



**General Assembly  
Economic and Social Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/44/116-E/1989/15 + Corr. 1 + Add. 1  
24 February 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Forty-fourth session  
Item 12 of the preliminary list\*  
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
First regular session of 1989  
Item 9 of the provisional  
agenda\*\*  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress  
and Development

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1 - 16	3
II. ESTABLISHMENT OF FAVOURABLE INTERNATIONAL CONDITIONS FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT: DISARMAMENT AND PEACE ...	17 - 25	5
III. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT .....	26 - 91	7
A. Trade .....	28 - 31	8
B. Finance .....	33 - 38	9
C. Environment .....	39 - 46	10
D. Contributions of the United Nations system to national efforts to enhance social progress and development ....	47 - 91	11

\* A/44/50.

\*\* E/1989/1.

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
IV. UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS .....	92 - 106	20
V. CONCLUDING REMARKS .....	107 - 116	23
<u>Annex.</u> Summary of the responses of States Members of the United Nations to the note verbale of the Secretary-General .....		27

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 41/142 of 4 December 1986 on the implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General "to prepare a substantive report on possible ways and means of increasing the contribution of the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, as far as they are concerned, to achieving the full realization of the principles and objectives contained in the Declaration and to submit it, through the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session".
2. On 30 November 1987, the General Assembly adopted resolution 42/48 on the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, in which all Member States were invited to communicate to the Secretary-General their views and comments on the issue under consideration, as well as on the impact of the Declaration on the formulation and implementation of the national policies and measures of their Governments. The Assembly requested that the information provided by the Member States be included in the present report.
3. The report has been prepared to meet the requests contained in both resolutions and is based mainly on the information supplied by eight Member States, namely, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chile, China, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Tunisia, and on reports published by organizations of the United Nations system. The responses provided by the Member States are summarized in the annex. Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Norway, Oman and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics responded after the preparation of the report. Responses were sought and received from the following specialized agencies: the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). In addition, responses were received from 10 organs of the United Nations system, namely, the United Nations Office at Vienna, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations University, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Council (WFC), the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute and the World Food Programme (WFP). Since this is the first report of its kind, it summarizes the findings from an historical perspective and highlights the present situation in the field of social progress and development.
4. From its inception and according to the Charter, the United Nations has served as an international machinery for promotion of the economic and social advancement of all people. While all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system serve this broad objective, some were established to deal with specific social and economic problems.

5. By the mid-1960s, the focus of the activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in the social and economic fields had shifted from the countries devastated by the Second World War to developing countries. This process was accompanied by an expansion of the United Nations system. A number of new organs, organizations and bodies (e.g., UNCTAD, UNIDO, IFAD, WFP, UNDP, and several others) were set up in response to the needs of developing countries.

6. In the 1960s, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council emphasized increasingly the need for a unified approach to economic and social planning to promote balanced and sound development. This idea was embodied in the provisions of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, adopted by the General Assembly in 1969 in its resolution 2542 (XXIV).

7. The Declaration states that social progress and development should aim at raising the standards of living of all members of society through the attainment of a series of main goals, among them full employment; equitable and favourable conditions of work, including the improvement of health and safety conditions; just remuneration for labour without any discrimination; and the assurance at all levels of the right to work, to form trade unions and workers' associations and to bargain collectively.

8. Other main goals contained in the Declaration include the elimination of poverty, hunger and malnutrition; a just and equitable distribution of income; eradication of illiteracy and free compulsory education at the elementary level; highest standards of health; the provision for all of adequate housing and community services; and the establishment of comprehensive social security schemes and welfare services. The promotion of fundamental rights and freedoms and the achievement of social justice is also proclaimed by the Declaration as one of the main objectives of the international community.

9. The Declaration considers favourable international conditions both a goal and a prerequisite for rapid and sustained social and economic development. This implies the elimination of all forms of discrimination and exploitation and all practices and ideologies contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and the establishment of new forms of international relations, in which each nation will enjoy equal opportunities and access to scientific and technological advancements of humanity. The Declaration was also one of the first United Nations documents in which the need for collective international measures to protect and improve the human environment was incorporated as an objective of the international community in promoting social progress and development.

10. Reaffirming the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and other documents adopted by the General Assembly, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development states that each Government has primary responsibility for ensuring the social progress and well-being of its people. However, it also states that social progress and development are common concerns of the international community and should be supported by international actions.

11. The Declaration suggests a number of ways and means by which the United Nations system should contribute to social progress and development, including measures to provide material support to developing countries, efforts to improve their social and economic conditions, and technical, financial and material assistance, both bilateral and multilateral. It emphasizes the importance of favourable conditions of lending to developing countries, as well as the implementation of a minimum aid volume target of 1 per cent of the gross domestic product at market prices of economically advanced countries.
12. International co-operation to ensure a broad international exchange of information, knowledge and experience concerning social progress and development, and trade relations on a non-discriminatory basis, including the transfer of technology, including know-how and patents, are also mentioned in the Declaration.
13. The Declaration asks for a reorientation of government spending from military aims to the purposes of social progress and economic development. It suggests the adoption of measures to achieve disarmament, and to aim at the complete prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.
14. The Declaration is thus very wide-ranging, covering almost every aspect of social development as well as a number of economic and political issues. The past two decades have seen many changes in the approaches to social development. New issues have emerged and new ways have been developed to address them.
15. These changes have occurred at the local, national, regional and global levels and the international institutions of the United Nations system have played a supportive, sometimes catalytic, role in the process. In some instances, international institutions have prompted a rethinking of social development priorities; in other cases, they have responded to the initiatives of Governments. In both cases, international organizations have been required to reorder their priorities, which has frequently involved structural and procedural adjustments within those organizations. Equally important is the fact that increasing recognition of the interrelationships between all aspects of social development and other dimensions of the development process has resulted in greater interaction between the programmes and activities of international organizations.
16. The present report recapitulates the contribution of the United Nations system in implementing the objectives embodied in the Declaration. Owing to the comprehensive nature of the Declaration and the wide-ranging scope of the relevant activities of the United Nations system, the report is limited to selected areas of activity that are central to social progress and development.

## II. Establishment of favourable international conditions for social progress and development: disarmament and peace

17. The maintenance of peace and security has been the main purpose of the United Nations system since its foundation and that purpose is reaffirmed in the Declaration on Social Progress and Development. The principal organs responsible for ensuring international peace and security are the Security Council and the General Assembly.

18. The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the methods of peaceful settlement include negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, and other mutually acceptable peaceful means, such as the use of United Nations missions of "good offices".

19. Since its inception, the United Nations has been steadily developing its capacity as a global peace-keeping and peace-making organization. To this end, it is also developing an "early-warning" capacity in order to avert conflicts. One of the most striking innovations in the methods of peaceful settlement is the emplacement known as the "United Nations presence". This entails the deployment, for varying periods of time, under the auspices of the United Nations, of one or more persons, observers or troops, who symbolize the interests and vigilance of the international community in the areas of conflict. Recent examples of the United Nations presence are the utilization of military observer groups in Iran and Iraq; the presence of the United Nations Technical Assistance Group in Namibia in 1988; the use of a United Nations mission of good offices in Afghanistan and Pakistan; and a United Nations verification mission in Angola.

