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INTERREGIONAL CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL
SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMESNote by the Secretary-General

1. By its resolution 42/125 of 7 December 1987 entitled "Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes", the General Assembly, inter alia, reaffirmed the decision of the Economic and Social Council that the Commission for Social Development should review, at its thirty-first session, the results of the Interregional Consultation and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the progress achieved in implementing and following up the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future (E/CONF.80/10, chap. III). Pursuant to that request, the Commission for Social Development received a report of the Secretary-General on the results and follow-up of the Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes (E/CN.5/1989/3). The Commission considered that report under item 4 of its agenda, at its 6th to 9th meetings, from 15 to 27 March 1989. Subsequently, the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission, adopted resolution 1989/53, entitled "Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future and follow-up of the Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes". The present note, which transmits the latest report of the Secretary-General to the Commission for Social Development, has been drawn up in response to the request contained in General Assembly resolution 42/125.

2. At its first regular session in 1989, in addition to resolution 1989/53, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1989/49, entitled "Follow-up of the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future", concerned specifically with the negative social consequences of alcohol use.

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3. A most important area within which the Secretary-General has initiated steps in pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/53 has been to ensure that social issues as conceived in the Guiding Principles should become a major part of the new international strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade. To this end, organizational adjustments were made within the United Nations Office at Vienna, including the establishment of a special task force on the social policy inputs to the new international development strategy, and procedures were put into effect to ensure fullest consideration of the social dimension in the preparation of the strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade.

4. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/53 and on the basis of the proposed further follow-up activities, as outlined in his report (E/CN.5/1989/3), the Secretary-General has also initiated steps to strengthen the follow-up of the Interregional Consultation, focusing on, inter alia, integrated, family- and community-oriented cost-effective innovations in the design of social welfare. These steps include the planning of a data base on contemporary innovations in social welfare policies and programmes, and the development of a programme that includes holding expert meetings and the preparation of a policy manual for use by practitioners in governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations. It is the intention of the Secretary-General that these means be used to bring about a more rapid exchange of recent experience among countries in this field. This programme will be closely integrated with the ongoing programme on the family, especially if the General Assembly decides to proclaim an international year of the family.

5. Also pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/53, the Secretary-General has taken steps to strengthen procedures for more effective technical support and co-operation with Governments, especially those of developing countries, focusing on the policy, planning, administration and training aspects of developmental social welfare. In this regard, a study is now under way on co-operation in social matters among the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Other means are being examined to ensure more effective forms of assistance to Governments, particularly those of the developing countries, in formulating appropriate social policies and in setting up effective programmes according to their needs.

6. At the present stage, the most important task is to implement the specific follow-up activities recommended by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in their respective resolutions, particularly at the regional and national levels. The process is already well advanced in the European region. In addition to the meeting of experts held at Bonn last January at the invitation of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, described in the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission for Social Development (E/CN.5/1989/3, para. 31), the Bureau of the European Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Affairs, held in April 1987 as a preparatory meeting to the Interregional Consultation, met at Warsaw on 29 and 30 May 1989 to discuss follow-up of the Consultation and the Ministers' Conference.

7. In view of the need for corresponding follow-up in the other regions, the Secretary-General wishes to stress the importance of taking expeditious measures to

assist Governments, particularly of the developing countries, in formulating appropriate policies and effective programmes in social welfare, in line with the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes. The Secretary-General invites Governments of the regions concerned to consider holding, in the near future, regional conferences on the follow-up to the Interregional Consultation. The United Nations is ready to extend all its assistance to countries hosting such regional meetings.

8. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/53, the Secretary-General will report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session on further progress achieved in implementating and following up the Guiding Principles.
