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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

United Nations Population Award

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on the United Nations Population Award, established by the Assembly in its resolution 36/201 of 17 December 1981. The report, which covers the 1987-1988 period, was prepared in accordance with the request in Economic and Social Council decision 1982/112 of 26 April 1982.

* A/43/50.

ANNEX

Report on the United Nations Population Award (1987-1988)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In order to promote awareness of and solution to population problems, the General Assembly adopted resolution 36/201 entitled "Establishment of the United Nations Population Award". At its first regular session of 1985, on 28 May, the Economic and Social Council, elected the following countries to serve on the Committee for the United Nations Population Award for a period of three years beginning in January 1986: Burundi, Colombia, Ecuador, Japan, Mexico, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia and Yugoslavia. Spain was elected at the second regular session of the Council, on 26 July 1985. The Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) serve as ex officio members. The Executive Director of UNFPA acts as the Secretary of the Committee. The Award consisted of a diploma, a gold medal and a monetary prize.

2. During 1986, the following five eminent individuals were selected by the Committee to serve as honorary members in an advisory capacity to the Committee: Mr. Edem Kodjo, former Minister of Finance and Economy of Togo; Mr. Nobuske Kishi, former Prime Minister of Japan; Ms. Carmen Miro, laureate of the 1984 Award; Mr. Robert E. Turner III, President of Turner Broadcasting System, United States of America; and Ms. Simone Veil, former President of the European Parliament. Following Mr. Kishi's death in 1987, the Committee selected Mr. Takeo Fukuda, former Prime Minister of Japan, to succeed him.

3. On 27 January 1987, the Committee elected Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri (Tunisia) as Chairman. He was succeeded on 25 January 1988 by Mr. Ahmed Ghezal (Tunisia).

4. On 5 December 1986, the General Assembly, during its forty-first session, amended article 2, paragraph 1, of the Regulations Governing the United Nations Population Award, contained in the annex to Assembly resolution 36/201, so that an individual and an institution may share the Award (see General Assembly decision 41/445).

5. On 26 May 1987, the Economic and Social Council amended the Rules of Procedure of the Committee for the United Nations Population Award (see Economic and Social Council decision 1987/129).

II. THE 1987 AWARD

6. A total of 19 nominations were received for the 1987 Award from qualified nominators. After a thorough review of the nominations and taking into account the views offered by the honorary members, the Committee for the United Nations Population Award selected President Hussain Muhammad Ershad of Bangladesh and the National Family and Population Office of Tunisia as laureates.

7. President Ershad of Bangladesh was chosen for the Award for his strong leadership in his nation's family planning programme. As Army Chief of Staff prior to becoming President, he promoted population awareness and family planning in the army. Since assuming the office of the President in 1982, he has given high priority and strong personal leadership to the programme. His leadership was credited with raising the contraceptive-user rate from 18.6 per cent in 1981 to 29.6 per cent in 1985 and with reducing the population growth rate of Bangladesh substantially.

8. The National Family and Population Office of Tunisia represents one of the oldest and most successful population and family planning programmes in Africa and throughout the developing world. The Office has been a driving force in reducing the fertility and growth rates of Tunisia. It has made contraceptives available to nearly 40 per cent of the nation's population. Today its work includes maternal and child health and nutrition services, along with family planning services. Its work has also been a major impetus behind a wide range of legislation aimed at raising the status of women.

9. In accordance with the decision of the Committee, the United Nations Population Award was presented to the laureates by the Secretary-General at a ceremony held at United Nations Headquarters on 10 June 1987. Statements were made by President Hussain Muhammad Ershad, the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr. Hedi M'Henni, President and Secretary-General of the National Family and Population Office of Tunisia, and the Chairman of the Committee.

III. THE 1988 AWARD

10. A total of 12 nominations were received for the 1988 Award from qualified nominators. After a thorough review of the nominations and taking into account the views offered by the honorary members, the Committee for the United Nations Population Award selected Mrs. Shidzue Kato and the Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana (PROFAMILIA) as laureates.

11. Mrs. Shidzue Kato was chosen for her nearly 70 years of dedication to improving the status of women, to promoting awareness of population problems and to seeking solutions to those problems in Japan and the world. In 1931, she participated in publishing the Encyclopedia on Women's History, which helped launch a world-wide movement for greater equality and justice for women. She founded the Women's Birth Control League of Japan and later opened the Birth Control Consultation Centre. She worked patiently and with great energy to spread the idea of family planning for the benefit of both mothers and children in Japan, which had a high birth rate and a high infant mortality rate, especially among the poor. Mrs. Kato was a founding member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and also founded the Family Planning Federation of Japan.

12. Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana (PROFAMILIA) was chosen because of the effectiveness of its family planning services in Colombia over the past 20 years. Founded in 1964, PROFAMILIA has provided information and family planning services to the people in rural areas and in poor urban neighbourhoods.

PROFAMILIA has been a major contributor to Colombia's increasing reproductive health and welfare system. Since its operations began, Colombia's contraceptive-user rate has risen from 10 per cent to its current level of 65 per cent of married women of reproductive age; also Colombia's birth rate has fallen from 44 to 24 per thousand and the overall annual rate of population growth has dropped from 3.2 to 1.75 per cent. In addition, the infant mortality rate dropped from 80 to 33 per thousand live births during the same period. PROFAMILIA's work has made it one of the leading family planning organizations in Latin America.

IV. FINANCIAL MATTERS

13. As at 1 January 1986, the Trust Fund stood at \$448,523. Income from interest for 1986 amounted to \$34,284. Expenditure in 1986, including printing costs, cost relating to the Award Ceremony and the prize, totalled \$34,885. The closing balance as at 31 December 1986 totalled \$447,922.

14. Income from interest for 1987 amounted to \$32,283. Expenditure in 1987, including printing costs, cost relating to the Award Ceremony and the prize, totalled \$24,066. The closing balance as at 31 December 1987 totalled \$456,139.
