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**PROPOSALS FOR ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGENDA
FOR ACTION ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCAP REGION:
REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MEASURES, WITH
PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE PRIORITIES OF
THE ESCAP PROGRAMME OF WORK**

(Item 6 (b) of the provisional agenda)

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MEASURES

Note by the secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. The Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference in Preparation for the World Summit for Social Development, held in Manila in October 1994, recognized that national efforts alone might not be adequate to make progress on social development, particularly in the least developed countries and the island developing economies. Governments called on developed countries, international financial institutions, United Nations agencies and other international, regional and subregional organizations to provide adequate finances, expertise, advice, training and other support to countries in their implementation of the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region. The World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen in March 1995, also called upon the international community to assist developing countries to strengthen or rebuild their capacities for formulating, coordinating, implementing and monitoring integrated strategies for social development and to provide expertise, advice and support to countries, at their request, in implementing the Programme of Action.

2. ESCAP was the prime mover in the formulation and adoption of the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region. That Agenda for Action reflected a regional consensus and commitment of governments in the Asian and Pacific region to direct their attention and efforts to attain the priority social development goals (poverty alleviation, employment expansion and social integration) and the specific time-bound targets on major social issues identified therein. Since the adoption of the Agenda for Action, the secretariat, in collaboration with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, has implemented various technical assistance activities concerning social development, population, environment, rural and urban development, economics, infrastructure, trade and investment, and industry and technology. These have directly or indirectly provided an enabling environment and catalysed national actions for effective approaches to problem analysis, targeting, and programme planning and development in implementation of the Agenda for Action. The Social Development Division has been charged with the task of giving impetus to the overall implementation of the Agenda for Action both within the secretariat and in cooperation with United Nations bodies, other subregional and regional intergovernmental organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

3. The secretariat organized the Regional Workshop on Guidelines for Implementation of the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region in March 1996. The publication entitled *Policy and Programme Perspectives in Implementing the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region* (ST/ESCAP/1714) focused on the crucial policy issues and perspectives for social development planning and programming, targeting, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation and other elements highlighted at the Workshop. Building on the Workshop's deliberations and recommendations, a set of *Guidelines for Implementing the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region* (ST/ESCAP/1700) was published and disseminated to strengthen the initiatives of planners and practitioners involved in social development in the different sectors. The secretariat has, through a series

of national workshops, assisted selected least developed countries, including Maldives, Myanmar and Nepal, and Pacific island developing countries, namely, Fiji and Vanuatu, in examining their national social situation and planning for the implementation of the Agenda for Action. Upon request, advisory services were also provided, among other countries, to Brunei Darussalam, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam on the planning and assessment of poverty alleviation and social integration programmes.

4. Subregional organizations such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Pacific Commission (SPC) and the South Pacific Forum have been promoting social development activities in the Asian and Pacific region. Bilateral donors, governments and multilateral financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have also played a vital role as collaborators in these efforts. Furthermore, NGOs have been involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of social development policies, programmes and projects in the region. The subregional, regional and international assistance has been directed mainly at providing technical and financial support to national efforts in assessing their socio-economic situations, and evolving policy and programme approaches for attaining the goals and targets in implementation of the Agenda for Action. That assistance is elaborated in a companion paper (E/ESCAP/SD/SOSD/3 - E/ESCAP/SD/MCSD/3).

5. The present proposals on the regional support measures for further accelerating the implementation of the Agenda for Action are based on the findings and recommendations from national and regional workshops, advisory services and an expert group meeting on implementation of the Agenda for Action organized by ESCAP. They also incorporate responses from the questionnaire survey sent to ESCAP members and associate members on progress on the implementation of the Agenda.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS ON REGIONAL SUPPORT MEASURES

6. The findings and recommendations underscore that ESCAP, in collaboration with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, and with the support of bilateral donors and multilateral financial institutions, should intensify regional cooperation activities, as elaborated below. These activities should include technical assistance through the provision of advisory services upon request, advocacy, organization of regional workshops and policy seminars, field studies, demonstration projects, conduct of analytical policy- and issue-oriented research and studies, and the dissemination of publications and other information.

