at the attainment of this priority goal. The removal of colonialism, apartheid and all forms of racial discrimination are, therefore, the fundamental conditions not only for the strengthening of international peace and security but also for the creation of conditions for the process of equality of women, with men still in a number of countries.
4. The draft Declaration of the Democratic Republic of Germany not only proceeds from the principle of the participation of women in the struggle for peace and disarmament but points to the possibility of the utilization of the released resources for the economic and social development of the developing countries and, likewise, underlines the right of those countries to the establishment of a new economic order. The draft Declaration of the German Democratic Republic thus develops and, in a dialectical way, connects certain fundamental ideas already contained in the previous United Nations documents as are, for example, General Assembly resolution 32/130. Alternative approaches and ways and means within the United Nations system for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 34/180.
5. The draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for Peace, against Colonialism, Racism and Apartheid is, by its contents and aims, in the interest of all States sincerely wishing that the United Nations Organization may achieve more effective results in the implementation of the aims contained in its

Charter. Czechoslovakia, therefore, wishes to express its firm conviction that, upon consideration of its contents and aims, the individual Member States will unambiguously support its positive adoption by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.

ECUADOR

[Original: Spanish]

[4 February 1981]

1. Ecuador has no major objections to the text of the draft Declaration but, in its opinion, the wording of articles 4 and 5 could be improved so as to clarify the concept they seek to establish.

(a) In article 4, the concept of cruel or inhuman treatment of women should be clarified, instead of examples of such treatment being provided at the end of the first paragraph.

(b) The objective of paragraph 5 should also be clarified; Ecuador considers that this paragraph should clearly reflect the importance of achieving the fair and equitable development of all nations in order to safeguard international peace, to eliminate the growing disparities between the developed and the developing countries and to create appropriate social and economic conditions for the full development of women everywhere in the world.

2. In the fourth sub-paragraph of part II, the last words, which read "to influence the work of mass media accordingly", should be changed to express their true purpose along the following lines: "to promote the dissemination of such information by the collective communications media at the national and international levels".

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

[Original: English]

[30 April 1981]

1. The German Democratic Republic considers the adoption of a declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for peace and disarmament and against colonialism, racism and apartheid in accordance with resolution 35/249 as a major task for the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Such a document, based on the draft submitted by 29 Member States at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, would conform with the vital interests of women in all countries in the maintenance and strengthening of peace. It would be a significant contribution to the world-wide attainment of equal rights by women, and besides, it would take account of the documents of the World Conferences of Mexico in 1975 and Copenhagen in 1980 and of the Convention on the Elimination

of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The German Democratic Republic, being one of the first States that have ratified this Convention, points especially to its provision which confirms that "the cause of peace requires the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields".

2. The inclusion of the question of peace in the central objective of the United Nations Decade for Women is logical because it is generally accepted that equal rights and development of women can only be assured in a world free from nuclear dangers and war. General Assembly resolutions 3519 (XXX), 32/142 and 34/158 appropriately commend the significant share of women in the struggle for peace and disarmament and against colonialism, racism and apartheid. These resolutions also point out the fundamental implications for women's equality of the struggle of peoples for national and social liberation. They affirm the close interrelationship between the main purpose laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, i.e., the maintenance of peace, and the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. These resolutions have been supported by the German Democratic Republic, because they call attention to the central issues of the struggle for the world-wide implementation of women's rights.

3. The German Democratic Republic, as a co-sponsor of the present draft Declaration, believes that the main objective formulated in its article 1, that all States should encourage and promote by all appropriate means, the equal participation of women in the political affairs of the society and in the endeavour to implement the right to live in peace as a fundamental right, is extremely important. More than half of the world's population are women, but many of them are subjected to discrimination and oppression and are therefore prevented from participating on equal terms in the struggle for peace, which is a cause of immediate concern to them. Peace détente and disarmament mean security for them and their families. The decisions adopted in the International Women's Year 1975 have been highly instrumental in making the United Nations to pay greater attention to women's interests. They were adopted at a time when the policy of détente and disarmament received a promising impulse. This nourished the hope of millions of women in all countries, including ours, to spare present and future generations the horrors of war.

