

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION, 1984

Mexico City, 6 - 14 August 1984



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NOTE

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Chapter I

RECOMMENDATIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

1. At its 12th plenary meeting, on 14 August 1984, the Conference adopted the Declaration and the recommendations the text of which is set out below. At its 10th and 12 plenary meetings, on 13 and 14 August 1984, respectively, it adopted resolutions I and II the text of which is reproduced at the end of this chapter.

A. MEXICO CITY DECLARATION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The International Conference on Population met in Mexico City from 6 to 14 August 1984, to appraise the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action, adopted by consensus at Bucharest, 10 years ago. The Conference reaffirmed the full validity of the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action and adopted a set of recommendations for the further implementation of the Plan in the years ahead.

2. The world has undergone far-reaching changes in the past decade. Significant progress in many fields important for human welfare has been made through national and international efforts. However, for a large number of countries it has been a period of instability, increased unemployment, mounting external indebtedness, stagnation and even decline in economic growth. The number of people living in absolute poverty has increased.

3. Economic difficulties and problems of resource mobilization have been particularly serious in the developing countries. Growing international disparities have further exacerbated already serious problems in social and economic terms. Firm and widespread hope was expressed that increasing international co-operation will lead to a growth in welfare and wealth, their just and equitable distribution and minimal waste in use of resources, thereby promoting development and peace for the benefit of the world's population.

4. Population growth, high mortality and morbidity, and migration problems continue to be causes of great concern requiring immediate action.

5. The Conference confirms that the principal aim of social, economic and human development, of which population goals and policies are integral parts, is to improve the standards of living and quality of life of the people. This Declaration constitutes a solemn undertaking by the nations and international organizations gathered in Mexico City to respect national sovereignty, to combat all forms of racial discrimination, including apartheid, and to promote social and economic development, human rights and individual freedom.

* * *

6. Since Bucharest the global population growth rate has declined from 2.03 to 1.67 per cent per year. In the next decade the growth rate will decline more slowly. Moreover, the annual increase in numbers is expected to continue and may reach 90 million by the year 2000. Ninety per cent of that increase will occur in developing countries and at that time 6.1 billion people are expected to inhabit the Earth.

7. Demographic differences between developed and developing countries remain striking. The average life expectancy at birth, which has increased almost everywhere, is 73 years in developed countries, while in developing countries it is only 57 years and families in developing countries tend to be much larger than elsewhere. This gives cause for concern since social and population pressures may contribute to the continuation of the wide disparity in welfare and the quality of life between developing and developed countries.

8. In the past decade, population issues have been increasingly recognized as a fundamental element in development planning. To be realistic, development policies, plans and programmes must reflect the inextricable links between population, resources, environment and development. Priority should be given to action programmes integrating all essential population and development factors, taking fully into account the need for rational utilization of natural resources and protection of the physical environment and preventing its further deterioration.

9. The experience with population policies in recent years is encouraging. Mortality and morbidity rates have been lowered, although not to the desired extent. Family planning programmes have been successful in reducing fertility at relatively low cost. Countries which consider that their population growth rate hinders their national development plans should adopt appropriate population policies and programmes. Timely action could avoid the accentuation of problems such as overpopulation, unemployment, food shortages, and environmental degradation.

10. Population and development policies reinforce each other when they are responsive to individual, family and community needs. Experience from the past decade demonstrates the necessity of the full participation by the entire community and grass-roots organizations in the design and implementation of policies and programmes. This will ensure that programmes are relevant to local needs and in keeping with personal and social values. It will also promote social awareness of demographic problems.

11. Improving the status of women and enhancing their role is an important goal in itself and will also influence family life and size in a positive way. Community support is essential to bring about the full integration and participation of women into all phases and functions of the development process. Institutional, economic and cultural barriers must be removed and broad and swift action taken to assist women in attaining full equality with men in the social, political and economic life of their communities. To achieve this goal, it is necessary for men and women to share jointly responsibilities in areas such as family life, child-caring and family planning. Governments should formulate and implement concrete policies which would enhance the status and role of women.

