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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD: PLANS AND ACTION TO IMPROVE THE
 SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN THE WORLD, PARTICULARLY IN THE DEVELOPING
 COUNTRIES

Note by the Secretary-General

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* A/34/50.

I. INTRODUCTION

The communications reproduced below, which relate to the International Year of the Child, are being circulated at the request of the Member States concerned.

II. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

BULGARIA

/Original: English/

/2 February 1979/

I have the honour to inform you of the International Children's Assembly "Banner of Peace", which is to be held at Sofia from 15 to 25 August 1979 under the honorary patronage of Todor Zhivkov, President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, and Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, Director-General of UNESCO. This large get-together of children all over the world is being sponsored jointly by many governmental and non-governmental organizations in Bulgaria. In this connexion, I am pleased to transmit to you the text of the Programme of the International Children's Assembly.

I should be obliged if you would circulate the texts of this letter and the above-mentioned Programme as an official document of the General Assembly under item 26 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Alexander YANKOV
Deputy Foreign Minister
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Bulgaria to the
United Nations

Programme of the International Children's Assembly

The International Children's Assembly "Banner of Peace" is organized to mark the International Year of the Child. It is dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

The Assembly will provide opportunities for meetings of children from many countries. It will promote the idea of peace and friendship among peoples and the overcoming of national and racial prejudices. The meetings of future artists, musicians and writers will stimulate the potential abilities of young talents in the name of achieving the harmonious development of the individual, architect of the constructive and peaceful future of mankind. They will show the spiritual culture, traditions and customs of the different peoples.

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For 10 days in Bulgaria's capital, Sofia, and in other towns the young visitors will meet together to draw and paint, write poems, sing songs, take part in lively games and carnivals and get to know Bulgaria. This will help them get the feeling of future creative workers addressing all people of the world.

The works presented by the participants in the Assembly will be widely publicized by the press, radio and television, displayed in exhibition halls, performed at musical and literary meetings and at concerts given by the young talents themselves and by prominent Bulgarian artistic ensembles. Collections and albums with works by the participants in the Assembly will be published. A message and an invitation by Bulgarian children extended to children all over the world has already been sent out.

An international scientific symposium on "Problems of the Creative, Versatile and Harmonious Formation and Development of Man, the Role and Place of Art and Culture in the World of Today and the Education of Children" will be held concurrently with the Assembly. Prominent scientists, teachers and artists will take part in it and they will meet the children, guests of Bulgaria. To this effect, Bulgarians working in various fields of science, education, culture and the arts have circulated an open letter to their colleagues from all over the world.

Rules for participation: general conditions

The International Children's Assembly "Banner of Peace" will be held in the People's Republic of Bulgaria, at Sofia, from 15 to 25 August 1979. It includes events in the following fields:

- (a) Plastic arts;
- (b) Music (composition and performance);
- (c) Literature.

The Assembly provides for:

- (a) Participation in person;
- (b) Participation by correspondence.

The works can be presented by the authors or by other performers.

The children's participation at the Assembly does not have a competitive character.

Groups of up to 10 children will be received from every country as guests of Bulgaria. Their travel expenses are to be met by the sending country, while the expenses for their stay in this country will be covered by the People's Republic of Bulgaria. The number of persons accompanying the children is not restricted. Their expenses are to be entirely met by the sending country.

During the Assembly constant medical care will be available for all children taking part.

Children born after 1965 are entitled to participate. The works submitted will be preserved in the Children's Creative Work National Fund.

International Exhibition of Children Artists

The Assembly programme includes an International Exhibition of Children Artists, where all works presented in the different genres of the plastic arts will be displayed.

A free choice of subjects and type of work is allowed.

The works should be original and independently executed. They can be sent either individually or collectively through the respective organizations and institutions.

Every participant may submit up to five works. The presented works will be published in a special album.

Children's festival - musical performers and composers

The Assembly programme will be a series of musical performances and compositions, which will include all works submitted.

The works should be sent in individually or collectively through the appropriate organization or institution.

The duration of concerts to be given by each country should not exceed 30 minutes, the choice of programme being free. This includes the compositions entered.

The scores of orchestra, chamber pieces and individual compositions should be made available.

An opportunity is also offered to have the best works performed by Bulgarian singers, instrumentalists or music ensembles. During the Assembly the accompaniment of Bulgarian pianists will be available.

The 30-minute programme should be submitted beforehand with the title and duration of every piece indicated.

The works submitted will be included in special publications, tape recordings and phonograph records.

Review of children's literary works

The International Assembly envisages a review of children's literary works.

Every participant may submit up to three works, regardless of their genre.

The literary works should be submitted in two copies: one in the original language and the second in one of the following languages: English, French, German, Russian or Spanish.