4. Lately, however, they have had to witness an arms race spurred on by imperialist forces and a resulting serious aggravation of the international situation. Therefore, the idea contained in article 2 of the present draft Declaration, that resources released as a result of effective measures of disarmament be used to satisfy the needs of developing countries, especially, concerning the protection of mother and child, is of topical interest. The arms race exhausts all sources of wealth on this planet. It cripples the world economy and delays the progress of mankind. Underdevelopment, backwardness and hunger, illness and illiteracy could be overcome much more rapidly if just a portion of the resources used for armament was provided to the developing countries. This would also meet the aspirations for a democratic restructuring of international economic relations, which is no doubt of crucial importance to the social position of women

in developing countries. More than 500,000 million dollars are spent on arms each year. But a mere 4,000 million dollars would suffice to feed 200 million hungry children over one year. The resources going into one week's arms production would be sufficient to eradicate hunger in the world.

5. Women in the German Democratic Republic have approvingly responded to the latest peace proposals of the USSR and to the concept adopted at the tenth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany for peace and disarmament. They consider disarmament and détente as indispensable to a permanently secure and happy future for their children and families, and therefore take a committed stand on these objectives.

6. By this token, women from the German Democratic Republic took part in the World Conference held in Copenhagen in 1980 and in the Forum of non-governmental organizations which gathered a total of 8,000 participants of different political or ideological convictions. GDR women have supported these peace appeals which 500,000 women in northern Europe addressed to the United Nations Secretary-General, calling for efforts against the danger of war and the nuclear menace. The women's organization of the German Democratic Republic advocates implementation of the proposal of the Women's International Democratic Federation to convene a world congress in Prague in October 1981 to discuss the heightened role of women in the struggle for peace. It welcomes the initiative of the International Women's League for Peace and Freedom to organize shortly before the second United Nations special session on disarmament an international meeting of women for peace in Washington.

7. Women and children continue to be particularly affected by colonialism, racism, apartheid, foreign aggression and alien domination. Therefore, the Declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for peace should urge the final elimination of those causes of murders, immeasurable sufferings and discrimination. Article 3 of the present draft takes account of this need. Closely linked with it is the appeal in Article 4 to render comprehensive solidarity and assistance to those women who on account of their advocacy of international peace and the right of peoples to self-determination, are victims of massacre, imprisonment, torture, devastation of homes, forced evacuation and other reprisals. Such crimes shall be condemned as gross violations of human rights. In this connexion the German Democratic Republic recalls that the South African régime of apartheid as the bulwark of imperialism and colonialism in southern Africa deprives millions of people of their fundamental rights. The people of the German Democratic Republic condemns indignantly that brutal terror, that does not even spare women and children.

8. On 8 March 1981, International Women's Day, millions of women in the German Democratic Republic, like women in many other countries, manifested their sympathy with national and social liberation struggles in southern Africa, the Arab region, in Chile and El Salvador. A Declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for peace and against racism, colonialism and apartheid would be a valuable instrument to support the peoples in their fight against colonial, racist and social oppression.

9. Against the background of the points made above, the German Democratic Republic considers that:

(a) Through the adoption of the Declaration, the United Nations can and should make an effective contribution to the implementation of equality for women on a world-wide scale and the advancement of their role in the struggle for peace and disarmament and against colonialism, racism and apartheid;

(b) The present draft Declaration meets this requirement, since it links the motto of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, with the overriding concern of women in all countries for the maintenance and strengthening of peace;

(c) The draft underlines the need for a democratic restructuring of international economic relations, for overcoming economic backwardness and promoting development in the interest of social progress;

(d) The draft takes into consideration that the equal participation of women in development and in political affairs will contribute to securing international peace, promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, and establishing a new international economic order;

(e) The draft Declaration admits that notwithstanding the progress attained in implementing equality for women, considerable discriminations continue to exist in different parts of the world, hampering the active participation of women in solving international problems of vital importance;

(f) The adoption of the Declaration at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly of the United Nations would meet the expectations of millions of women, and that, therefore, the Declaration should find the broadest possible acceptance.

GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF

[Original: English]

[11 May 1981]

1. The Federal Government holds the view that there is no need for the proposed Declaration. The World Conference on the Decade for Women has emphasized repeatedly that practical measures are necessary to strengthen the role of women in the economic and social spheres. Accordingly, priority should be given to the solution of the manifold problems with which women are confronted in the areas of employment, health and education, as opposed to giving precedence to the formulation of further international declarations, as long as the basic needs of women in many countries cannot be met. Moreover, a substantial number of recommendations concerning the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of peace and security and against colonialism, racism etc. were included in the Copenhagen Programme of Action, and thus the matter about which the

countries supporting the draft Declaration express concern has been given due consideration. Similar provisions are also included in the preamble to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and in numerous resolutions adopted by United Nations organs.

2. Regarding article 1 of the draft Declaration, the Federal Government would like to point out that the Federal Republic of Germany, through the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the Convention of 31 March 1953 on the Political Rights of Women, has already committed itself to encouraging and promoting "equal participation by women in the political affairs of the society". Furthermore, article 4 paragraph 1, of the draft Declaration includes examples of typical violations of human rights which, for all human beings, are protected by the aforementioned International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It is inconsistent to condemn such violations as "crimes against humanity" only when they are directed towards a particular group of people, in this case women, who advocate international peace and the right of peoples to self-determination. Nor does humanitarian international law generally differentiate according to sex, in contrast to the draft Declaration which is based on this unjustified distinction. In striving to achieve full equality of rights for men and women, precisely this kind of distinction should be avoided wherever possible.

3. The discussions which have so far been held by the Commission on the Status of Women and the General Assembly concerning the agenda item dealing with the Decade for Women have led to particular emphasis being placed on the role of women in the areas of peace, security and so on. The cause of women's equality would be better served if the role of women in these areas were to be the subject of serious discussion in the United Nations bodies which are responsible for formulating political guidelines for peace, security, the struggle against colonialism, racism etc. These bodies could help to underscore the joint responsibilities of women and men.

GREECE

[Original: English]

1. The Government of Greece is of the view that for the time being there is no need for a declaration on the above-mentioned subject, for the reasons set forth below.

2. The concerns of those in favour of a Declaration have already been met by the inclusion of relevant provisions in the preamble of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Moreover, a substantial number of recommendations concerning the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism etc. has also been included in the Copenhagen Programme of Action.

3. There also exist several international instruments (two conventions and one declaration) on the promotion of the rights and the status of women. Therefore there is no need for the elaboration of further instruments, especially at a time when, as it was acknowledged in Copenhagen, the basic needs of women in many developing countries have not been met yet. What is mostly needed now, especially in certain areas of the world, are action-oriented programmes. Action-oriented programmes are also needed in developed countries to bring about de facto equality which is lagging far behind de jure equality.

4. Furthermore, the Government of Greece is not in favour of singling out the role of women in any sphere of life, either nationally or internationally. In striving for full equality, the joint responsibilities of women and men should be emphasized.

HUNGARY

[Original: English]

[5 May 1981]

1. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic supports the initiative to elaborate a Declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security, and against colonialism, apartheid, all forms of racism and racial discrimination, foreign aggression, occupation and all forms of foreign domination, and favours its early adoption.

2. The Programme of the United Nations Decade for Women - whose objectives are Equality, Development and Peace - plays a highly important role in the realization of endeavours to link the attainment of women's equality with the efforts to solve the world's political, economic, cultural and social problems. Strengthening of international peace and security, curbing of the arms race, and disarmament are essential prerequisites for the world-wide enforcement of equal rights for women.

3. The Government of Hungary is of the view that women's participation in the world-wide struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security is taking on increasing importance. This is proved by the actions taking place within the framework of the Programme of the United Nations Decade for Women, a major event of which was the World Conference held in Copenhagen in 1980.

4. The Government of Hungary fully shares the view that the maintenance and strengthening of peace, respect for the right of all peoples to self-determination, non-resort to the use or threat of force and the just restructuring of international economic relations along democratic lines are indispensable prerequisites for a world-wide enforcement of full equality of rights for women.

