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UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY,  
 DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Measures taken to implement the World Plan of Action  
 and the Programme for the United Nations Decade for  
 Women

Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/32/150.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 31/136 of 16 December 1976 on the United Nations Decade for Women, by which the Assembly approved the Programme for the Decade, which focuses on the first half of the Decade, 1976 to 1980, and requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of its provisions and on measures taken to implement the World Plan of Action and the Programme for the Decade.

2. It may be recalled that, pursuant to paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX), the Secretary-General had submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-first session a report on measures taken to implement the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the World Conference of the International Women's Year and to initiate procedures for the review and appraisal of the Plan (A/31/220).

3. The present report describes further steps which have been taken within the framework of the implementation of the World Plan of Action, including the Programme for the United Nations Decade for Women.

4. The present report does not cover the developments relating to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, as a report on the subject will be before the General Assembly at its thirty-second session (A/32/174), nor does it refer to the developments relating to the elaboration of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which will be the subject of a separate report requested under Economic and Social Council resolution 2058 (LXII) of 12 May 1977. The action taken by the Secretary-General relating to the convening of the Pledging Conference for the United Nations Decade for Women on 8 November 1977 at United Nations Headquarters will be reported at a later date.

## II. DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PLAN OF ACTION

5. In its resolution 3490 (XXX) of 12 December 1975 on the implementation of the World Plan of Action, the General Assembly affirmed that a system-wide review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action should be undertaken in the years of the biennial review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, namely, 1977-1979, as an input to the process of review and appraisal of progress made under the Strategy. The Assembly requested the Commission on the Status of Women to consider reports on measures undertaken in implementation of the World Plan of Action, in accordance with the Strategy, and to report its findings and conclusions on major trends and policies with regard to the status of women, particularly the integration of women in development, to the Economic and Social Council through the Committee for Development Planning and the Committee on Review and Appraisal. The Secretary-General was invited to make appropriate arrangements for the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action.

6. In resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975 on the World Conference of the

International Women's Year, the General Assembly also affirmed that a system-wide review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action should be undertaken biennially and should constitute an input to the process of review and appraisal of progress made under the International Development Strategy, and that such reviews and appraisals should take into account the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the decisions resulting from the sixth and seventh special sessions of the Assembly.

7. The Secretary-General prepared a report on measures undertaken under the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade and in implementation of the World Plan of Action (E/CN.6/598 and Add.1 and 2) for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-sixth session.

8. The Commission recognized that, within the time-limit given, few Governments were able to report on measures taken at the national level specifically to implement the World Plan of Action and that it was therefore difficult at that stage to adopt findings and conclusions on major global trends and policies with regard to the status of women. It therefore decided that the review undertaken by it at that session should be considered as a first preliminary review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action and that a more comprehensive review should be undertaken at the twenty-seventh session in 1978.

9. On the recommendation of the Commission, the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-second session adopted resolution 2060 (LXII) of 12 May 1977 the operative part of which read as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"1. Notes with interest the following developments reported during the period under review in a number of countries:

"(a) The recognition of and commitment to the principle of equality of men and women and the integration of women in development, both for reasons of social progress and for economic development;

"(b) The adoption or plans for adoption of constitutional and/or legislative provisions ensuring the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of sex;

"(c) The establishment of provisions for equal access at every level of education and guidance, compulsory education and the measures necessary to promote co-education and to prevent school drop-outs;

"(d) The adoption of comprehensive measures for health education, health services, sanitation, nutrition, family education, family planning and other welfare services;

"2. Considers that, on the basis of the material submitted, action is urgently needed to improve the situation of women in the following areas in

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order to meet the minimum targets set forth in paragraph 46 of the World Plan of Action for the implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year for the five-year period 1975-1980:

"(a) The enactment of legislation guaranteeing the principle of equality and non-discrimination on grounds of sex, particularly legislation designed to guarantee to women equal pay for equal work;

