

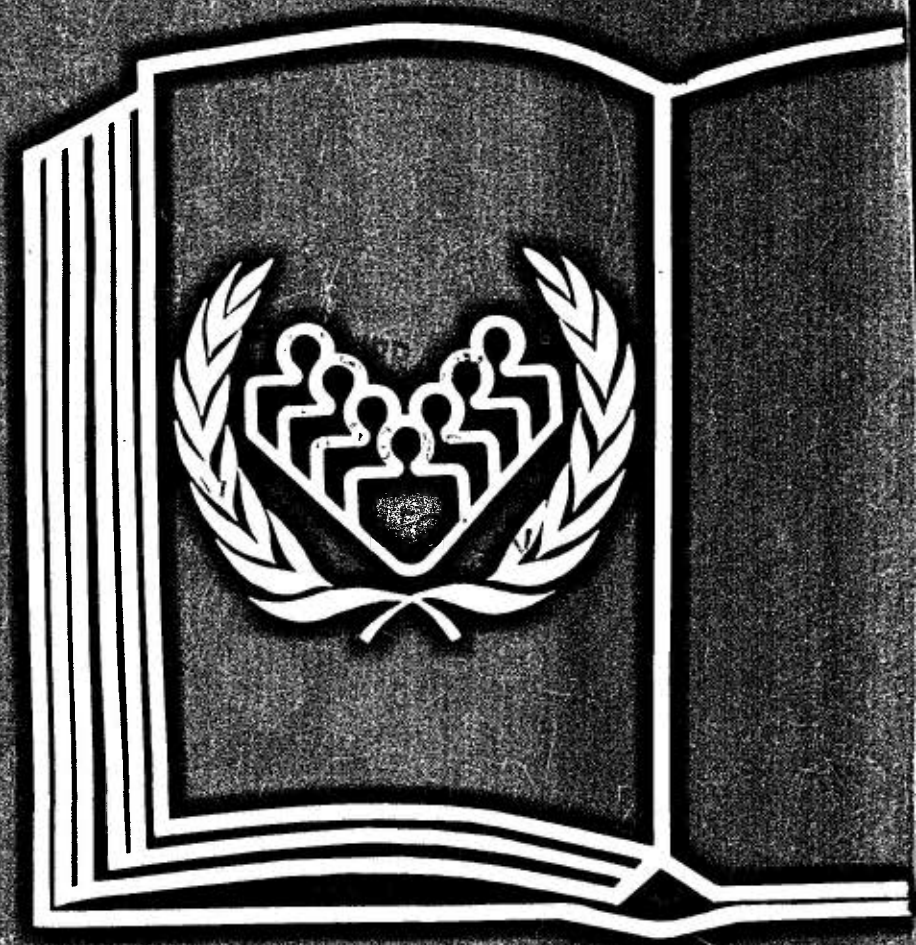
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History and Concept



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UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS:

HISTORY AND CONCEPT

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INTRODUCTION

As countries seek to harness their national energies for the Third Development Decade, they continue to utilize traditional forms of external development assistance, but also increasingly link the goal of national self-reliance with technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). Within this framework, the concept of volunteer service as represented by the United Nations Volunteers is a viable and evolving element.

This paper chronologically traces the history of the United Nations Volunteers, from its original conception to its emergence as a major and vital new element of the United Nations development system for the Second Development Decade. The achievements of its first decade are summarily outlined in the concluding chapter.

BACKGROUND

When modern volunteer service commenced is difficult to pinpoint. Customarily, however, historians of volunteer service link its beginnings with youth's shocked reaction to the destruction caused by World War I, fueling their need to demonstrate a human concern for fellow men, and their determination to take voluntary constructive action. The moral philosophy of constructive peaceful alternatives to war was not confined to Europe. In India, for instance, where the teachings and example of the Mahatma Gandhi attracted world attention, life in an ashram and village development held sufficiently high appeal for some foreigners that the first team of long-term international volunteers went to India in 1934. There were analogous developments elsewhere.

The vast devastation caused by the Second World War and the imperative of rebuilding Europe led to the mobilization of youth in more and larger work camp activities. Volunteers thus played an important part in the reconstruction of East and West Europe. Conceptually, these work camps helped advance the voluntary movement by (i) establishing the fact that young people had something important to offer in rebuilding their countries and (ii) bringing together the youth of many countries previously isolated from one another, giving them the chance to acquire a mutual understanding by working side-by-side. One of the first efforts to organize such voluntary groupings was undertaken by UNESCO when it sponsored, in 1948, a Conference of Organizers of International Workcamps which established the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS).

In the decade of the 'Fifties, as self-determination of peoples became a recognized right enunciated in declarations of the United Nations General Assembly, many former colonial territories gained national sovereignty. The launching in 1961 of the First United Nations Development Decade not only focussed world-wide recognition on the legitimate aspirations of newly-independent countries but also highlighted the

state of chronic under-development and deprivation in which newly independent nations undertook the tasks of national development with high enthusiasm. With more than half the population of many developing countries below the age of twenty, it was obvious that youth should be permitted to play a major role in nation building.

By the beginning of the 'Sixties, youth of the industrialized nations responded in large numbers to help meet the need for middle-level manpower within national development efforts in the developing world. Some were members of voluntary nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), while many others were government sponsored. Some were recent graduates, generalists who themselves had to learn skills on-the-job; others had some technical training and experience. In some instances, the foreign volunteers joined with local youth in community development and other work schemes, serving as catalysts to strengthen domestic voluntary activities. As national and domestic volunteers organized for development work, the foreign volunteer-sending agencies devoted greater attention to exploring how best to relate to these indigenous groups.

It was in this context that, in 1961, the U.S. Peace Corps was founded as the first major governmental volunteer service for development. The Peace Corps, in turn, exerted particular efforts to encourage industrialized country governments to organize comparable bilateral volunteer services, and in 1962, convened an intergovernmental Conference on middle-level manpower in Puerto Rico. This resulted in the creation of governmental or government-sponsored volunteer services in a number of countries; in addition, an International Peace Corps Secretariat was established in Washington. This Secretariat was soon transformed into the International Secretariat for Volunteer Service (ISVS), an intergovernmental institution whose headquarters was eventually transferred to Geneva, Switzerland. Within the next five years, a large number of governmental volunteer-sending organizations were formed. 1/

1/ By late 1966, ISVS could report that 19 countries had government-sponsored volunteer programmes with some 16,000 volunteers serving overseas, while 18 countries had national and domestic volunteer programmes involving an estimated 33,000 volunteers (including domestic volunteer programmes in industrialized countries).

VOLUNTEERISM IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

ECOSOC Resolution in 1961

Parallel with the bilateral initiatives, the concept of "volunteer technical personnel" in the United Nations system was first mooted in a note by the United Nations Secretary-General (E/TAC/109) (1961) and, then, in a draft resolution introduced by the United States in the Economic and Social Council in 1961 on the "Use of Volunteer Workers in the Operational Programmes of the United Nations and Related Agencies designed to assist in the economic and social development of the less-developed countries". It was noted that funds available for technical cooperation programmes for economic development of developing countries were not commensurate with existing needs and that volunteer personnel could provide additional supporting assistance. ^{2/} The sponsor of the resolution also emphasized that volunteers would be of service to international organizations and subject to their support and discipline. Six guiding principles were proposed. In accordance with these principles, volunteers were to be assigned only in the field and solely within activities deemed suitable by the executing agencies of the United Nations for volunteer assignments; could be assigned only with the prior approval of the receiving country and with the agreement of the executing agency; and would enjoy the status of an international civil servant. Finally, the government providing the volunteer personnel would be responsible for meeting all related costs.

^{2/} Earlier documentation on this question refers only to "economic" development, whereas later United Nations terminology covers "social" aspects as well and more often than not refers to comprehensive socio-economic planning and integrated development.

In the course of the debate on this draft resolution, several representatives indicated that their governments would support a scheme providing such useful additional assistance to governments at their request, as a means of increasing the total resources available to developing countries in their efforts for economic and social progress. Some members stressed that the volunteers should have skills and knowledge useful to the recipient countries and be recruited only when specific needs arose for their services.