20. The peace-keeping activities of the United Nations have always been given the highest priority by the Organization and, indeed, the peace-keeping forces were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988 in recognition of their importance. The modalities of peace-keeping operations have been refined over time and, as illustrated by the Iran-Iraq operation, the speedy assembly of units from armies of various contributing countries and their rapid deployment can assist in providing an assurance to the principal countries involved that the purposes for which such units are deployed - such as the supervision of a truce, or the physical separation of two opposing military forces - will be strictly observed.

21. The Iran-Iraq conflict came to an end when both countries complied with Security Council resolution 598 (1987), which was supported by all the permanent members of the Security Council. As repeatedly stressed by successive Secretaries-General, the United Nations machinery for the resolution of conflicts exists for the benefit of all countries but the potential contribution of the United Nations to world peace cannot be fully realized in the absence of the political will to use that machinery. At the present time, this political will has been enhanced by the desire of the major Powers to make fuller use of the United Nations. Moreover, in pursuance of recently elaborated peace plans for settlements in Kampuchea and Western Sahara, the deployment of United Nations peace-keepers by the Security Council is also envisioned.

22. In matters of disarmament, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has primary responsibility. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research at Geneva undertakes independent research on disarmament and related security issues, working closely with the Department for Disarmament Affairs. However, many other bodies of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations University and the International Labour Office, have produced studies relating to peace and disarmament or, at the request of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, have contributed to the Department's work.

Such co-operation among the bodies of the United Nations system and increased attention and sensitivity to aspects of peace and disarmament in the regular work of all branches of the United Nations furthers the objectives of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development.

23. Such co-operation is also likely to become more important as the debate on the relationship between disarmament and development progresses. In the International Conference on that subject held in New York in 1987, delegates stressed the relationship between disarmament, development and security, and urged that more attention be paid to examining non-military threats to security. Gross and systematic violations of human rights, disease, environmental degradation, mass poverty, illiteracy and unemployment were some of the non-military threats to security listed in the Final Document of the Conference. 1/ These different threats are the subject matter of the work of many different bodies of the United Nations system; their experience and expertise will be important as the international community's understanding of this complex issue evolves.

24. Three special sessions devoted to disarmament have been held by the General Assembly. The first was its tenth special session, held in 1978, and, in 1979, in order to promote the attainment of the objectives set out in the Final Document of that session, 2/ the General Assembly, by its resolution 34/75 of 11 December, declared the 1980s the Second Disarmament Decade. The twelfth special session of the General Assembly, its second devoted to disarmament was held in 1982 and was marked by concern that the Programme of Action of the 1978 special session remained largely unimplemented. Its Concluding Document 3/ reaffirmed the validity of the 1978 Final Document. Consensus was not reached at the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly, the third special session devoted to disarmament, held in 1988, but the deliberations were marked by an increased sense of realism and a recognition that international efforts to achieve practical measures of disarmament must continue. Most recently, special attention has been paid to the question of banning chemical weapons.

25. The work of the United Nations in the field of peace and disarmament is one in which results are not easily measured. One year can produce dramatic results after decades of what has appeared to be a failure to make any progress. However, by maintaining the existing machinery for disarmament negotiations and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and by upholding a reputation of absolute impartiality and trustworthiness, the United Nations system makes a contribution to these vital issues. The prevailing philosophy has never implied institutional rigidity or an unwillingness to enter what could be controversial fields, and the recourse by many different parties to the United Nations peace-keeping machinery and the good offices of the Secretary-General are testimony to the vital importance of the role of the Organization.

### III. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT

26. According to Article 1, paragraph 3, of its Charter, one of the purposes of the United Nations is "to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian

character". The Charter states that the United Nations should promote higher standards of living, full employment, solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems, international cultural and educational co-operation, and universal respect for human rights.

27. In order to attain these objectives, a number of institutions were established, of which the Economic and Social Council was the first. United Nations institutions in the economic and social fields have diversified and expanded significantly in the post-war period, mainly in response to the needs of developing countries.

#### A. Trade

28. The Declaration on Social Progress and Development, reaffirming the importance of further intensification of multilateral economic co-operation, recommends concrete actions to establish a more equitable international exchange of goods and services between countries.

29. These recommendations include (a) the establishment of an international trade régime based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination; (b) the amelioration of the position of developing countries by establishing equitable terms of trade, a general non-reciprocal and non-discriminatory system of preferences for the exports of developing countries to the developed countries; and (c) the establishment and implementation of general and comprehensive commodity agreements, and the financing of reasonable buffer stocks by international institutions.

30. The most active international organizations in the field of international trade have been the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and UNCTAD. Although not strictly part of the United Nations system, GATT co-operates closely with United Nations bodies (notably the Economic and Social Council and UNCTAD) and specialized agencies (in particular the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank). GATT is concerned with trade tariff negotiations and the establishment of principles governing trade relations between member countries. UNCTAD has dealt with a wide range of subjects of particular interest to developing countries in addition to trade issues. The negotiating machinery of UNCTAD works mainly on the basis of country groupings, while the starting point for negotiations within GATT has been, in essence, bilateral.

31. The main distinction between the two institutions is their legal status. Countries that have signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade are legally bound. On the other hand, the functions of UNCTAD are to facilitate trade relations between groups of countries through identifying and negotiating the problems impeding international trade and development and suggesting common actions in order to minimize the negative effect of external economic shocks on socio-economic trends in developing countries.

32. Through the UNCTAD negotiating machinery important multilateral agreements have been reached on restrictive business practices and shipping. International commodity policy and commodity agreements have been promoted and the Common Fund



for Commodities came into force in 1987. At the second session of UNCTAD, held in 1968, agreement was reached on a generalized system of preferences, which was incorporated into GATT two years later. UNCTAD has also brought into focus and catalogued the proliferation of non-tariff barriers.

#### B. Finance

33. With respect to international financial co-operation, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development emphasizes the importance of the access of developing countries to international financial resources and of greater assistance on favourable terms.

34. The multilateral institutions of the United Nations system have endeavoured to meet the financial needs of developing countries. This is reflected both in the growth of the volume of multilateral aid and in the improvement of its terms, particularly towards the end of the 1970s. In the course of that decade, the network of multilateral development institutions was expanded, and new financial structures within the primary international financial and development agencies were established.

35. The most important institutions of the United Nations system engaged in mobilizing and providing financial and technical assistance are the World Bank and its affiliates (the International Development Association and the International Finance Corporation), IMF and UNDP. IFAD in particular has been noted for its innovative lending policies. However, numerous other organizations of the United Nations system also finance and/or implement programmes and projects in developing countries.

36. The years since the adoption of the Declaration have seen a very rapid increase in the volume of development finance of all kinds, followed by great turbulence. Bilateral and multilateral flows of concessional financial assistance have increased steadily and in the second half of the 1970s commercial capital flows increased even faster, leading to rapidly accumulating debts. In the 1980s, commercial flows to heavily indebted countries contracted sharply and multilateral non-concessional flows decelerated considerably, leaving official development assistance as a mainstay of the poorest countries.

37. The debt crisis of the 1980s has produced widespread agreement about the need to check the threat of rising protectionism and to reduce the instability of the international monetary and financial system. These issues are on the agenda of the international community.