"(b) Appropriate measures to inform and advise women of their rights, utilizing the mass communication media wherever appropriate, and to provide them with assistance in exercising their rights and responsibilities;

"(c) The establishment of goals, strategies and time-tables to increase the participation of women in decision making at local, national and international levels;

"(d) The establishment of specific target dates for the elimination of illiteracy, especially among young persons, and the provision of the measures necessary for its maintenance within as short a time as possible for each State;

"(e) The provision of life-long and continuing education, training and retraining facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of women;

"(f) The development of modern rural technology, cottage industry, pre-school day-care centres, and time and energy saving devices to help reduce the heavy workload and increase the resources of women, particularly those living in rural sectors and the urban poor;

"(g) The creation of new employment and income-producing opportunities for women and the expansion of existing employment opportunities, and elimination of discrimination in the terms and conditions of employment on grounds of sex;

"(h) The establishment or strengthening of an interdisciplinary and multisectoral machinery by Governments for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full integration into national life;

"(i) The establishment and enforcement of measures to facilitate the combination of family and work responsibilities;

"(j) The provision and extension of comprehensive and continuous health and other social services to underprivileged urban and rural communities, including maternity and child-care services as well as family life education;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of the Committee on Review and Appraisal at its fourth session in May 1977, together with the relevant reports submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women, at its twenty-sixth session (E/CN.6/598 and Add.1 and 2) and any information submitted subsequent to the preparation of these reports;

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"4. Urges the Committee on Review and Appraisal, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3490 (XXX), paragraph 5, to pay special attention to the question of the status of women and to take into account the above recommendations in the review and appraisal in 1977 of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General, in connexion with the next review and appraisal of the Implementation of the World Plan of Action:

"(a) To prepare, in consultation with the regional commissions, a questionnaire on the implementation of the World Plan of Action to be forwarded to Governments in 1977;

"(b) To prepare a report on the basis of the replies to the questionnaire, taking into account information received subsequent to the preparation of document E/CN.598 and Add. 1 and 2, for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-seventh session in January 1978.

"6. Also requests the Secretary-General:

"(a) To ensure as far as possible that, in 1979, the questionnaire relating to the implementation of the World Plan of Action shall be forwarded to Governments, together with the request for information relating to the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy;

"(b) To prepare a comprehensive report based on the replies to these questionnaires, for consideration at the 28th session of the Committee on the Status of Women and at the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, 1980."

10. In compliance with that resolution, the Secretary-General circulated a questionnaire to Governments on 11 July 1977 with a view to assessing the progress achieved at the national level in the implementation of the World Plan of Action, especially the minimum objectives set forth in paragraph 46 of the Plan.

The questionnaire is divided into six sections as follows:

- I. General aspects including development of planning and monitoring systems
- II. Participation in political life, policy making, international co-operation and the strengthening of international peace
- III. Education and training including cultural activities
- IV. Employment and related economic roles
- V. Health, education and social well-being
- VI. Family, human settlements and other social questions

Various requests for information contained in the questionnaire have a direct bearing on the specific recommendations contained in General Assembly resolution 31/136, especially as they relate to the establishment of machinery designed to ensure the effective implementation and evaluation of the World Plan of Action and the Programme for the Decade (para. 4) and to the undertaking of massive public information programmes with a view to bringing awareness to all sectors of the population about the need of fully implementing the Programme for the Decade (para. 6).

11. Also in compliance with paragraphs 4 and 5 of General Assembly resolution 3490 (XXX) and with the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women at its resumed twenty-sixth session which were subsequently endorsed by the Council, the findings and conclusions of the Commission were brought to the notice of the Committee on Development Planning and the Committee on Review and Appraisal which were urged to pay special attention to the question of the status of women in the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy.

