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POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH

Channels of communication between the United Nations
and youth and youth organizations

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 39/24 of 23 November 1984, the General Assembly, inter alia, called upon Member States, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations to implement fully the guidelines relating to the channels of communication not only in their general terms, but also in concrete projects dealing with issues of importance to young people; it called upon the national co-ordinating committees of the International Youth Year and other similar structures to assist national youth organizations, upon their request, in carrying out their role as channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations; and it stressed the necessity of making use, within the framework of the channels of communication, of mechanisms which have been set up by youth and youth organizations themselves at the national, regional and international levels. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a detailed, structured and evaluative report on the implementation of the guidelines and additional guidelines for the improvement of the channels of communication.

2. The guidelines referred to in resolution 39/24 are those adopted by the General Assembly for the improvement of channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations (resolutions 32/135, annex, and 36/17, annex). The Specific Programme of Measures and Activities to be undertaken prior to and during the International Youth Year, as contained in document A/36/215, annex, and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 36/28 of 13 November 1981, states that effective channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations form a basic prerequisite for the successful preparation, observance and follow-up of the International Youth Year.

3. The present report is submitted in accordance with resolution 39/24 and in line with the previous reports of the Secretary-General regarding channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations. 1/ The comments and observations provided are based on the experience of the Secretariat and on responses to a note verbale of the Secretary-General sent to Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

II. BACKGROUND

4. The maintenance and strengthening of channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations is an ongoing function. Channels of communication have operated for many years and their constant improvement has been a priority of the Secretariat. They can be defined as those organizational structures and operational activities of the United Nations system, and of the organizations with which it comes in contact, that enable the United Nations to communicate information about its goals and activities to the young people of the world and to receive feedback from youth and youth organizations on its activities. In this context, channels of communication should always be understood to involve a two-way process.

5. While it is true that channels are an ongoing concern, it is also worth noting that the International Youth Year provides an opportunity to strengthen them further. The International Youth Year has been the occasion for Governments, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations at all levels to evaluate their approaches to youth issues and to reassess or refine programmes and projects involving or affecting youth. It has been the turning point for long-term action based on a more clearly defined perspective on youth. This perspective, developed partly as a result of experiences gained during preparations for the Year, is reflected in the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth elaborated by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year at its fourth session and transmitted for consideration to the General Assembly at its fortieth session (A/40/256, annex, sect. III).

6. A major aspect of this perspective on youth is that the overriding need for fuller and more effective participation by youth in society is more widely recognized. Such participation can be real only if the young are recognized not only as objects of the social development process but also as subjects of it. They should have the right to participate in economic, social and political life and should have the expectation that their participation will be meaningful and taken seriously. They must not be considered solely as resources for development but as participants in the decision-making process. The participation of youth is both a goal in itself and a means of improving prospects for the attainment of development and peace. It is now accepted that young people should be viewed as positive, contributing factors in society and not merely as a group requiring society's help in order to overcome problems. None the less, experience gained during the preparation of the International Youth Year indicates that young people may not automatically want to participate in society. Although many young people have a sense of effective participation, the majority do not. It may be either that they are unaware of the opportunities or unable to gain access to the institutions or that they are uninterested in the process itself or in the expected benefits to be derived. Young people require more information, in a format that is both interesting and accessible to them.

7. Experience indicates that, to encourage youth to participate, institutions such as the United Nations should make consistent efforts to establish their relevance by communicating their goals, programmes and activities to young people. Communication requires channels. In the case of the United Nations, communication should involve information not only about youth policies and programmes but also about the entire range of activities undertaken by the Organization. All the activities of the United Nations system affect young people to some extent, and the effectiveness of these activities will be heightened by the involvement and feedback of youth. If provided with relevant information, young people may take more interest in United Nations activities, be more willing to participate and feel they have more of an incentive to do so.

8. With the elaboration by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year of guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth (A/40/256), the need for channels of communication to be fully utilized has become even greater. The guidelines suggest opportunities for enhanced active

participation by youth and youth organizations in society, and this requires the strengthening of two-way communication with these groups. To improve communication it would be helpful first of all to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidelines on existing channels of communication. In the present report, therefore, an attempt is made to review some of the activities undertaken and to evaluate each guideline for areas in which channels of communication may be further improved.

III. IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AS A RESULT OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR: PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE

9. Preparations for the International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace have resulted in considerably increased communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations. Because the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities for the Year placed clear emphasis on activities at the national level, the organization of such activities has rested primarily with Governments and non-governmental organizations. The United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations, by using existing channels or developing new ones, have collaborated within their fields of competence and have co-ordinated efforts in developing programmes and activities. The Secretariat has encouraged the dissemination of information through existing networks to youth and youth organizations at local and national levels, which has led to increased communication and the strengthening of channels of direct communication. Some of the activities undertaken in observance of the International Youth Year that have improved channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations are highlighted below.