5. The Government of Hungary believes that, as requested also by the resolution of the World Conference, the United Nations, particularly the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, will have to play an important role in

promoting the equal participation of women in the struggle for the safeguarding of peace and the strengthening of international security by elaborating and adopting a Declaration within the framework of the Programme of the United Nations Decade for Women and in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

6. The Government of Hungary is of the view that the draft Declaration submitted by the German Democratic Republic (A/C.3/35/L.17) provides an appropriate basis for and makes a constructive contribution to the speedy elaboration of the Declaration, which should, as would be advisable, lay down the following important principles:

(a) The implementation of the right to live in peace and of the principle of women's equality should be closely linked;

(b) All necessary prerequisites should be created for women's participation in the struggle for curbing of the arms race, disarmament, and the elimination of colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid and all forms of racism and racial discrimination;

(c) The sovereign right of every State to establish an economic order of its own choice should be implemented, with a view to creating the socio-economic pre-conditions for the free development of women;

(d) In the process of the just restructuring of international economic relations on a democratic and just basis emphasis should be laid on elements affecting the status of women.

7. The Declaration including the above principles would be in conformity with the Convention of 1952 on the Political Rights of Women, the resolutions of the World Conferences of Mexico City and Copenhagen, and the provisions of the Convention of 1979 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

8. Hungary is a party to both of the above-mentioned international conventions; it also fully supports the resolutions of the two world conferences and is seeking to promote their implementation.

9. The Government of Hungary agrees with the Programme of Action contained in part II of the draft Declaration.

10. The Government of Hungary deems it necessary that the final text of the draft Declaration be elaborated and adopted by the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

IRELAND

/Original: English/

/22 May 1981/

1. The Government of Ireland notes that there already exist two Conventions and a Declaration which have the purpose of promoting the rights and the status of women. The Government is also aware that the ideas contained in the present proposed Declaration were put forward and were given full consideration in the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-second, thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions when the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women was elaborated and adopted. These ideas were also included in the consideration of the Programme of Action for the second half of the Decade for Women which was adopted at Copenhagen in July 1980. The Government of Ireland doubts, therefore, if there is a need at this point for a Declaration along the lines proposed.
2. The Government of Ireland also believes that political matters, whether national or international, should be the concern of both men and women and that there should be no differentiation, therefore, on the grounds of sex. The questions raised in the proposed Declaration should be approached on the basis that they are the concern of the whole international community and not the concern of women more than men or vice-versa.
3. The Government of Ireland considers that, so far as substantive matters are concerned, in the Declaration as presently proposed, inadequate attention is given to the purpose of the United Nations to promote and encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all, as provided in the Charter and as made explicit in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Human Rights Covenants and Optional Protocol, and other instruments, including instruments now under consideration within the Organization.
4. If the General Assembly should decide to give further attention to the question of a Declaration, it would be useful to include in discussion major current problems of human rights violations such as, for example, torture, the arbitrary deprivation of liberty and the phenomenon of disappearances.
5. It is also noted that the wording of several parts of the proposed Declaration is unclear or questionable and would, therefore, require revision.

JAPAN

/Original: English/

/22 May 1981/

The Government of Japan is reluctant to support the adoption of the draft Declaration for the following reasons:

1. On the basis of previous discussions at the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, the Government

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of Japan believes that discussions on the adoption of the draft Declaration would inevitably give rise to political controversy which would be irrelevant to the solution of women's problems. It would not be pertinent to spend much more time discussing this matter.

2. The Government of Japan has doubts as to whether the Declaration would effectively contribute to the enhancement of the status of women and realization of world peace. Further, since international instruments on related matters already exist, Japan questions the necessity of adopting this Declaration.

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

/Original: French/

/11 June 1981/

1. The Lao People's Democratic Republic believes that the question of the participation of women in the strengthening of international peace and security and in the struggle against colonialism, apartheid, racism, racial discrimination, aggression and all forms of foreign domination is of fundamental importance. This belief is based on two things: the number of women involved - they constitute more than half of the world population - and the fact that, in many parts of the world, they are still subject to sexual discrimination, which the international community has consistently denounced and condemned because of its unfairness and because it is contrary to the rights of the individual and to human dignity. It is all the more important for them to participate because many years have passed since the welcome adoption of the World Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women at the World Conference held in Mexico City in 1975. Colonialism, racism, apartheid, and foreign aggression and domination continue to inflict untold suffering on innocent women and to hinder their active participation in all areas of human endeavour.