12. At its thirteenth session, held in April 1977, the Committee on Development Planning had before it the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its twenty-sixth session (E/5909) and the report in documents E/CN.6/598 and Add.1 and 2. The Committee took note of General Assembly resolution 3490 (XXX) on the report on its twelfth session. It stated that it had been informed about the views put forward by the Commission on the Status of Women in the report on its twenty-sixth session on the subject of major trends and policies with regard to the status of women, particularly the integration of women in the development process, and that in discharging its responsibilities, following its customary practice, the Committee will continue to draw on the work carried out by the Commission on the Status of Women and all other bodies of the United Nations that are concerned with development problems and policies. 1/

13. At its fourth session, held in May and June 1977, the Committee on Review and Appraisal had before it Economic and Social Council resolution 2060 (LXII), the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/5909) and the report of the Committee on Development Planning on its thirteenth session (E/5939). 1/ Reference to the implementation of the World Plan of Action was not made in the report of the Committee on Review and Appraisal.

III. DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO THE INTERORGANIZATIONAL  
PROGRAMME FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN:  
EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

14. In accordance with paragraph 5 (b) of General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX), the organizations of the United Nations system have further developed the interorganizational programme which, although initially conceived of as dealing

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1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 4 (E/5939), para 86.

only with the integration of women in development, now covers a much wider field and is geared to the implementation of the World Plan of Action in line with the objectives for the United Nations Decade for Women 1976-1985. The programme is therefore entitled "Interorganizational programme for the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace" and will be implemented in two five-year phases.

15. The programme is based on an analysis of the objectives contained in the World Plan of Action and in related resolutions of the Mexico Conference and the General Assembly. After elaboration of a conceptual framework for the programme, a synthesis of ongoing and planned activities of the United Nations system has been undertaken in accordance with the nine principal objectives of the programme, which in turn are broken down into a number of more specific objectives. Activities are being undertaken or planned towards each of the objectives, according to the following means of action: (a) technical co-operation; (b) research, data collection and analysis; (c) dissemination and exchange of information; and (d) formulation, implementation and review of international standards. The programme's purpose is to promote effective co-operation and collaboration among all organizations of the system in order to accelerate further the system's response to the resolutions of the World Conference of the International Women's Year while avoiding duplication of efforts and waste of the limited resources available. It is understood that several activities may be planned and implemented as joint projects while others may require separate action by individual organizations according to their areas of specialization.

16. The interorganizational programme was completed by the United Nations in April 1977, on the basis of contributions received by all interested organizations. Its approval was expected by the end of May 1977. However, various organizations forwarded corrections, additions or revisions to the text which was sent to all organizations by mid-April 1977. These have been incorporated into the text and the Programme has now been finalized. The future of the Programme, especially its regular updating as well as the possibility of joint implementation of projects, will be discussed at the Ad Hoc Interagency Meeting on Preparations of the World Conference, 1980, which was held at Geneva from 20 to 22 July 1977.

#### IV. DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE

17. In resolution 31/135 of 16 December 1976, the General Assembly endorsed the decision of the Economic and Social Council to create an International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, as well as the guidelines set out by the Council in resolution 1998 (IX) of 12 May 1976 regarding the activities of the Institute, in particular the necessary close collaboration between the Centre and the regional institutes which have similar objectives. The General Assembly also accepted with appreciation the offer of the Government of Iran to act as host for the Institute; it requested the Secretary-General to expedite the substantive preparations for the early establishment of the Institute and to this end seek actively financial resources through voluntary contributions as well as technical support for it. The Secretary-General was further requested to report to the

Economic and Social Council at its sixty-second session on the progress achieved. In compliance with that resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a report to the Council at that session (E/5926), and has further pursued the activities described therein.

18. In resolution 31/137 of 16 December 1976, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene during the thirty-second session of the Assembly a pledging conference for voluntary contributions to be made to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women for the purpose of financing programmes under the World Plan of Action and the Programme for the Decade for Women and to the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. The Pledging Conference is scheduled to be held at Headquarters on 8 November 1977.