Other members were more cautious, stating that, while not in principle opposed to the idea, they felt the question should first be raised before the General Assembly, where all member states would have the chance to express their views on the subject. They also felt it should be ensured that volunteers would not replace qualified local people or impede their training. Still other members considered that the resolution was proposed by the sponsor as a way to influence other countries and might jeopardize the training of local personnel.

During the debate, representatives of some United Nations specialized agencies had also aired their views on the subject of including volunteers in their technical assistance projects. The representatives of FAO and UNESCO noted, on the basis of their organizations' experience with junior experts, that they would be in a position to utilize volunteers. Neither WHO nor ILO had used volunteers in their projects, but the former was considering the use of junior experts, "under the usual staff rules", while the representative of the latter explained that a decision would need to be taken by its governing body were it to use such volunteers. 3/

3/ It can be inferred from both the principles attached to the resolution and the debate, that at the time, there was no firm distinction between "volunteers" and "junior experts" or "junior professional

A draft resolution was introduced to refer the matter to the General Assembly, and thus give all governments a chance to comment upon the idea. A compromise wording was reached, however, whereby the Council:

"Approves, upon agreement of the recipient government, the consideration of the use of volunteer technical personnel in the technical assistance activities of the United Nations, and those carried on by the United Nations related Agencies on a limited and experimental basis, subject to revision and elaboration by the General Assembly."

The draft resolution, with this amendment and the six principles referred to above, was approved by the members of the Committee and on 4 August 1961 became ECOSOC Resolution 849 (XXXII).

3/ (contd)

officers". The debate did not centre around defining any of these categories, but rather was concerned with fitting into the United Nations system projects, people who were not "experts", whose costs would be largely covered by the sending country. Later, it became clear that the resolution really covered "associate experts", as they came to be called, and not the "volunteers" who would go to the field under different conditions, and without possessing the status of an international civil servant.

Early use of Volunteers in the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies

In the wake of ECOSOC Resolution 849 (XXXII), the ILO considered the possibility of including volunteers in ILO-assisted projects. In May 1965, by an exchange of letters with one volunteer-sending organization, agreement was reached for the provision of volunteers to ILO technical assistance programmes. The ILO stipulated that:

"volunteers assigned to the ILO shall, in no way, be considered as agents or staff members, and the ILO shall consequently incur no employer liability whatever towards such volunteers. Such volunteers shall not be entitled to any privileges, immunities, compensation or reimbursements."

The ILO had technical authority with respect to volunteers but they were administratively subject to the jurisdiction of their sending organization. In spite of these auspicious beginnings, less than 20 volunteers had served in ILO-assisted projects by the end of 1967. The principal concerns raised by ILO were the questions of administrative overhead and administrative supervision of volunteers. By late 1967, however, there was a readiness within the agency to re-appraise the situation and include more volunteers in its technical cooperation activities.

The FAO had, since the 1961 ECOSOC Resolution 849 (XXXII), been investigating ways of bringing bilateral volunteers (as distinct from associate experts) into its projects, and in late 1966, this effort came to fruition. FAO worked out formal arrangements with several volunteer-sending organizations, and informal agreements with others. By the end of 1967, 64 volunteers had been fielded to FAO projects, some 70 posts were being processed, and approximately 500 more requests were being considered. In a report produced in 1967, the FAO

recognized the value of the technical assistance rendered by the volunteers in its projects, and stated that there was considerably more to their input than goodwill.

In 1967, UNESCO and UNICEF were devising ways in which they could constitutionally incorporate volunteers in their projects. UNESCO laid down five criteria which it felt should be adhered to should a volunteer programme be initiated within its projects: (1) volunteers should always be fielded in teams, as international as possible, and the teams should always include local volunteers; (2) volunteers should be recruited from both government-supported agencies and NGOs; (3) both students and technicians should be recruited for volunteer teams; (4) volunteers should not replace local staff; and (5) each international team should be tailored to, and recruited specifically for, the functions needed in the project. The agency specified further that each international team of volunteers in UNESCO-assisted projects should have a senior member as a leader, who should be briefed at UNESCO Headquarters. The UNESCO terms for a volunteer programme continued, "as the direct administration of a programme of volunteer service by UNESCO is not envisaged, the eventual recruitment and administration of volunteers for UNESCO-assisted projects would be managed by the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service with which UNESCO would sign an agreement".

UNDP, meanwhile, entered into an agreement with the United Nations Association of Great Britain. The Association provided graduate economists - known as UK/UNA volunteers - who were assigned as programme assistants in selected UNDP field offices. These volunteers, who functioned under the direction of the Resident Representative, were given contracts as locally recruited UNDP personnel, at the top level of the local salary scale with, in addition, a nonresident's allowance. Their external costs - return travel, baggage and resettlement allowance at the end of the assignment - were absorbed by the UK/UN Association.

The results of the placements were considered generally successful, and the scheme continued until 1971.

UNICEF was formulating a policy of its own on the incorporation of volunteers into its projects. This came out in 1968, in the form of a memorandum to its field offices, after the fielding of international volunteers in early 1967 to work on UNICEF assisted projects in India and Pakistan.

Volunteerism and the Participation of Youth in Development

Concomitant with these efforts by the United Nations and its specialized agencies to use volunteers in United Nations-assisted projects, the international community as a whole was concerned with another but much related issue, i.e., the participation of youth in development. Between 1964 and 1968, this issue was raised and discussed in four Inter-Agency Meetings on Youth. These meetings, and particularly the 2nd and 4th meetings, considered volunteerism as a possible vehicle for youth participation in development.

The 2nd Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Youth in April 1965 was specific in its references to voluntary service among youth. The discussion on "International Arrangements for Youth Volunteers", centred around two subtopics, "Within the United Nations and specialized agencies"; and "General schemes for international voluntary service by youth". On the former topic, several conclusions emerged. The administrative arrangements adopted by the United Nations and specialized agencies governing the use and assignment of volunteers were not the same, which led to concern on the part of governments and concerned NGOs; there had been too little experience to date with the use of volunteers in United Nations projects to determine the types of tasks for which they were best suited or their effectiveness within the United Nations technical cooperation activities; and certain agencies,

particularly FAO and UNESCO, wanted to increase the effectiveness and scope of their use of volunteers.

During the discussion of this subtopic, it transpired that:

"there was a general agreement that long-term volunteers could perform a useful function at a practical level, but that to gain the maximum value from their presence, they should operate: (1) under the supervision of a technical assistance expert, and (2) in a training or demonstration situation where they could pass on their skills to local counterparts."

It was also agreed that ways of augmenting the number of volunteers associated with the United Nations operational programmes would be further examined.

On the second subtopic, the meeting discussed ways of enabling more young volunteers to participate in development projects as:

"the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies would continue to utilize directly only a small proportion of young volunteers in the field of international service. However, as international bodies they might be able to assist in strengthening the appropriate institutions for the coordination of international voluntary service by youth, especially with regard to the exchange of information between 'sending' and 'receiving' organizations and countries through a form of clearing-house."

It was agreed to continue to study the use of international youth volunteers in technical cooperation activities of the United Nations, and to explore the possibility of finding ways to strengthen CCIVS

"with a view to its becoming an effective international clearing-house for international voluntary service by youth".

By July of that same year (1965), this concern to bring youth into the development process culminated in the passing of two ECOSOC resolutions, E/RES/1086 (XXXIX) G, "Family, Child and Youth Welfare Service", and E/RES/1086 (XXXIX) J, "Youth and National Development", on the basis of a report by the Secretary-General on "Family, Child and Welfare Services". The first of these two resolutions requested the Secretary-General "(b) To undertake studies of... (ii) the effective use of volunteers, especially in social welfare programmes concerned with youth development", while the latter requested that governments, United Nations agencies and NGOs pay more attention to the needs of youth and to ways in which they could more fully participate in national development activities. These resolutions gave an impetus to the volunteer movement, and constituted another official recognition of the potentially important contribution that youth could make, in volunteer and other capacities.