38. As regards direct private investment, negotiations have been under way for some time within the United Nations system to establish codes of conduct intended to govern the relationship between Governments and transnational corporations. While the negotiations have not yet resulted in agreed texts, the process has been of value in that it has clarified the issues.

### C. Environment

39. The Declaration states that the protection and improvement of the human environment is a main goal of social progress and development. In 1968, one year before the Declaration, the General Assembly already adopted a decision that called for action at the national, regional and international levels to protect and improve the human environment. It was, however, not until 1972, when the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was held at Stockholm, that the issue of the environment became firmly embedded in the United Nations system through the creation of a number of institutional arrangements: (a) the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (to provide general policy guidance for the direction and co-ordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system); (b) the secretariat of UNEP (to serve as a focal point for environmental action within the United Nations system); (c) the Environment Fund (to provide financing for environmental programmes); and (d) the Environment Co-ordination Board (to provide for the efficient co-ordination of environmental programmes within the system; it was later merged into the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination).

40. Environment is a multidisciplinary issue and UNEP is not the sole operational, funding or executing agency for environmental protection of the United Nations system. Nevertheless, the creation of UNEP was a step towards establishing ways and means of achieving the goals of protecting and improving the human environment. UNEP has promoted public awareness through its public information efforts on global environmental problems. It has promoted wider environmental education and training and has focused attention on the international approach to a number of environmental issues, such as the destruction of the ozone layer. In addition, the Environment Fund stimulates environmental action by supporting the activities of others, both inside and outside the United Nations system.

41. An important means at the disposal of the United Nations system in the area of environmental protection and improvement is the system-wide medium-term environment programme. The programme distils the policy guidance of the UNEP Governing Council. It was prepared through an intensive process of inter-agency consultations and co-ordination and is intended to provide an overall and coherent system-wide framework. The importance attached to environmental matters by the United Nations system is shown by the fact that over 600 mandates in 27 different organs, organizations and bodies have been prescribed since the Conference on the Human Environment held in 1972.

42. Considering the plethora of mandates and activities regarding the environment in the United Nations system, co-operation and co-ordination among the various organs, organizations and bodies are crucial in establishing effective ways and means of realizing the goal of protecting and improving the human environment. For example, 13 of the 32 substantive areas identified in the system-wide medium-term environment programme show more than 45 mandates with main and secondary emphasis.

43. Notwithstanding the obstacles to effective co-operation and co-ordination, there has been steady progress. A new impetus to concerns about the environment within the United Nations system was given by the report of the World Commission on

Environment and Development 4/ and by the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond. 5/ Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in 1987 and 1988 have also provided the United Nations system with new mandates in the area of the environment.

44. Particularly noteworthy was the signing in September 1987 of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Similar agreements regarding global warming and the "greenhouse effect" should be pursued. In areas affecting the global commons, including the atmosphere and outer space, the United Nations system is called upon to play an effective and catalytic role.

45. Heads of United Nations organs, organizations and bodies agreed at Oslo in June 1988 to establish an inter-agency task force on sustainable and environmentally sound development under the authority of the Secretary-General. It is envisaged that this task force will focus in an action-oriented manner on a limited number of major issues, including the integration of environmental considerations in development policies and planning.

46. Environmental concerns, in particular, as they regard the depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, deforestation and toxic wastes, are at the top of the international agenda and are expected to remain there for the foreseeable future. This poses new challenges to the international community in general and to the United Nations system in particular. At its forty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/195 of 20 December 1988, by which it decided to consider, at its forty-fourth session, the question of convening a United Nations Conference on environment and development no later than 1992.

D. Contributions of the United Nations system to national efforts to enhance social progress and development

47. The world social situation has undergone profound changes in the 20 years since the adoption of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development in 1969. Change has been sweeping and far-reaching, affecting all countries, irrespective of their level of material development or their social system. In many countries, rapid demographic changes have aggravated the inequalities and imbalances between people and resources. The size, the sex and age structure, and the geographical distribution of the population, as determined by rapid urbanization, migration, fertility and mortality, have all had important social and economic implications. Revolutions in science, technology and communications have resulted in profound changes in living conditions. In addition, Governments have carried out programmes and policies directly or indirectly leading to an improvement in the conditions of life. National efforts have been enhanced by the contributions of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in the elimination of poverty, hunger, malnutrition and unemployment; the improvement of working and living conditions; the establishment of comprehensive social security schemes and social welfare services; the achievement of improved standards of health; the eradication of illiteracy and the promotion of universal access to culture and knowledge; and the provision of adequate shelter to low income groups and large families. In sum, the entire work of the United Nations system can be viewed as a contribution to the

principles, objectives and methods of implementation proclaimed in the Declaration on Social Progress and Development.

48. Technical co-operation has been a particularly important dimension of the response of the United Nations system to the Declaration because it is the primary mechanism by which the system provides assistance to Governments in their efforts to promote social development. The most important aspects of social development, i.e. health, education and other dimensions of social welfare, depend more heavily on national than on international action.

49. Although most of the specialized agencies finance some of their own technical co-operation activities from their regular budgets, the majority of such activities are funded from extrabudgetary resources. Most of these extrabudgetary resources are provided to the agencies through United Nations funding agencies, notably UNDP, but some are provided to them directly by the donors.

50. The following sections highlight some areas in which the organizations of the system have supported social development at the national level. The extent to which the system has provided support has depended not only on the availability of financial resources but also on the priorities of individual developing countries.

#### 1. Food security

51. The World Food Conference, convened by the General Assembly at Rome in 1974, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), recommended the creation of a World Food Council to help to keep the global food situation under review. To concentrate aid in the poorest rural areas, it called also for the creation of an International Fund for Agricultural Development.

52. Another major event was the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, which took place in 1979. The Conference adopted a Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action, which has become the major policy guideline for FAO. It highlighted the need for a system of global food security and called upon Governments and United Nations agencies to implement programmes to reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition. It emphasized action to promote growth with equity, access to land and other natural resources, and the participation of the people.

53. The FAO Committee on Food Security has developed a concept of food security that sets out three specific goals, namely, (a) ensuring adequate production; (b) stabilizing the flow of supplies; and (c) providing access to food supplies for those in need. The approach of WFC to solving world food problems and eliminating hunger is to encourage developing countries to adopt national food strategies, the aim of which is to build a greater degree of food self-reliance in countries where the need is greatest and to assure that the consumption needs of the people are addressed.

54. As the lead agency of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination Task Force on Rural Development, FAO facilitates the international exchange of information, knowledge and experience concerning social progress and development in the rural sector. It has intensified its activities in the field of rural and social development since the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development through technical assistance, high-level advisory missions, in-depth studies and government consultative and inter-agency meetings.

55. One of the recommendations of the Conference refers to monitoring progress of rural development. FAO has developed socio-economic indicators and assisted member Governments in the collection and analysis of data with regard to social development, with emphasis on the alleviation of poverty. FAO has also prepared two comprehensive world-wide reviews - in 1983 and 1987 - on progress achieved and difficulties encountered in promoting rural social development.