19. The following pledges of financial support for the Institute have now been made:

Iran . . . . .	\$1,000,000
Mauritius . . . . .	15,000
Turkey . . . . .	5,000

In addition, the following sums were contributed in cash:

Netherlands . . . . .	\$98,425
Philippines . . . . .	500

#### V. PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN, 1980

20. In its resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, the General Assembly proclaimed the period from 1976 to 1985 United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, to be devoted to effective and sustained national, regional and international action to implement the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the World Conference of the International Women's Year. It also decided to convene in 1980, at the mid-term of the Decade, a world conference to review and evaluate the progress made in implementing the objectives of the International Women's Year, as recommended by the World Conference of the International Women's Year and, where necessary, to readjust existing programmes in the light of new data and research available.

21. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1999 (LX) of 12 May 1976, stressing the importance of a comprehensive and thorough review and appraisal of progress made in meeting the goals of the World Plan of Action, requested the Commission on the Status of Women, at its twenty-sixth session, to consider different aspects of the preparatory work for the World Conference on the Decade, including its agenda. It further decided to consider at its sixty-fourth session, to be held in March and April 1978, the preparatory work for the Conference.

22. Accordingly, the Secretary-General prepared a note on the preparatory work for the 1980 Conference for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women

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at its twenty-sixth session, where certain issues were raised relating to different aspects of the substantive preparation and the organization of the Conference as well as the programmed budget implications (E/CK.6/600).

23. The ad hoc interagency meeting on the recommendations of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, which convened at Geneva from 1 to 8 September 1976, expressed the hope that the preparations for the 1980 Conference would be accorded the same importance as those for other major United Nations conferences, and that adequate resources would be allocated for this purpose. It strongly endorsed the holding in 1979 of regional intergovernmental conferences, which were considered as an essential part of the preparatory work. These conferences would review the progress made in the implementation of the plans of action at the country and regional levels and propose any revisions of emphasis. Parallel meetings of non-governmental organizations and mass media representatives at the regional level were also considered useful. The meeting further agreed that it would be important to hold ad hoc interagency meetings during the period before the Conference in order to arrange for and co-ordinate the system's inputs to the preparatory work. It suggested that such meetings, as necessary, should be arranged starting in July 1977, during the sixty-third session of the Economic and Social Council at Geneva. An Ad Hoc Interagency Meeting on Preparations for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women was convened at Geneva from 20 to 22 July 1977. Participants were invited, among other things, to give their views on the substantive aspects of the preparation of the Conference, including a suggested agenda and an identification of documents to be prepared. 2/

24. The Commission on the Status of Women discussed the question of the preparatory work for the Conference at its resumed twenty-sixth session 3/ and recommended a draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. 4/

25. The Economic and Social Council amended the above-mentioned draft resolution and adopted the text as resolution 2062 (LXII) of 12 May 1977, the operative paragraphs of which read as follows:

"1. Requests the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-seventh session to give the highest priority to the consideration of the item 'Preparatory work for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, 1980' and to the study of proposals concerning the substantive and organizational arrangements for the Conference, taking into account all the relevant reports relating to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action, as well as the discussions of the Commission and

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2/ At the time of the preparation of the present report, information was not available on the results of the meeting.

3/ For a summary of the discussion, see Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 3 (E/5909), paras. 325-343.

4/ For the text of the draft resolution, see ibid., pp. 21-22, draft resolution VIII.

the documents submitted to it at its twenty-sixth session, and to report to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-fourth session.

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-seventh session a report outlining a programme of concrete action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, 1976-1985, as the basis for a report to be submitted to the 1980 World Conference;

"3. Decides to establish, not later than June 1978, a preparatory committee composed of not more than 23 Member States designated by the President of the Council after consultation with regional groups, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, to make recommendations for the substantive and organizational arrangements for the World Conference;

"4. Invites the regional commissions to consider at the earliest opportunity ways and means of contributing effectively to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, including the possibility of holding before 1980 regional seminars or meetings on the themes of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, and of reporting thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-fourth session."