A. Member States

10. To plan and co-ordinate programmes and activities at the national level, it was recommended in the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities that Governments establish national co-ordinating committees or other forms of co-ordination for the International Youth Year. Governments have responded strongly to this recommendation. As at 1 July 1985, a total of 158 national co-ordinating committees or other forms of co-ordination were functioning or were being established in countries or territories around the world. ^{2/} The membership of most national committees includes representatives of both governmental ministries and non-governmental organizations working in the field of youth, which helps to improve communications between these institutions. Sometimes membership is extended to representatives of academic institutions and research institutes. The committees seem to have served as major channels of communication between national and regional or international organizations, including organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and other national committees.

11. Throughout the preparations for International Youth Year and especially during 1985, a tremendous number of programmes, activities, special events, meetings, conferences, competitions, projects, seminars, festivals and information activities have been organized or co-ordinated by the national committees. The activities of

the individual committees have varied according to the interests, needs, desires and traditions of youth in each country. The vast number of activities world-wide is indicative of the interest and concern for youth felt in Member States.

12. Many Governments have included information about the United Nations system - its structure, principles, objectives and activities - in the educational curricula of schools and universities. Young people often obtain their first knowledge and experience of the United Nations from these programmes. In this way, national and local educational systems have served as primary, if perhaps unrecognized, channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations.

13. Several Governments have established programmes to facilitate the participation of youth delegates to intergovernmental meetings dealing with youth issues. Youth delegates were present at several of the regional meetings devoted to the International Youth Year, at sessions of the Advisory Committee for the Year and at meetings of the General Assembly during which youth issues were discussed.

B. United Nations

14. The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs was designated by the General Assembly to serve as lead entity for the International Youth Year. The Centre's secretariat for the Year has primarily co-ordinated activities and shared information among all groups or institutions involved in preparations for the Year. The Centre has relied on such channels of communication as meetings, seminars, conferences, publications, mailings or general correspondence to promote and publicize issues related to youth. It has provided substantive assistance to the Geneva Informal Meeting of International Youth Non-Governmental Organizations and to the Vienna non-governmental organization Committee on Youth. Young volunteers have been given the opportunity to gain firsthand experience of the United Nations Secretariat and to contribute to preparations for the International Youth Year through assignments with the secretariat for the Year. In addition, the services of the interregional adviser on youth have been provided to Governments upon their request.

15. The Centre has continued to improve and expand the quarterly Youth Information Bulletin. The Bulletin, which is distributed to all interested organizations, institutions and individuals, serves as a major source of information about youth-related events, programmes and activities taking place around the world. In addition, other publications of the Centre, such as the Social Development Newsletter and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Newsletter report on youth affairs.

16. The secretariat for the Year produces a monthly newsletter entitled Channels, in co-operation with the United Nations Information Committee, Vienna, designed specifically to report about the plans and activities of national co-ordinating committees. The newsletter was first published in March 1984, and present resources will enable it to be continued through December 1985. It is published in English, French and Spanish. Channels is supported by contributions from both governmental and non-governmental sources. It provides a forum for communication

between the national committees, the secretariat for the International Youth Year and youth organizations world-wide.

17. The secretariat updates a directory of national co-ordinating committees which is distributed world-wide. The directory provides the contact addresses for each of the national co-ordinating committees, thus encouraging communication with and among them. An expanded directory, providing information about each committee's programmes for the International Youth Year, is being produced in English, French and Spanish.

18. The secretariat has produced a booklet listing the major programmes and activities taking place during the International Youth Year. This booklet, known as the programme of activities for the International Youth Year, has been compiled from information received by the secretariat and is updated periodically. In addition, a list of regional and international meetings that are taking place in the context of the International Youth Year is produced every six months.

19. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat has responded to requests for information and has provided publicity materials to the extent possible. The materials produced include posters displaying the emblem for the Year, bumper stickers and information kits which were widely distributed. In addition, the Department has produced a film about youth especially for the Year entitled Being Young. A special booklet linking the International Youth Year and the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations entitled Hope for Tomorrow: The United Nations for Young People was also produced and distributed extensively. Development Forum, in addition to featuring stories on the International Youth Year on a regular basis, issued a special edition devoted entirely to the Year. The materials in this issue were prepared by students from three schools of journalism in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Throughout the Year the Non-Governmental Liaison Services devoted particular attention to working with non-governmental organizations interested in the issue of youth and initiated the issuance of a newsletter called The Tree Project News.

20. The Department for Disarmament Affairs organizes the Disarmament Internship Programmes. Thirteen graduate students worked as interns at the Department for Disarmament Affairs in 1983 in connection with the United Nations Ad Hoc Internship Programme. In 1984, eight graduate students participated in this programme. The Summer Disarmament Internship Programme, organized in co-operation with the Department of Public Information Graduate Student Intern Programme, had 15 graduate students participating in 1983 and 8 in 1984. Expansion of the Disarmament Internship Programmes is envisaged in 1985 in the observance of the International Youth Year.

21. Two one-day seminars on disarmament for all ad hoc interns at the United Nations were organized in 1983, the second in connection with the observance of Disarmament Week. In 1984, another one-day seminar for all ad hoc interns at the United Nations was organized as part of the observance of Disarmament Week. Invitations are also extended to representatives of youth organizations to attend relevant meetings.

22. In support of the International Youth Year, the Division of Narcotic Drugs is publishing a special issue of the Bulletin on Narcotics in 1985, containing the latest research and findings on youth and drug abuse. The bimonthly Information Letter of the Division has carried a number of articles on International Youth Year activities. It has also included meetings related to the Year in its calendar of events to help in forward planning.