7. ESCAP should continue to promote vigorously the implementation of the Agenda for Action, and assess the progress made in attaining the specified time-bound goals and targets. However, in the light of the resource availability, consideration should be given to set the priorities for such assistance based on (a) the capacity of the secretariat to undertake the activities vis-à-vis other agencies, and (b) the needs and demands of the countries and territories, level of development and capacity to mobilize support from other sources. There are several niche areas in which the secretariat's assistance would have a catalytic impact, focusing on assistance to the least developed countries, Pacific island developing countries and areas, and transitional economies.

A. Overall planning and programming

8. The systematic regional programme of technical assistance for the implementation of the Agenda for Action should be strengthened to assist governments in the formulation of coherent multisectoral social development action plans, the establishment of priority goals and targets relating to those specified in the Agenda for Action, taking into account national-specific situations and resource capacities, and their integration in the overall national development plans and programmes. Such assistance should be coordinated with the national efforts, as well as with the activities of other external agencies to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication. The programme of regional assistance should consider the special needs in the subregions in terms of their socio-economic and political transitions and, accordingly, be organized by subgroupings where necessary.

9. ESCAP should support the conduct of analytical studies on the social impact of macroeconomic and sectoral policies and programmes on poverty alleviation, employment expansion and social integration. The publication of such studies would provide guidelines on methodologies and processes to improve social planning and programming in the light of provisions in the Agenda for Action. Among the important areas for further study are the role of public policy in social development, the links between social integration and other aspects of the quality of life with economic growth and income distribution, and perspectives and guidelines for social integration in the light of emerging social issues.

10. Regional cooperation activities should assist governments in the establishment of a comprehensive social development management information system, both nationally and regionally, to enable more coherent intersectoral planning and evaluation of social development programmes. The development of data and indicators for these systems should provide a basis for forward planning and adjustments directed at attaining the goals of poverty alleviation, employment expansion and social integration, in the context of the changing social, economic and political situation, and resource availability. Country and regional studies, as well as planning and training workshops, on various elements in developing the system should be organized in this regard.

B. Building national institutional capacity

1. Strengthening national coordinating mechanisms

11. The importance of the role and function of a national multisectoral coordinating structure to spearhead overall implementation of the Agenda for Action has been underscored. Regional support should be given to the conduct of national and regional workshops of national focal points to exchange information, assess the efficacy of the structure, role and function of current national coordinating bodies and focal points and strengthen the capabilities and role of the national focal points in coordination, resource mobilization and advocacy in national social development efforts.

2. Decentralization of the social sectors

12. Technical assistance should be provided to strengthen modalities for decentralization of the social sector as a means to accelerate the attainment of social development goals and targets. Country case studies and regional seminars should be implemented, aimed at the sharing of methodologies and processes of decentralization, and developing training and operational guidelines for the use of policy makers, administrators and practitioners in effecting viable modalities for local governance in the social sector.

3. Improving human resource capability

13. Policy advice and technical assistance should be provided for national human resources capacity-building for social development planners and other functionaries. National and regional seminars and workshops, as well as field study programmes, should be organized, including on a technical cooperation among developing countries basis, for exchange of experience and to enhance skills and knowledge on social planning, institution-building, social programmes, project management, community and resource mobilization and data systems development and use, among other social issues.

4. Promoting best practices

14. ESCAP should strengthen its support in the identification and dissemination of examples of best practices in social development in general, and in the implementation of the Agenda for Action in particular. Compiling information on these practices, making it widely available, and assisting the least developed and Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition in adapting these practices in their planning and programme development should be continued and expanded. For example, in the area of human resources development, an ESCAP HRD Award¹ has been presented

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annually in recognition of exemplary work in human resources development. This particular experience

¹ Six such awards have been made so far covering the human resources development aspects of environment, drug abuse demand reduction, helping women in extreme poverty, productive employment for youth, and people's participation in community development; the seventh, to be awarded in 1998, is on the theme of empowering the urban poor.

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of the secretariat should be expanded through the provision of assistance in the application of these best practices in the specific national context.

