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HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 35/130 A on 11 December 1980, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session a report prepared on the basis of the information received from Member States regarding the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind, adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 3384 (XXX) of 10 November 1975. The General Assembly stressed the importance of implementing the provisions and principles contained in the Declaration in order to promote human rights and economic and social development of peoples.
2. In a note verbale of 2 March 1981, the Secretary-General requested all Member States to provide the information described in resolution 35/130 A.
3. At its thirty-sixth session, in 1981, the General Assembly had before it a report of the Secretary-General (A/36/429 and Add.1 and 2), which contained replies from the following Member States: Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Dominica, Dominican Republic, German Democratic Republic, Israel, Kuwait, Malta, Netherlands, Qatar, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Sierra Leone.
4. In its resolution 36/56 A of 25 November 1981, the General Assembly, inter alia, invited those Member States which had not yet done so to submit their information in accordance with resolution 35/130 A. The General Assembly also invited the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to submit information on action they had accomplished to take into account in their programmes and activities the provisions of the Declaration.
5. Consequently, a reminder was sent on 31 March 1982 by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 35/56 A to those Member States which had not yet complied with the previous request addressed to them. At the same date, a note verbale was sent to the specialized agencies and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system.
6. A summary of the four substantive replies received from Governments as at 30 June 1982 appears in section II below. A summary of the replies received from five specialized agencies and two other organizations of the United Nations system appears as section III. 1/

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

CUBA

[Original: Spanish]

[9 June 1982]

1. The Republic of Cuba strongly supports the efforts of the United Nations to implement throughout the world the provisions of the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind. This Declaration is a valuable and important instrument reflecting the need to adopt effective measures as a matter of urgency at both the national and international levels in order to eliminate the potentially negative effects of scientific and technological development on peace, human rights and the international community in general.

2. Cuba, bearing in mind that among the purposes set forth in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations are the maintenance of international peace and security and the achieving of international co-operation in solving international problems, considers that the activities of the United Nations relating to science and technology should concentrate on the struggle against any improper use of scientific and technological progress to promote the arms race or the proliferation of increasingly inhuman weapons of mass destruction, or to strengthen the neo-colonial domination suffered by under-developed countries.

3. Since the triumph of the Revolution, Cuba's policy has always been to respect and promote the progressive aspect of science. The Constitution of the Republic of Cuba therefore provides, in article 38, paragraphs (f) and (g), that the State shall promote and facilitate research and give priority to research aimed at solving problems of concern to society and the people, while making it possible for workers to contribute to scientific endeavours and the development of science.

4. Cuba considers that it is only with the consolidation of international peace and security, peaceful coexistence, the cessation of the arms race, the preservation and promotion of international détente, support for the just struggle of peoples for independence, the rejection of imperialist aggression and the establishment of the new international economic order, that effective scientific and technological co-operation will be achieved and that the fruits of scientific and technological progress will be used to promote universal development.

JORDAN

[Original: English]

[24 June 1982]

The Jordanian Royal Scientific Society is paying special attention to scientific and technological researches for the purpose of supporting the economic development in Jordan, in the interests of peace and for the benefit of mankind through the co-operation between all countries.

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PAKISTAN

[Original: English]

[30 June 1982]

The Government of Pakistan has brought the provisions and principles contained in the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind to the notice of all the authorities concerned in Pakistan and has instructed them that the recommendations contained therein are kept fully in view.

PHILIPPINES

[Original: English]

[15 June 1982]

1. The Government of Philippines states that scientific and technological efforts must be geared to meet the demands of economic and social development, and that the results of such research and development must be properly applied and utilized to the processes of production to ultimately benefit the Filipino people. The National Science and Technology Authority stands to uphold the crucial role that science and technology play as catalysts of national development.
2. The national scientific community shares with the other sectors of society the same ultimate goal: that of improving the quality of life of Filipinos. It has contributed its modest share to the accelerated economic development of the country in recent years which has resulted in a number of major social gains.
3. A wide range of research and development programmes are being pursued, geared, among others, towards the efficient and economical utilization of various energy sources and technologies. In addition, programmes aimed at improving the quality of, and access to, basic education as well as upgrading educational facilities in engineering and the sciences are stressed.
4. In support of the Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran (KKK) launched by the National Government to uplift the socio-economic status of the people and conformably with its role as lead Support Agency for technical assistance, the National Science and Technology Authority (NSTA) has adopted a KKK-NSTA Appropriate Technology Program. The Program's ultimate goal is the transfer to rural communities of packages of appropriate technologies in such areas as agro-forestry, agri-livestock, waste utilization, cottage and light industries, aqua-marine and shelter components, which shall provide the basis for increased productive activity utilizing local resources and local skills. Methodologies used are trainings, seminars, and information campaign on appropriate technologies in areas determined as priority by the Government. Demonstration centres showcasing viable technologies are established thus generating awareness of the people on such technologies. Technical and financial assistance to small-scale entrepreneurs is also provided.