56. The World Food Programme (WFP) furthers the objectives of social progress and development through the provision of food aid resources to fund agricultural, rural and human resources development projects as well as to respond to emergency needs. On average, WFP supports approximately 230 operational projects annually and approves an average of 50 projects in any one year, in addition to its emergency operations. Food aid is used as an investment resource to promote both economic and social development, contributing in this manner to the enhancement of the capacity of the rural and urban poor to produce and sustain benefits for themselves beyond the immediate realm of project activities.

57. The contributions of WFP to the elimination of poverty, hunger and malnutrition are made at various levels. Food aid is provided as a direct dietary supplement to population groups that are nutritionally most at risk and to those that lack secure access to food throughout the year (e.g. marginal, subsistence and small farmers, the rural landless poor and the urban informal sector) until such time as they are independently able to acquire food through increased production and/or purchasing power. Food-for-work schemes to construct infrastructure contribute to food security.

58. The food-for-work projects of WFP are in such diverse fields as reforestation, agricultural and rural development, land settlement, the environment and health and nutrition activities. To carry out these projects, WFP works in close collaboration with other institutions and United Nations agencies, such as the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, IFAD and the Joint Consultative Group on Food Policy, so as to make food aid programmes, projects and financial assistance more effective.

59. Following the World Food Conference, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination recommended the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Nutrition in 1977. The Sub-Committee is the focal point for harmonizing the policies and activities in nutrition of the United Nations system.

## 2. Alleviation of poverty

60. Since the adoption of the Declaration, the World Bank has increased its commitment to the alleviation of poverty, not only in its lending operations, but also in its economic research and policy analysis. It has increased lending to sectors and subsectors that impact on large numbers of poor people - rural development, primary education, population, health and nutrition, small-scale industry, water supply and urban development. The World Bank's lending in "poverty-oriented" sectors rose from less than 10 per cent in 1970 to about 30 per cent in 1980. Innovative techniques for reaching the poor, such as urban slum upgrading and sites and services programmes, have been adopted in many countries.

61. The major concern of UNIDO has been the acceleration of industrial development in developing countries. The mandate of UNIDO has given the Organization a focus on the contribution of industrialization to conditions for rapid and sustained social and economic development, particularly in the developing countries.

## 3. Creation of favourable conditions of employment

62. An important element of a broad strategy directed towards the root cause of poverty rather than its mere alleviation is increasing employment and improving working conditions for both men and women. The bulk of these efforts are carried out by ILO. In this context, some of the work of the Human Rights Commission, UNESCO and WHO is also relevant. ILO consults and engages in joint projects with these other agencies of the system.

63. In addition, ILO has sought to improve conditions of life and work by building up a comprehensive code of law and practice through the joint efforts of Governments, management and labour. Standard-setting continues to be one of the main activities undertaken to improve labour conditions, living standards and workers' rights by building up a comprehensive code of law and practice through the joint efforts of Governments, management and labour. The instruments have been international conventions and recommendations that are relevant to various aspects of the principles and objectives of the United Nations Declaration on Social Progress and Development. Thus, 71 countries have ratified the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), making full, productive and freely chosen employment a major goal of their policies for economic and social development. Since 1969, some 30 international labour standards and some 20 codes of practice have been adopted to regulate, for instance, annual and paid educational leave, minimum age for admission to employment, hours of work in road transport, equal opportunity for workers with family responsibilities and a number of occupational safety and health topics.

64. Under the guidance of the tripartite constituency of ILO and within the framework of international labour standards, technical co-operation activities have become an important means of ILO action. These activities seek to promote an appropriate balance between equity and growth and to strengthen national capability and self-reliant development in the fields of ILO competence. Employment and

development, training and sectoral activities have accounted for about 80 per cent of the technical co-operation expenditure of ILO in recent years. Many countries have, with ILO assistance, set up improved machinery for employment planning and forecasting, for monitoring developments in the labour market or for evaluating the impact of different policies on employment, while at the local level numerous projects have led to higher levels of employment and incomes for vulnerable groups.

65. The ILO World Employment Programme was launched in 1969. The programme is designed to be a long-range attack upon problems of unemployment and underemployment. Its research has covered issues relating to employment, poverty, the satisfaction of basic needs and income distribution, and technical co-operation activities have ranged from short advisory missions to large-scale projects extending over a number of years.

66. In the area of human resources development, ILO has promoted the transfer of knowledge and experience from developed to developing countries, primarily through technical assistance in managerial and vocational training. Attention has been devoted to equality of opportunity in training, effectiveness and efficiency of training, training opportunities for women in entrepreneurship and management development, and participation of workers' and employers' organizations in the formulation of training policies and programmes. ILO has also assisted Member States in developing vocational rehabilitation and re-integration policies for physically and mentally disabled persons.

67. Further, ILO has helped to establish and strengthen social security schemes. Through a study entitled Into the Twenty-first Century: the Development of Social Security, ILO has contributed to the reappraisal of social security systems of industrialized countries designed decades ago, in the light of present-day financial, social and economic problems. Through its technical co-operation programme and technical advice, ILO has helped developing countries to formulate social protection policies, extend the coverage of their schemes, establish new systems and train social security officials and other interested parties.

#### 4. Improving health

68. In the area of health, WHO is mandated to act as the directing and co-ordinating authority and to encourage technical co-operation among and within countries with a view to an improvement in the health of the world. The Organization has created a framework for action by member States on the basis of agreements reached in the World Health Assembly.

69. The International Conference on Primary Health Care, held in 1978 at Alma-Ata, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, declared that "A main social target of Governments, international organizations and the whole world community in the coming decades should be the attainment by all peoples of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life. Primary health care is the key to attaining this target as part of development in the spirit of social justice". 6/ The Conference called upon all Governments to formulate national policies, strategies and plans of action to

launch and sustain primary health care as part of a comprehensive national health system and in co-ordination with other sectors.

70. The Declaration of Alma-Ata marked a turning point in strategies for health care by moving the emphasis away from a predominantly disease-oriented and curative focus to one that emphasized the prevention of ill health, the removal of health risks and the promotion of health. WHO subsequently issued guiding principles for formulating national strategies for health for all and prepared a Global Strategy, based on the national strategies adopted by the World Health Assembly in 1981.

71. A first evaluation of the implementation of the Global Strategy for Health for All, by the Year 2000 covering the years 1978-1984, was carried out in 1985. <sup>7/</sup> A total of 147 member States and 15 areas and territories took a critical look at how they were implementing the Global Strategy. Despite the severe economic and social constraints characterizing the 1980s, natural disasters and political and armed conflicts in many parts of the world, most countries were able to record some progress towards an improved status of health. Countries, individually and in regional groupings, identified their most acute problems and suggested priority actions to combat them. This evaluation and continued monitoring contribute to establishing a picture of the quality of life on earth and to an assessment of the extent to which the goals set in the United Nations Declaration on Social Progress and Development are being achieved.

72. The WHO Special Programme of Research, Development and Training in Human Reproduction continues to respond to the needs of families for more and better methods of fertility regulation, both for contraception and for infertility, to enable them to exercise their right to determine freely and responsibly the number and timing of their children. A primary function of WHO's programmes of maternal and child health, including family planning, is the provision of technical and managerial support to member States for the adaptation and integration of the main components of maternal and child health and family planning care into all levels of the health care system. In 1987, in collaboration with WHO and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (now the United Nations Population Fund) (UNFPA), the World Bank co-sponsored a Safe Motherhood Conference at Nairobi. Following up, the World Bank contributed \$1 million to establish a Safe Motherhood Fund under WHO management for operational research in support of maternal health programmes.

