

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
5 January 2004

Original: English

Commission on Population and Development**Thirty-seventh session**

22-26 March 2004

Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters**Report of the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development on its intersessional meeting, held in Vilnius, on 13 and 14 November 2003****I. Background**

1. At its thirtieth session, the Commission on Population and Development had authorized the Bureau, in preparation for its sessions, to hold intersessional meetings on a yearly basis. In follow-up to that decision, an intersessional meeting of the Bureau was convened in Vilnius, on 13 and 14 November 2003 at the invitation of the Government of Lithuania and was hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. Previous Bureau meetings had been held in 1996 (Brussels), 1997 (Mexico City), 1998 (Kuala Lumpur), 1999 (New York), 2000 (Nairobi), 2001 (New York) and 2002 (Rome).

2. The intersessional meeting was held at the Hotel Ratonda of Vilnius. Four of the five members of the Bureau participated in the meeting; Mr. Iftekhhar Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, was unable to attend. A complete list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report. In addition to the members of the Bureau, an observer from the United Nations Population Fund attended the full meeting and two observers, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania and from the Institute for Social Research of Lithuania, respectively, were present during part of the meeting.

3. The Bureau reiterated the importance of the intersessional meetings for planning the future sessions of the Commission and for stimulating interest in and awareness of population and development issues. The intersessional meetings also provided an opportunity to organize briefings for government officials, scholars and the media in the host country. In Vilnius, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, in collaboration with the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Social Research and the Department of Statistics of Lithuania, organized a

* E/CN.9/2004/1.

seminar entitled "Population Issues: Global and National Perspectives", held at the auditorium of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences on Friday, 14 November, from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. All Bureau members participating in the intersessional meeting made presentations at the seminar, which was opened by Gediminas Šerkšnys, Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations and Chairman of the Commission on Population and Development.

II. Opening

4. The meeting was opened by Šarūnas Adomavičius, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, who noted the great interest that Lithuania took in the activities of the United Nations and particularly in those of the Economic and Social Council. Mr. Adomavičius underscored the importance of demographic trends and their impact on all aspects of socio-economic development. He welcomed the members of the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development and wished them success in their deliberations.

5. Joseph Chamie, Director of the Population Division in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, also welcomed the members of the Bureau to the meeting and thanked Mr. Šerkšnys and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the preparations made in support of the intersessional meeting. Mr. Chamie stressed the importance of the intersessional meetings for the smooth working of the Commission. He then summarized the issues that needed to be discussed by the Bureau and reviewed the background material that had been made available.

III. Deliberations and recommendations

6. Mr. Šerkšnys chaired the deliberations of the Bureau. The provisional agenda was discussed at the start of the meeting and the agenda, as adopted, is presented in annex II to the present report.

7. Among the items discussed at the meeting was the provisional agenda of the Commission on Population and Development at its thirty-seventh session in 2004, including the second quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the cross-cutting themes that would guide the debate of the Commission under agenda item 3. Also discussed were the proposed themes for the thirty-ninth to forty-first sessions of the Commission, scheduled for 2006 to 2008; the modalities of work of the Commission, including the review requested by the Economic and Social Council and its implications for the future review and appraisal of the Cairo Programme of Action; other decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of July 2003 of relevance for the programme of work of the Commission; and other related matters.

8. In regard to the cross-cutting themes for the thirty-seventh session, Mr. Bichler brought to the attention of the Bureau the results of a consultation he had initiated with the major country groupings. He had received responses from the European Union, Canada and the United States of America indicating that a consolidation of the cross-cutting themes proposed by Governments earlier in 2003 would be useful in facilitating a more focused debate on the review and appraisal of the

implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action. The Bureau took into account those responses in consolidating the cross-cutting themes.

9. The Bureau took note of Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/6 of 16 July 2003, entitled “The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits”, in which the Council had referred to General Assembly resolution 57/270 B of 23 June, entitled “Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields”. In that resolution, the Assembly had requested each functional commission to examine its methods of work, on the basis of a report with recommendations to be submitted by the Secretary-General to each functional commission in 2005, in order to better pursue the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. The Bureau debated the implications of the two resolutions for the work of the Commission. It noted that discussion of the implications of resolution 57/270 B could start at the thirty-seventh session of the Commission so as to provide input for the Secretary-General’s 2005 report.