23. The Division provides audio-visual and other material to educational institutions and to non-governmental organizations to promote their involvement in assisting and guiding young people in the avoidance of drug abuse. A Committee on Narcotic Drugs, a non-governmental organization, was established at Vienna in 1983 to co-ordinate work by the community of non-governmental organizations in the prevention of drug abuse. In December 1984, a New York non-governmental organization Committee on Narcotics and Substance Abuse was organized to undertake similar activities from United Nations Headquarters.

24. The International Year of Peace will be observed in 1986, and a secretariat was formed in September 1983 within the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs to co-ordinate its observance. The secretariat organized a series of regional seminars on the International Year of Peace based on the themes peace and development, peace and disarmament and preparation for life in peace. The seminars were attended by representatives of Governments, United Nations bodies and agencies and non-governmental organizations. Academic experts were also invited. Four regional seminars were held during 1985.

25. The secretariat for the International Year of Peace publishes a newsletter to share information of interest to non-governmental organizations and to enable them to contribute information about their activities. The newsletter has also provided information on the International Youth Year. The secretariat for the International Year of Peace is considering the possibility of involving young interns or volunteers in its work.

26. The Public Information Division of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is producing materials for the International Youth Year including a 15-minute, 16-millimetre film on summer camps, a slide and tape presentation on Youth Activities Centres in Gaza and the West Bank and articles in the UNRWA Newsletter on activities of young people. UNRWA runs Youth Activities Centres for boys and young men and Women Activities Centres for young women. The Youth Activities Centres are encouraged to initiate additional community development projects involving young people.

27. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) encourages communication through a combined effort involving training activities, meetings and seminars, research, studies and publications. ESCAP convenes national and regional training workshops and seminars and organizes inter-country exchange programmes of field study for youth leaders and youth workers, programme administrators, planners and policy makers to enhance their knowledge, skills and experiences in various aspects of youth policy and programme development.

28. To disseminate information on youth issues, ESCAP publishes reports of studies and important regional meetings and workshops. It also publishes the quarterly Youth Development Newsletter as well as the periodic International Youth Year Information Sheet.

29. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has developed a range of programmes, activities and events in preparation for and observance of International Youth Year which have also served to improve communications with Governments and youth organizations in the region. ECLAC produces documents on youth and youth-related topics such as education, employment, the situation of poor urban youth and youth movements. It has also published diagnoses of the situation and perspectives of young people in Latin America and in the Spanish- and English-speaking Caribbean. It has sponsored and participated in the non-governmental organization Latin American Forum on the Participation of Youth and it will organize the second Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting on the International Youth Year as a follow-up to the regional meeting held during 1983 at Montevideo, Uruguay. Furthermore, it has prepared and distributed 15,000 copies of a special issue of Notes on Economy and Development dedicated to the situation of youth in the region within the context of the International Youth Year.

30. ECLAC has also collaborated with national co-ordinating committees, international organizations and non-governmental organizations in meetings, seminars, workshops and training courses dedicated to the International Youth Year in different countries of the region. In collaboration with the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations in Chile, ECLAC has organized different youth projects for the observance of the Year, designed by a special International Youth Year task force of 22 non-governmental organizations affiliated with the Association. With the Young Men's Christian Association, ECLAC has collaborated in the publication of a Latin American Youth Information Bulletin addressed to non-governmental organizations of the region and in a meeting of organizations from selected countries designed to alert public opinion to and stimulate action on behalf of youth.

31. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has concentrated its youth-related activities at the national level through its field offices and national committees. The field offices and committees were asked to co-operate with existing national co-ordinating committees for the International Youth Year or to participate in their creation. Focal points were established in New York and at Geneva headquarters and a junior professional officer is assisting in matters related to the Year at Geneva.

32. Since March 1983, the UNICEF publication Ideas Forum has carried a special page on the International Youth Year and has devoted a special issue to it entitled "Universal Children's Day, preparing for International Youth Year 1985". A recent issue of UNICEF News was devoted to the Year under the title "Prospects and promises: youth confronts the future"; a fact sheet on youth was included in the issue. The International Youth Year is the theme of a number of products produced by the Greeting Card Operation, for example the Business Diary and the postcard calendar. UNICEF sponsored the International Youth Year poster competition of the Bologna Book Fair in Italy in collaboration with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and the World Youth Music Festival to be held at Geneva in

1985, organized by the Office of Tourism and the city of Geneva. In addition, UNICEF is producing with the co-operation of national television networks, a development education kit on street children and youth and a short film illustrating the youth-in-service-to-children approach to the child survival and development revolution. Finally there is a clearing-house for the distribution of materials related to the International Youth Year at Geneva.

33. In anticipation of the International Youth Year, all United Nations Volunteers were requested by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/United Nations Volunteers programme to assist local and national youth programmes and projects. The United Nations Volunteers programme periodically publishes information about such assistance in a section on the International Youth Year introduced in its regular newsletter in 1983. A special United Nations Volunteers Youth Newsletter is being initiated during 1985 as a channel for informing the public about the multifaceted contribution of young people to development activities throughout the world. The United Nations Volunteers programme has also sent a circular letter highlighting the Year to the representatives of volunteer services and youth institutes.