73. Raising public and professional awareness of the public health consequences of population aging has been the theme of the programme on health of the elderly established by WHO in 1982. A Special Programme for Research on Aging has been established by WHO for the purpose of learning how people can remain healthy as they age.

74. The number of disabled is rapidly increasing as a result of population growth and longer survival rates. A major effort is therefore needed by Governments to commit themselves to programmes that will ensure that all disabled people receive at least the essential services. For its part, WHO has initiated and implemented community-based rehabilitation services for the disabled in about 60 countries.



75. The success of the smallpox eradication programme in the mid-1970s inspired WHO to lead a world-wide campaign, with the collaboration of UNICEF, to provide effective immunization for all children by 1990 and prevent the six major communicable diseases of childhood - diphtheria, measles, poliomyelitis, tetanus, tuberculosis and whooping cough. Two thirds of the developing world's children are now receiving a first dose of DPT (diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus) vaccine and 50 per cent are completing the full course of three injections. Half are also being immunized against polio and about 40 per cent against measles. The result is that approximately 1.4 million young lives are saved each year. Similarly, oral rehydration, which was largely unknown outside the scientific community at the beginning of this decade, is now being used by approximately 20 per cent of the world's families, preventing an estimated 600,000 deaths from dehydration each year among the world's young children.

76. WHO also directs and co-ordinates a special programme and global strategy to prevent and control acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), with public information and education about the modes of transmission as major priorities. Its global AIDS initiatives are already being reflected in country-level activities supported by UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP (which has been designated the operational arm). The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs provides the focal point for the co-ordination of activities relating to AIDS prevention and control within the United Nations.

#### 5. Eradication of illiteracy and improvement of education

77. Eradication of illiteracy is one of the objectives of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development. As the lead agency in the United Nations system for the elimination of illiteracy and the training of basic skills, UNESCO combines literacy programmes with a drive to make primary education universal and to eliminate the root causes of illiteracy. The programme of fundamental education of UNESCO has been superseded more recently by functional literacy, but the goals are essentially identical. The aim of functional literacy is economic and social effectiveness; it includes vocational training and skills linked to social and economic development.

78. UNESCO has run pilot projects in adult education and given advice about literacy campaigns, at both the national and regional level. It established the International Institute for Educational Planning in Paris and a number of regional centres for the training of administrators. It also assists in the training of teachers and in developing new techniques, as well as with the production of text books, especially through three main regional programmes in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

79. Another major concern of UNESCO is the preservation of human culture. It encourages awareness of national heritage so as to derive the maximum advantage from modernization without the loss of cultural identity and diversity. UNESCO has promoted, *inter alia*, conventions on the Protection of the World's National and Architectural Heritage, on the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict, and on the Illicit Export and Import of Cultural Property.

## 6. Housing and human settlements

80. Housing and human settlement needs are very great in developing countries and engage a great number of the agencies of the United Nations system. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), also known as Habitat, and the regional commissions had only 0.8 per cent of the United Nations budget for such purposes, but UNCHS attracted almost four times that much in extrabudgetary resources. In 1986, UNCHS had 160 projects in 77 countries, of which 98 were funded by UNDP. In terms of funds, by far the largest agency involved in this area is the World Bank, which in 1987 spent \$2.4 billion, or 14 per cent of its total lending, on projects.

81. The arrangements made by UNCHS for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (1987) increased world-wide awareness about the growing numbers of homeless. Many bodies of the United Nations, though not directly involved in shelter and human settlements, participated in the Year. The work to achieve the objectives of the Year will be continued through the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/191 of 11 December 1987.

## 7. Improving the status of women and protection of vulnerable groups

82. The wide range of efforts of the United Nations system to enhance national capacities has been accompanied by detailed consideration of trends affecting women and special groups, such as youth, the aging and the disabled. The United Nations has been also concerned with particular social problems, such as the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, and the international control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Office at Vienna serves as focal point within the United Nations system for each of these concerns.

83. The United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) raised public awareness of the role of women in society and development and of the constraints that prevent them from full participation on the basis of equality. Full participation on equal terms in all social, political and economic activities underlies the corpus of international instruments adopted by the United Nations and emphasized in strategies adopted at recent international conferences, notably, the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. §/

84. An important result of the Decade was the adoption of the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development. This plan has spurred inter-secretariat arrangements for the co-ordination of administrative, operational and programme activities having a bearing on the status of women. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs is preparing a cross-organizational programme analysis on matters related to the advancement of women in order to provide baseline data for monitoring the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan.

85. The General Assembly, in 1987, decided to include, for the first time, in the World Economic Survey for 1988 a selective set of indicators of the socio-economic attainment of women world-wide. These data provided a clear indication of the indispensable role that women play, not only in the family, but also in all the major sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, trade, industry, services, education and health. The indicators also revealed some of the problems and biases facing women, especially in the areas of education, employment and health. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs is working closely with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) to develop methods for measuring the contribution of women to economic output as a whole.

86. Integrating the young is a major challenge to all societies and the General Assembly designated 1985 as International Youth Year with the theme "Participation, development, peace". The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs promotes a concerted approach for the integration of youth in development. These efforts have been directed towards assisting Governments in developing comprehensive youth policies by providing guidance, information, technical expertise and direct operational support.

87. The slowing of population growth in the world and the widespread increase in life expectancy are raising the proportion of people in the older age brackets and causing an overall aging of populations. Social changes in developing countries weaken traditional family structures in which the aging were cared for by their kin. This problem was addressed in the International Plan of Action on Aging adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/51 of 3 December 1982. The International Plan of Action is reviewed quadriennially, and the United Nations Office at Geneva is conducting a survey to determine the status of national policies on aging.

88. The International Year of Disabled Persons (1981) increased awareness and action in this area, especially in the non-governmental sector. Many Governments have formulated plans for the prevention of disability and the rehabilitation of disabled persons. Disabled persons have also formed organizations to promote their rights and to participate in decisions affecting their lives. One of the important outcomes of the International Year was the preparation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/52 of 3 December 1982. The objectives of the World Programme of Action are to promote effective measures for prevention of disability, rehabilitation and the realization of the goals of full participation of disabled persons in social life and development, and of equality. In line with the recommendations of the World Programme of Action to assist developing countries in the development of systems of data collection and analysis with regard to disability-related statistics, the Statistical Office in association with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, has prepared two technical reports - Development of Statistics of Disabled Persons and Case-Studies and Development of Statistics Concepts and Methods on Disability for Household Surveys.

89. The United Nations Social Defense Research Institute (UNSDRI) has tried to advance policy and practice in the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency

and adult criminality, giving special emphasis to the development and application of new knowledge. The largest segment of the UNSDRI work programme has been devoted to undertaking and promoting, at the interregional, cross-cultural level, action-oriented research in crime prevention and criminal justice. A systematic effort has been made by the Institute to extend research results to the field level, particularly through technical and scientific co-operation with developing countries.