15. Information should be compiled on social development issues and constraints, processes, methodologies, technologies and techniques, best practices, and indicators and milestones of progress in social development and disseminated to the member countries and territories and other agencies, including NGOs. ESCAP should also survey the successful approaches to enhancing increased public awareness of and building strong popular support for social development in the region, and promote the adaptation of such approaches in other countries and areas. The experiences from innovative schemes implemented by ESCAP or others in the region should be documented and disseminated, and avenues upgrading the successful projects by other domestic and international financiers should be pursued. The *Social Development Newsletter* should continue to be published biannually, and policy and programme-oriented publications should be used as vehicles for disseminating current information on social development activities and issues in the Asian and Pacific region.

C. Mobilizing enablers and resources

16. In line with the commitments of the World Summit for Social Development on means by which the international community should strengthen cooperation with developing countries for achieving social development, the international community should promote an enabling environment for the developing countries in the ESCAP region in their efforts to eradicate poverty, expand productive employment and enhance social integration. Action may include the promotion of an open, equitable, stable and secure international trading system in goods and services, including migrant labour, foreign direct investment and regional cooperation through such forums as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, ASEAN, SAARC, SPC and the South Pacific Forum. Ameliorating the increasing debt burden of the highly indebted developing countries should be an important priority.

17. The United Nations and other agencies, for their part, should give explicit consideration to the national and regional priorities and requirements for accelerating the implementation of the Agenda. The feedback on regional level efforts on promoting social development in the region has been enumerated in a companion paper (E/ESCAP/SD/MCSD/3). It would appear that more explicit consideration of the goals and targets of the Agenda is necessary to effect its concerted implementation. A regional monitoring mechanism may be considered by ESCAP to assess progress in this regard.

18. ESCAP and other United Nations organizations should act as catalysts in mobilizing both technical and financial assistance for national social development. In particular, ESCAP could be an important intermediary in bringing together interested donors and recipient developing countries to improve their financial allocations for basic social services under the 20:20 compact on human development.

19. Other intergovernmental subregional and regional organizations have contributed to social development in the Asian and Pacific region. These include ASEAN, the Economic Cooperation

Organization, SAARC, SPC and the South Pacific Forum. ESCAP should play a catalytic role in strengthening such cooperation with subregional organizations to enhance the impact of their efforts on social development in general and in accelerating the implementation of the Agenda for Action. In this regard, it could also build on its collaboration with SAARC on the "Seven sisters: district development, coordination and improved poverty project design" programme.

20. Bilateral donor governments, multilateral financial institutions such as ADB, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as NGOs, play a crucial support role in the process of attaining the goals and targets of the Agenda for Action. In developing their policy decisions on funding and technical assistance, increasing attention should be paid to the social dimension. In particular, they could take into account more explicitly the priorities and requirements of the implementation of the Agenda for Action and the Programme of Action, or the follow-up actions of other regional and global conferences relating to these priorities, in their loans, funding and general development assistance operations. Such integration is in accord with the recommendations of the World Summit for Social Development and other such conferences that called on NGOs, international financial institutions and donors to increase their support for social development.

21. In financial terms, the volume of their bilateral donor assistance to the region is highly significant. In some countries, coordination of bilateral assistance is achieved through the periodic Consultative Group or Round Table meetings. However, no such coordination mechanism exists at the regional level.² ESCAP, in close collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme should look into suitable mechanisms to facilitate such coordination in the Asian and Pacific region. Consideration should be given to convening a multi-donor consultation in the region, including multilateral institutions on the implementation of the Agenda for Action to promote dialogue and reach consensus, including on regional donor coordination aspects at such a forum.

22. ADB, which was established upon the initiative of ESCAP, is a premier regional development agency for financing development projects in the Asian and Pacific region. It has begun to incorporate poverty reduction, enhancing the role of women in development, human resources

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² A regional donor coordination mechanism for official development assistance from both bilateral and multilateral sources has been operating for about a decade for Africa, in the form of the Special Programme of Assistance for Africa, coordinated by the World Bank.

development, and sound management of natural resources and the environment in its operations. It could expand its loan and technical assistance operations for social development and sustainable development in the Asian and Pacific region. This will be particularly relevant as resource flows from the international financial markets to invest in traditional infrastructure projects in the developing countries increase.