2. The detrimental social phenomena described above are compounded by the all-out arms race which has resulted from the attempt by certain imperialist circles to upset the present balance of power so as to gain military superiority and to rebuild the world to their advantage and at the same time, to continue their domination and political and economic exploitation of entire peoples and nations.

3. This attempt has the effect of seriously undermining international relations. In view of the present international situation, the Lao People's Democratic Republic believes that the adoption of the Declaration on the Participation of Women - who represent an immense force - in the struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, apartheid, Racism, Racial Discrimination, Aggression and All Forms of Foreign Domination should be considered to be one of the most important tasks of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

4. The adoption of the Draft Declaration, coupled with firm will and sincere determination on the part of all States, would represent an appreciable step forward in the international community's efforts to secure real recognition of the rights of women, which have thus far remained peripheral. It would also represent another step forward in the collective efforts to achieve a further strengthening of international peace and security.

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MONGOLIA

/Original: Russian/

/7 May 1981/

1. The Government of the Mongolian People's Republic considers that the adoption by the United Nations of a declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism, and aggression would be important and timely. Such a step would also be in keeping with the resolution adopted at Copenhagen by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, calling for continued efforts to elaborate a draft declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security, and against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression and occupation and all forms of foreign domination.

2. The preservation of peace and international security, respect for the sovereignty and independence of States, the cessation of the arms race and the expansion of co-operation between States are necessary conditions for ensuring the full equality of women in all countries of the world. The strengthening of peace and the security of nations is directly linked to the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women. In the present complex international situation, the Governments of all countries and all peace-loving forces, including women, must make every effort to consolidate peace, curb the arms race and avert the danger of war.

3. World public opinion is seriously concerned by the fact that, despite the major advances that have been achieved in securing the equality of women, in a number of regions of the world women still continue to be the object of the kind of discrimination that prevents them from playing an active part in the solution of important international problems. Colonialism, apartheid, all forms of racial discrimination and aggression, and fascism represent the principal obstacles to the attainment of full equality for women.

4. Mongolia believes that such a declaration would be a useful instrument for enhancing the economic and social status of women. It would also contribute to a restructuring of international economic relations on a democratic basis. In this way, favourable conditions would be created for ensuring the equality of women from the material standpoint.

5. The provisions of the Declaration are in accordance with those of General Assembly resolution 32/130, which states that all "human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent; equal attention and urgent consideration should be given to the implementation, promotion and protection of both civil and political, and economic, social and cultural rights." The Declaration would make an important and constructive contribution to the implementation of the provisions of the 1952 Convention on the Political Rights of Women and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

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6. The adoption of this Declaration would help to translate into reality the decisions of the 1975 World Conference of the International Women's Year, the 1980 World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, and the provisions of the Programme of Action for the second half of that Decade.

7. Mongolia attaches great significance to the United Nations Decade for Women and is a consistent supporter of international efforts aimed at achieving its objectives and purposes. Our country regards this initiative as an important step towards securing genuine equality for women in society and promoting their extensive involvement in all areas of public life and their active participation in the movement to strengthen peace and international security.

8. Mongolia supports the Programme of Action for the second half of the Decade and takes note of the importance it ascribes to the participation of women in efforts to consolidate international peace. Mongolia fully endorses the resolutions adopted at the Copenhagen Conference, particularly those which deal with women's role in strengthening peace and security, the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, sanctions against South Africa and the condemnation of the inhuman régimes in Chile and El Salvador.

9. The equality of women and guarantees of their broad participation in the socio-economic development of the country are enshrined in the Constitution of the Mongolian People's Republic. Mongolian women are playing an active role in the economic, social, and political life of the country and are making a worthy contribution to the building of a socialist society. At the present time, 29 percent of the deputies to the people's Khurals, the organs of state power, nearly 60 percent of employees in the public education system and three quarters of public health personnel in the Mongolian People's Republic are women.