5. In the area of international co-operation, the Philippine Government's policy to provide mutual understanding and co-operation among nations as well as to contribute to the advancement of science is supported. Bilateral, regional and multilateral exchanges and co-operation in science and technology are actively pursued.

6. International co-operation in science and technology has been promoted and enhanced through joint co-operative research projects, scientific seminars or workshops, training/research visits and exchange of research/academic scientists.

7. Government programmes and private initiatives have been intensified towards removing barriers to information flow and considerably improving access to scientific and technological information for the benefit of mankind, progress and world peace.

III. REPLIES FROM SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

[Original: English]

[22 June 1982]

1. FAO was founded in 1945 with the main purpose of raising the levels of nutrition and the standards of living of peoples and of securing improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products, thus ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger (see the Preamble to the FAO Constitution). FAO's constitutional functions include international co-operation in: scientific and technological research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture; the improvement of education on these subjects, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice; the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production; the improvement of the processing of food and agricultural products (art. I.2 of the FAO Constitution).

2. An important element of the activities indicated above relates to the application of science and technology, and to the use of the results of new developments in these fields, for the purpose of achieving fundamental economic and social rights, and in particular the right to food.

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND
CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

[Original: English]

[18 June 1982]

1. An important contribution in this respect was the convening of a symposium in Athens, from 30 March to 3 April 1981, to examine pseudo-scientific theories invoked to justify racism and racial discrimination. The symposium resulted in the Athens Appeal which denounced, on the basis of different disciplines such as biology, genetics, psychology, sociology, history and philosophy, the invocation of pseudo-scientific theories.

2. In addition, a symposium with the theme of human rights, new human rights and scientific and technological progress is to be convened in the last quarter of 1982. About 20 experts will meet in Trieste, under the auspices of the International Institute for the study of Human Rights, in order to study the positive and negative consequences of certain scientific and technological advances, particularly in the fields of informatics, telematics and genetic manipulations.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

[Original: English]

[9 June 1982]

1. The World Health Organization would like to mention here three programmes.

(1) Proposed International Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects

2. The guidelines have particular relevance to externally sponsored research undertaken in third world countries. Most importantly, they stress the need for peer review within the country in which the research is to be undertaken.

(2) Principles of medical ethics relevant to the role of health personnel in the protection of persons against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

3. This code was formulated by the Council of International Organizations for Medical Sciences as the result of a request to WHO from the General Assembly of the United Nations. The code was endorsed by the WHO Executive Board at its sixty-third session in January 1979 and transmitted to the Secretary-General for submission to the General Assembly.

(3) CIOMS Round Table Conferences:

- (i) Medical Ethics and Medical Education (Mexico, 1980)
- (ii) Human Experimentation and Medical Ethics (Manila, 1981)

4. These meetings, which were co-sponsored by WHO, constitute an important element in ongoing comprehensive programmes concerning ethical issues related both to biomedical research and the delivery of health services.

WORLD BANK

[Original: English]

[21 June 1982]

1. The World Bank has accomplished much in science and technology, both in promoting research and in developing local scientific and technological capacity, in pursuing its basic objective of improving the economic and social development of its developing member countries; in particular, through its project financing, the Bank has been an important agent for the transfer of appropriate technology.
2. Specifically, Bank assisted projects have supported \$1 billion in agricultural research and \$2.6 billion in scientific and technological education; the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research mobilized \$140 million in 1981 to support 13 international programmes, of which \$14.6 million came as a grant from the Bank administrative budget.
3. In addition, Bank assisted projects, totalling \$118 million, encourage technological innovation in industry; and in many countries the Bank has helped develop capacity for project design and implementation.
4. These examples serve to illustrate the role of science and technology in the Bank's operational activities, which aim at accelerating the development of developing countries, while supporting the objectives of the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technical Progress in the Interests of Peace and the Benefit of Mankind.