23. ESCAP and ADB should strengthen their collaboration on economic, environmental and social aspects. ADB co-financed, with ESCAP and other donors, the regional preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, and some of the follow-up actions to the Summit, including the present Fifth Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Development. Such cooperation would optimize the technical expertise and funding resource complementarities between the two agencies for promoting social development. In this regard, mechanisms should be established to facilitate joint advance planning to promote continuing partnership such as in developing indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Agenda for Action, identifying and targeting the absolute poor and promoting effective anti-poverty and social integration programmes, and facilitating the establishment of social development management information systems.

24. NGOs have been active in promoting social development in the region. In many cases, they have been playing an advocacy role in bringing to the fore social and environmental concerns, including those impinging on the poor, children, women, disabled persons, older persons and indigenous peoples. These NGOs have been active in promoting new ideas, alerting the governments and regional agencies to emerging concerns, and developing expertise on such issues. ESCAP should assist in promoting effective modalities for government and NGO cooperation in implementation of the Agenda for Action. NGOs should be mobilized as partners in enhancing the public awareness about the Agenda for Action and in building support for social development.

25. ESCAP should continue to facilitate the participation of regional and national NGOs in various forums and social development efforts through consultations, and channel the inputs of NGOs at intergovernmental forums. Its action has been initiated by inviting governments to include representatives of NGOs in their delegations.

26. With increasing economic liberalization and the opening of economies to global markets, including foreign direct investment, international labour flows and tourism, the importance of the private sector in influencing economic and social development has increased substantially in recent years. Further, advances in communication technologies, including access to the Internet, have broken down barriers and considerably enlarged the spheres of operation of the private sector. In collaboration with other bodies, ESCAP should undertake a systematic analysis of the existing and emerging role and influence of the private sector in social development to identify effective policies and mechanisms for constructive engagement in the social development process. Innovative and successful modalities for government and private sector collaboration should be documented and disseminated to both sectors. Regional consultations

among the private sector, including employers' and employee associations, and the government, on social development goals and priorities in the Agenda for Action would help to widen the network of enablers and mobilize assistance.

D. Advocacy and coordination

27. ESCAP has taken a strong proactive advocacy role in social development in forging the regional agreement on priority social development issues and concerns in the Asian and Pacific region, formulating approaches to tackle the problems, and adopting goals and targets and action plans to achieve these. This role could be further intensified through systematic research and vigilant monitoring to identify emerging issues, mobilizing expertise to analyse and explore potential options and solutions to vulnerable situations, and bringing them to the early attention of governments for action.

28. The advocacy of policy and programme implementation should build upon the results of monitoring progress on social development, including a review of the progress made in the implementation of the Agenda for Action. The Commission, in resolution 51/4 of 1 May 1995, called for high-level biennial meetings to review progress made in the implementation of the Agenda for Action. The Fifth Ministerial Conference is the first such meeting. Other expert group and regional technical meetings involving government and NGO representatives, and United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations will facilitate the process. In particular, ESCAP should actively promote regional cooperation in addressing the growing importance of emerging issues of social protection and social safety nets, particularly in the transitional economies, and the public policy and programme implications of strengthening the role of the family in providing social protection.

29. Information on the Agenda for Action and the strategies, plans and programmes should be easily accessible to the public throughout the ESCAP region in the local languages. Regional support should be provided for such translations and programmes to facilitate increased awareness about social development to accelerate the implementation of the Agenda for Action in the region, including the use of the media and modern communication networks such as Internet. In drawing up the Agenda for Action, the secretariat prepared a "Concordance to the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region".³ The Concordance provided a brief overview of the major precedents established in various international instruments pertaining to the social development goals and targets contained in the Agenda for Action. ESCAP should publish a supplement to the

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³ *Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference in Preparation for the World Summit for Social Development: Proceedings* (ST/ESCAP/1475), pp. 53-110.