34. A note from the Executive Co-ordinator of the United Nations Volunteers programme was distributed to all UNDP resident representatives under cover of a letter from the Administrator of UNDP, requesting the assistance of UNDP field offices in the establishment of national co-ordinating committees for the International Youth Year, in the promotion of a common approach to the Year within the United Nations system at the field level, in the granting of high priority to the establishment of technical co-operation projects related to youth and in the provision of information on the Year at the national level.

35. The United Nations University, as part of a three-phase activity planned for the International Youth Year entitled "Perspective on youth", conducted interviews with young people on the subthemes of labour, learning and leisure in addition to the main theme of the Year, "Participation, Development, Peace". The production of a videotape of young people discussing these themes is envisaged. The aim is to encourage young people to participate in various aspects of development activity earlier in life. Of particular interest is the attempt to involve illiterate and rural youth, who are able to articulate their ideas verbally through the medium of video and sound cassettes.

36. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has developed a poster on youth and housing, and it will further publicize the International Youth Year in its newsletter, Habitat News.

C. Specialized agencies

37. In preparing for the International Youth Year, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) undertook a series of studies to determine the needs of rural youth as perceived by youth workers and rural youth themselves. The respondents were also asked to suggest solutions to the problems identified. In addition, national rural youth leaders are being identified to serve as focal points in each of the developing countries for the purpose of establishing an international communication network of rural youth. FAO has commissioned the

development of a "Handbook for working with rural youth in developing countries" and the organization has been actively represented in regional meetings on preparations for the Year.

38. The joint publication of FAO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Training for Agriculture and Rural Development, is edited by FAO and will have a youth theme for the issue published in 1985. The issue will address several topics related to youth and will present examples of work that is currently being carried out in different parts of the world. In 1985, two editions of the FAO newsletter on rural youth were produced, and additional information was distributed to the national focal points for rural youth. The newsletter provides contributors an opportunity to discuss a broad range of youth-related issues before an audience having similar interests.

39. UNESCO has actively disseminated and exchanged information about and for youth during the past five years. It holds a yearly collective consultation with approximately 70 non-governmental youth organizations which have consultative status with it. These consultations have been most useful in the preparation of the International Youth Year.

40. The main activity that UNESCO organized for the International Youth Year was the World Congress on Youth held at Barcelona, Spain from 8 to 15 July 1985. Some 600 participants, among them youth leaders, experts on youth and representatives of Governments and non-governmental organizations, came together to discuss three themes: youth, education and work; youth and cultural values; and youth, mutual understanding and international co-operation. Other activities and events have included a round-table discussion on youth, education and work, organized in collaboration with youth and teachers' non-governmental organizations; a meeting of experts to examine research findings on the nature, causes and consequences of unemployment among young people; a travelling photographic exhibition on the theme "Youth in the 1980s"; an international poster competition, "Youth and literacy", on the theme of participation; a travelling exhibition of selected projects from an international competition for young architects on the theme "Tomorrow's habitat"; and production of a series of audio-visual materials.

41. There are nearly 2,900 UNESCO Clubs in more than 80 countries which serve as channels of communication between UNESCO and local supporters. During the International Youth Year, many Club meetings are scheduled to encourage youth participation in development at all levels.

42. In May 1985, ILO hosted at its Geneva headquarters a gathering of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, which had been organized by the non-governmental organization International Movement ATD Fourth World. The meeting enabled these youths to begin a direct dialogue about their problems and their special needs with the Director-General of ILO.

43. The World Health Organization (WHO) has produced a World Health Kit on the many health issues that concern youth. The January/February 1985 issue of World Health was dedicated to youth, with the majority of material written and edited by

young people themselves. World Health Day, in April 1985, was celebrated at Geneva as a special public event devoted to the International Youth Year.

D. Intergovernmental organizations

44. In preparation for the International Youth Year, the Commonwealth Secretariat has actively promoted the sharing of information, skills and experiences about youth among its members. An information brochure and "Guidelines for action" were produced and widely distributed for the purpose of encouraging numerous activities and widespread involvement in the observance of the Year. In addition, training workshops and seminars have been organized at Commonwealth Regional Centres, and youth exchange programmes have been developed.

45. The Council of Europe has established channels of communications with youth through its existing structures such as the European Youth Centre and the European Youth Foundation. In addition, the Council organized, within the context of the International Youth Year, a large gathering of young people under the banner "European Youth Week" at Strasbourg, France. The event brought together approximately 1,000 young people from the region to discuss various issues related to the theme, "The future of Europe". Events of this nature have served to publicize youth issues and the International Youth Year and therefore to strengthen communication with youth.

46. In co-ordination with the national co-ordinating committees for the International Youth Year in the region, the League of Arab States has undertaken several activities in observance of the Year which have served to strengthen channels of communication with youth and youth organizations. Among the activities taking place are a declaration by the Secretary-General of the League on the occasion of the International Youth Year; a youth volunteer camp involving five young people from each member State of the League; a congress of Arab university students at which the role of Arab youth in social and economic development and the question of youth and problems of peace were discussed; a seminar on the role of Arab women in social development and integration; and Arab Youth Week overseas, involving a group of young people from each member State of the League, to be held in two countries in Europe.