12. Unwanted high fertility adversely affects the health and welfare of individuals and families, especially among the poor, and seriously impedes social and economic progress in many countries. Women and children are the main victims of unregulated fertility. Too many, too close, too early and too late pregnancies are a major cause of maternal, infant and childhood mortality and morbidity.

13. Although considerable progress has been made since Bucharest, millions of people still lack access to safe and effective family planning methods. By the year 2000 some 1.6 billion women will be of childbearing age, 1.3 billion of them in developing countries. Major efforts must be made now to ensure that all couples and individuals can exercise their basic human right to decide freely, responsibly and without coercion, the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so. In exercising this right, the best interests of their living and future children as well as the responsibility towards the community should be taken into account.

14. Although modern contraceptive technology has brought considerable progress into family planning programmes, increased funding is required in order to develop new methods and to improve the safety, efficacy and acceptability of

existing methods. Expanded research should also be undertaken in human reproduction to solve problems of infertility and subfecundity.

15. As part of the overall goal to improve the health standards for all people, special attention should be given to maternal and child health services within a primary health care system. Through breast-feeding, adequate nutrition, clean water, immunization programmes, oral rehydration therapy and birth spacing, a virtual revolution in child survival could be achieved. The impact would be dramatic in humanitarian and fertility terms.

16. The coming decades will see rapid changes in population structures with marked regional variations. The absolute numbers of children and youth in developing countries will continue to rise so rapidly that special programmes will be necessary to respond to their needs and aspirations, including productive employment. Aging of populations is a phenomenon which many countries will experience. This issue requires attention particularly in developed countries in view of its social implications and the active contribution the aged can make to the social, cultural and economic life in their countries.

17. Rapid urbanization will continue to be a salient feature. By the end of the century, 3 billion people, 48 per cent of the world's population, might live in cities, frequently very large cities. Integrated urban and rural development strategies should therefore be an essential part of population policies. They should be based on a full evaluation of the costs and benefits to individuals, groups and regions involved, should respect basic human rights and use incentives rather than restrictive measures.

18. The volume and nature of international migratory movements continue to undergo rapid changes. Illegal or undocumented migration and refugee movements have gained particular importance; labour migration of considerable magnitude occurs in all regions. The outflow of skills remains a serious human resource problem in many developing countries. It is indispensable to safeguard the individual and social rights of the persons involved and to protect them from exploitation and treatment not in conformity with basic human rights; it is also necessary to guide these different migration streams. To achieve this, the co-operation of countries of origin and destination and the assistance of international organizations are required.

19. As the years since 1974 have shown, the political commitment of Heads of State and other leaders and the willingness of Governments to take the lead in formulating population programmes and allocating the necessary resources are crucial for the further implementation of the World Population Plan of Action. Governments should attach high priority to the attainment of self-reliance in the management of such programmes, strengthen their administrative and managerial capabilities, and ensure co-ordination of international assistance at the national level.

20. The years since Bucharest have also shown that international co-operation in the field of population is essential for the implementation of recommendations agreed upon by the international community and can be notably successful. The need for increased resources for population activities is emphasized. Adequate and substantial international support and assistance will greatly facilitate the efforts of Governments. It should be provided wholeheartedly and in a spirit of universal solidarity and enlightened self-interest. The United Nations family should continue to perform its vital responsibilities.

21. Non-governmental organizations have a continuing important role in the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and deserve encouragement and support from Governments and international organizations. Members of Parliament, community leaders, scientists, the media and others in influential positions are called upon to assist in all aspects of population and development work.

* * *

22. At Bucharest, the world was made aware of the gravity and magnitude of the population problems and their close interrelationship with economic and social development. The message of Mexico City is to forge ahead with effective implementation of the World Population Plan of Action aimed at improving standards of living and quality of life for all peoples of this planet in promotion of their common destiny in peace and security.