90. The Seventh United Nations Congress on Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Milan, Italy in 1985, unanimously adopted the Milan Plan of Action, the Guiding Principles for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Context of Development and a New International Economic Order and the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. 9/ Endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 40/32 of 29 November 1985, these instruments emphasize the international initiatives directed at the challenge posed by the internationalization of criminal activities. The United Nations norms and guidelines provide a yardstick against which countries can assess their own situation and monitor progress.

91. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking, in their linkages to other types of organized crime, reflect the growing transnationalization of crime networks operating in producer, user, processing and transit countries. The United Nations plays a role in the world-wide concerted strategy to deal with drug abuse and illicit trafficking through its drug control bodies and through successive conventions and protocols designed to limit the flow of narcotic drugs. 10/ The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held at Vienna in 1987, assigned an increased role and responsibility in this area to the United Nations system. The United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and UNDP have joined forces to assist countries in the development and implementation of specific actions.

#### IV. UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

92. Since the adoption of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the efforts of the United Nations in the field of human rights have been widened and strengthened. Many resolutions and a series of international instruments relating to the promotion of human rights have been adopted. They aim at promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms; monitoring the implementation of the provisions of these instruments; and promoting greater public consciousness of the importance of the international protection of human rights. 11/

93. Standard-setting, implementation procedures and public information have been the three targets of United Nations activity in the field of human rights. The principal means to achieve these goals has been the adoption of international human rights agreements, which represent a broad international codification of universally accepted standards of human rights. While the United Nations has no way of obliging Governments to adhere to these instruments, the adoption in 1966 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to

the Covenant represent important progress in the work of the United Nations for the promotion of human rights and set forth fundamental principles of international co-operation in this field. The two Covenants have been supplemented by a large number of other instruments that clarify substantive rights and duties. 12/

94. The United Nations has developed other mechanisms for protecting human rights, which include the review of reports of the performance of Member States by expert committees; the treatment of complaints by the Human Rights Committee; the consideration of the human rights situation in specific countries; and the review of human rights violations. A system of review and protection has been established through the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights. The United Nations is actively engaged in efforts to strengthen and expand the procedures and machinery for implementation. In this multilateral system of improving respect for human rights, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Group of Three established under the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women play a vital role. 13/ The recent establishment of the Committee against Torture is also of signal importance.

95. Non-governmental organizations have made valuable contributions to the promotion of human rights through their multifaceted activities. They inform the general public about human rights as well as about United Nations activities in the field and they provide communications and views to the meetings of intergovernmental or expert bodies.

96. Over the last 20 years, a number of declarations on more specific human rights issues have been adopted. 14/ The activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights have included the proclamation of international years and decades, the goals of which were the promotion of the enjoyment of human rights and social justice. 15/ These events have served to mobilize efforts at the national and international levels through the adoption of various activities and have provided impetus for increased international co-operation.

97. The General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights have given close consideration to the promotion of social progress and improved standards of living. Consideration has been given to the interrelationship and interdependence of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights and equal promotion of all human rights. 16/ These bodies have also emphasized the realization of economic, social and cultural rights. For its part, the Commission reviews the observance of economic, social and cultural rights annually in order to assess the progress made and the problems encountered.

98. The above bodies have found that the implementation and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights and the obstacles to their realization have not yet received sufficient attention within the framework of the United Nations system. They recognized the need to consider more effective and practical measures for the fuller realization of these rights, taking into account recent developments in international law and in the world economic and social situation.

99. The two bodies have also been making efforts to give particular attention to the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable groups. By its resolution 1988/23, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Sub-Commission to give priority to identifying practical strategies to promote economic, social and cultural rights for everyone, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

100. A number of studies have been prepared relating to the issue of human rights and development, including a 1979 study on the international dimension of the right to development. In 1981, a working group was set up to study the scope and content of the right to development and the most effective means for ensuring the realization in all countries of the economic, social and cultural rights contained in various international instruments. <sup>17/</sup> In 1986, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Right to Development (resolution 41/128, annex).

101. Attention has also been given by the two bodies to specific means to promote the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. Close study has been given to the question of popular participation in its various forms as an important factor in development and to the full realization of all human rights. The Secretary-General prepared several reports on these issues.

102. In 1985 the General Assembly reaffirmed that the right to food was a universal human right. The Commission on Human Rights in 1985 requested the preparation of a study on the right to adequate food as a human right, with special attention to its significance in relation to establishment of a new international economic order. The Special Rapporteur completed the comprehensive final study in 1987.

103. In 1986, the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly expressed the need for measures at the national and international levels to promote the right of all persons to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate housing. By its resolution 1988/43, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare for the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session a report on the social aspects of the situation of homeless people.

104. The development of public information in the field of human rights and the provision of advisory services and technical co-operation are some of the methods adopted for promoting respect for human rights. The programmes of advisory services have sought to promote concrete and productive international co-operation in the field of human rights. The recent creation of a voluntary fund for such services has enabled the United Nations to respond more fully to growing demand in this area.

105. Standard-setting must also be continued. Priority attention should be given to the protection of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Some projects are already under way for the drafting of additional standards focused, again, upon particularly vulnerable groups. The international community should aim to define and protect the rights of, among others, minorities, migrant workers, indigenous people, the mentally ill and the defenders of human rights. The human rights of the victims of AIDS merit special attention. Consideration could be given to

developing and promoting a programme of international co-operation in the humanitarian field. In all these diverse ways, the international community can develop methods to encourage respect and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

106. The constitution of WHO states that "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition" and the Organization has taken steps to promote health as a basic human right. WHO has set the goal of achieving for all peoples a level of health that would permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life.

#### V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

107. The findings of the present report indicate that the main objectives of the Declaration, which are embodied also in the International Development Strategy for the Third Development Decade, namely, the elimination of unemployment, hunger, malnutrition and poverty, the eradication of illiteracy, the assurance of the right to universal access to culture, the provision of health protection for the entire population, the provision of free, universal education at the primary level and the promotion of human rights and social justice, while still valid, have not yet been universally realized. The objectives have been quite generally pursued, although in many countries economic adversity has obstructed progress in these areas. International co-operation within the United Nations system has been actively directed towards the assistance of Member States. Since the adoption of the Declaration, the United Nations system has evolved both in organizational structure and in the implementation of its mandates.

108. The small number of replies from Member States confirms the impression that the objectives spelled out in the Declaration, adopted 20 years ago, have come to be regarded as the self-evident objectives of international co-operation. The thrust of the Declaration was to spell out in greater detail the grand challenges of the Charter itself, which are now broadly accepted. The goals set forth in the Declaration remain as valid as ever, but they have become too widely shared to attract more focused attention. In that sense, the Declaration has served its purpose.

109. The United Nations system has also evolved so much in response to the objectives set out in the Declaration that many of these tasks including ways and means to implement them, have been greatly elaborated in response to experience and new concerns.

110. The rate of success of the United Nations institutions in implementing the Declaration and the effectiveness of the means and methods applied cannot be measured by objective criteria. Moreover, progress in international co-operation is not a linear process. Success in certain areas is often accompanied by setbacks in others. Often, patient efforts leading to important agreements fail to achieve results because of unexpected political changes or economic shocks.