Concordance to update it, taking into account the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and other related global and regional conferences convened subsequent to the adoption of the Agenda for Action.

30. As earlier indicated, NGOs, civil society and the private sector, including transnational enterprises, trade unions, employers' organizations and other interest groups and individuals, are or can be important influences on specific social development concerns. ESCAP should explore suitable regional mechanisms to harness the efforts of these groups in mobilizing funds, providing advice and technical assistance, raising awareness of social implications of production and labour market strategies, and thereby promote the attainment of the social development goals and targets.

31. ESCAP should take a coordinating role in the planning and programming of regional support measures to accelerate the implementation of the Agenda for Action. In this regard, the Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation of the Regional Interagency Committee for Asia and the Pacific (RICAP) (the latter convened by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP) has a coordination and information exchange function among the United Nations bodies on ongoing activities addressing poverty. However, the other two important aspects, expansion of productive employment and social integration, are not either directly or completely covered by this or other RICAP subcommittees, although there are subcommittees on particular disadvantaged groups and specific areas such as women in development, disability-related concerns, HIV/AIDS prevention and drug control. Given the multidimensional nature of the concerns and targets in the Agenda for Action, consideration could be given to expanding the mandate of the existing Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation to engender greater cooperation and regional support among agencies in the implementation of the Agenda for Action. Alternatively, a new subcommittee might be convened.

32. Such a mechanism to forge coordination and development of an effective regional support programme would strengthen linkages among agencies to facilitate advance joint planning and programming of activities and avoid unnecessary overlap. In view of the importance of fund mobilization for social development, the membership of the subcommittee could be expanded to include representatives of bilateral and multilateral donors, the private sector and NGOs.

E. Reviewing goals and targets in the Agenda for Action

1. Establishing baseline data

33. To monitor progress in attaining the time-bound goals and targets, it is necessary to establish baseline data, with a base year or period and benchmark data for the base year or period. It is proposed that 1990 should be selected as the base year in measuring progress on the implementation of the Agenda for Action in line with that used in assessing progress on implementation of the Social Development Strategy for the ESCAP Region Towards the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted in 1991 at the Fourth Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Development. The Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference

in Preparation for the World Summit for Social Development relied, to a large extent, on the 1990 data on social indicators, including poverty incidence, as the benchmark for discussion. In addition, some of the goals and targets in the Agenda for Action adopted by the Conference used 1990 as the base year (for example, to reduce maternal mortality rates to half those of 1990 by 2000, and halve illiteracy levels from those prevailing in 1990 by 2000). Furthermore, the World Summit for Social Development relied on 1990 as the base year in adopting the goals and targets in the Programme of Action. Finally, many of the last decennial censuses to collect data on population statistics and other social indicators were conducted around 1990.

2. Identifying and targeting the absolute poor

34. Identifying and targeting the absolute poor in Asia and the Pacific is an essential element in devising effective plans and programmes for the eradication of absolute poverty. National estimates of the incidence of poverty thus far are based on the incidence of income poverty. Absolute poverty has been frequently defined in terms of the minimum income or expenditure required to satisfy the basic necessities of life. These may include food, clothing, shelter, education and health services. However, the list of basic necessities included in such estimates differ from one source to another and between countries. As a result, comparisons of absolute poverty among countries are difficult. To facilitate national and regional comparisons, it is proposed that regional support should facilitate the identification and targeting of the absolute poor through adoption of the World Bank definition of US\$1 per capita per day at 1985 PPP⁴ as the absolute poverty line for assessing progress on the eradication of absolute poverty target in the Agenda for Action. National and regional studies and workshops should be organized to assist governments in the identification/mapping and targeting of the absolute poor and in the formulation and implementation of national anti-poverty policies and programmes.