23. IN ISSUING THIS DECLARATION, ALL PARTICIPANTS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION REITERATE THEIR COMMITMENT AND REDEDICATE THEMSELVES TO THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION

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I. PREAMBLE

1. During the years since the United Nations World Population Conference in 1974, the World Conference Plan of Action a/ has served as a guide to action in the field of population for Governments, for international organizations and for non-governmental organizations. The consensus of Bucharest has facilitated international co-operation and helped to bring population issues to the forefront. The principles and objectives of the Plan have shown themselves to remain valid and are reaffirmed.

2. However, the demographic, social, economic and political conditions of the world have changed considerably. In many developing countries the demographic situation has improved since 1974; fertility has declined, morbidity has diminished, infant mortality has declined and life expectancy has increased. There have also been improvements in the social sphere. In many developing countries school enrolment and literacy rates have increased, and access to health services has improved. For the developing countries as a whole, there has been an increase in per capita calorie supply, though in some regions, such as Africa, per capita calorie supply has not improved. Economic trends have, however, been less encouraging. Although per capita income did not grow as rapidly since 1974 as in the previous 10 years, it is none the less true that per capita income did grow moderately in a number of developing countries during that period. During the latter part of the decade, however, many developing countries experienced little or no growth in per capita income, and many experienced actual declines in per capita income, with the result that the gap between the per capita incomes of many developed and most developing countries widened during the period. Moreover, while progress has been made in achieving some goals of the World Population Plan of Action, other goals have not been met. Some important gaps in knowledge have been filled and new issues have emerged to challenge the international community. Therefore, as foreseen at Bucharest, some of the goals and recommendations of the Plan now call for complementing and further refinement. Though the community of nations has made considerable progress in the pursuit of the goals of the World Population Plan of Action, there is still a great need for continuation and acceleration in these efforts to realize those goals, as they have been refined at Mexico City in August 1984.

3. With respect to some major issues raised in the Plan, the following facts and trends deserve special mention:

(a) Though the global rate of population growth has declined slightly since 1974, the world population has increased by 770 million during the decade, and 90 per cent of that increase has occurred in the developing countries. Furthermore, the annual additions to the world's population are increasing in size. Moreover, in many countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia growth rates have increased owing to mortality declines not accompanied by equivalent declines in fertility;

(b) At the global level, and in virtually all countries, the level of mortality has fallen. However, the targets set by the World Population Plan of Action have not been met. At the same time, new approaches in the form of primary health care have been widely adopted;

(c) At the global level, fertility declined substantially but, as with population growth, the changes in some regions were far greater than in others.

For national and sub-national groups in populations and sub-populations representing about one fourth of the world's population, no decline of fertility was observed. The fertility changes were associated with progress in socio-economic development; with continued changes in the status of women, with changes in family structure in some regions, and with the increased availability of family planning services;

(d) Improvements in the status of women have been promoted by the World Population Plan of Action and the plans and programmes generated under the aegis of the United Nations Decade for Women. However, persisting inequalities between women and men are evident in the higher incidence of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy among women, the limited range of employment categories and the uneven share of home and family responsibilities borne by women. At the same time, it is increasingly recognized that socio-economic development is curtailed without the active participation of women in all fields of activity;

(e) Access to and knowledge of family planning have come to be much more widely permitted and supported by Governments as a contribution to maternal and child health, to the human rights of individuals and couples, and as a demographic measure. Nevertheless, data from the World Fertility Survey for developing countries indicate that, of women who wanted no more children and were exposed to the risk of pregnancy, on average over half were not using contraception;

(f) As a result of demographic trends, population structures have changed. In particular, the aging of populations and changes in household and family structure and composition have continued;

(g) In most regions of the world, urban populations continued to increase far more rapidly than total populations. In some developed countries, however, there was a trend towards deconcentration. Rapid urban population growth has become a matter of growing policy concern to most Governments, particularly in the developing regions in which the urban unemployment level remains extremely high. In some regions, the continued high levels of rural population growth renders rural development difficult;

