

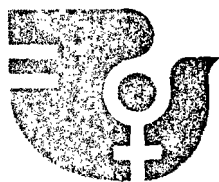


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JUN 28 1975

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WORLD CONFERENCE UN/ISA COLLECTION
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR
MEXICO CITY, 19 JUNE TO 2 JULY 1975

E/CONF.66/C.2/L.14
24 June 1975
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

Second Committee
Agenda item 9

CURRENT TRENDS AND CHANGES IN THE STATUS AND ROLES OF WOMEN AND
MEN, AND MAJOR OBSTACLES TO BE OVERCOME IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF
EQUAL RIGHTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of women with regard to the problem of disability

Costa Rica: draft resolution

Recalling Recommendation No. 99 of the International Labour Conference concerning Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled, of June 1955, and Economic and Social Council resolutions 309 E (XI) of 13 July 1950 concerning rehabilitation of physically handicapped persons and 1086 K (XXXIX) of 30 July 1965, concerning rehabilitation of the disabled, and General Assembly resolution 2856 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971, entitled "Declaration of the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons",

Noting that one of the five substantive items of the agenda of the Conference of the International Women's Year is "Current trends and changes in the status and roles of women and men, and major obstacles to be overcome in the achievement of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities", the basic document relating to which is the report of the Secretary-General (E/CONF.66/3),

Bearing in mind the pledge taken by States Members of the United Nations under the United Nations Charter to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization to promote higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development,

Aware that the fulfilment of this commitment is even more imperative in the case of the disabled,

Considering that this world of ours, with some exceptions, is not adapted to enabling disabled persons to carry out their daily activities; that there are architectural obstacles within and outside the home for the individual who lives and moves in a wheelchair, on crutches or with the aid of heavy orthopedic appliances; that door handles and light switches at inconvenient heights, interior doorjamb or lintels, stairs, public telephones, plumbing fixtures, small elevators in commercial buildings, churches, theaters and libraries become walls imprisoning disabled persons in an open and fast-moving world which demands that everyone take care of himself,

Emphasizing that the impact of disability in the family is generally borne by the female members in the following ways:

- Daily and constant attention to the disabled member of the family,
- Acceptance of the limitation of the child, which in the Latin American environment is systematically ignored or denied by the man of the house, who escapes from this pressure through his work,
- The need to take care of the child in the home because of the lack of adequate services,

Drawing attention to the fact that in the field of education the vast majority of teachers, especially at the primary level, are women, and that in order to detect and accept limitations of any kind in a child and help him it is necessary to have a knowledge of such limitations,

Noting that in the field of over-all rehabilitation in relation to health, education and work there is a shortage of technically trained staff and that, perhaps even more tragic, certain countries may have such personnel but lack adequate budgetary resources for programmes to provide services for disabled children who, with their lives ahead of them, will be burdened by their limitations, their hands and minds empty for lack of help given, whether great or small, at the appropriate time, and that there is also inadequate knowledge of the problems of disability and of the capacity of disabled persons to overcome their handicaps sufficiently to hold a job,

Aware that because of physical and mental handicaps and the reactions of society to them, hundreds of millions of people are unable fully to enjoy the opportunities afforded by the communities in which they live,

Bearing in mind that women constitute 51 per cent of the world's population and that every woman in the depths of her heart has the tenderness of a mother and feels the obligation to participate in the solution of the problem,

1. Resolves to draw to the attention of Governments the growing magnitude of the problem of disability and of the disabled of the world, and the contribution of women to the solution of this problem,

2. Urges Governments to:

(a) Promote the extension and improvement of programmes of medical rehabilitation, special education, vocational rehabilitation and training of teaching and administrative technical personnel in these fields,

(b) Promote legal measures which would guarantee the full enjoyment of the rights and fulfilment of the duties of disabled women,

(c) Provide at the national level adequate budgetary resources for rehabilitation programmes,

(d) Promote to the maximum opportunities for disabled women to join the work force and thus participate in the economic and social development of nations,

(e) Consider the elimination of architectural obstacles in urbanization and construction projects;

3. To ask women in their capacity as active and responsible members of the community:

(a) To understand the condition and needs of the disabled and help develop a world in which there will be equality of opportunities for such persons,

(b) To work as a volunteer, providing the human complement to the work of the professional, thus helping to make it possible to utilize fully the services of scientific, teaching and technical personnel,

(c) To promote the establishment of rehabilitation services in their various aspects and help to raise funds for these purposes,

(d) To promote the idea of the worth of the work of the disabled through publicity campaigns,

(e) To prepare herself, as the mother of a disabled child, to help him accept his limitation and develop his residual capacities,

(f) As an educator, to make her students aware that the disabled child is like any other child, with the same desires, interests and possibilities, and help her disabled students to be integrated into the group in conditions of equality.
