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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

GUIDELINES FOR INTERNATIONAL DECADES

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General submits herewith the text of the Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/63 of 27 July 1988 entitled "Guidelines for international decades", which was recommended for adoption by the General Assembly in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 42/171 of 11 December 1987.

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980, in which it adopted guidelines for international years and anniversaries,

Noting General Assembly resolution 42/171 of 11 December 1987, in which the Assembly requested the Council to submit recommendations on guidelines for the designation of future international decades,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on guidelines for international decades, 1/

Recommends that the General Assembly adopt the guidelines for international decades contained in the annex to the present resolution on the understanding that these guidelines are not intended to apply to United Nations development decades.

39th plenary meeting
27 July 1988

1/ E/1988/58 and Corr.1.

ANNEX

Guidelines for international decades

A. Selection of subjects for and timing of international decades

1. The subject proposed for a decade should be consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as stated in the Charter. It should be of priority concern in the political, economic, social, cultural, humanitarian or human rights field, and should require long-term action at the international or regional level and at the national level. Action on the subject should contribute to the development of international co-operation or the strengthening of universal peace.
2. In areas where effective programmes already exist, international decades should be proclaimed only if they can be expected to produce results that would not otherwise be achieved.
3. As a rule, overlapping of decades should be avoided. A new international decade should be initiated only if it is clear that the United Nations system has the substantive, administrative and financial capacity to play an effective role in the implementation of a programme for the decade.
4. Before a new decade is proposed, consideration should be given to the possibility of an observance for a shorter period of time.

B. Requirements for the proclamation of international decades

5. Proposals for international decades should include a draft programme of action with well-defined objectives and activities to be carried out at the international, regional and national levels. The activities should be designed to lead to clearly identifiable results. The draft programme of action should indicate the proposed organizational arrangements and modalities for financing, from both budgetary and extrabudgetary sources, as well as procedures for monitoring implementation. Provision should also be made for public information activities.
6. The draft programme of action should indicate a lead agency or agencies for the decade and the mechanisms to be used for co-ordinating the activities of the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as those of the other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned.
7. At the national level, the programme of action should provide for the establishment of national committees or other mechanisms to mobilize public support and carry out activities connected with the decade.

C. Procedures for the proclamation of international decades

8. Proposals for international decades should be submitted to the Economic and Social Council so that it may review the purpose and timing, drawing on the views of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and other intergovernmental bodies concerned.

9. The General Assembly should proclaim an international decade after the proposal has been thoroughly reviewed by the intergovernmental bodies concerned and the views of all Member States and of the non-governmental organizations concerned have been taken into account. For this purpose there should be an interval of two years between the introduction of the proposal in the Economic and Social Council and the proclamation of the decade by the General Assembly.

10. There should be sufficient time between the proclamation of the decade by the General Assembly and the start of the decade to allow for preparatory work at the international, regional and national levels.

11. When a second decade on a particular subject is proposed, the following should be taken into consideration:

(a) There should be a two-year preparatory period between the end of the first decade and the start of the second for drafting the programme of action for the second decade;

(b) Steps should be taken to ensure that the expertise and experience acquired during the first decade are retained, in order to ensure the prompt implementation of activities once a second decade is launched;

(c) The mid-term and end-term reviews of the first decade should be used as a baseline for the programme of action for the second decade;

(d) A second decade should be proclaimed only if the objectives of the first decade have not been fully attained and if there are good prospects for attaining them, particularly in cases where projects or programmes of the first decade have reached an advanced stage of implementation.

D. Review and appraisal of the implementation
of the programme of action of the decade

12. The implementation of the programme of action of the decade should normally be reviewed by an appropriate intergovernmental body at the mid-point and end of the decade. When a world conference on the subject of an international decade is convened within the period of the decade, such a conference should serve, *inter alia*, as an instrument for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the programme of action of the decade.