(h) Persistent disparities among countries, particularly in population and economic development as also the felt needs of some host countries, have increased the potential of further international migration. These migrant workers do contribute to the economic development of receiving countries. However, the direction, magnitude and the type of international migration flows is a matter of concern to some countries;

(i) The flows of refugees are increasing in different regions of the world and are also a matter of increasing concern;

(j) Problems relating to involuntary migration have also increased;

(k) The overall social and economic development of the developing countries and the implementation of effective measures to deal with population trends in the period 1974-1984 have been greatly hampered by the serious effects of the international economic crisis on the economies of the developing countries. In the majority of developing countries, increases in population and its aspirations have contributed to increasing imports versus exports - food in particular. Furthermore, existing population programmes have been greatly affected by a shortage of adequate resources from both national and international sources;

(l) In many countries the population has continued to grow rapidly, aggravating such environmental and natural resource problems as soil erosion, desertification and deforestation, which affect food and agricultural production. The mechanisms to deal effectively with these problems are still in an incipient stage in many countries. There is, however, increasing awareness of the need to take into account natural resources and the quality of the environment along with social and economic factors;

(m) In the years since 1974 there have been a number of hopeful developments. New agricultural technologies, including the green revolution, have made it possible to better meet the needs of growing populations. Progress in molecular biology has potential for influencing both levels of fertility and mortality and the development of communication satellites may greatly advance mass education, including education directly related to population issues. The economic and social consequences of these advances raise serious ethical questions and may have a fundamental impact on the future of society.

4. The principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action affirm that the principal aim of social, economic and cultural development, of which population goals and policies are integral parts, is to improve the standards of living and quality of life of the people. Achieving this goal requires co-ordinated action in population with all socio-economic fields; thus, population trends must be co-ordinated with trends of economic and social development. In helping to achieve this co-ordination, the World Population Plan of Action should become an essential component of the system of international strategies for the promotion of economic development, the quality of life, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

5. The Plan affirms that the consideration of population problems cannot be limited to the analysis of population trends, since population variables influence development and are influenced by them. The present population situation in developing countries is related, inter alia, to unequal processes of socio-economic development, which are intensified by inequities in international relations, and by related disparities in standards of living.

6. It remains true that the basis for an effective solution of population problems is, above all, socio-economic transformation and, therefore, population policies must always be considered as a constituent element of socio-economic development policies and never as substitutes for them. However, even if social and economic development is slow or lacking, family planning programmes may have an impact on the level of fertility.

7. While the importance of integrating women into the development of society has been recognized by many Governments, much remains to be done to fulfil the recommendations adopted in 1974 by the World Population Conference as elaborated in 1975 by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, and in 1980 by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. The Plan, as well as other important international instruments, stressed the urgency of achieving the full integration of women in society on an equal basis with men and of abolishing any form of discrimination against women. In order to provide women with the freedom to participate fully in the life of society, it is equally necessary for men to share fully with women responsibilities in the areas of family planning, child-rearing and all other aspects of family life. The achievement of these objectives is integral to achieving development goals, including those related to population policy.

8. To achieve the goals of development, the formulation of national population goals and policies must take into account the need to contribute to an economic development which is environmentally sustainable over the long run and which protects the ecological balance.

9. The interdependence among countries has become ever more manifest and requires that national and international strategies pursue an integrated and balanced approach to population, resources, environment and development at national and international levels, by ensuring that the developing countries achieve significant improvement in their living standards and in the quality of life through economic and social transformation.