10. The Mongolian Government attaches enormous importance to the welfare of the country's women workers. Major efforts are being made to improve their general wellbeing and culture, better their living and working conditions and raise their level of education and skill.

NETHERLANDS

/Original: English/

/24 March 1981/

1. In an earlier reply, based on the Secretary-General's note SO 244(39) of January 1979, the Government of the Netherlands has already given a first opinion on the above-mentioned declaration. In the time that has lapsed since then, no new facts or circumstances have arisen which might have led to a change of opinion on the desirability of or the need for such a declaration.

2. The Government of the Netherlands continues to hold that no clear need exists for a declaration as envisaged by the co-sponsors of various General Assembly resolutions. The World Conference on the Decade for Women has once again emphasized that the strengthening of the role of women in economic and social

development requires practical action-oriented approaches. The Conference stressed that high priority should be given to solving the many problems that women face in the areas of employment, health and education. As long as the basic needs of women in many countries cannot be met, the elaboration of further international standards and declarations must not be given high priority. Moreover, it seems that the concerns of those in favour of a declaration have already been met by the inclusion in the Copenhagen Programme of Action of a substantial number of recommendations concerning the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism, etc. Such provisions are also included in the preamble of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and in numerous resolutions of United Nations organs.

3. Another reason why the Government of the Netherlands is not in favour of the proposed declaration is the fact that such a declaration would be based on an unwarranted distinction on the basis of sex. In striving for full equality between women and men emphasizing the role of one to the detriment of the other does not serve a useful purpose. Distinctions should be avoided as much as possible. The discussions which have until now been taking place in the Commission on the Status of Women and under the agenda item of the General Assembly which deals with the United Nations Decade for Women have led to singling out the role of women in the area of peace, security, etc. Women's emancipation would be served better if women's potential roles in these areas were discussed in a serious manner in the United Nations organs and fora which are responsible for the formulation of the over-all policies relating to peace and security, the struggle against colonialism, racism, etc. These organs and fora could help to emphasize the joint responsibilities of women and men.

NEW ZEALAND

/Original: English/

/4 June 1981/

1. New Zealand is firmly committed to the search for ways and means of strengthening peace and security, through the elaboration of international instruments and declarations and by other means. This is a matter that concerns all people, women as well as men. The New Zealand Government is however of the view that, in considering the separate question of improving the status of women, the key factor is the existence of universal, sex-based discrimination. The draft Declaration does not address that fundamental question and would therefore not specifically advance the cause of women's equality with men. Many of the articles of the draft as it stands have little relevance to the specific interests and problems of women, even within the selected field of their participation in the struggle for peace.

2. The New Zealand Government believes that the incorporation of issues relating to the strengthening of international peace and security into the context of the advancement of women would be an unnecessary duplication of the machinery already established to deal with those questions. Furthermore, New Zealand considers that the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

against Women, to which New Zealand is a signatory and which, it is hoped, will soon come into force, provides the necessary framework to promote the rights of women. Since these rights include the right to full participation in political activities, there is no need for a separate declaration such as the one under consideration.

POLAND

/Original: English/

/23 April 1981/

1. In reply to the note of the Secretary-General SO 3022/2 of 27 January 1981, the Government of the Polish People's Republic wishes to reiterate that it invariably attaches great attention to questions of international peace and security as well as to all initiatives serving their consolidation. Establishing conditions for lasting peace, détente, disarmament and enhanced international security in the world depends upon attitudes of still greater involvement in them of men and women alike.
2. The important initiative for the adoption of the Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and Against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination constitutes a prominent part of efforts by world community to eliminate effectively the sad heritage of discrimination of women in all walks of life. There can hardly be any talk of fully equal rights as long as half of mankind represented by women contributes a share to widely conceived struggle for peace incommensurate with its possibilities and aspirations.
3. The Government of Poland has already had an opportunity of presenting its position on the draft Declaration in question in its reply to the note of the Secretary-General SO 244 of 18 February 1977. This position remains valid. Owing to their dramatic historic experiences, Polish women have made a conscious choice by granting their active and consistent support to the policy of peace, to all initiatives aimed at disarmament and construction of a system of collective security.
4. World developments give ample evidence of the tremendous role played by women in the cause of strengthening peace. Poland is deeply convinced that there exists a close relationship between the growth of international co-operation and the preservation of peace, the need to eliminate colonialism and neocolonialism, apartheid, racial discrimination, aggression, domination and occupation. Likewise, social progress and growth are possible only if mankind be spared the disaster of wars. Polish women expect decisive steps to be taken to bring about world peace and understanding which include as their inseparable components disarmament and strengthening of international security.
5. There can be no successful socio-economic development in any country unless women become fully fledged members of their respective societies. It has