E. Non-governmental organizations

47. The involvement of the community of non-governmental organizations in the preparations for the International Youth Year has been strong and far-reaching. The scope of the present report does not permit a listing of all the events, programmes and activities that have been undertaken. More specific information may be obtained from the report of the Secretary-General on the International Youth Year (A/40/701). The examples provided here are intended to highlight activities, vis-à-vis the United Nations, that show innovative approaches to channels of communication or that are representative of the efforts of non-governmental organizations in preparing for the Year.

48. At the initiative of the International Catholic Child Bureau, the Inter-NGO Programme on Street Children and Youth was created in late 1982. The Programme co-ordinates joint efforts of non-governmental organizations to combat the problems of homeless young people and to build a network of communication and co-operation between interested bodies and individuals. A quarterly newsletter, The Street, covers stories of individual projects and publicizes international developments in the field. Among the most important features of the newsletter are the reprinting of field workers' points of view and the provision of many contact addresses to facilitate communication to the grass-roots level.
49. An important contribution to the work of the secretariat for the International Youth Year, particularly in the area of public information activities, has been made by young volunteers sponsored and supported by non-governmental organizations, in particular the American Field Service International/Intercultural Programme. The volunteers have provided a youthful perspective to the secretariat and have gained first-hand experience of the United Nations. In addition, they have shared information and strengthened communications with the sponsoring organizations.
50. The International Movement ATD Fourth World is a non-governmental organization that strives to increase the participation of the most disadvantaged young people in society. The organization has created innovative programmes and activities designed to communicate with these youths who may not respond well to traditional written forms of information. Through skits and role-playing, as well as through more substantial theatrical performances, the organization attempts to channel information to youth. Because they directly involve young people, these activities and discussions also provide feedback from youth to the organization.
51. The International Union of Students contributed to preparations for the International Youth Year and helped to strengthen channels of communication by printing summarized versions in one booklet of the five regional plans of action adopted at the preparatory meetings for the Year organized by the regional commissions. The Union provided 5,000 copies of the booklet to the secretariat for the Year for world-wide distribution, thus enabling the secretariat to provide concise and useful information in a practical form to a wide audience.
52. Many activities have been organized by the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement - International in observance of the International Youth Year. Among them were the co-sponsorship of the Tenth Annual Asia-Pacific Youth Forum, the organization of tree-planting programmes which involved young people in various countries of the region and a large publicity campaign and events related to the Year in Japan. Some of these activities were undertaken independently and others were organized in conjunction with Governments, the United Nations system or other non-governmental organizations; each activity contributed to information-sharing about the United Nations and the International Youth Year and helped to encourage the interest and involvement of young people in development activities in the region.
53. Many non-governmental organizations have produced information packages and audio-visual aids in connection with the International Youth Year so that their membership could be kept informed in a concise and uniform fashion. For example,

the International Planned Parenthood Federation has collaborated with the secretariat for the Year in the production of information materials, and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and the World Organization of the Scout Movement have jointly developed a Programme Kit for the Year. Both these packages include background information on the Year, practical ideas for activities and resource materials.

IV. REVIEW OF GUIDELINES AND ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

54. This section contains a review and evaluation of each of the guidelines and additional guidelines for the improvement of channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolutions 32/135 and 36/17. The section has three subdivisions (national, regional and international) in keeping with the structure established in the guidelines and additional guidelines. Each guideline or additional guideline is given, followed by a summary of the present situation regarding its implementation.

A. National level

55. The need to promote the participation of young people in the development of their societies at the national level has been clearly recognized by the United Nations and by individual Member States, and the improvement of channels of communication was an important aspect of efforts made at the national level to formulate and strengthen programmes and policies in the field of youth.

56. In General Assembly resolution 32/135, section A, paragraph 1 of the annex, the guidelines stipulated that the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme should be requested to continue exploring, in consultation with the Governments concerned, ways to involve youth organizations in development activities in the United Nations at the national level.

57. In the field of youth, UNDP resident representatives have assisted in the establishment of national co-ordinating committees for the International Youth Year, in the promotion of a common approach to the Year in the United Nations system at the national level, in the granting of high priority to the establishment of technical co-operation projects related to youth and in the provision of information on the Year at the national level. The resident representatives have recently been requested to help to co-ordinate at the national level the requests of Governments and non-governmental organizations for funding support from the Trust Fund for the International Youth Year. In addition, the potential for the resident representatives to channel feedback from the youth organizations at the national level to the United Nations has been recognized.

58. The resident representatives' role in channelling information between youth organizations and the United Nations system is an important one, and the co-ordination of relevant youth activities in the field with those of bodies of the United Nations system, national co-ordinating committees or other co-ordinating

mechanisms at the national level will continue. A primary aim of the co-ordination would be to ensure that progress achieved during preparations for the International Youth Year is maintained and expanded and that the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth, as adopted by the Advisory Committee (A/40/256), are widely available to all concerned.