10. As the world enters a second decade after the World Population Conference of 1974, major challenges and problems in the area of population that are of primary concern to the international community and that are particularly relevant to the economic and social progress of the developing countries are:

(a) The task of reducing poverty, expanding employment and assuring the right to work by encouraging economic growth, which includes measures for the just distribution of wealth;

(b) The continued need to further promote the status of women and the expansion and advancement of their roles;

(c) The annual increments in population, which are projected to grow larger throughout the decade;

(d) The rate of population growth, which remains high in developing countries and which, for many countries, may even rise in the coming years;

(e) Changes in population structures, particularly the aging of populations, changes in household and family structure and composition, and the growth of the working-age populations in developing countries where economies are not growing adequately;

(f) High levels of infant and maternal mortality, and the important mortality differentials between regions, countries, social groups and sexes;

(g) The persistence of fertility rates substantially higher or lower than those desired by Governments and peoples in some countries;

(h) The unmet needs for family planning in many countries, which unless they are addressed will grow even greater as the number of couples of reproductive age increases substantially during the coming decade;

(i) The disequilibrium between rates of change in population and changes in resources, environment and development;

(j) The persistence of high rates of internal migration, new forms of mobility, high rates of urbanization, and the concentration of population in large cities in developing countries where these phenomena have negative consequences for development;

(k) The importance and diversity of international migration and its consequences for countries of origin and destination and the necessity for co-operation between these countries in this field;

(l) The need to find solutions to all problems related to refugees, whose numbers are increasing;

(m) The increasing number of persons who lack sufficient food, pure water, shelter, health care, education and the other facilities required to achieve full human potential;

(n) The consequences of progress in agricultural technology and in genetic engineering, which may lead to essential changes in the character of societies;

(o) The relatively high proportion of young people in the populations of the developing countries and the problems and consequences attendant to this which, unless addressed, will assure that populations will continued to grow for many decades to come;

(p) The need to strengthen the capacities of developing countries in data collection, analysis and utilization and to develop appropriately trained personnel in the population area;

(q) The need for increased national and international support to implement the Plan, in particular, adequate multilateral resources to support the efforts of developing countries.

11.* The Plan and the following recommendations for its further implementation should be considered within the framework of other intergovernmental strategies and plans. In this respect, they reaffirm the principles and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 217 A (III)), the International Covenants on Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex), the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (General Assembly resolution 2542 (XXIV)), the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (General Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)), the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX)) and the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 35/56, annex) and General Assembly resolutions 34/75 and 35/46 on the declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. In addition, the following declarations, plans of action and other relevant texts that have emanated from intergovernmental meetings must be stressed because of their relevance to the objectives of the World Population Plan of Action:

(a) United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959); b/

* While joining the consensus the delegation of the United States of America stated that:

"The United States reserved its position on all the international agreements mentioned in this document consistent with our previous acceptance or non-acceptance of them."

- (b) Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and the Action Plan for the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972) c/ and resolution 1 adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its session of a special character (Nairobi, 1982); d/
- (c) Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition (Rome, 1974); e/
- (d) World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year (Mexico City, 1975) f/ and Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women (Copenhagen, 1980); g/
- (e) Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation (Lima, 1975); h/
- (f) Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action adopted by the Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress and the International Division of Labour (Geneva, 1976); i/
- (g) Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976; j/
- (h) Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (Nairobi, 1977); k/
- (i) Mar del Plata Action Plan adopted by the United Nations Water Conference (Mar del Plata, 1977); l/
- (j) Declaration of Alma-Ata adopted by the International Conference on Primary Health Care (Alma-Ata, 1978); m/
- (k) Programme of Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (Geneva, 1978), n/ programme of activities to be undertaken during the second half of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination o/ and Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (Geneva, 1983); p/
- (l) Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (Buenos Aires, 1978); q/
- (m) Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (Rome, 1979); r/
- (n) Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development (Vienna, 1979); s/
- (o) Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000, t/ adopted by the World Health Assembly in its resolution WHA 34.36 of 22 May 1981 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/43 of 19 November 1981;
- (p) Nairobi Programme of Action for the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (Nairobi, 1981); u/
- (q) Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries (Paris, 1981); v/
- (r) International Plan of Action on Aging (Vienna, 1982). w/

II. PEACE, SECURITY AND POPULATION

12. Being aware of the existing close links between peace and development, it is of great importance for the world community to work ceaselessly to promote, among nations, peace, security, disarmament and co-operation, which are indispensable for the achievement of the goals of humane population policies and for economic and social development. Creating the conditions for real peace and security would permit an allocation of resources to social and economic rather than to military programmes, which would greatly help to attain the goals and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

13. Many of the following recommendations are addressed to Governments. This is not meant to preclude the efforts or initiative of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, private institutions or organizations, or families and individuals where their efforts can make an effective contribution to overall population or development goals on the basis of strict respect for sovereignty and national legislation in force.