10. The Bureau was also informed about the consultations that the Economic and Social Council was planning to hold with the chairpersons of the functional commissions in early 2004 as part of the process of establishing a multi-year work programme for its coordination segment on cross-cutting thematic issues common to the international conferences and summits. The Bureau’s suggestions on themes that the Commission on Population and Development might consider in future years would be shared with the Council during those consultations.

11. The implications of resolution 57/270 B for the modality and timing of the periodic review and appraisal of the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action were discussed by the Bureau. It was noted that in paragraph 47 of resolution 57/270 B the General Assembly had underscored that “the functional commissions, when mandated, should continue to have the primary responsibility for the review and assessment of progress made in implementing United Nations conference documents”, and, in paragraph 73, the Assembly had emphasized that “the periodicity and format of the review of the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits should be decided on a case-by-case basis by the General Assembly”. The view of the Bureau was that, given that the Commission on Population and Development had primary responsibility for the review and assessment of the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action, as long as such a review and assessment was carried out during the regular sessions of the Commission, the General Assembly would have no objection to it. Approval from the General Assembly would be less certain if it were suggested that the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action should take place in conjunction with an intergovernmental conference or summit. The Bureau concurred that such issues needed to be debated by the Commission on Population and Development.

12. As a result of its discussions, the Bureau made a number of recommendations, which are presented in annex III to the present report. The Bureau reaffirmed the importance of its intersessional meetings in facilitating the work of the Commission.

Annex I

List of participants

Members of the Bureau

Marc Bichler
Counsellor
Deputy Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of Luxembourg to the United Nations
17 Beekman Place
New York, NY 10022

Alfredo Chuquihara
Minister Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations
820 Second Avenue, 16th floor
New York, NY 10017

Ambassador Crispin Grey-Johnson
Permanent Representative of the Gambia to the United Nations
800 Second Avenue, Suite 400F
New York, NY 10017

Ambassador Gediminas Šerkšnys
Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations
420 Fifth Avenue, 3rd floor
New York, NY 10018

United Nations Secretariat

Joseph Chamie
Director
Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Secretariat
Two United Nations Plaza
Room DC2-1950
New York, NY 10017

Hania Zlotnik
Assistant Director
Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Secretariat
Two United Nations Plaza
Room DC2-1956
New York, NY 10017

Observers

Kwabena Osei-Danquah
Senior External Relations Adviser
United Nations Population Fund
220 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

Vlada Stankuniene
Deputy Director
Institute for Social Research
Saltoniskitj 58
LT-2004 Vilnius
Lithuania

Rokas Bernotas
Director
Department of Multilateral Relations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
J. Tumo — Vaizganto str. 2
LT-2600 Vilnius
Lithuania

Šarūnas Adomavičius
Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
J. Tumo — Vaizganto str. 2
LT-2600 Vilnius
Lithuania

Annex II

Agenda of the intersessional meeting of the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Commission on Population and Development:
 - (a) Agenda, organization of work, documentation and other matters relating to the thirty-seventh session of the Commission in 2004;
 - (b) Modalities of work and programme of work of the Commission in 2005-2009;
 - (c) Relevant recently adopted resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, including the joint meeting of the bureaux of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions.
4. Related matters.
5. Conclusions.
6. Closing of the meeting.

Annex III

Conclusions and recommendations of the Bureau

I. Provisional agenda, organization of work and working methods for the thirty-seventh session of the Commission

1. The Bureau recommended adoption of the draft organization of work of the Commission at its thirty-seventh session, as shown in appendix I to the present annex. The organization of work reflected one amendment suggested for the agenda of the thirty-seventh session, the addition of item 4bis on the review of the methods of work of the Commission, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/270 B.

2. The Bureau suggested that the cross-cutting themes for discussion of agenda item 3, entitled "Follow-up actions to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development", should be the following: (a) population imperatives for sustainable development, and (b) building partnerships and capacity, and mobilizing human and financial resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. It was agreed that the Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Šerkšnys, would communicate that suggestion to all current and future members of the Commission by letter as soon as possible so as to foster a focused and well-prepared debate at the thirty-seventh session of the Commission.

3. The Bureau recommended that, as at the thirty-sixth session, one or two distinguished guest speakers should be invited to address the Commission at the thirty-seventh session, focusing their statements on the lessons learned and the challenges still facing the international community in implementing the Cairo Programme of Action. As at other sessions of the Commission, the Working Group would adjourn during the presentation by the guest speakers.