The 4th Inter-Agency Meeting on Youth, held from 3-8 July 1968, considered the question of youth participation and specifically that of the role of volunteers in technical cooperation. In this meeting, the "importance of international voluntary service for building up the infrastructure of youth work in developing areas", and the "value of international youth action, particularly through multinational teams, for building up national schemes and a tradition of voluntary service by youth", were agreed upon. The meeting endorsed the United Nations' proposal to convene a formal Inter-Agency Meeting:

"to discuss the technical and management questions regarding the use of volunteers in development programmes of the United Nations and agencies... It was agreed that the time had come to consider seriously the possibility of establishing an international association (or) Corps of Volunteers for work in

technical cooperation projects assisted by the United Nations and agencies."

The meeting further recommended, under the rubric of long-term planning, that:

"an important feature of national and international youth programmes should be the encouragement of voluntary service by young people and the active participation of youth in planning and carrying out development programmes."

These recommendations by the 4th Inter-Agency Meeting on Youth reflected an accelerating recognition both within and outside the United Nations system of the potential value of volunteerism within the realm of technical cooperation.

Other Multilateral Efforts

During 1967 and 1968, two multilateral bodies concerned with international volunteerism organized various meetings which touched on the subject of volunteers serving in United Nations projects and thus played a part in the widening debate, particularly in calling attention to the need for a coordinating mechanism for such volunteers. The first was the "Seminar of Affiliates with Long-Term Service Programmes", sponsored by CCIVS from 10-12 November 1967. Following on its heels was the ISVS "Special Session with International Organizations at the 1967 Directors' Meeting", held on 17 November. Both CCIVS, a coordination committee for NGOs involved in volunteer-sending and the organization of workcamps, and ISVS, a major intergovernmental volunteer organization at that time, discussed during the course of their respective meetings, the establishment of a "clearing-house" or other brokerage mechanism to facilitate the placement of international volunteers in United Nations-assisted projects.

The report of the CCIVS Meeting held in November 1967 noted that the legal basis for sending volunteers to work on projects assisted by the United Nations was Resolution 849 (XXXII). This resolution, according to the report, "recognizes the significance of volunteers but does not permit United Nations funds to be used to support volunteers in any way. With the notable exception of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Family has interpreted this resolution until now as precluding the use of volunteers in United Nations-assisted development programmes." A main concern voiced in the report was the coordination of volunteers in the field and the necessity to avoid as much as possible duplication of efforts in recruiting and fielding volunteers in development projects.

The desire for increased cooperation between CCIVS and the United Nations, and the former's concern for comparable conditions of service for volunteers going into United Nations projects, were markedly reflected in the report adopted by the meeting, which included, inter alia, the suggestion that the "Committee (CCIVS) ask the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies to consider the possibility of establishing commonly agreed procedures for associating volunteers with their programmes, and that the Committee should stand ready to provide advice assistance in this regard."

The ISVS Meeting which then followed on 10-12 November 1967 also discussed the issue of coordination and examined a proposal put forth during the meeting that ISVS become a "clearing-house", and source of information and even planning/programme guidance in the field of international volunteerism. During the meeting, it became apparent, however, that while volunteer-sending organizations/governments were willing to send volunteers (under specific conditions) to work in association with international technical assistance projects, they did not favour the clearing-house concept but would prefer that volunteers be sent on the basis of a bilateral agreement between sending agency and receiving

governments and that they be associated with an international technical assistance project in some less formal way. 4/

The proposal for a clearing-house gained acceptance, however, when CCIVS hosted the "Sixteenth Conference of Organizers of International Voluntary Service" from 2-8 December 1968. This meeting was also attended by representatives of the United Nations and several specialized agencies participated. As a result of this meeting, a resolution was adopted, to establish a Clearing-House of Volunteers for Development. In accordance with this resolution, the clearing-house would be instrumental and helpful in involving qualified and trained volunteers in development projects carried out by, or with the approval of, governments. It was anticipated that many of these projects would be carried out in cooperation with the United Nations or its specialized agencies. It is clear that the proposal itself had originally been motivated by the perception shared by CCIVS and some of the agencies that some coordination of the use of volunteers in development projects of the United Nations was not only desirable but also becoming essential.

United Nations Initiative

In late 1967, the question of the use of volunteers was raised officially by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the central funding organization for technical cooperation in the United Nations system, in a report on the human resource

4/ It emerged during the meeting that a very large number of international volunteers were informally associated with United Nations assisted projects - this status sometimes being unknown to the United Nations agency and/or the headquarters of the volunteer-sending organization involved.

situation in general. Entitled "Execution of UNDP Projects: Problems of Recruitment and Supply of Expert Manpower for the Implementation of UNDP Projects: Progress Report by the Administrator", the report covered the gamut of human resources used, available for use, needed and proposed for UNDP projects. In his report, the Administrator established that ECOSOC Resolution 849 (XXXII) covered associate experts, whom he felt had a place in technical cooperation efforts, but did not apply to volunteers. Noting that while "the question of the utilization of volunteers, who are not covered by the requirements of Resolution 849 (XXXII) of the Economic and Social Council and who cannot therefore have the status of international civil servants or associate experts, is essentially outside the scope of the present report", the Administrator recognized "the potential importance of attracting collaboration with UNDP-sponsored projects, through the recipient governments, of larger numbers of volunteers, both national and international". Toward this end, the Administrator stated that he intended to "encourage Resident Representatives to offer their good offices to recipient governments with a view to facilitating the conclusion of such agreements". The report was none too early: by mid-1967, 67 volunteers from one country alone were working in UNDP-assisted projects in 18 countries.

The Administrator's report on human resources provided an opportunity for the Fifth Session of the UNDP Governing Council in January 1968 to discuss the question of volunteers in the United Nations system. The views expressed by government representatives varied, from a desire to see an increase in volunteers (and associate experts), and a stated willingness to provide them, to outright opposition on the part of one country to their use in any projects, United Nations or others. However, several countries noted that volunteers were needed and useful, while one representative expressed the reservation that volunteers should work in their own countries to avoid exacerbating the brain drain situation.

Following this session and guided by the deliberation of the Governing Council, UNDP issued a memorandum to its field offices with directions on the use of volunteers in UNDP-assisted projects (DP/CM/Field/148) (1968). The memorandum reiterated the Administrator's interest in attracting skilled volunteers to collaborate in UNDP projects. Encouraging the Resident Representatives to "offer their good offices to recipient governments" with a view to concluding agreements between the volunteer-sending organizations/governments and the recipient governments, the Administrator noted that "it is of paramount importance that volunteers' work be coordinated at the national level by the government itself, or by a body it designates". The memorandum also addressed other current concerns of the agencies vis-à-vis their volunteer programmes: "Particular care should be taken not to impair the international character of the UNDP by absorption under its projects of too many volunteers of one nationality", and emphasized that "Volunteers - domestic or international - do not at any point, even while working with United Nations experts, acquire the status of international civil servants. They remain employees of their own sponsoring organizations. This differs from the case of associate experts who, although paid by their donor governments, become international civil servants and holders of Laissez-Passers". Resident Representatives were also asked to assist developing countries to develop their own volunteer organizations, and to give priority to the utilization of domestic volunteers and where possible form volunteer teams consisting of both international and domestic volunteers.

Also in 1968, a team led by Sir Robert Jackson had been appointed to prepare a capacity study of the development system of the United Nations. This work, entitled "A Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System", was published in two volumes in November 1968. The second volume contained a major chapter on "Human Resources for International Development Operations". Under this heading, the question of volunteers and associate experts was examined, and in its recommendations on manpower for the execution of projects, the study stated that:

"Associate project personnel and volunteers should be more widely used and the creation of an international volunteer service should be studied."