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

[Original: English]

[17 May 1982]

1. The provisions of the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind are taken into account by ITU in its activities and are, to the extent appropriate, incorporated in the International Telecommunication Convention which is the basic instrument of

the Union. In particular, some provisions of article 4 of the Convention lay down the purposes of the Union as follows:

- "12. a) to maintain and extend international co-operation for the improvement and rational use of telecommunications of all kinds;
- 13. b) to promote the development of technical facilities and their most efficient operation with a view to improving the efficiency of telecommunications services, increasing their usefulness and making them, so far as possible, generally available to the public;
- 14. c) to harmonize the actions of nations in the attainment of those ends."

2. In addition to listing a number of other specific telecommunication purposes, this article also provides that the ITU shall:

- "20. f) promote the adoption of measures for ensuring the safety of life through the co-operation of telecommunication services;"

3. In pursuance of this objective the ITU co-operates closely with other international organizations concerned with maritime and civil aviation services.

4. The right of the public to use the international telecommunication service is also incorporated in the Convention in the chapter dealing with "General Provisions relating to Telecommunications". Article 18 reads as follows:

"Members recognize the right of the public to correspond by means of the international service of public correspondence. The services, the charges and the safeguards shall be the same for all users in each category of correspondence without any priority or preference."

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

[Original: English]

[19 April 1982]

A large component of the Agency's programme is devoted to the provision of scientific and technological information in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy. This is done particularly with the needs of developing countries in mind, and taking due account of General Assembly resolutions and resolutions adopted by the IAEA General Conference in matters relevant to the subject.

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

[Original: English]

[7 June 1982]

1. On the basis of the UNU Charter's reference to peaceful relations between States and the maintenance of peace and security, and human rights as among the subjects to be included in the University's research, the Medium Term Perspective document 1983-1987 proposes a single sub-programme, the Sub-Programme on Peace and Global Transformation, as an entry point into this theme.

2. The exploratory activities towards setting up this sub-programme took place in 1981 and 1982. The following meetings helped in broadening the programme-planning perspectives:

(a) The hosting of the meeting of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (ICDSI - "the Palme Commission") at the UNU Centre from 4 to 6 December 1981 and the co-sponsoring and organization of the Workshop on Disarmament and International Security for its Tokyo and Hiroshima sessions on 7 and 8 December. The latter seminar provided an interesting forum for discussion between the members of the Palme Commission and Asian experts on peace issues. One major perspective gained through this discussion was the importance of conducting further research on the problems of regional peace and security issues.

(b) The co-sponsoring with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of the Symposium on the Promotion, Dissemination, and Teaching of Fundamental Human Rights of Refugees at the UNU Centre from 7 to 11 December 1981. Among other things, it was recommended that the UNU should take the initiative, in co-operation with UNESCO, in encouraging social scientific research on political, socio-economic, and cultural causes of refugee phenomena and their various effects on the countries of refuge as well as their implications for international relations and regional peace, and facilitate the exchange of information and research results among different research and university institutions in co-operation with UNESCO.

(c) The Task Force Meeting held from 24 to 26 March 1982 in Tokyo, in which 30 experts on the major aspects of the theme discussed the sub-programme on the basis of different disciplines, regional experiences, and schools of thought.

3. As a result of the above-mentioned exercises, the following projects are proposed with a view to maximizing the special advantages the UNU has: it can undertake research and dissemination in areas that have been found to be of a divisive nature in inter-governmental forums. The UNU network is also particularly suited to establish linkages among the several components of the sub-programme as well as with other sub-programmes. Above all, the UNU network provides very effective channels for dissemination of information, ideas, educational materials etc. with a view to influencing and creating public opinion in favour of peace and just global transformation.

4. In addition to the above comments, the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies where the Office of the Programme Director, UNU Sub-Programme on Peace and Global Transformation, is located, stated in a letter of 2 June 1982 that the relevant paragraphs in the General Assembly resolutions had been noted and would be taken into account in the activities under the Sub-Programme. Human rights was an important component of the programme and the use of science and technology laterally entered into a number of specific research areas which were being planned under the Sub-Programme.

Note

1/ The full texts of these replies are on file in the Secretariat and are available for consultation if desired.