A. Socio-economic development, the environment and population

14. The World Population Plan of Action recognizes explicitly the importance of the interrelationships between population and socio-economic development and affirms, inter alia, that "the basis for an effective solution of population problems is, above all, socio-economic transformation" (paragraph 1) and that "population policies are constituent elements of socio-economic development policies, never substitutes for them" (paragraph 14 (d)). Consequently, the Plan of Action includes a number of recommendations dealing with socio-economic policies, the contents of which fully deserve reaffirmation and further development. The following recommendations reflect the view that if national and international policies are not adopted and implemented to increase the overall resources and the share of the world's resources going to the very poor, it will be extremely difficult for many countries to achieve the levels of fertility and mortality that they desire. The recommendations reflect the importance to be attached to an integrated approach towards population and development, both in national policies and at the international level. The recommendations also reflect the view that, although the actions of the developing countries are of primary importance, the attainment of the goals and objectives stipulated in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade will require appropriate policies by the developed countries and by the international community which support the efforts of the developing countries to achieve those objectives.

Recommendation 1

Considering that social and economic development is a central factor in the solution of population and interrelated problems and that population factors are very important in development plans and strategies and have a major impact on the attainment of development objectives, national development policies, plans and programmes, as well as international development strategies, should be formulated on the basis of an integrated approach that takes into account the

interrelationships between population, resources, environment and development. In this context, national and international efforts should give priority to action programmes integrating population and development.

Recommendation 2

National and international efforts should give high priority to the following development goals included in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade: the eradication of mass hunger and the achievement of adequate health and nutrition levels, the eradication of mass illiteracy, the improvement of the status of women, the elimination of mass unemployment and underemployment and the elimination of inequality in international economic relations. To achieve these goals, it is further recommended that Governments should take population trends fully into account when formulating their development plans and programmes.

Recommendation 3*

In order to promote the broadly based socio-economic development that is essential to achieving an adequate quality of life as well as national population objectives and to respond effectively to the requirements posed by demographic trends, all countries are urged to co-operate in efforts to achieve the above objectives and to accelerate development, particularly in developing countries, inter alia, through policies to lower barriers to trade, to increase multilateral and bilateral development assistance, to improve the quality and effectiveness of this assistance, to increase real income earnings from the export of commodities, to solve the problems arising from the debt burden in a significant number of developing countries, to increase the volume and improve the terms of international lending, and to encourage various sources of investment and, wherever appropriate, entrepreneurial initiatives. To respond to the needs of populations for employment, food self-sufficiency, and improvements in the quality of life and to increase self-reliance, productive investment should be increased, appropriate industries should be encouraged and substantial investments should be fostered in rural and agricultural development.

* While joining the consensus the delegations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic stated that:

"They cannot accept the unbalanced wording in recommendation 3, which implies underestimation of the role that the State sector is playing in socio-economic development as reflected in relevant United Nations documents."

While joining the consensus the delegation of the United States of America stated that:

"The United States wished to underline that endorsement of this document does not change known United States positions on commodity agreements or future lending resources for international financial institutions."

Recommendation 4

In countries in which there are imbalances between trends in population growth and resources and environmental requirements, Governments are urged, in the context of overall development policies, to adopt and implement specific policies, including population policies, that will contribute to redressing such imbalances and promote improved methods of identifying, extracting, renewing, utilizing and conserving natural resources. Efforts should be made to accelerate the transition from traditional to new and renewable sources of energy while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the environment. Governments should also implement appropriate policy measures to avoid the further destruction of the ecological equilibria and take measures to restore them.