During 1967, the Office of Technical Cooperation of the United Nations (OTC) - the precursor of today's United Nations Department of Technical Cooperation for Development - had also been garnering its resources for a full-scale inquiry into the question of the utilization of volunteers. Informal inquiries had been made, of agencies, volunteer-sending organizations, volunteer receiving countries, and individuals within the United Nations who were acquainted with international volunteer programmes, as to the utilization, potential and need for international volunteers. By November 1967, on the basis of its research, OTC was seeing its role as that of a "broker" in which a government would request a volunteer and provide administrative back-stopping and the United Nations expert would give the technical guidance and supervision. Negotiations would be undertaken separately between the host and the volunteer-sending government to cover financial arrangements. At this time, the OTC stated directly that it was not considering the establishment of a volunteer service of its own, but made an informal proposal to ISVS that the latter attach a volunteer to the Resident Representative's Office in some countries to research the setting, potential duties and conditions of service of volunteer postings in the country. The volunteer would then also be in a position to serve as administrative assistant for the volunteers that followed. Also, during two missions in 1967, one to six Latin American countries, the other to six African countries, informal inquiries were made of the Resident Representatives as to the use, need for and attitude of their country towards international volunteers. When the reaction to these initial approaches seemed positive, the OTC took the firmer step of writing, in February 1968, to the Resident Representatives in selected countries to solicit their views on the subject. When the responses came in, they mostly reflected interest in receiving volunteers.

Finally, in an internal study in June 1968, OTC drew together the results of its research into volunteerism, conducted in consultation with recipient governments, governmental and nongovernmental volunteer-sending organizations and other agencies of the United Nations system. The study set forth possible alternative approaches to a United Nations Volunteer programme. These ranged from (a) the conclusion of bilateral agreements between sponsor and United Nations or specialized agency (as FAO was doing), to (b) the United Nations itself being broker for the United Nations system in dealings with sponsors, to (c) an "International Corps of Volunteers for Development" situated within the United Nations or the UNDP, to (d) an independent international agency for youth, one activity of which would be the International Corps of Volunteers for Development. More importantly, it made a concrete proposal for the establishment of a "United Nations Programme for Volunteers in Technical Cooperation", to serve within United Nations-assisted projects. Citing 15 principles which should guide the formation of such a programme, the report constituted a radical departure from the stipulations of Resolution 849 (XXXII), by defining a volunteer as distinct from an associate expert, giving him a specific role and promoting the concept of an organization whose main function would be to coordinate this new form of technical assistance.

The proposed new principles governing the utilization of volunteers in field projects of the United Nations, put forth in this OTC report, stipulated, inter alia, that:

"the volunteer component of a project should be a built-in element which is clearly structured, in response to determined need, to consist of work which is different from and noncompetitive with the work of local personnel and which extends the range of the senior expert's contribution to the project",

and that the working conditions and terms of service of the volunteers should be as consistent as possible among the various suppliers to the several international organizations in the same country.

In this first study, a trust fund was proposed for contingencies and to finance volunteers, and it recalled that the so-called "Quaker Fund", contributed to the United Nations in the "Fifties" by the Society of Friends from tithes collected from individual members of the Society, was the first example of a trust fund established in response to the popular wish to become identified with and contribute to the United Nations development activities. It was believed that nongovernmental organizations, foundations, and private sources as well as governments would wish to contribute to international volunteers serving under the United Nations.

THE SHAPING OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

Discussion in the Third Committee of the United Nations
General Assembly

For the first time, a committee of the General Assembly (the Third or Social Committee) addressed itself in 1968 to a formal recommendation concerning the use of volunteers in development cooperation activities of the United Nations system. The recommendation was included in a report prepared by a group of special rapporteurs appointed by the United Nations at the request of the Commission for Social Development. The report, which was entitled "Report of the Special Rapporteurs Appointed to Undertake a Review of Technical Cooperation Activities in Social Development", was based on missions to developing countries and recommended that:

"the technical cooperation programmes of the United Nations system should include the possibility of utilizing volunteers", noting that "there is a place for volunteers of many levels of competence in United Nations programmes."

These levels ranged from "retired persons with administrative or professional experience down to secondary and technical school graduates", although the rapporteurs observed "a special need for persons with university or technical training who would be capable of working under direction in both the carrying out of technical duties and teaching activities".

While finding bilateral volunteers "both valuable and welcome as a temporary means to counteract drastic shortages of staff", the rapporteurs found that for some countries, although they used such volunteers, some resistance characterized their usage, and, as a result, further offers

of volunteers had been declined even though technically their contribution might have been able to fill an important gap. The rapporteurs found also that in some countries there was reluctance to accept too many volunteers from any one country. It was therefore felt by the rapporteurs:

- that the number of countries supplying volunteers should be increased;
- that an attempt should be made to form multinational teams of volunteers under the professional guidance and supervision of United Nations experts;
- and that volunteers should work together with national counterparts and help promote national volunteer movements.

Noting that this could be facilitated by international coordination of volunteer schemes utilizing resources of national programmes and with the participation of nongovernmental organizations, and that "countries which could benefit most from volunteers... are often those least able to finance local living costs", they therefore recommended that on an experimental basis, some resources available for development purposes be earmarked for pilot projects they suggested be set up to place multinational volunteer teams in selected countries; and that the study of the use of volunteers by the United Nations technical cooperation programmes "be expedited" - which also included specifically a review of the adequacy of Economic and Social Council resolution 849 (XXXII) as United Nations legislation governing the use of volunteers.

Inter-Agency Agreement on the Use of Volunteers in Field Projects

In response to a request made by the Fourth Inter-Agency Meeting on Youth in July 1968, the United Nations Secretariat organized an Ad hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on the Use of Volunteers in Field Projects of the United Nations System from 9-10 December 1968. This meeting was attended by representatives of the United Nations and a number of its specialized agencies and culminated in a consensus of all agencies concerned that it was desirable to move towards the creation of an international corps of volunteers to work on technical cooperation activities under United Nations auspices. The meeting thus constituted a major landmark for the international volunteer movement. Its recommendations as to the best course of action for the United Nations in connection with the question of volunteers were specific and categorical:

"That the United Nations and agencies evolve a framework which would lead to a harmonization of practices for the use of volunteers in United Nations field projects and eventually to a volunteer instrument identifiable as a corps of volunteers,

"That all members of the United Nations system find a formula whereby volunteers may serve as agents of development within that system, and

"That the greater utilization of volunteers in field projects be included as a major item in the proposals for securing popular participation in the Second Development Decade."

Other recommendations concerned the issue of costs, for which the meeting proposed the creation of a fund-in-trust to help meet international and local costs of volunteers, as well as some of the administrative and overhead expenses incurred in the provision of liaison services between requesting governments and volunteer-sponsoring bodies; and the preparation of an interagency report on the use of volunteers in the field projects of the United Nations system, the leadership for which, it was suggested, should be taken by the United Nations.

General Assembly Decision to Study the Feasibility of an International Corps of Volunteers

Only 10 days after the Inter-Agency Meeting on the Use of Volunteers, the General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the Report of the Special Rapporteurs and its Social and Economic Committee, adopted resolution 2460 (XXIII), "Human Resources for Development", on 20 December 1968. This resolution expressed the conviction that

"the United Nations could respond imaginatively to the desire of individuals - and in particular of youth, irrespective of country, class, race, religion, sex, age, economic level or social status - to dedicate a certain period of their lives to the cause of development, and could offer them a positive means of translating their fellow men into an effective force for economic and social progress throughout the world",

and requested the Economic and Social Council

"to study the feasibility of creating an international corps of volunteers and to report to the next annual General Assembly..."

Pursuant to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2460 (XXIII), the United Nations accelerated its study and prepared a Note by the Secretary-General (E/4663 dated 16 May 1969) to provide the historical background and to indicate some of the considerations which the Economic and Social Council might wish to have in mind in determining its response to General Assembly resolution 2460 (XXIII). In this Note, entitled "Technical Cooperation Activities Undertaken by the Secretary-General", the Secretary-General underscored the importance of placing as much emphasis on the number and range of countries interested in receiving and using volunteers as there was on the number and range of countries wishing to supply them. The Secretary-General also presented the justification for renewed interest by the United Nations system in the question of the use of volunteers, after the 1961 Economic and Social Council resolution 849 (XXXII), and explained why it was inadequate to answer legal questions concerning the status of volunteers in United Nations projects:

"Resolution 849 (XXXII) appears to have related essentially to practices similar to those employed in the associate expert scheme, under which donor governments provide and pay all costs of graduates qualified to serve as juniors, principally at the P-1 and P-2 levels, to senior experts who supervise their work and provide on-the-job training throughout the contract period of from one to three years."