Both published and unpublished works can be entered for the review. The works should be sent individually or collectively through the appropriate organization or institution. The submitted works will be published in a special literary collection.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

/Original: Russian/

/8 May 1979/

I have the honour to transmit to you information on the measures for the International Year of the Child in the USSR.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this information as an official document of the General Assembly under item 26 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) O. TROYANOVSKY

Information on measures for the observance of the
International Year of the Child in the USSR

1. People in the Soviet Union view with understanding the efforts of the international community aimed at providing the necessary conditions for a normal life, full development and a happy future for children. They welcomed with great interest the United Nations decision to observe the International Year of the Child in 1979 for the purpose of drawing the attention of Governments and peoples to the situation of children. In his televised address on 1 January of this year L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, said: "Children are our future; they must continue the work of their fathers and mothers. I am sure they will make life on earth better and happier. Our duty is to see to it that the children of all nations never experience war and that they have a peaceful and joyous childhood." These words not only reflect the great concern of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government for children but also provide a guide for the International Year of the Child in the Soviet Union.

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2. Children in our country benefit from the concern of the entire people. Maternal and child welfare, an integral part of the Soviet way of life, is an established social norm of developed socialism. It is legally confirmed in the Constitution of the USSR and is guaranteed by a well-developed system of material, social and cultural benefits, including free medical care and universal free education at the primary, secondary, higher and professional and technical levels, by social insurance and by a material and technical base with specialists staffing a broad network of non-academic institutions. Today more than 45 million children are studying in schools, and more than 13 million children are being educated in pre-school institutions. Children have access to Young Pioneer palaces and houses, centres for young technicians and naturalists, children's railways, clubs for young pilots and cosmonauts, young people's theatres, and stadiums. Books are written for children, newspapers and magazines are published, films are made and plays are staged in order to inculcate in them the noble sentiments and high moral qualities of builders of communism.

3. The decisions of the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union aimed at further raising the material and cultural level of the entire Soviet people provide a striking illustration of the consistent policy of creating the most favourable conditions for living, learning and recreation for children. In the above-mentioned address, L. I. Brezhnev stated: "We are trying to do everything to make childhood years healthy and happy. We have created and are continuing to build thousands and thousands of bright, comfortable day nurseries, kindergartens and schools. We are striving to teach children kindness and friendship, to teach them to live as good neighbours with people of every nationality and skin colour, and to respect labour and be able to work for the good of all people." The Soviet Government and local governmental bodies, with the active participation of public organizations, are implementing broad measures designed to help children develop their talents, to gain knowledge and work habits and to grow up educated, cultured and physically strong.

4. The Soviet Union shares the view that the International Year of the Child should become a year for concerted action by the broadest sections of the world community to implement the principles of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child and ensure a peaceful and happy future for all children. The question of the participation of Soviet governmental and public organizations in the International Year of the Child was given special consideration at a meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, which, supporting the United Nations decision, recommended to the standing committees of both houses of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR strengthening control over the work of the governmental administrative bodies concerned with further improving maternal and child welfare, children's health and their upbringing and education. The decision adopted also contains appropriate directives to the Presidiums of the Supreme Soviets of Union and Autonomous Republics and to the local Soviets of People's Deputies.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR has established a Commission for the Observance of the International Year of the Child in the Soviet Union under the chairmanship of N. A. Tikhonov, Candidate Member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and First Deputy

Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. The Commission consists of leaders from branch industrial ministries engaged in the manufacture of products to meet the needs of children, and also from the Ministries of Education, Health, Culture and Finance. Leaders of the State Committees on Publishing and Printing, Cinematography, Television and Radio Broadcasting, Physical Culture and Sports are also members of the Commission and the Deputy Chairmen of Soviets of People's Deputies and party, trade-union and other public organizations are represented in it. A Working Group has been established within the Commission to carry out administrative and organizational work and monitor the implementation of plans, and a Secretariat has been created to prepare questions for discussion in the Commission and maintain communication with institutions and organizations. This functional structure of the Commission makes possible the effective operation and organization of all its work.

5. The Commission for the Observance of the International Year of the Child co-ordinates all activities for the implementation of national plans for social and economic development in behalf of mothers and children. It gives special consideration to increasing the output and improving the quality of goods and products for children, to developing the network of children's pre-school institutions and schools, to improving the system of medical care for mothers and children, to constructing medical institutions for children and a material base for child and family recreation, to expanding the network of music schools and artistic education centres for children, and to improving the system of physical education for children and adolescents. The activities of the Commission will be combined with the implementation in the Soviet Union of a number of international measures for studying the results of work with children.