invariably been Poland's position that equal rights for women are possible only once all forms of discrimination, poverty, injustice and social inequality are eliminated. This has been manifested by Poland's signing and ratifying, as one of the first of its parties, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

6. The long over-due reign of colonialism, racial discrimination and foreign occupation in some parts of the globe raises serious concern all over the world. There is also greater awareness of the need to step up the struggle against those phenomena; it is women who play an important part in it. Poland lends them its full support, particularly as far as the heroic women of South Africa are concerned, who have been fighting apartheid for years we are in full solidarity with Palestinian women in their hard struggle against aggression and the denial of the right to their own homeland.

7. In taking an active part in various aspects of human endeavour, in engaging themselves in public and political life of their respective countries women represent a tremendous force today, capable of shaping human attitudes and public opinions. The role of women is directly related to the idea embodied in the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, adopted on 15 December 1978 by the thirty-third session of the General Assembly and further elaborated with regard to women in the resolution of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in Copenhagen, last July. It appealed inter alia to all women in the world to act perseveringly and consistently with a view to implementing the noble ideas of preparing societies for life in peace, invariably recognizing in practice the superior necessity of maintaining peace. Both the discussion and the resolutions of the Conference as well as the course of the debates are an important contribution to the strengthening of the role of women in the public and political life. They proved that it is inappropriate to consider problems of women in the narrow sense of employment, health and education without tying them closely to the lofty ideals of equality, growth and peace pursued during the United Nations Decade for Women.

8. Recent years have again confirmed that there is growing need for an adoption of a Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination, as initiated by the German Democratic Republic. One should be most appreciative that the problem of the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security occupies such a prominent place in the draft declaration. It is precisely women who play the decisive role in educating the young generations in the spirit of peace, in shaping individual and social attitudes based upon mutual respect among peoples and nations, on the will of mutually advantageous co-operation, construction of lasting peace in a just world. It should be assessed most favourably that by eliminating barriers on the way to their own advancement, women play an ever more important role not only in determining the well-being of their families, but also in bringing about justice in their societies, eliminating all forms of discrimination, wiping out racism, apartheid, colonialism and neocolonialism.

9. The proposed document, in the form of a solemn Declaration, would be part and parcel of efforts taken by the entire international community with a view to eliminating totally whatever discrimination against women, more effective participation in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the second half of the Decade.
10. The Government of Poland is in support of the contents of the draft Declaration as contained in document A/C.3/35/L.17 of 24 October 1980.
11. Poland is profoundly convinced that an adoption of the Declaration will be a resolute and unambiguous move against most disgraceful phenomena of our civilization that defy the purposes and principles of the Charter. It will also be a vote of full solidarity with and moral support for women involved in the struggle for their basic rights in all corners of the world.