26. In compliance with paragraph 1 of the resolution, the Commission on the Status of Women will have before it at its twenty-seventh session proposals which will further elaborate the substantive and organizational arrangements for the Conference. These proposals will reflect the exchange of views and conclusions reached at the Ad Hoc Interagency Meeting on Preparations for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women already mentioned. The note to be prepared for the Commission's consideration will suggest a more detailed agenda with the corresponding documentation to be prepared by the relevant organizations within the United Nations system.

## VI. ELABORATION OF REGIONAL PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

27. The World Plan of Action, in paragraph 46, sets out 14 objectives, the achievement of which should be envisaged by the mid-point of the United Nations Decade for Women in 1980. It recommends further that these objectives should be developed in more specific terms in regional plans of action. Also, both the World Plan of Action and the Programme for the Decade stress the role, at the regional level, of the regional commissions in stimulating national action through the development of regional programmes for the Decade. The developments described below are all in implementation of the World Plan of Action and the Programme for the Decade and have a most direct and important bearing on the recommendations of General Assembly resolution 31/136.

28. Regional seminars, conferences or consultations have taken place or are now planned in the five regions, in close co-operation with the regional commissions, as follow-up action to the Conference. In some instances the seminars are held under the United Nations regular programme of technical co-operation, and the

Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs acts as the executing agency in consultation with the regional commissions.

29. The first seminar of the Decade was held in Argentina in March 1976, under the regular programme of technical co-operation, on the participation of women in economic, social and political development and obstacles to their integration. The seminar recommended that a group of experts should be convened to elaborate a regional plan of action before the end of 1976. 5/ In implementation of this request a Technical Consultative Meeting was held in Mexico City from 10 to 14 January 1977, which adopted a regional plan of action. This meeting was attended by experts of nine countries of the region invited in their personal capacity, and in consultation with their Governments. 6/ It was followed by a Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America which was held in Havana from 13 to 17 June 1977. The Conference adopted a Regional Plan of Action as well as a resolution recommending that the Executive Secretary of ECLA convoke a special session of the Plenary Committee of the Commission during 1977 to give final approval to the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Development and to adopt the measures necessary to guarantee its rapid and effective implementation.

30. In the Asian region, which already has a regional plan of action endorsed at the World Conference in Mexico, a regional follow-up seminar was held in Nepal in February 1977 on the participation of women in political, economic and social development (with special emphasis on machinery to accelerate the integration of women in development). This seminar was organized under the regular programme of technical co-operation by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. 7/

31. In Africa, which has a regional plan of action endorsed by the World Conference and an ongoing action programme of several years' standing, a regional conference is being planned by the Economic Commission for Africa, with support from the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs through the regular programme of technical co-operation. The Conference is scheduled to be held from 27 September to 3 October 1977 in Nouakchott and it is anticipated that 35 participants will attend. The objectives of the conference will be to review progress in the implementation of plans of action for the integration of women in development at the national and regional levels and to propose further activities, including ways in which organizations and agencies working at the regional level can co-operate with each other.

32. Plans are being made for a regional consultation, to be held in Amman in March and April 1978 within the framework of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, to adopt a plan for the region.

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5/ For the report of the seminar, see ST/ESA/SER.B/9.

6/ Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela.

7/ For the report of the seminar, see ST/ESA/SER.B/10.

33. In Europe, the Division of Social Affairs of the United Nations Office at Geneva organized a seminar in the Netherlands, in April 1977, on the changing roles of men and women in modern society, their functions, rights and responsibilities. The main focus of the seminar was the new relationship between men and women in the family, in employment, in public life, and so forth, in those societies which are trying to shake off the vestiges of sex-oriented prejudices and barriers. Consultations are now taking place with a view to organize a European seminar in order to adopt a European plan of action.

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