3. Setting intermediate targets

35. The time-bound quantitative and qualitative goals and targets in the Agenda for Action provide a useful basis for assessing progress towards attaining the three core goals. However, the time-frame for achieving the goals and most of the targets is long. Intermediate targets and milestones should be considered to facilitate assessment of progress in the shorter term. ESCAP should convene an expert group meeting to facilitate a systematic review of the Agenda's goals and targets, *inter alia*,

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taking into account the progress and experience to date, assess the need for clarification or increased specificity, and to set intermediate time-frames for the actions and targets. This should also include the

⁴ The purchasing power parity (PPP) concept incorporates the real purchasing power of local currencies in the respective countries and provides a more appropriate indicator of command over goods and services as compared to the nominal exchange rates between the US\$ and local currencies. See World Bank, *Poverty Reduction and the World Bank* (Washington DC, 1996), for a detailed explanation, coverage and estimates.

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identification of appropriate indicators for assessment of progress made in implementing the Agenda for Action.

36. In the Agenda for Action, it was agreed that absolute poverty would be eradicated by 2010 and relative poverty reduced. Assuming that 1990 is adopted as the base year, the time-frame for achieving the target will be 20 years. To assess progress, it is desirable to adopt an intermediate target for poverty eradication. Accordingly, it is proposed that the Conference should adopt the intermediate target of reducing absolute poverty to half the level prevailing in 1990 by 2000.

37. Other intermediate targets may be set. The major issues are identified as follows:

- (a) Reducing infant mortality to half that prevailing in 1990 by 2000;
- (b) Achieving life expectancy at birth of 65 years by 2000 for all countries and areas, with those experiencing high mortality rates achieving at least 60 years by 2000. This will also be in harmony with the target in the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development;
- (c) Providing access to basic education for at least 80 per cent of the population by 2000;
- (d) Providing access to secondary education for at least 80 per cent of those who qualify by 2000;
- (e) Revising the date for achieving the target for redesigning the secondary education curricula from 2010 to 2000 in line with the imperative for the developing countries to improve their human resources expeditiously in order to compete in the changing global markets;
- (f) Adopting clear time-frames (currently unspecified) for implementation of activities for support of the informal sector, as follows: (i) revising restrictive laws, regulations and practices by 2000, (ii) providing infrastructure and services immediately, (iii) supporting NGOs and entities providing technology, credit and other assistance immediately, and (iv) encouraging private lending and soft loans to the informal sector immediately;
- (g) Revising the formulation and implementation of regulations to eliminate wage differentials between men and women from the year 2010 to an earlier date, taking into consideration the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women;
- (h) Specifying actions and time-frames to promote the strengthening of the family, taking into account the International Year of the Family and its follow-up.

F. Follow-up actions

38. It is timely that the theme topic of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission will focus on “Asia and the Pacific into the twenty-first century: status and prospects for social development”. A systematic review of the requirements for ESCAP to support governments in Asia and the Pacific fully in their social development efforts should be conducted in order to identify any gaps and to strengthen that role.

39. At the global level, the Commission for Social Development, in coordination with other relevant commissions (including the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Human Rights, and the Commission on Human Settlements (Habitat)) and United Nations bodies, will undertake work in 1999/2000 in preparation for the special session⁵ to review and appraise the implementation of the outcome of the Summit.

40. Expansion of productive employment was chosen as the priority theme for review at the 1997 session of the Commission for Social Development, with the International Labour Organization as the task manager. The priority theme for the 1998 session will be social integration. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice have been requested to provide appropriate inputs for the discussion on social integration. The priority theme for the 1999 session of the Commission for Social Development is social services for all. The Commission will initiate an overall review of the implementation of the outcome of the Summit at its session in 1999 in preparation for the overall review to be undertaken by the General Assembly at its special session in 2000.

41. The next regional review on the implementation of the Agenda for Action will be undertaken before the global review of the follow-up to World Summit for Social Development by the United Nations General Assembly at its special session in 2000. The regional review should contribute to the global review as the regional preparations did for the World Summit for Social Development. In pursuance of Commission resolution 51/4 of 1 May 1995, it is proposed that the next regional review of progress on implementation of the Agenda for Action on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development should be undertaken in 1999 to facilitate the incorporation of its results in the global review of the follow-up to the Summit. Consideration should be given to the necessary preparatory work for that review.

⁵ See E/CN.5/1997/9.