The Secretary-General's Note cited the two definitions of a volunteer that had been adopted by the Ad hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on the Use of Volunteers in Field Projects of the United Nations System held in December 1968, as the basis for its discussions:

"A volunteer is a person who gives his services without remuneration. He may be a youth, someone in middle age,

or a person recently retired from salaried employment. He is usually strongly motivated to donate his energies, his skills, his time for the accomplishment of tasks in whose purpose he believes."

"A volunteer offers a means of extending the work of an expert by demonstration and/or training, thereby helping to transfer a skill to local personnel."

and

"Volunteers are men and women who give up their normal work and, without regard to financial benefit, devote their knowledge and abilities, within the framework of common efforts, to the people in regions of social and economic need."

Finally, the Note briefly discussed the costs involved in financing volunteers including the related administrative arrangements. Seven possibilities were outlined, ranging from the idea that volunteers would be financed directly and wholly by the sending organizations, to various combinations of trust funds, sending organizations' contributions and project budgets to meet the costs.

Economic and Social Council Supports the Preparation of Feasibility Study

When the Economic and Social Council (forty-seventh session) opened in July 1969, the statement at the opening by United Nations Secretary-General U Thant declared that "many youth movements have demonstrated their determination to participate in the drive for development, especially through international voluntary service... With them, we should seek new and unconventional channels of communication and we should draw upon their open-mindedness and readiness to give a new impetus to development

policies." In doing so, the Secretary-General invited the Economic and Social Council to give consideration to his Note.

Part of the debate of that session aired the views of developing and industrialized nations on the use of volunteers in United Nations development projects, and centred around the proposal to study the feasibility of creating an international corps of volunteers for development. Nine countries sponsored a draft resolution welcoming the idea of establishing an international volunteer corps and calling for a study of the constitutional, administrative and financial arrangements under which it might operate.

It was noted during the debate that "the input of an individual volunteer or even a group of volunteers would be immeasurably enhanced if the volunteers enjoyed the unifying force of membership in an international corps under the flag of the United Nations." At the same time, it was felt that United Nations volunteers should be assigned to specific projects which were selected for their appropriateness to volunteer service; that they should be sent in accordance with needs of, and only in response to requests by, developing countries; that no volunteers should be sent to a country without prior approval of the recipient country; and that no volunteers should serve at the headquarters of a United Nations agency.

The speech by the Secretary-General introducing the debate, also touched on what was becoming a central reason for the idea of creating an international corps of volunteers: the necessity to coordinate volunteer inputs into United Nations-assisted technical assistance projects:

"We have proposed to keep a simple, workable arrangement which maximizes the flexibility which must characterize a Volunteer Corps and which permits its operation within the existing framework of the UNDP. The centralized,

coordinated direction which is necessary to harmonize existing but diffuse volunteer schemes can be provided by the UNDP."

The other main issues in the debate were whether the resolution should advocate the creation of an international corps of volunteers for development, or merely recommend that the feasibility of establishing such a corps be studied, and whether the corps of volunteers would be "of" the United Nations or "for" the United Nations: e.g., whether recruitment, selection and training would be done by the United Nations or by existing organizations sending bilateral volunteers to work in United Nations projects. Most countries favoured the study of the feasibility of creating a corps of volunteers for development, before launching directly into advocating the corps itself. The question of expenses of the new scheme was also raised by both governmental and United Nations agency representatives, but was left unsolved at the time, in the expectation that it would be addressed by the Secretary-General's feasibility study.

A number of NGOs also present at this session of the Economic and Social Council welcomed the idea of an international United Nations volunteer service, and most offered to put their experience in the field of international volunteerism and any other assistance that could be useful, at the disposal of the United Nations in its study of the situation.

After concluding its debate, on 31 July 1969, the Economic and Social Council passed resolution 1444 (XLVII), inviting the Secretary-General to study the constitutional, administrative and various financial arrangements mentioned in his Note (E/4663) for the creation of an international corps of volunteers and to submit his report and recommendations to the Council at its forty-ninth session through the Governing Council of UNDP. Several guiding principles had been agreed upon in the debate, and

formed the essence of recommendations to the Secretary-General for this feasibility study:

"(a) A volunteer should be a person who gives his services without regard to financial benefit and with the purpose of contributing to the development of the recipient country;

"(b) A volunteer scheme should consist of persons recruited on as wide a geographical basis as possible;

"(c) Where possible, the composition of teams should be on a multinational basis;

"(d) No volunteer shall be sent to a country without the explicit request or approval of the receiving country."

Report of the Secretary-General: "The Feasibility of Creating an International Corps of Volunteers for Development" (E/4790), April 1970

Before preparing the feasibility study, the Secretary-General consulted developing countries to ascertain their needs for middle-level volunteer cadres and to learn how they might use volunteers in national development, by sending a questionnaire to 90 governments through the UNDP Resident Representatives. Responses indicated a need for additional manpower to assist in development schemes. Some 80 percent expressed readiness to receive volunteers supplied by the United Nations for service in projects assisted by the United Nations system and also (68 percent) to work directly in government programmes. More respondents favoured technical and trade school graduates and those having apprentice training than university generalists. This positive response from the developing countries forecast a need for between one and two thousand international volunteers within the First Development Decade.

Based on this positive response, the United Nations Secretariat formally recommended, in the Secretary-General's Feasibility Study, "that an international corps of volunteers for development be created within the existing framework of the (United Nations) system", to be known as the UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS. The guiding principles were those stated in Economic and Social Council resolution 1444 (XLVII).

One body, the United Nations Volunteers, was to serve the entire United Nations system; its central office, to be placed under the aegis of UNDP, would give a sense of entity to the operation as a whole. On emphasizing the importance of coordination under one office, the Secretary-General's Report stated that this central office would be the point to which all volunteers could relate and feel that they have a contact with the over-all development work of the United Nations system.

The Secretary-General's proposals for the UNV foresaw a tripartite arrangement involving individuals, governments and nongovernmental organizations. Paragraph 42 stated:

"Applications from individuals, usually sponsored by governments, or by nongovernmental organizations, shall be submitted to the United Nations Volunteers through the established machinery of the United Nations system, including the Offices of the Resident Representatives, or through the clearing-houses of ISVS and CCIVS."

The study also envisaged that the individual man or woman could make direct application to UNV and that his/her transportation and other out-of-country costs might be paid by a foundation, civic society, or university, or by a nongovernmental organization or government sponsor.

The programming of volunteers was considered in the study to be essentially a function of the requesting government, thus linking them

to governmental plans and priorities and development projects.

Whereas financing of out-of-country costs was proposed as a sponsor responsibility as indicated above, recipient countries were to bear in-country costs to the maximum extent possible. Where not possible, the United Nations system project budget would meet such in-country costs.

A trust fund composed of voluntary contributions from governments, nongovernmental organizations, foundations and private individuals, and administered by UNDP, was proposed primarily to finance the external costs of qualified volunteers for whom no sponsor-financing was available. The report emphasized that "the Secretary-General considers this provision essential to ensure wide geographical participation in United Nations Volunteers."

Finally, it is also important to note the clear distinction made in the report between a volunteer and an associate expert:

"Whereas associate experts would seem, for the most part, to have been motivated by the desire to gain experience leading to professional careers... a substantial number of volunteers are motivated principally by the desire to give a period of their lives to the service of others, while at the same time, gaining the experience of a new venture, a new culture, and an identification with an activity in whose purposes they believe... Those motivations are not unrelated to career goals, but the prime commitment is the philosophy and purpose of the development activity, and to the people with whom and for whom they will work."

Debate on the Secretary-General's Feasibility Study

The first United Nations forum to discuss officially the Secretary-General's Feasibility Study (E/4790) was the Governing Council of UNDP at its tenth session in June 1970. Most members of the Council fully supported the guiding principles contained in the report of the Secretary-General and approved the basic concept of United Nations Volunteers. There was broad agreement that volunteers can make a contribution to development, that it is necessary to seek qualified volunteers, preferably with technical skills, and that much care must be devoted to their selection and training.

