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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER  
AND THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Written statement submitted by the World Association for the School  
as an Instrument of Peace, a non-governmental organization in  
consultative status - Roster

The relations between and the mutual effects of the new international economic order and human rights have very appropriately become a matter of concern to the international organizations. The United Nations held a seminar on the subject in New York at the beginning of this month, while the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization convened a meeting of experts, in June 1981, to clarify the matter.

The World Association, which participated in the work of those two meetings, summarizes below their key ideas for the purpose of discussing the Special Rapporteur's excellent report.

The establishment of a new international economic order, efforts to achieve disarmament and the promotion of human rights can henceforth be incorporated into the concept of the "world order of human rights" if the following definition, submitted to the UNESCO meeting, is adopted in its entirety:

"The world order of human rights consists in the effective functioning of the United Nations to ensure that the peoples fully enjoy the right of self-determination, the right to exploit rationally the resources of the earth within the context of a new international economic order, and the right to achieve full disarmament under international control, so that the individual person may be free from fear and want and able fully to develop his personality."

Human rights are those defined by the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights. Their international dimension, on which the world order of human rights is founded, is article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

"Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized."

The indivisibility of the various human rights is reaffirmed, without any possible ambiguity, by the Preamble to each of the two Covenants:

"In accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights, as well as his civil and political rights."

A report of the Secretary-General dated 11 December 1978 (E/CN.4/1334) has made a systematic compilation of United Nations resolutions and of the practices of United Nations organs in the area of the right to development. What is more, this well-documented report brings out a more or less marked tendency of the world organization to make use of the concept of human rights in a sense embracing all the rights contained in the two Covenants.

Rational exploitation of the resources of the earth is based on national sovereignty over natural resources, but is put into effect through co-operation by States in applying economic, social and cultural rights within the context of a new international economic order. This new order, commended by resolutions 3201 (S-VI), 3281 (XXIX) and 3362 (S-VII) of the General Assembly, is interpreted by many as "a way of eliminating want and of achieving fundamental human rights".

In this context, the concept of peace becomes not only the absence of war but a just and democratic system of international relations, which would be henceforth defined as "the effective functioning of the United Nations to achieve full disarmament under international control".

In order, however, to rescue human rights - which are also duties - from the rut, from the academics and political slogans in which they are still impounded, and make them both popular and applicable, it is necessary to apply the UNESCO plans concerning education in human rights. Education for human rights is a novel apprenticeship, advocated by the Club of Rome, which transmits the knowledge of a multidisciplinary science of human rights, encourages the attitudes inherent in these rights (solidarity, responsibility and tolerance), and develops in the individual and in the group an awareness of the means by which such rights may be translated into practice and urges them to action.

In this way, such an education could prevent the catastrophes looming over this transitional period, this historical crisis through which we are living.