4. The Bureau recommended that interventions by delegations during the debate on national experiences should address the review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Cairo Programme of Action at the national level, taking into account the cross-cutting themes identified by the Bureau (see para. 2 above). Oral presentations should be about five minutes in length. Delegations wishing to prepare lengthier statements could make them available in writing.

5. As for previous sessions, the Bureau recommended that a working group be established at the thirty-seventh session of the Commission to discuss issues that might result in resolutions or decisions. The working group should begin its work on the afternoon of the first day of the session. The Bureau also recommended that the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat should prepare initial drafts of resolutions and decisions that might facilitate the deliberations of the working group. The Bureau encouraged the Population Division to conduct consultations with interested Member States in developing the draft proposals. The Bureau thought that the Commission might wish to consider resolutions concerning, among other issues, (a) the second quinquennial review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of the

International Conference on Population and Development; and (b) the special themes for the years 2006-2008.

6. The Bureau recommended that the Director of the Population Division organize a briefing for delegations before the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the status of documents, the organization of work, and resolutions and decisions that are likely to be considered by the Commission.

7. The Bureau stressed the importance of the timely availability of documents for the thirty-seventh session of the Commission in order to facilitate preparations of statements by delegations. The Bureau endorsed the posting of advanced unedited versions of the documents on the Internet.

II. Programme of work for future sessions of the Commission

8. The Bureau took note of Commission decision 2003/1, in which the Commission decided that "Population, development and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty" should be the special theme for the Commission at its thirty-eighth session in 2005. The Bureau suggested that other themes that the Commission might consider for its sessions in the years 2006 to 2008 were: (a) internal migration and urbanization; (b) international migration; and (c) changing age structure and population ageing.

9. In addition to the second quinquennial review and appraisal in 2004, the Bureau was informed of other activities and proposals to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. These included a special commemoration day, possibly in October 2004, as part of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly; technical meetings organized by the regional commissions; and a special event planned for June 2004 in conjunction with the meeting of the Executive Board of the United Nations Population Fund. The Bureau requested a calendar showing the timing and venue of those activities and events.

III. Programme of work of the Bureau

10. The Bureau recommended that it should meet prior to the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development to review and discuss preparations for the session.

11. The Bureau took note of the draft summary report of its joint meeting with the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council (see appendix II) on 4 April 2003, emphasized the usefulness and the importance of such annual meetings to enhance coordination and information-sharing, and recommended that such meetings should continue to be held at the time of the annual sessions of the Commission.

12. The Bureau took note of the meeting of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council and the chairpersons of the functional commissions of the Council held at Geneva on 17 July 2003 during the substantive session of the Council. Mr. Šerkšņys represented the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development at the meeting.

13. Taking note of the consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council in 2003 (E/2003/90 and Add.1), the Bureau recommended that the Commission on Population and Development take the lead in highlighting the importance of population issues for the work of other functional commissions and in contributing to the setting of priorities in the social and economic fields. In that regard, the Bureau acknowledged the importance of joint meetings with the bureaux of other functional commissions to foster the exchange of views.

14. The Bureau requested the Director of the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat to conduct informal consultations with Member States regarding the composition of the Bureau for the thirty-seventh session of the Commission and to continue the practice of rotating the chairmanship of the Bureau among regional groups.

IV. Programme of work of the Secretariat in the field of population

15. The Bureau took note of the programme of work of the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat and stressed the importance of the Population Division in continuing to maintain a comprehensive approach to population and development issues. In particular, the Bureau recommended that the Division continue to investigate new and emerging issues in the field of population and development.

16. The Bureau also recommended that the Population Division continue to convene technical meetings to shed light on key population concerns of the international community, including those related to the special themes discussed annually by the Commission.

17. The Bureau took note of the report that the Population Division would prepare for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on Population and Development regarding the methods of work of the Commission, including specific recommendations on the issue. The Bureau recommended that a process of consultation with Member States should be followed in preparing the report.

18. The Bureau took note of the consultations that the Economic and Social Council would conduct before adopting a multi-year plan for its coordination segment. The Bureau decided to share with the Council the themes it proposed for the consideration of the Commission at its thirty-seventh session, namely: (a) internal migration and urbanization; (b) international migration; and (c) changing age structure and population ageing.