59. In General Assembly resolution 32/135, section A, paragraph 2 of the annex, the guidelines stipulated that the Office of Public Information 3/ of the Secretariat should continue to work in close co-operation with the Joint United Nations Information Committee to provide information on the issues on which the United Nations is working in a way as to attract young people, at the national level, and interest them in the ideals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

60. Pursuant to that recommendation, the Division for Economic and Social Information of the Department of Public Information has worked with the Joint United Nations Information Committee to produce Development Forum, a regular publication of the United Nations system in the field of economic and social development, appearing 10 times a year in English, French and Spanish. During preparations for the International Youth Year, Development Forum has devoted increased attention to youth issues. Other information materials relevant to youth will continue to be produced by the United Nations (see also para. 19 above).

61. In General Assembly resolution 32/135, section A, paragraph 3, the guidelines stipulated that, bearing in mind proposals contained in his note on the role of youth in the promotion and protection of human rights, the Secretary-General should explore, in consultation with Governments, the feasibility of identifying a national liaison and focal point on youth within each country, taking into consideration the networks of national correspondents which had been set up to facilitate communication between countries and with the United Nations in allied fields of social development.

62. The need for focal points on youth was reiterated by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year when it recommended the establishment of national co-ordinating committees for the Year. As a result of preparations for the Year, 158 Governments have taken steps to establish either focal points or national co-ordinating committees. Efforts have been made to ensure a strong involvement and representation of youth on the individual committees and to reflect the interests of youth at the national level. (For additional information on activities of the national co-ordinating committee, see also the report of the Secretary-General on preparations and observance of the International Youth Year (A/40/701).

63. The role played by the national co-ordinating committees as part of the channels of communication between the United Nations, youth and youth organizations has been an important one. Because of the effectiveness of these committees in the preparations for the International Youth Year, it would be appropriate for Governments to consider their future role, beyond 1985, in further planning and follow-up of activities in the field of youth.

64. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section A, paragraph 1 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that attention should be given to the expansion of advisory services on youth activities provided by the United Nations to Governments at their request. The services of an interregional adviser on youth policies and programmes are provided by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in co-operation with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. The demand for the services of the interregional adviser continues to increase and may exceed capacity in the near future.

65. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section A, paragraph 2 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that Governments should consider the inclusion of youth representatives in their national delegations to the General Assembly and to other relevant United Nations meetings.

66. A number of Governments have taken steps to implement this guideline, as evident from the youth representatives present during discussions at recent sessions of the General Assembly as well as in the meetings of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year. It is anticipated that, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 39/22 of 11 November 1984, Member States will be including youth representatives in their delegations to the fortieth session of the Assembly.

B. Regional level

67. A major function of channels of communication at the regional level is to supplement and encourage channels at both the national and international levels. The regional commissions are ideally situated to work with both Governments and national non-governmental organizations on the one hand and with the United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and international non-governmental organizations on the other. The regional commissions may also encourage the strengthening and further development of regional non-governmental organizations as appropriate and desired. Although in principle the guidelines at the regional level are meant to apply in all regions, circumstances vary from region to region and therefore distinct approaches to implementation may have developed or may be required.

68. In General Assembly resolution 32/135, section B, paragraph 4 of the annex, the guidelines stipulated that the regional commissions should be requested to pay special attention to the question of active participation of youth in the process of national development and to consider at their forthcoming sessions appropriate forms in which regional commissions could assist Governments in that field and establish contacts with youth and youth organizations.

69. As described in the preceding section section, the regional commissions have been actively involved in training activities, meetings and seminars, research, studies and publications aimed at increasing the overall participation of youth in national development. Many of these activities, undertaken in collaboration with national governments and with regional and international non-governmental organizations, help to increase the expertise of youth workers, whose work carries information to the grass-roots level.

70. It is anticipated that the regional commissions will continue their activities related to youth, including co-ordination with subregional and regional organizations dealing with youth activities and assistance to their member States, when requested, on youth matters, including calling attention to areas in which youth could play a dynamic role in development.

71. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section B, paragraph 3 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the regional commissions should review their relationships with regional non-governmental youth organizations in order to facilitate co-operation with and among such organizations.

72. In the context of the International Youth Year, the convening of regional preparatory meetings provided opportunities for the regional commissions to strengthen links with Governments and youth organizations, leading to better communication. In this regard, several regional meetings of non-governmental organizations were organized under the auspices of the commissions prior to the regional meetings for the International Youth Year. The commissions have adopted resolutions indicating their concern for youth activities in connection with the adoption of the regional plans of action for the Year. The commission secretariats have also emphasized their commitment to the maintenance of relations with youth organizations in their respective regions.

73. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section B, paragraphs 4 and 5 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the regional commissions should pay special attention to the question of the active participation of youth in the development process and should consider the need to co-operate closely with the international programmes of the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for the provision of services for and by youth with regard to employment; and that the executive secretaries of the regional commissions, within their mandates, should consider the promotion and co-ordination within their respective regions of all activities regarding the integration and participation of youth in development.

74. There is great potential for co-ordination at the regional level because of the number of activities and technical co-operation projects of the various United Nations bodies and specialized agencies that are carried out at both regional and national levels. To date, evidence indicates that efforts by the commissions to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations system or of Governments and non-governmental organizations need to be strengthened further.

75. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section B, paragraph 6 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the regional commissions should consider the possibility of organizing regional workshops on questions relating to youth. Despite financial constraints, the regional commissions have undertaken numerous activities in the youth programme and have expressed interest in promoting more activities to the extent possible. It is anticipated that in planning their programme of work, the regional commissions will give consideration to organizing and holding, where possible, technical workshops and meetings devoted exclusively to questions and issues relating to youth.

76. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section B, paragraph 7 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the regional commissions should, with the assistance of regional liaison officers, strengthen their co-operation with youth organizations. The regional commissions have utilized resources in the social development sector for, inter alia, liaison activities in the field of youth. It would appear to be necessary to continue the liaison activities in the follow-up of the International Youth Year and in other subregional and regional youth projects.

C. International level

77. As a result of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations that gives non-governmental organizations the possibility of obtaining consultative status with the United Nations system through the Economic and Social Council, channels of communication with these organizations at the international level are relatively long-standing and are more developed than at the other levels. The possibility exists for youth organizations with consultative status to further strengthen their participation in several areas of United Nations activity of direct interest to them.

78. In General Assembly resolution 32/135, section C, paragraph 5 of the annex, the guidelines stipulated that the scope of the quarterly Youth Information Bulletin should be extended and it should be published in French and Spanish in addition to English, within the existing budgetary allocations, and that both government and non-governmental bodies dealing with youth should be encouraged to provide material for dissemination through the Bulletin and to assist in its distribution so that it might be available to as many young people and youth organizations as possible.

79. Actions have been taken to implement this guideline. The Bulletin is now produced quarterly in English, French and Spanish. The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs has endeavoured in recent years, and particularly in connection with the preparations for the International Youth Year, to broaden the range of the Bulletin, both topically and geographically. This effort has been made easier by the tremendous amount of information that the secretariat for the Year receives on programmes and activities undertaken for the Year. The priority will be to maintain a high level of information and to expand the two-way communication. For this purpose, an extensive review of the present list of subscribers to the Youth Information Bulletin is being made. In addition to distribution to readers requesting subscriptions, the Bulletin will be sent to organizations, institutions and individuals for whom it serves or would serve an important function.

80. To make the Bulletin more effective as a publication for youth issues dealt with by the United Nations system, the Centre has identified sources of information on youth within the various United Nations bodies and specialized agencies so that information can be more quickly and accurately reported in the Bulletin. In addition, a section for correspondence from readers, in the form of a forum has been initiated. In this section, readers are invited to provide ideas, comments and feedback on issues of concern and on the work of the United Nations.

81. During the preparations for the International Youth Year, the secretariat for the Year issued, in addition to the quarterly Youth Information Bulletin, a newsletter, Channels, to meet the need of the national co-ordinating committees and other interested organizations for topical information at shorter intervals. The publication of Channels has been made possible by donations from Governments and non-governmental organizations and is expected to cease in December 1985. Consideration is being given to the possibility, after 1985, of publishing the Youth Information Bulletin at more frequent intervals, possibly monthly.

82. In General Assembly resolution 32/135, section C, paragraph 6 of the annex, the guidelines stipulated that the work of the Office of Public Information and the Centre for Economic and Social Information 4/ of the Secretariat, in the creation of suitable radio and television programmes about the United Nations and its activities, should be intensified within their existing budgetary allocations.

83. The Department of Public Information has produced a film about youth during 1985 for use during and after the International Youth Year. It has also attempted to integrate topics of concern to youth into its regular radio and television series. A list of films and media material of interest to youth and available from the United Nations system has been published.

84. The activities of the Department of Public Information in video and broadcasting will continue to include special features on youth, expanded whenever possible, as a major means for the United Nations to communicate, particularly with "unorganized" youth. The Department will invite, as appropriate, young people with skills and an interest in media to take part in its activities focused on youth.

85. In General Assembly resolution 32/135, section C, paragraph 7 of the annex, the guidelines stipulated that the Secretary-General should continue to utilize the existing channels of communication between the United Nations and international and regional non-governmental youth organizations.

86. The International Youth Year has provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen channels of communication. Many contacts have been established with youth organizations where they did not exist before; many organizations that did not consider themselves to be particularly involved in youth work have now recognized that young people form an important part of their programmes.

87. It is important that the opportunity provided by the International Youth Year to extend and improve channels of communication should not be lost after 1985. In this connection, relationships with non-governmental organizations should be strengthened, particularly with regard to project-oriented activities.

88. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section C, paragraph 8 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination should continue arrangements for the promotion and co-ordination of activities in the field of youth and the integration of those activities into the overall programmes of social and economic development. This could be done, the guidelines continued, by, inter alia, regularly including the item concerning youth in the Committee's agenda or convening ad hoc inter-agency meetings on youth, or both.

89. The need for co-ordination among United Nations bodies and agencies in the field of youth has been established; it is based on the fact that youth issues cannot be readily categorized along topical lines. For example, the issue of youth unemployment is also an issue of education and training, health, housing, family formation, migration and overall social and economic development. The issues affecting youth employment fall within the competence of various United Nations bodies and specialized agencies.