B. The role and the status of women

15. The World Population Plan of Action (paragraphs 15 (e), 32 (b), 42 and 43) as well as other important international instruments - in particular the 1975 Mexico City Plan of Action, the 1980 Copenhagen Programme of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex) - stress the urgency of achieving the full integration of women in society on an equal basis with men and of abolishing any form of discrimination against women. Comprehensive strategies to address these concerns will be formulated at the 1985 Nairobi Conference which is being convened to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women.

16. In view of the slow progress made since 1974 in the achievement of equality for women, the broadening of the role and the improvement of the status of women remain important goals that should be pursued as ends in themselves. The achievement of genuine equality with respect to opportunities, responsibilities and rights would guarantee that women could participate fully with men in all aspects of decision-making regarding population and development issues that affect their families, communities and countries.

17. The ability of women to control their own fertility forms an important basis for the enjoyment of other rights; likewise, the assurance of socio-economic opportunities on an equal basis with men and the provision of the necessary services and facilities enable women to take greater responsibility for their reproductive lives. The following recommendations take into account the need for actions to ensure that women can effectively exercise rights equal to those of men in all spheres of economic, social, cultural and political life, and in particular those rights which pertain most directly to population concerns.

Recommendation 5

Governments are strongly urged to integrate women fully into all phases of the development process, including planning, policy and decision-making. Governments should pursue more aggressively action programmes aimed at improving and protecting the legal rights and status of women through efforts to identify and to remove institutional and cultural barriers to women's education, training, employment and access to health care. In addition, Governments should provide remedial measures, including mass education programmes, to assist women in attaining equality with men in the social, political and economic life of their countries. The promotion of

community support and the collaboration, at the request of Governments, of non-governmental organizations, particularly women's organizations, in expediting these efforts should be given paramount importance.

Recommendation 6

Governments should ensure that women are free to participate in the labour force and are neither restricted from, nor forced to participate in, the labour force for reasons of demographic policy or cultural tradition. Further, the biological role of women in the reproductive process should in no way be used as a reason for limiting women's right to work. Governments should take the initiative in removing any existing barriers to the realization of that right and should create opportunities and conditions such that activities outside the home can be combined with child-rearing and household activities.

Recommendation 7

Governments should provide women, through education, training and employment, with opportunities for personal fulfilment in familial and non-familial roles, as well as for full participation in economic, social and cultural life, while continuing to give due support to their important social role as mothers. To this end, in those countries where child-bearing occurs when the mother is too young, Government policies should encourage delay in the commencement of child-bearing.

Recommendation 8

Governments concerned should make efforts to raise the age of entry into marriage in countries in which this age at marriage is still quite low.

Recommendation 9

Governments should promote and encourage, through information, education and communication, as well as through employment legislation and institutional support, where appropriate, the active involvement of men in all areas of family responsibility, including family planning, child-rearing and housework, so that family responsibilities can be fully shared by both partners.

Recommendation 10

All Governments which have not already done so are strongly urged to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

C. Development of population policies

18. The World Population Plan of Action urges that population policies should not be considered substitutes for socio-economic development policies but rather should be integral components of those policies (paragraph 2). In formulating population policies, Governments may aim to affect one or more of the following population trends and characteristics, among others, population growth, morbidity and mortality, reproduction, population distribution, internal and international migration and population structure. The Plan also recognizes the sovereignty of

nations in the formulation, adoption and implementation of their population policies (paragraph 14), consistent with basic human rights and responsibilities of individuals, couples and families (paragraph 17).

Recommendation 11

Governments are urged to adopt population policies and social and economic development policies that are mutually reinforcing. Such policies should be formulated with particular attention to the individual, the family and community levels, as well as to other factors at the micro-level and macro-level. Special emphasis needs to be given to linkages between population trends, labour supply and demand, the problems of unemployment and the creation of productive employment. Governments are urged to share their experience in integrating population policies into other social and economic development policies.