19. The Bureau took note of a draft resolution before the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session calling for a 2005 Summit on Development. The Bureau suggested that, if the resolution was adopted, the Commission should take steps to contribute to the Summit.

20. The Bureau was informed of the initiative by Member States to set up an independent global commission on international migration and development whose mandate would run from January 2004 to June 2005. The Bureau also took note of a draft resolution on international migration and development requesting a high-level dialogue on international migration that would take place in 2004. The Bureau recognized that work on international migration was increasing and supported the

allocation of increased human resources to this activity, including the creation of a section devoted exclusively to migration. The Bureau noted with satisfaction that a Second Coordination Meeting on International Migration had been held in conjunction with the debate on international migration and development in the Second Committee of the General Assembly.

Appendix I

Draft organization of work of the Commission on Population and Development at its thirty-seventh session

Date/time

Agenda Item

Week of 22-26 March 2004

Monday, 22 March

Morning

Item 1. Election of officers

Item 2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

(a) Report of the Bureau of the Commission on its intersessional meeting (E/CN.9/2004/2)

(b) Agenda and organization of work (E/CN.9/2004/1; E/CN.9/2004/L.1)

Item 3. Follow-up actions to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development

Report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (E/CN.9/2004/3)

Report of the Secretary-General on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (E/CN.9/2004/4)

Afternoon

Item 3. Follow-up actions to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development (continued)

Simultaneous with plenary: informal consultations to discuss draft resolutions

Tuesday, 23 March

Morning

Item 3. Follow-up actions to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development (continued)

Item 4. General debate on national experience in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

Simultaneous with plenary: informal consultations to discuss draft resolutions

Date/time

Agenda Item

Afternoon

Item 4. General debate on national experience in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (continued)

Keynote speakers on the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

Wednesday, 24 March

Morning

Item 4. General debate on national experience in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (continued)

Item 4bis. Review of the methods of work of the Commission on Population and Development

Simultaneous with plenary informal consultations to discuss draft resolutions

Afternoon

Item 5. Programme implementation and future programme of work of the Secretariat in the field of population

Report of the Secretary-General on programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2003 (E/CN.9/2004/5)

Simultaneous with plenary: informal consultations to discuss draft resolutions

Deadline for submission of draft proposals under items 3, 4 and 5

Thursday, 25 March

Morning

Item 6. Provisional agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission

Draft provisional agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission (E/CN.9/2004/L.2)

Simultaneous with plenary: informal consultations to discuss draft resolutions

Afternoon

Informal consultations

Friday, 26 March

Morning and afternoon

Item 7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its thirty-seventh session

Appendix II

Draft summary report of the joint meeting of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council and the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development, 4 April 2003

1. The joint meeting of the bureaux of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Population and Development was chaired by the President of the Economic and Social Council (Guatemala). Also in attendance were the representatives of Ethiopia, Finland, Nepal and Ukraine, representing the Bureau of the Council. The Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development was represented by the Chairman (Lithuania) and the representatives from the Gambia, Luxembourg and Peru. The representatives of the Secretariat also took part in the discussion.
2. The President of the Economic and Social Council, after opening the meeting, introduced the members of the Bureau of the Council and noted that the meeting was part of a series of meetings between the Bureau of the Council and the bureaux of the functional commissions. He noted that those meetings provided an opportunity to exchange views and to help the Council provide guidance to its subsidiary bodies. He then asked the Chairman of the Commission on Population and Development to brief the meeting on the work undertaken during the thirty-sixth session of the Commission and to discuss other agenda items.
3. The Chairman of the Commission expressed appreciation for the opportunity to exchange views with the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council, introduced members of the Bureau of the Commission and then proceeded to describe briefly the highlights of the deliberations of the Commission. He said that a large number of delegations, including 33 observers, had participated in the Commission. Such a large participation in the thirty-sixth session was attributable to the widespread interest in the theme "Population, education and development" as well as interest in what the Commission might decide regarding the second quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action at the thirty-seventh session in the context of the ongoing work of the General Assembly Working Group on United Nations Conference follow-up. The documentation for the Commission's deliberations included the *World Population Monitoring* report on the special theme of population, education and development, as well as documents on world demographic trends, population programmes, flow of financial resources and the programme of work of the United Nations Population Division.
4. The Chairman of the Commission informed the meeting that the 2003 session of the Commission had seen the very successful innovation of having two eminent keynote speakers address the Commission instead of having the usual panel discussion. The stimulating speeches had enlivened the debate on the special theme and had been very well received by the delegates.
5. The Commission had formed a Working Group to hold informal consultations on possible resolutions and decisions. Resolutions/decisions had been adopted by the Commission on the subjects of: (a) the special theme of population, education and development; (b) the provisional agenda for the session of the Commission in 2004; and (c) establishing the special theme for the year 2005 as "Population, development and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty".