111. Among the means applied by the United Nations institutions in implementing the Declaration, the emphasis has been on providing services to Member countries and in mobilizing international support for national efforts in such fields as eradication of poverty, hunger, mass diseases, illiteracy; development of human resources, norm-setting in such areas as international trade, transportation, exploitation of common resources; and development finance and mobilization of domestic savings. There has also been a noticeable expansion of early warning systems to alert the international community to emerging problems, particularly in the areas of food security and the environment.

112. In view of the internationalization of political and economic relations present requirements are to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations negotiating and consulting machinery; to strengthen its co-ordination mechanisms; to improve links with other agents of international relations, such as non-governmental organizations, academic communities and transnational corporations; to clarify further respective areas of activity and priorities, particularly in operational activities; and to strengthen the monitoring and early warning capacity.

113. There is a need to maintain an overview of the changes in social conditions in the world in order to identify emerging needs, trends and problems, with special attention to situations in developing countries.

114. In order to fulfil this task, the United Nations system should improve its capacity to undertake research and policy analysis on a collaborative basis, taking full advantage of the work of the national and regional institutions on evaluation techniques, the development of indicators and programme planning, design and implementation.

115. There is a growing perception that multilateral institutions play an important role in ensuring a favourable international environment and that they are necessary to bring about a fair distribution of the benefits of international economic relations and to support economic forces working towards social progress and the prosperity of mankind. The effectiveness of the United Nations institutions involved in international co-operation will depend on which tendency in international economic relations will become dominant - that towards strengthening collective action in an increasingly interdependent world through the multilateral co-ordination of economic and social policies or that towards decreasing the vulnerability of national economies by means of establishing regional and subregional economic zones or economic groupings and bilateral agreements. Taking a long-term view of national interests and the needs of the international community will depend, in the end, on the ability of the international community to deal with the complex reality of the interdependent world economy and the readiness of Member States to adapt their national policies.

116. One immediate opportunity for the United Nations system to intensify its collaboration in the economic and social field is the preparation of a new international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade. The new strategy must take into account the changes in circumstances and priorities at the present time. The preparation of the new strategy will involve



extensive negotiations and supportive research efforts by the United Nations system. It will afford an opportunity for the international community to bring together a wide array of economic and social issues into a comprehensive framework. It will also be an occasion for assessing socio-economic developments during the 1980s and identifying the trends and perspectives in the coming decade.

#### Notes

- 1/ See Final Document of the Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.IX.8.
- 2/ General Assembly resolution S-10/2.
- 3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Special Session, Annexes, agenda items 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13, document A/S-12/32.
- 4/ World Commission on Environment and Development, Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future, Oxford University Press, April 1987, chap. 3, p. 83.
- 5/ General Assembly resolution 42/186.
- 6/ See Primary Health Care, Report of the International Conference on Primary Health Care, Alma-Ata, USSR, 6-12 September 1978, Geneva, World Health Organization, 1978, pp. 2-6 ("Health for All" series, No. 1).
- 7/ WHO: Evaluation of the Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000: Seventh Report of the World Health Situation, volume 1, global review, Geneva, 1987.
- 8/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.
- 9/ Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August-6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.1).
- 10/ The United Nations and Drug Abuse Control, New York, 1987 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.I.8).
- 11/ United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.83.XIV.2).
- 12/ Mention should be made of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment (1984), the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports (1985). A legally binding convention on the rights of the child and an international convention on the rights

Notes (continued)

of all migrant workers and their families are currently in the final drafting stages.

13/ Human Rights Machinery, United Nations Fact Sheet No. 1.

14/ The Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind (1975), the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975), the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief (1981), the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Security (1982), the Declaration on the Right of the Peoples to Peace (1984) and the Declaration on the Right to Development (1986).

15/ They have included: International Women's Year (1975), United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985), International Year of the Child (1979), International Year of Disabled Persons (1981), United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992), International Youth Year (1985), International Year of Peace (1986), International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (1987) and International Literacy Year (1990). At its forty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/135 of 8 December 1988, entitled "Need to enhance international co-operation in the field of the protection and assistance to the family", in which it requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a report containing the proposed date and a comprehensive outline of a possible programme for an international year of the family. Reference may be made in this connection to the report of the Secretary-General on this question (A/43/570).

16/ By resolution 41/117 of 4 December 1986, entitled "Indivisibility and interdependence of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights", the General Assembly appealed to all States to pursue policies directed towards the implementation, promotion and protection of those rights and called upon States to co-operate in creating such national and international conditions as were conducive to the enjoyment of human rights.

17/ See the report of the Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Right to Development, E/CN.4/1988/10.

ANNEX

Summary of the responses of States Members of the United Nations  
to the note verbal of the Secretary-General

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

1. The main objectives of Byelorussia's social policy since the Declaration was adopted have been full employment, improvement of standards of living, ensuring social protection of vulnerable groups and protection of rights of mother and child. The high rates of economic growth have been seen as a key instrument in achieving social goals.
2. At the present time, the Byelorussian economy is undergoing radical reforms aimed at scientific and technological renewal of all fields of material production.
3. The social field is one of the main priorities of the Government. As a result of the successful implementation of the last five-year plan (1981-1985), the national income of the republic grew by 32.5 per cent, 80 per cent of which was distributed for consumption purposes. During this period the wages of different occupational groups have been raised significantly. On the average, the wages of workers and employees grew by 15 per cent and those of members of collective farms by 150 per cent.
4. Currently, Byelorussia is revising its pension system in order to eliminate a gap between those pensions provided 10 years ago and the present costs of living. To correlate pensions and costs of living, a two-year revision was established.
5. Education is free of charge and more than 4 million people are currently involved in the educational process. To meet new requirements brought about by economic reforms, Byelorussia has undertaken a modernization of secondary and vocational schools.
6. Housing is also one of the social priorities. By the year 2000, the current five-year plan envisages the provision of a separate apartment for each family, with special attention given to the improvement of living conditions of the rural population and the preservation of the human environment. In cities and towns, "green zones" have been established; in addition, a legislative system to protect air, water and land, as well as research on preventing and protecting measures have been launched.
7. In the field of health, emphasis is on the improvement of medical services and facilities, especially maternity hospitals and development of the child-care system. In 1987, there were 4,500 kindergartens and nurseries functioning all over the republic. For children of school age, there are thousands of pioneer camps and resorts financed by trade unions.

#### CHILE

1. In the last dozen years or so, the main objective of social policies in Chile has been the eradication of extreme poverty as a way to ensure equal opportunity for all. Policies have concentrated particularly on child nutrition and a nutritional surveillance system for children under the age of six has been developed to identify those in need. This allows for more effective and efficient action and also provides a continuous evaluation of nutritional programmes. Other measures to eradicate poverty include free education, housing subsidies, provision of water and sewage systems and, in the rural areas, technical assistance and subsidized credit to small farmers.

2. Since fiscal resources have been limited, these policies have led to a major reorientation of government expenditures. Traditional social programmes were reformed to focus the benefits on the most needy. Further, in order to improve efficiency, State bureaucracy has been reduced and decision-making has been transferred to regional and municipal governments. At the same time, private participation in the provision of social services has been encouraged.

3. The improvement of several social indicators has been perceptible in the second half of the 1980s. In particular, there has been a substantial drop in child mortality rates since the mid-1970s.