ROMANIA

/Original: French//20 May 1981/

1. The delegations of the Socialist Republic of Romania to the sessions of the United Nations General Assembly and to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women have always supported the proposal to draft a declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression and occupation and all forms of foreign domination. At the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Romanian delegation voted in favour of the adoption of the Draft Declaration on this subject, which was contained in document A/C.3/35/L.17 of 24 October 1980.
2. Romania's support for this initiative stems from its general position that an important potential in the struggle for peace and détente currently resides in the international women's movement, in the activities of national women's organizations, and in those of the many women throughout the world who are deeply interested in defending the peace and security of their homes and in eliminating war from the life of mankind, once and for all. In view of the present deterioration of the international situation and the new, serious threats to the peace and independence of peoples and to the peace of the whole world, it is becoming increasingly necessary actively to promote and strengthen the solidarity and unity of action of all the progressive forces of society, both at the national and the international levels. In this context, women can make a valuable contribution to the resumption and continuation of the policy of détente, co-operation, independence and peace and to the settlement of international disputes exclusively by peaceful means; they can help to find an equitable solution to the major problems of our times and can further the establishment of a new international economic order. Women throughout the world are now called upon to make a direct contribution to the victory in the struggle to eliminate all conflicts and sources of tension, to halt the arms race and to achieve general disarmament - first and foremost nuclear disarmament. They must help get rid of underdevelopment, to

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close the enormous gaps between the developed and the developing countries and to promote new, democratic principles in international relations, principles that will help to create a climate of peace and complete security on our planet. At the same time, women's organizations, together with the other progressive forces of society, have the lofty responsibility of taking firm enough action to rule out new manifestations of fascism and to ensure the democratic, independent development of every people.

3. In Romania's view, if ever improved conditions for material and spiritual life are to be guaranteed and if women are to be given the opportunity of asserting themselves in all areas, underdevelopment must be eliminated and new international relations must be established based on unfailing respect for the principles of full equality of rights, independence, national sovereignty and non-recourse to the use or threat of force. Only under these conditions can women fulfil their great mission in society and make an increasingly active contribution to the economic, social and political life of every country, and to the over-all struggle of peoples to guarantee each nation's fundamental right to peace, economic and social development and a free and independent existence.

4. Women's contribution to the carrying out of a policy of peace and co-operation, to the struggle for the freedom and dignity of nations, to the progressive renewal of human society, to social and national justice, and to the promotion of a new policy of equality, independence, détente and security throughout the world is greatly appreciated in Romania. The women of Romania, who are active partners in the country's foreign policy - a policy of peace and friendship among peoples - have expressed their complete and active acceptance of these lofty humanist ideals. The National Council of Women of Romania, which represents the women's movement all over the country, is expanding relations of friendship, co-operation and solidarity with women's organizations in all States in the struggle to achieve the great common objectives: peace and co-operation, economic progress, equality, equity and social justice, freedom and national independence. Romania wishes to express its solidarity with the struggle of the women who are still suffering under racial and social discrimination, exploitation and oppression.

5. In view of the above observations, Romania considers that, at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, it is necessary to intensify efforts directed towards the elaboration and adoption of the Draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, Racism, Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression and Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination. Romania will continue to support the strengthening of women's role and capacity for action in the collective struggle of the world's peoples to promote and defend international peace and security.

May 1981

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

/Original: English/

/1 April 1981/

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has decided to support the draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination contained in document A/C.3/35/L.17.

TUNISIA

/Original: French/

/8 June 1981/

The Draft Declaration on the Participation of Women in the Struggle for the Strengthening of International Peace and Security and against Colonialism, Apartheid, All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination, Foreign Aggression, Occupation and All Forms of Foreign Domination does not call for any comments or objections from the competent authorities of Tunisia.

TURKEY

/Original: English/

/15 July 1981/

The relevant Turkish authorities are of the opinion that, in view of the intricate nature of the process of preparing an international declaration, and in keeping with past practices, it would be advisable to carry out further preparatory work, involving all the Member States of the United Nations, on the draft Declaration, and thereby to reach a consensus on the contents of the text of the mentioned Declaration.

VIET NAM

/Original: English/

/11 June 1981/

The Draft Declaration has reflected the earnest feelings of women and their own interests which are closely attached to peace, security and national independence. Struggling for the defence of peace and national independence is what they are now doing and their participation in this course is ever more active with every passing day. The international situation in the recent past

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has given rise to urgent tasks of maintaining peace, détente and linked the struggle for national independence with the struggle for international peace and security. The Vietnamese women who were victims of more than thirty years of wars of aggression are now faced with the threat uttered by the imperialist and expansionist forces.

It is kindly requested that the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly discuss and adopt the above-mentioned Draft Declaration with the totality of its contents.