Recommendation 12

Governments are encouraged to provide adequate resources and, where appropriate, to adopt innovative measures for the implementation of population policy. To be effective and successful, population programmes and development activities should be responsive to local values and needs, and those directly affected should be involved in the decision-making process at all levels. Moreover, in these activities, the full participation of the community and concerned non-governmental organizations, in particular women's organizations, should be encouraged.

D. Population goals and policies

1. Population growth

19. United Nations population projections, as assessed in 1982,* indicate that, between 1984 and the end of the present century, the growth rate of the world population will decline more slowly than during the past 10 years. This is partly due to the fact that, as a consequence of high fertility levels in the past, the number of women of child-bearing age (15-49) will continue to grow rapidly. Although, according to the medium variant projections, the total fertility rate during this period is expected to decline from 3.6 to 3.0 children per woman, the annual rate of growth is projected to reach only 1.5 per cent. For the world as a whole, the present annual increment of 78 million is projected to increase to 89 million by 1995-2000. Thus, in the 16 years from 1984 to 2000, the world population is expected to increase by 1.3 billion, from 4.8 billion in 1984 to 6.1 billion in 2000.

20. These global perspectives conceal significant demographic differences existing at the regional as well as the country levels. According to the United Nations estimates, the current total fertility rates range from 6.4 children per woman for Africa, 4.7 for South Asia, 4.1 for Latin America, 2.3 for East Asia, to 1.9 for Europe and North America. During the remainder of the present century these differences are not expected to narrow significantly. Moreover, these

* The United Nations demographic estimates or projections are revised every two years.

projections assume a continuation of present efforts and policies without which uninterrupted declines in both fertility and population growth cannot be achieved. The World Population Plan of Action invites countries to consider adopting population policies, within the framework of socio-economic development, which are consistent with basic human rights and national goals and values (paragraph 17). It is in the light of that provision and the above-mentioned trends that the following recommendation is made.

Recommendation 13

Countries which consider that their population growth rates hinder the attainment of national goals are invited to consider pursuing relevant demographic policies, within the framework of socio-economic development. Such policies should respect human rights, the religious beliefs, philosophical convictions, cultural values and fundamental rights of each individual and couple, to determine the size of its own family.

2. Morbidity and mortality

(a) Goals and general guidance for health policies

21. The World Population Plan of Action set targets for those countries with the highest mortality levels for 1985 and noted the progress necessary for each region to attain an average life expectancy of 62 years by 1985 and 74 years by 2000 (paragraphs 22 and 23). Recommendation 14 below updates the targets for countries with higher mortality levels and challenges countries with intermediate or lower mortality levels to continue and strengthen their efforts for the improvement of health and the reduction of mortality in the context of overall population and development planning. The targets are feasible, provided a commitment is made and resources are well allocated. Their achievement requires that communities become increasingly involved in efforts to promote their health and welfare, that all agencies and institutions of government be involved in this endeavour, and that each programme be evaluated. The achievement of these targets will also require that countries will not be subject to aggression (paragraph 24 (f)). The attainment of reduced levels of morbidity and mortality is in accordance with the Declaration of Alma Ata, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/58 of 29 November 1979.

Recommendation 14

All Governments; regardless of the mortality levels of their population, are strongly urged to strive to reduce morbidity and mortality levels and socio-economic and geographical differentials in their countries and to improve health among all population groups, especially among those groups where the morbidity and mortality levels are the highest. Countries with higher mortality levels should aim for a life expectancy at birth of at least 60 years and an infant mortality rate of less than 50 per 1,000 live births by the year 2000. Countries with intermediate mortality levels should aim to achieve a life expectancy at birth of at least 70 years and an infant mortality rate of less than 35 per 1,000 live births by the year 2000. The countries with lower mortality should continue their efforts to improve the health of all population groups and to reduce mortality even further, in keeping with their social and economic capacities. Levels, trends and differentials in mortality should be monitored in order to evaluate the success of programmes in achieving these goals.