#### CHINA

1. China has legislated and implemented employment policy with regard to concerns in the Declaration. In 1979, reform was introduced in the employment system so that employment referral, self-employment and job search by individuals have been some of the major measures instituted in the area of employment. Employment structure has been adjusted with emphasis on the development of consumer goods and tertiary industries. The Government has also stressed the principle of "training before employment", which has resulted in significant development of vocational education schools, trade schools, employment service agencies and training centres of new entrants to the labour force. As a result, the unemployment rate in urban areas declined from 5.3 per cent in 1978 to 2 per cent in 1987.

2. In China, women and men enjoy equal rights in employment. The Constitution of the country mandates also the State's assistance in the employment of the handicapped. Currently, over 50 per cent of the handicapped who are able to work are employed.

3. Based on output and productivity growth, wages have been raised and the standard of living of workers has been gradually raised. Average urban wages increased 52 per cent between 1978 and 1987.

4. The criteria for wage determination are a combination of efficiency and equity. Adhering to the targets of macro-economic control and increased micro-economic productivity, enterprises were given authority in wage determination. The principle of moral and material motivation is maintained. In

social insurance and welfare, the Government has in place a system of retirement compensation for workers and employees of enterprises and government organizations. These workers are also entitled to leave and medical care for childbirth, old age, illness and disability.

5. With regard to the protection of women and under-age workers in 1988, a regulation passed emphasizes protection of rights related to childbirth. It prohibits the reduction of base wage or the termination of a work contract owing to pregnancy; grants paid leave of 90 to 105 days; provides time for nursing infants under one year of age during the work day, etc. Chinese law prohibits the employment of child labour under 16 years of age.

6. China is continuously improving the safety of the work environment, with development of national standards of health and safety in the workplace. An eight-hour workday is enforced with strict control of "overtime".

#### GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

1. Although not yet a member of the United Nations at the time of the adoption of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the German Democratic Republic considered the principles and objectives contained in the Declaration as an important guideline for its efforts in the fields of social policy and development. The main task of the five-year plans promulgated by the German Democratic Republic People's Chamber since 1971 has been proclaimed to be that of "translating economic achievements into social benefits". This task aims at a systematic raising of the population's material and cultural standards of living on the basis of a high growth rate in production, increased efficiency, scientific and technological progress and growing labour productivity.

2. The German Democratic Republic has successfully implemented its social goals. The standard of living of the population has risen significantly. There is no poverty, unemployment or homelessness.

3. The main task of the German Democratic Republic's foreign policy is to contribute to the establishment of international peace through the process of both nuclear and conventional disarmament. It supports also the efforts of the developing countries to eliminate poverty, illiteracy and to build national industry.

#### POLAND

1. The Polish People's Republic emphasizes the importance of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development as a guideline for international and national social development. The country has been taking special care to implement the principles and objectives contained in the Declaration since 1969.

2. Regardless of the economic difficulties experienced by the country during the current decade, the standard of living of all segments of the population has

noticeably risen. Social relationships have become more democratic, civic rights and liberties have been broadened, and the access of the citizens to the governmental institutions as well as their participation in consulting and decision-making processes have been also significantly improved.

3. Poland has regarded as the main priority of its social and development policy to implement articles 6 and 10 of the Declaration dealing with the right of everyone to work. This right is safeguarded by the Constitution and by the Code of Employment. At present there is no unemployment in the country.

4. Illiteracy has long been eradicated and everyone has access to education free of charge as well as to culture. However, there is still a certain lagging-behind of the countryside as regards educational facilities.

5. While the protection and improvement of the human environment did not receive adequate attention for a long time, recently a series of measures has been introduced with a view to preventing further degradation of the environment.

6. A major task of the country in the future is to find a balance between people's expectations, social objectives and resources available for the implementation of the latter. In the past, the underestimation of balancing these elements led to contradictions and even to social conflicts.

#### SPAIN

1. In Spain, the Constitution of 1978 introduced deep institutional changes regarding the provision of social services. It is now basically the responsibility of the Parliament of each one of the so-called "comunidades autónomas" to legislate with regards to social services to be applied within its territory. The subjects that in the last 10 years have attracted greater attention nationwide are the family, women, education, youth employment, refugees, senior citizens and the handicapped.

2. The family policies to a large extent are oriented towards reversing the declining trend in birth rates through a variety of measures and assisting low-income families or families with many children. Legislation on women has paid special attention to fuller incorporation of women at all levels of education and to increasing their employment. Since youth unemployment is double the national average, the modification of Workers' Laws in 1986 has promoted internship and professional training work contracts. The regulations of the 1978 Constitution that established Spain's solidarity with refugees were adopted into law in 1984. The law gives special privileges to refugees, such as work permits. Since 1982, the number of senior citizens affected by social security and assistance pensions has increased considerably and pensions have started to reflect more fully changes in the minimum wage. With regard to the handicapped, a new Law for the Social Integration of the Handicapped was adopted in 1982, which, for the first time in Spain, provides a comprehensive legal framework for assisting the handicapped and for preventing the occurrence of handicaps. The law is being implemented by providing rehabilitation to the handicapped and by promoting their employment. On

the side of prevention, four-year plans have been formulated and are being implemented in close collaboration with the Health Plan established under the General Health Law.

#### SWEDEN

1. Sweden emphasizes the importance of preserving and further improving its social welfare system. This system is considered a necessary and important element of societal organization for implementing the main social goals of the country, such as: social justice, improvement of living conditions, protection of vulnerable groups and "conferring a good standard of living to all citizens, regardless of social status, economic circumstances or residential locality". It is also regarded as an important instrument in ensuring social and political stability.

2. In order to implement its social strategy in a most effective way, Sweden has closely integrated the social welfare policy with an active economic and labour market policy. Such an approach has proved to be successful in many circumstances, including the economic difficulties of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

3. At present Sweden has undertaken several measures aiming at further development of its social welfare system. Among them are decentralization of social and welfare activities through giving more independence to local authorities in the provision of social services and welfare benefits, as well as in the mobilization of financial support for their activities through expending their rights in taxation.

#### TUNISIA

1. Tunisia considers employment to be closely linked to the ability of the country to utilize more fully its productive potential and to make allocation of resources optimal. Job creation has been one of the top Government priorities of the Seventh Development Plan. Efforts have been made to improve the "social environment" of the enterprise, including measures aimed at sustaining employment and increasing productivity. The new scheme of collective bargaining envisioned enterprise as a key unit in wage negotiations.

2. Along with employment creation in the industrial sector, measures have been taken to promote the creation of jobs in services, including engineering and consultative services, entertainment, civil aviation and so forth.

3. Family planning policies have been promoted by the Government. Broader coverage of contraceptive use has been encouraged. Particular attention is being paid to rural areas; better use of infrastructure and mobile equipment is planned. The Government, showing concern for long-term employment problems, has adopted a policy whereby families can only qualify for state allowances for three children, and the retirement age in the civil service has been reduced from 65 to 60 years.

4. While efforts have been undertaken to restrain inflation, the minimum daily wage in agriculture and industry has recently been increased. Recent social policy efforts are bringing about an improvement in the social protection of the population, its coverage and regional distribution.

-----