6. Welcoming the first meeting of the chairpersons of the functional commissions in New York in 2002, the Chairman of the Commission said that the meeting had been very useful for achieving greater coordination among the commissions. Furthermore, the close cooperation among the secretariats of the functional commissions in areas of common interest had given consistency and coherence to the work of the functional commissions. In that connection, the Chairman mentioned the issues of ageing and HIV/AIDS as examples where the functional commissions and their secretariats were able to coordinate their work.

7. The Chairman of the Commission said that at each of the intersessional meetings the bureaux of the commissions had taken a close look at the relevant conclusions, resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during the previous year. He indicated that it would be useful, when considering the themes for future sessions of the Commission, to know, if possible, the theme for the high-level and coordination segments of the Council. Noting the theme of the Council's coordination segment for 2003, "The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits", he said that the result of the Council's deliberations in that area would be very important to the work of the Commission in 2004 on the quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action.

8. The Vice-Chairman of the Commission who chaired the Working Group established by the Commission to consider possible resolutions and decisions further informed the meeting about the deliberations in the Commission and noted specifically the intensive debate that took place regarding the 10-year review and appraisal of the Cairo Programme of Action. The Vice-Chairman stressed the importance of the expected recommendations of the General Assembly Working Group for the future work of the Commission.

9. A representative of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which acts as the secretariat of the Commission, noted the Bureau's efforts in the successful conclusion of the current session and mentioned the scheduled General Assembly debate on international migration and development, for which the Division would prepare the report of the Secretary-General. The report would discuss the political implications for countries on both sides of the issues of migration. The other important issues for the Division, which were also included in the Secretary-General's proposals for strengthening the United Nations, would be HIV/AIDS and ageing of the population.

10. Thanking the Chairman of the Commission for his detailed briefing, the President of the Economic and Social Council then reviewed the themes for each of the four segments of the substantive session of the Council and expressed the hope that the Council would be able to select the themes earlier than in previous years to give sufficient time to its subsidiary bodies for appropriate consideration of the issues in order to make a substantive contribution to the work of the Council. Highlighting the upcoming important events, he mentioned the meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization in the context of the Monterrey Consensus, the meeting with the chairs of the functional commissions to be held in June/July 2003 and two planned informal consultations to review the reports of the functional commissions.

11. The President pointed to the multidimensional nature of the population issue, which, one way or the other, affected the whole spectrum of issues discussed in the Economic and Social Council. Referring to the progress made in the Working Group on Conference follow-up, he saw no overriding need for the same follow-up arrangements for all conferences. How to coordinate under the Council different issues and actors was a conceptual problem, but in his opinion, there was no need to force equality on technical bodies other than to coordinate their work through respective secretariats.

12. A member of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of developing a mechanism for the functional commissions, either through the meeting of the chairpersons or through closer cooperation among the commission secretariats, to make a substantive contribution to the work of the Council. She also agreed that the commissions should be given enough lead time for their outcome to feed into the work of the Council. A member of the Bureau of the Commission welcomed the meeting of chairpersons as a means for closer cooperation among the functional commissions and proposed that consultations be held among the commissions on the preparation of their reports.

13. A member of the secretariat of the Economic and Social Council briefed the meeting on the discussion in the General Assembly Working Group on Conference follow-up regarding the review of individual conferences. He indicated that a consensus was developing in favour of a flexible review mechanism to be decided by each individual commission based on its own particular circumstances instead of an automatic five- and ten-year review of each conference. Regarding the functional commissions' contribution to the work of the Council, he said that all commissions should take into consideration Council themes and the agreed conclusions and resolutions adopted by the Council. In the light of the experience in 2002, he remarked that the secretariat would be in a better position to prepare the meeting of the chairpersons of the functional commissions in 2003.