6. In accordance with the basic internationalist position of our party and the Soviet State and in response to numerous proposals made and wishes expressed by the members of industrial enterprises and construction projects, collective and State farms, governmental departments and offices, and military units and subunits, and also by individual citizens, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and the Central Committee of the Young Communist League took a decision that 75 per cent of the resources obtained through the All-Union Communist Subbotnik dedicated to the one hundred ninth anniversary of the birth of V. I. Lenin should be allocated to the assistance fund for the fraternal nation of Viet Nam, which had suffered greatly as a result of the barbarous aggression committed by China. The remainder of the resources from the All-Union Subbotnik of 1979 will be spent on the construction of specialized children's medical institutions - hospitals, polyclinics, sanatoria and forest schools - in the territories, regions, districts and towns of the Soviet Union. This will be a significant contribution to the further development of the system of children's medical care during the International Year of the Child.

7. At the present time, on the initiative of the Commission, numerous lectures and reports, discussions and thematic evenings, film festivals and photographic exhibitions devoted to the International Year of the Child are being held at enterprises, institutions, collective and State farms, educational establishments and research institutes. The all-Union socio-political lectures on "Socialism, happy motherhood and childhood" have begun. Matinée cycles on "October and

Children" and film festivals on "Two Worlds - Two Childhoods" have been organized at schools and technical training establishments. Regular sections on the themes "The International Year of the Child in the USSR", "Making Things Better for Children", "1979 - the International Year of the Child", "Children Are Our Future" and "Two Worlds - Two Childhoods" have been introduced in newspapers and magazines. Posters, postcards, records, envelopes and postage stamps dedicated to the International Year of the Child are being issued. Preparations for the holding of meetings dedicated to International Child Welfare Day and for the observance of children's holidays under the title "Let There Always Be Sunshine" are under way. An international children's holiday entitled, "For a Happy Childhood in a Peaceful World" will be celebrated at the "Artek" Young Pioneer camp in the Crimea, with the participation of young guests from many countries of the world.

Conferences, seminars and meetings of writers, composers, actors, artists and scientists for discussion of current questions concerning the organization of children's art education and the scientific and technical work of children are being held within the framework of the International Year of the Child. All-Union weeks of children's and young people's books under the motto "Writers for Children" and of music for children and young people under the motto "Composers and Musicians for Children" are being held at schools, technical training establishments and cultural institutes. In many towns and regions of the country, branches of the Union of Artists and the Union of Journalists are organizing exhibits of children's drawings. Experts in art photography are preparing an exhibition entitled "Children of the Soviet Land", and artists are preparing an exhibition entitled "Artists for Children". An all-Union review of the work of dramatic and musical theatres in the creation of plays for children and young people and an all-Union festival of young people's theatres and puppet theatres, dedicated to the International Year of the Child, are being held. An international competition in children's drawings entitled "I See the World" and an international conference of writers and artists engaged in the creation of works for children will be held in the Soviet Union.

8. The appeal of the General Assembly at its thirty-first session urging Governments to "expand their efforts at the national and community levels to provide lasting improvements in the well-being of their children" has evoked a widespread response in the Soviet Union.

While showing constant attention and concern for its own mothers and children, Soviet society also espouses the principles of international solidarity and deep involvement in the fate of the more than 1.5 billion children in the world. As a part of its extensive economic and cultural co-operation with developing countries, the Soviet Union assists them in preparing qualified personnel for national systems of children's education and public health services. Considerable assistance is rendered in the development of programmes for pre-school education, instruction and medical care for children. The Soviet Government actively participates in programmes of the United Nations, UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and other international organizations.

9. This type of international action is all the more significant in view of the fact that in many countries millions of young citizens are still suffering from hunger, poverty and disease, that growing unemployment is seriously affecting the

interests of children, and that the exploitation of child labour is continuing and even increasing. As a result of long years of colonial and continuing neo-colonial exploitation, in most States of Asia, Africa and Latin America the child mortality rate is high, elementary conditions for the education and development of children are lacking, and in various parts of the world there is shooting and bloodshed, and not only adults but children too perish. Thus, the most important human right - the right to live in peace - is being violated and brutally flouted. Children are especially in need of peace - violence, racism, militarism and the arms race cripple children physically, intellectually and morally. The struggle for children's happiness is an integral part of the struggle of peoples for national independence, peace and social progress. The International Year of the Child must stir the will of peoples to strengthen peace and international security, halt the arms race, and create the conditions for strengthening détente and peaceful development in order to ensure the well-being and happiness of people.

10. These vitally important questions will be discussed at the world conference entitled "For a Peaceful and Happy Future for All Children", to be held at Moscow in September of this year on the initiative of a great many international, regional and national organizations. It will discuss various aspects of children's upbringing, society's responsibility to the rising generation, questions concerning education, artistic and physical development, health care and other problems related to child welfare and to the achievement of peace and disarmament. Within the framework of the conference two international meetings will be held - a meeting of young people and a meeting of children's writers. The conference will conclude with the adoption of appropriate decisions on the questions discussed.