Several interventions strongly emphasized the importance of wide geographic participation and favoured financial provisions which would make possible the participation of volunteers from the developing countries. While there was some opposition or reservations concerning the modality of a trust fund, a consensus emerged that financial obstacles must not hinder the participation of volunteers from developing countries in the work of other developing countries.

After taking note of the proposals and the observations and reservations expressed in the discussion, the Governing Council stated its willingness to consider specific proposals for UNV by the Administrator at its eleventh session.

The following month, the forty-ninth session of the Economic and Social Council reviewed and discussed the Secretary-General's Feasibility Study. While the debate reflected general support for the guiding principles proposed in the Feasibility Study and already endorsed by the Governing Council of UNDP, there were some reservations concerning the creation of a trust fund to meet those in-country costs which recipient governments were unable to cover and to pay for the external costs for volunteers who had no sponsoring organizations able to cover

costs. However, representatives of several developing countries, whose views finally prevailed, insisted that such a fund would be essential, in order to recruit on the widest possible geographical basis.

At the end of three days of debate, the Economic and Social Council on 28 July 1970 adopted resolution 1539 (XLIX) which recommended to the General Assembly that it "welcome the Secretary-General's proposals in his report" and establish "within the existing framework of the United Nations system" the United Nations Volunteers.

United Nations General Assembly Creates the United Nations Volunteers

Finally, at its twenty-fifth session in 1970, the General Assembly reviewed and considered the Secretary-General's Feasibility Study, taking into account also the views expressed earlier by the UNDP Governing Council and the Economic and Social Council. More than 30 nations either spoke extensively or commented upon the Study.

In the debate leading up to the adoption of the resolution, representatives of 26 nations explicitly stated their firm commitment to the principles contained in the draft resolution, and their desire to see the proposed new organization, the United Nations Volunteers, succeed. Three issues received particular attention: the desirability of creating a trust fund to pay for the costs of volunteers, particularly those from developing countries, who had no sponsoring organization able to bear their external costs; the necessity to secure the approval of the recipient country before any volunteer was fielded; and the importance of fielding only volunteers who were qualified for those posts. Several of the delegates, particularly those from developing countries, insisted that such a trust fund was an "indispensable condition" for the establishment of the United Nations Volunteers. The debate reflected broad consensus on the other two issues mentioned above. Both

industrialized and developing countries stressed the importance of skills, characterizing the proposed United Nations Volunteers as a useful tool for development.

Viewing the proposed new programme as an additional source of qualified manpower for development cooperation, a large proportion of the countries' spokesmen also saw in the proposal for UNV an opportunity to associate youth with the United Nations in a constructive programme.

Other speakers emphasized the importance of establishing a central office to coordinate the activities of the volunteer corps. Reference was also made by a number of speakers to the issue of recruitment, and they reiterated the conviction that volunteers should be recruited on as wide a geographical base as possible. One delegate emphasized in this connection that volunteers should be fielded whenever possible in multinational teams, while another suggested that those who served in such a volunteer corps be released from military service.

On 7 December 1970, the General Assembly adopted by a vote of 91 to 0 resolution 2659 (XXV) which welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals contained in his report; established within the existing framework of the United Nations system effective 1 January 1971, the United Nations Volunteers; designated UNDP to administer the UNV and authorized the Secretary-General of the United Nations to appoint in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP a coordinator of UNV "to promote and coordinate the recruitment, selection, training and administrative management of the activities of the United Nations Volunteers"; and invited contributions from governments, international nongovernmental organizations and individuals to a special voluntary fund for the support of the activities of UNV.

The resolution expressed the conviction that voluntary service could make a substantial contribution to development assistance activities, provided that:

"(a) Such service is well planned and directed, utilizes volunteers recruited and serving on as wide a geographical basis as possible, including in particular the developing countries, and the necessary resources are made available;

"(b) Volunteers have the technical and personal qualifications required for the development of recipient countries, including the transfer of skills;

"(c) Volunteers are not sent to a country without the explicit request and approval of the recipient governments concerned."

With the adoption of this resolution, the United Nations Volunteers came into being on 1 January 1971.

THE FIRST DECADE OF UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS

Programme Evolution

The beginning of the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) in 1971 was also the beginning of the Second Development Decade (DD-II) and from the outset, the approach of the programme was consistent with the strategy of development whereby national plans and priorities determine the input from the United Nations system. It was also faithful to the guiding principles enunciated by the General Assembly in the basic resolution creating the programme. At the same time, the UNV gradually developed during the decade its own distinctive character - unique in the field of volunteer activity - and evolved approaches which have markedly enlarged the concept of volunteerism.

The universality in the selection and placement of volunteers is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the United Nations Volunteers. Initially, the established volunteer-sending organizations in industrialized countries served as principal channels of recruitment for the United Nations Volunteers programme. However, in an effort to ensure the widest possible geographical base for recruitment, the UNV programme, in accordance with its mandate, soon extended its search for qualified candidates to all quarters of the world. After an initial period when the ISVS assisted in recruiting volunteers from the major government cosponsoring agencies, a General Assembly resolution in 1972 called for renewed efforts to recruit a larger proportion of volunteers from the developing countries, and the UNV programme commenced direct recruitment in 1974. How successful it has been in attracting volunteers is proven by statistics at the end of 1982: some 75 nationalities were represented among the nearly 1,000 volunteers serving in 90 countries. Somewhat over 80 percent of the volunteers have been recruited from developing countries, the balance from industrialized countries. The United Nations Volunteers programme's truly international character has undoubtedly been one of its

strong appeals to prospective volunteers.

Another feature of the UNV programme, from its inception, has been the emphasis on skills and experience. The developing countries and many of the developed countries had stressed in the United Nations debates how important it was for the international volunteers to possess the technical skills and experience which would mark them as middle-level manpower, qualified to collaborate effectively with local workers and, in some cases, to train them. By the end of the Second Development Decade, the programme was able to point with pride to the record of qualifications and experience of its thousand volunteers.

One of the cardinal principles of the United Nations Volunteers, was that the volunteer's qualifications had to fit the requirements of the assignment as determined by the government which requested his or her services. This was so whether his services were to be used within a project assisted by the United Nations or one of its specialized agencies, or elsewhere in a development scheme operated by the government. True to its mandate, the United Nations Volunteers programme has, therefore, always been recipient oriented. Not only has this fact helped those serving as United Nations Volunteers to fit into the local country situation, it also led by the middle of the Second Development Decade to the United Nations Volunteers programme being asked increasingly to provide volunteers to assist the governments directly. By the end of 1982, just over half of the serving United Nations Volunteers were assigned directly within government development activities.

This particular aspect of the programme has taken on special meaning in the least developed countries and the most severely affected countries, where nearly two-thirds of the total United Nations Volunteers programme

is now concentrated. To these countries, the UNV programme has been able to offer skilled, experienced, middle-level manpower, not only in traditional volunteer activities, but also to fill critical vacancies in the country's own development projects, receiving modest salaries paid in some cases by the government concerned, supplemented by transportation expenses and necessary allowances paid in accordance with United Nations Volunteers rules. A form of what UNDP terms as OPAS (operational assistance), this scheme has been designed to provide temporary staff services until such time as national personnel either return from study abroad or are sufficient in number to fill such posts.

As an integral component of the development cooperation activities of the United Nations system, the UNV programme furthers the concept of technical cooperation among developing countries in its own practical action programme. More than three out of four volunteers now in service are nationals of one or other of the 53 developing countries supplying volunteers to the programme, thus underscoring the role of the United Nations Volunteers programme as a concrete example of TCDC in action.

Expansion of the Mandate

As a result of two resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in 1976, the role of the United Nations Volunteers programme was formally extended to incorporate two new areas, as a logical outgrowth of the basic mandate of the programme. The first of these resolutions (31/131) designated the United Nations Volunteers programme as a major operational unit of the United Nations for the execution of youth programmes and especially of pilot activities and training programmes. The second resolution (31/166) called on the United Nations Volunteers programme to develop further and expand its activities in support of "Domestic Development Service" (DDS), a term designating organized efforts by local and indigenous groups and communities to promote self-help through

programmes and projects which conform to national development priorities and structures. In both of these areas, United Nations Volunteers activities have developed and consolidated and are expanding.