90. The importance of inter-agency co-operation has been recognized by intergovernmental bodies. In its resolution 1983/26 of 26 May 1983, the Economic and Social Council recognized that inter-agency consultations have proved to be a useful tool in planning, initiating, promoting and implementing activities in the context of the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities. The General Assembly, in its resolution 38/22 of 22 November 1983, reaffirmed the importance of better co-ordination of efforts in dealing with specific problems confronting young people and in examining the manner in which those problems are being treated by the specialized agencies and the various United Nations bodies. At the same session, the General Assembly took note, in resolution 38/26 of 22 November 1983, of the efforts in inter-agency co-operation to promote and strengthen channels of communication.

91. Inter-agency co-operation in the field of youth, particularly at the technical level, has been positive during the preparations for and observance of the International Youth Year. Measures will be taken to ensure continued inter-agency co-operation in the future.

92. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section C, paragraph 9 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the practice of providing internships for youth should be expanded in order to give a broad section of young people from all regions of the world the opportunity of being acquainted with the United Nations and thereby learning of its activities and that those internships should not be confined to United Nations Headquarters.

93. Considerable progress has been made by United Nations bodies and specialized agencies in developing internship programmes and creating opportunities for young volunteers to participate in their work, particularly at the headquarters level. In addition, volunteers have contributed a great deal to preparations for the International Youth Year, for example, through their work with UNDP/United Nations Volunteers and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (see also section III above).

94. The question of further involving young volunteers and interns both at the headquarters of the different United Nations bodies and at the field level is under review. Consideration is also being given to publicizing better the opportunities available to youth to participate in activities of the United Nations system.

95. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section C, paragraph 10 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the Joint United Nations Information Committee should take into account the views of youth organizations representative of all regions of the world on all phases of production of United Nations publications of interest to youth and ensure the broadest possible circulation of such publications.

96. This is an area of long-time interest in the context of channels of communication. The Joint United Nations Information Committee has been developing working relationships with non-governmental organizations, particularly through the work of the Non-Governmental Liaison Services, the Non-Governmental Organizations Unit of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Public Information.

97. In General Assembly resolution 36/17, section C, paragraph 11 of the annex, the additional guidelines stipulated that the Secretary-General should continue to strengthen and promote the relationship with, and assistance to, the Geneva informal meetings of international non-governmental youth organizations as an important channel of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations.

98. The Geneva Informal Meeting of International Youth Non-Governmental Organizations plays a meaningful role as an international platform of youth organizations. Its importance as a forum in which youth organizations can participate in United Nations activities, co-operate in areas of common interest and share problems and experiences is well recognized. Throughout the period of preparation for the International Youth Year, the Geneva informal meeting encouraged its member organizations to undertake activities in the context of the Year and to publicize youth issues through their individual communications networks. It has also addressed intergovernmental bodies such as the Advisory Committee for the Year, providing direct input on concerns to youth. The Geneva Informal Meeting has received official recognition by the General Assembly and consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in the past few years.

99. It is suggested that the Geneva Informal Meeting might organize specific thematic projects or programmes of action and that it should consider enhancing its contribution to the work of the United Nations system, especially by including in its programme of work other forms of activity than workshops organized at the time of its regular sessions. To strengthen its role, individual Governments might wish to consider providing financial subsidies for youth representatives to travel from less developed countries, an action which has been taken by several Governments.

V. CONCLUSIONS

100. Although channels of communication between the United Nations and youth and youth organizations have existed for many years, their effectiveness has varied tremendously in the past. It is clear that the International Youth Year has been instrumental in focusing attention on and increasing interest in youth issues and that it has thereby contributed to greater awareness of the necessity for improving channels of communication in order to promote the participation of youth in development and in the work of the United Nations at the national, regional, interregional and international levels.

101. Efforts have been intensified, despite limited resources, to ensure that youth and youth organizations are informed of activities of the United Nations system and of the importance of the direct participation of youth in economic and social development. Governments, bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations have found innovative ways of addressing the need to mobilize efforts

at the local, national, regional and international levels in carrying out specific programmes concerning youth.

102. Consideration needs to be given to finding ways to maintain the strong commitment to improving channels of communication and to strengthening co-operation in the field of youth. As already mentioned, guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth have been prepared by the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year as a tool for encouraging further action for young people (A/40/256). The dissemination and promotion of these guidelines would require the strengthening of channels of communication which, to be more effective, may appropriately focus on information dealing with peace and international co-operation, development, employment, environment, and culture and leisure.

103. On the basis of the information provided in the present report and taking into account the prevailing resource limitations, it can be concluded that the following measures might be taken to strengthen channels of communication:

- (a) Non-governmental organizations concerned with youth activities, particularly those organizations at the national and regional levels, should apply for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council;
- (b) The involvement of the family as an information channel should be encouraged;
- (c) The role of educational institutions in channelling information should be strengthened;
- (d) The use of film and video should be increased;
- (e) The translation of information on youth into more languages should be encouraged.

Notes

1/ A/33/261, A/34/199, A/35/503, A/36/427, A/37/401 and A/38/339.

2/ As at 1 July 1985, national co-ordinating committees or other forms of co-ordination have been established or are in the process of being established in Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium (Flemish- French- and German-speaking), Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi,

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Notes (continued)

Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (committees in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales), United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

3/ The Office of Public Information is now the Department of Public Information.

4/ The Centre for Economic and Social Information is now the Division for Economic and Social Information.