Coordination

As repeatedly reflected during the debates in the General Assembly, in ECOSOC, and in the Governing Council of UNDP, during the years preceding the founding resolution, the United Nations Volunteers programme was seen as an important and essential means to coordinate volunteer activities within the United Nations system and to harmonize and standardize terms and conditions of service. Several of the specialized agencies who had previously associated volunteers with their projects, also expressed a strong desire to establish uniform terms and conditions on the basis of their experience with widely varying and disparate approaches and contractual conditions applying to volunteers from different sources, sometimes assigned to work side-by-side in the same project.

The importance attached to this question has been reflected in three General Assembly resolutions calling on governments, specialized agencies and the UNDP to coordinate all volunteer activities in United Nations-assisted projects through the United Nations Volunteers programme as a means of harmonizing placement policies and conditions of service. The following United Nations General Assembly resolutions are especially noteworthy:

Resolution A/RES/2810 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971:

"Requests all the Specialized Agencies and other organizations in the United Nations system to channel all requests for volunteers in development projects executed by them through the United Nations Volunteers programme and to coordinate all volunteer activities within United Nations-assisted projects with the Coordinator of the programme."

Resolution A/RES/2970 (XXVII) of 14 December 1978:

"Requests the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the Specialized Agencies and organizations of the United Nations concerned, as well as the Resident Representatives of the United Nations Development Programme, to promote with the agreement of the countries concerned, the use of United Nations Volunteers in United Nations-assisted projects and to coordinate all voluntary activities within United Nations-assisted projects with the Coordinator of the programme."

Resolution A/RES/33/84 of 15 December 1978:

"Reiterates the request addressed in its resolution 2970 to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the executive heads of the organizations concerned, with a view to coordinating, through the Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers programme, the use of United Nations Volunteers in United Nations-assisted projects and activities and to harmonizing policies on placement and conditions of employment of all volunteers in the United Nations system, taking into account the development needs at the field level."

After Ten Years

The tenth anniversary year provided a special opportunity for United Nations Volunteers headquarters to review and take stock of the results achieved by the programme and to consider ways of tackling constraints and problems still inhibiting the greater realization of the potential of the programme. To obtain additional guidance and views from the direct beneficiaries of the programme, as well as from other parties involved, a high-level symposium on the role and potential of volunteerism in international development cooperation was organized by the

UNV programme, in cooperation with UNDP, in Sana'a, Yemen Arab Republic, in March 1982, with the participation of senior officials from selected participating governments, UNDP, and other United Nations organizations as well as bilateral cooperating organizations. This symposium served to review in depth the role of volunteerism as a tool of development and, in the light of experience, to chart its future orientation, so as to optimize its usefulness and contribution to development.

The Sana'a Declaration - adopted by consensus by the representatives of the international community present in Sana'a, and later endorsed by the Governing Council of UNDP at its 29th session in June 1982 - confirmed and underlined the vital role of volunteerism in international development cooperation. It acknowledged and emphasized the United Nations Volunteers programme's custodianship of the concept of international volunteerism by the following words in its preamble:

"international volunteer service constitutes a most important vehicle for promoting solidarity among nations in pursuance of vital global objectives of economic and social development..." and "represents an important instrument for counteracting isolationism and fostering true global cooperation."

Additionally, the Sana'a Declaration took note of the magnitude of the need, in the present and for the foreseeable future, for operational-level volunteer manpower, as provided by the United Nations Volunteers programme. The text of the Sana'a Declaration follows.

The Sana'a Declaration

We, the participants at the UNV High-Level Symposium on Volunteer Service and Development, assembled in Sana'a, Yemen Arab Republic, from 7 to 13 March 1982, have arrived at a consensus that:

- international volunteer service constitutes a most important vehicle for promoting solidarity among nations in pursuance of vital global objectives of economic and social development;
- the cause of collective self-reliance among developing countries, as an intermediate stage in the process of attaining global interdependence, is effectively and innovatively served by the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) in the spirit of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC);
- the UNV programme, as an exponent of the universal spirit of volunteer service, represents an important instrument for counteracting isolationism and fostering true global cooperation;
- the UNV programme, in successfully completing its first decade, has truly reflected the letter and spirit of the United Nations; well-earned praise should be given to this young and dynamic organization which, with limited staff and resources, has been able to achieve the level of 1,000 volunteers in the field well ahead of the date envisaged, and the attainment of its future potential should be encouraged;
- UNV offers a unique opportunity to citizens of all nations, irrespective of age, sex, race or creed, to volunteer their talents and skills for the cause of international development cooperation, thus providing vitally-needed technical personnel to developing countries and contributing to peace and the economic and social progress of disadvantaged nations, while gaining new knowledge, experience and a sense of personal satisfaction.

Within the consensus reached above, and taking full account of the successful first decade of the UNV programme, the following recommendations, as endorsed by the participants, are proposed as the basis for the programme's future development:

"The Concept of International Volunteer Service"

The UNV programme constitutes a practical and effective mechanism for mobilizing support and for implementing the concept of international volunteer service for development. In creating UNV as part of the United Nations development system, the UN General Assembly conferred upon it the task of ensuring that the concept of international volunteer service is formally recognized as an important component of international technical cooperation, as well as giving it the responsibility for serving as a custodian to safeguard and nourish that concept within the international community. UNV has been able to adapt the international volunteer service concept of an effective synthesis of motivation and skills as a new element in the United Nations system for the particular objectives of development cooperation. Accordingly, it is recommended that:

- UNV convene periodic intergovernmental meetings similar to the present symposium, in an effort to review with participating governments, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, the development of international volunteer service;
- UNV further develop its role as a focal point for international volunteer cooperation by convening at least once a year consultative meetings of participating organizations from industrialized and developing countries;
- UNV further develop its range of documentation services on international volunteerism.

"The Magnitude of the Need for Operational-Level Volunteer Manpower"

United Nations Volunteers, being particularly adaptable, represent a most relevant form of technical assistance, providing operational expertise at the middle and technical levels. The UN Volunteers' dedication makes them especially effective for work in remote and difficult regions, which often lag behind more accessible areas in the progress of their development activities. UN Volunteers have been found to be an especially cost-effective means of providing technical assistance in an era when the scarcity of overall resources for international development cooperation, in relation to pressing and still growing needs, makes it imperative to ensure that the most efficient possible use is made of these limited resources.

There is a vast and largely unfilled need for middle-level operational expertise to support economic and social development activities in developing countries. The requirements for middle-level technicians were estimated in the Report of the Secretary-General of the UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC), held in Paris in September 1981, to be in the order of 20,000 per year throughout the 1980's.

Therefore it is recommended that:

- continuous efforts be made with a view to increasing the overall level of UNV assistance in response to the projected rapidly increasing needs of developing countries for middle-level technicians.

"The Role of UNV in Development Cooperation"

In light of its particular relevance to current development needs and its capabilities to mobilize appropriate level, motivated technical assistance personnel at modest cost, there is still insufficient utilization of the UNV programme in international technical cooperation activities. In view of the ready availability of UN Volunteers, compared with that of other technical assistance personnel at similar levels, and bearing in mind the potentially much wider use of this technical personnel which could be made in all aspects of government programmes, it is recommended that:

- in the design of government projects, systematic consideration be given at the project formulation stage to the use of UN Volunteers; in such cases, the UNDP office or other funding agencies should associate the UNV programme with the elaboration of the volunteer component as promptly as possible;
- the use in the same project of associate experts and UN Volunteers be avoided; moreover, UNV management should consult with the executing agencies to establish a procedure for identifying posts originally foreseen for associate experts, but for which no associate expert candidates are available, to avoid last minute conversion of these posts to those of UN Volunteers;
- UNV examine the possibility of instituting more flexibility in terms of length of assignments for UN Volunteers.

"Universality, Solidarity and Interdependence through International Volunteer Service"

One of the programme's recognized strengths is its universality, its unique ability to call upon all the world's citizens, regardless of age, sex or national origin. A significant percentage of serving UN Volunteers are women. Moreover, the high percentage of UN Volunteers from developing countries gives the programme a dimension extending beyond the traditional "North-South" relationship and makes it an important mechanism for increasing "South-South" cooperation.

In order to further enhance the universality of the UNV programme, and particularly the aspect of "North-South" cooperation, it is recommended that:

- UNV and those cooperating organizations in the industrialized and developing countries that provide it with volunteers not only continue their collaboration, but seek suitable means of enabling a greater number of volunteers from these countries to serve with UNV, according to volunteer service criteria applicable under the UN system; UNV is also requested to seek the cooperation of additional governmental and nongovernmental organizations to widen the base of participation in the programme;
- UNV encourage the participation of people who have completed their professional careers and who stand ready to lend their rich experience to developing countries under volunteer service conditions;
- UNV further enhance the already considerable degree of women's participation in the programme;
- UNV explore the possible modalities under which UN Volunteers from developing countries could be usefully assigned in industrialized countries, with the primary purpose of giving additional impetus to "North-South" collaboration through improving understanding and cooperation among nations.

"Domestic Development Service for Self-Reliance"

External development assistance activities, whether capital or technical assistance, can have only limited lasting value unless they are related to national development endeavors; self-reliance is thus not only an objective but also a means for achieving social and economic development. Through its efforts in support of Domestic Development

Service (DDS), UNV has made good progress in supporting and promoting self-reliant development activities.

In order to strengthen and encourage UNV's efforts in this direction, it is recommended that:

- UNV extend its DDS programme from Asia to other developing country regions;
- UNV undertake, at the request of governments, national educational activities on DDS and help governments so desiring to create such organizations in their countries through seminars, workshops and other activities at the national or regional level.

"Participation of Youth in Development"

Note was taken of the situation of youth, both as a participator in and beneficiary of development, in the face of world-wide economic stagnation and decreasing prospects for meaningful and rewarding employment. In the light of this situation and in line with the decision of the world community to recognize 1985 as the International Year of Youth (IYY), it is recommended that:

- UNV, as a part of the core group of UN agencies involved in preparing the International Youth Year, provide a wide information system to governments and nongovernmental agencies related to youth programmes;
- bearing in mind the experience UNV will acquire from the Asian Youth Ministers' Meeting due to take place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in November 1982, UNV is urged to take similar initiatives in other developing regions of the world, in an effort to develop and strengthen youth's participation in development;
- bearing in mind the example of the UNV-executed project in Latin America on youth's participation in development, which has been assisting the ten participating countries for the last six years in the establishment of youth enterprises, elaboration of governmental national policy and in youth leadership training for development, UNV provide such assistance to other countries and/or regions in the developing world. To this end, UNV is requested to discuss with UNDP and the governments concerned the modalities for furthering such technical cooperation programmes.

"Increased Awareness of and Commitment to the Concept of International Volunteer Service for Development"

UNV is producing a number of effective, high quality publications concerning the programme and concept. An expansion of this activity, both in the volume and in the variety of means used, would increase awareness and knowledge of the UNV programme and of the concept of international volunteer service for development, in developing and industrialized countries. Furthermore, such increased activity, employing additional means of communication, would increase the pool of available volunteer candidates and the level of commitment to the volunteer concept, promote international solidarity and, potentially, lead to increased financial support of the programme. It is accordingly recommended that:

- UNV utilize increased output of information materials and the services of serving and returned volunteers to increase awareness of the UNV programme and its activities.

"Increased UNV Participation in the Development Efforts of LDCs"

UNV has been, from its inception, heavily involved in the development efforts of the least developed countries (LDCs), as well as in those of the newly independent countries (NICs). The UN Conference on the LDCs has further highlighted the need for UNV to participate even further in the efforts of these countries towards self-reliance and development. In line with the Substantial New Programme of Action adopted for the LDCs, it is recommended that:

- UNV continue its increased assistance to the LDCs and NICs by providing on a priority basis the qualified operational expertise needed, in line with the recommendations embodied in the Substantial New Programme of Action;
- further to the decision to substantially increase aid to the LDCs and bearing in mind that UNV is considered to be a particularly appropriate mechanism for implementing increased assistance, the UNV administration approach governments with a view to negotiating multi-financed volunteer projects in LDCs.

"Strengthening UNV's Ability
to Backstop the Programme"

While recognizing that UNV/UNDP has been providing backstopping to the UNV programme and UN Volunteers in the field, the limited staff and other resources of the UNV secretariat pose serious constraints to the improvement of its orientation of volunteers and to its administrative and logistic support. Therefore it is recommended that:

- UNDP undertake, on an urgent basis a detailed review of the present ratio of volunteers in the field and under recruitment to the authorized UNV staff at headquarters in an effort to redress the present situation and to arrive at a staffing level commensurate with the size of the programme;
- UNV brief and debrief when feasible volunteers en route to assignment or returning after completion of assignment in an effort to enrich the programme with the varied experience of those returning and to better prepare those who are undertaking their assignments;
- in the case of UN Volunteers cosponsored by industrialized countries, all efforts be made for these volunteers to stop at UNV headquarters for a briefing on their assignment, in addition to receiving the information they are provided with by the cosponsoring organization;
- where briefing at UNV headquarters is impractical, UNV is urged to prepare for orientation of new UN Volunteers special information material such as kits, country profiles, etc.

"The Magnitude and Adequacy
of UNV's Financial Resources"

The widening disparity between resources available to and the needs of the developing countries is a major concern to UNV, since the UNDP Indicative Planning Figures (IPF) are the principal source of funding of in-country costs of UNV assignments. Of immediate concern is the low and static level of contributions to the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF), which is the sole source of funds to cover the external costs of UN Volunteers from developing countries. These costs make up between 20 to 25 percent of the cost of a UN Volunteer's assignment. The low level of contributions to the SVF has created a real danger that UNV will be unable to field candidates for posts for which both in-country costs and candidates are available but for which no travel funds can be found.

Moreover, the Special Voluntary Fund has been designated by the UN General Assembly as a source for, inter alia, financing UNV support to Domestic Development Service (DDS) as well as for financing UNV activities aimed at increasing the participation of youth in development.

Regarding these vitally important issues of financing in-country and external costs of UNVs, as well as initiatives in DDS and youth activities, it is recommended that:

- governments, specialized agencies of the UN, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations give urgent consideration to complementary and innovative approaches to funding of these in-country costs, including, by way of example, the establishment of trust funds; full funding or cost sharing by recipient countries and/or by third parties; utilization of the regular programme budgets of specialized agencies; and the allocation of resources from the intercountry and global funds of UNDP, so as to supplement the scarce resources available under the UNDP IPFs of individual countries;
- the UNDP Governing Council appeal to the international community, including governments, governmental and nongovernmental organizations and private donors, to channel additional funds to the Special Voluntary Fund, so as to enable UNV, as the only programme of its kind
 - 1) to continue to offer skilled and motivated nationals of developing countries an opportunity to serve the cause of development in other developing countries under conditions of international volunteerism and in response to vital and pressing needs for middle-level, operational expertise in developing countries and in conformity with the UN General Assembly resolution establishing the UNV programme;
 - 2) to avoid burdening developing countries, particularly LDCs with the external costs as a significant additional charge to project budgets;
 - 3) to expand and intensify UNV support to DDS; and
 - 4) to effectively pursue its mandate as a major operational unit of the United Nations for the execution of programmes to increase the participation of youth in development.

Conclusion

To mark the completion of the United Nations Volunteers programme's first decade, the Secretary-General paid the following tribute:

"Over the past ten years, the United Nations Volunteers programme has become a valuable addition to the United Nations family. As United Nations Volunteers, dedicated and creative young men and women - each with professional skills and experience - are currently on assignment around the world. Working at the operational level, they are playing constructive roles in the development efforts of nearly one hundred nations. Within its first decade, the United Nations Volunteers programme has created from the concept of voluntary service a viable instrument for international technical cooperation, uniting motivation and expertise into a dynamic, innovative and effective agent for development."