

Part one

ACTION TAKEN BY THE CONFERENCE

## Chapter I

### DECLARATION OF MEXICO ON THE EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, 1975

#### The World Conference of the International Women's Year,

Aware that the problems of women, who constitute half of the world's population, are the problems of society as a whole, and that changes in the present economic, political and social situation of women must become an integral part of efforts to transform the structures and attitudes that hinder the genuine satisfaction of their needs,

Recognizing that international co-operation based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be developed and strengthened in order to find solutions to world problems and to build an international community based on equity and justice,

Recalling that in subscribing to the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations undertook specific commitments: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war . . ., to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom",

Taking note of the fact that since the creation of the United Nations very important instruments have been adopted, among which the following constitute landmarks: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, and the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order based on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,

Taking into account that the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considers that: "discrimination against women is incompatible with human dignity and with the welfare of the family and of society, prevents their participation, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries and is an obstacle to the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity",

Recalling that the General Assembly, in its resolution 3010 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year and that the Year was to be devoted to intensified action with a view to: promoting equality between men and women, ensuring the integration of women in the total development effort, and increasing the contribution of women to the strengthening of world peace,

Recalling further that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1849 (LVI) of 16 May 1974, adopted the Programme for International Women's Year,

and that the General Assembly, in its resolution 3275 (XXIX) of 10 December 1974, called for full implementation of the Programme,

Taking into account the role played by women in the history of humanity, especially in the struggle for national liberation, the strengthening of international peace, and the elimination of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, alien domination, racism and apartheid,

Stressing that greater and equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making shall decisively contribute to accelerating the pace of development and the maintenance of peace,

Stressing also that women and men of all countries should have equal rights and duties and that it is the task of all States to create the necessary conditions for the attainment and the exercise thereof,

Recognizing that women of the entire world, whatever differences exist between them, share the painful experience of receiving or having received unequal treatment, and that as their awareness of this phenomenon increases they will become natural allies in the struggle against any form of oppression, such as is practised under colonialism, neo-colonialism, zionism, racial discrimination and apartheid, thereby constituting an enormous revolutionary potential for economic and social change in the world today,

Recognizing that changes in the social and economic structure of societies, even though they are among the prerequisites, cannot of themselves ensure an immediate improvement in the status of a group which has long been disadvantaged, and that urgent consideration must therefore be given to the full, immediate and early integration of women into national and international life,

Emphasizing that under-development imposes upon women a double burden of exploitation, which must be rapidly eliminated, and that full implementation of national development policies designed to fulfil this objective is seriously hindered by the existing inequitable system of international economic relations,

Aware that the role of women in child-bearing should not be the cause of inequality and discrimination, and that child-rearing demands shared responsibilities among women, men and society as a whole,

Recognizing also the urgency of improving the status of women and finding more effective methods and strategies which will enable them to have the same opportunities as men to participate actively in the development of their countries and to contribute to the attainment of world peace,

Convinced that women must play an important role in the promotion, achievement and maintenance of international peace, and that it is necessary to encourage their efforts towards peace, through their full participation in the national and international organizations that exist for this purpose,

Considering that it is necessary to promote national, regional and international action, in which the implementation of the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year should make a significant contribution, for the attainment of equality, development and peace,

Decides to promulgate the following principles:

1. Equality between women and men means equality in their dignity and worth as human beings as well as equality in their rights, opportunities and responsibilities.
2. All obstacles that stand in the way of enjoyment by women of equal status with men must be eliminated in order to ensure their full integration into national development and their participation in securing and in maintaining international peace.
3. It is the responsibility of the State to create the necessary facilities so that women may be integrated into society while their children receive adequate care.
4. National non-governmental organizations should contribute to the advancement of women by assisting women to take advantage of their opportunities, by promoting education and information about women's rights, and by co-operating with their respective Governments.
5. Women and men have equal rights and responsibilities in the family and in society. Equality between women and men should be guaranteed in the family, which is the basic unit of society and where human relations are nurtured. Men should participate more actively, creatively and responsibly in family life for its sound development in order to enable women to be more intensively involved in the activities of their communities and with a view to combining effectively home and work possibilities of both partners.
6. Women, like men, require opportunities for developing their intellectual potential to the maximum. National policies and programmes should therefore provide them with full and equal access to education and training at all levels, while ensuring that such programmes and policies consciously orient them towards new occupations and new roles consistent with their need for self-fulfilment and the needs of national development.
7. The right of women to work, to receive equal pay for work of equal value, to be provided with equal conditions and opportunities for advancement in work, and all other women's rights to full and satisfying economic activity are strongly reaffirmed. Review of these principles for their effective implementation is now urgently needed, considering the necessity of restructuring world economic relationships. This restructuring offers greater possibilities for women to be integrated into the stream of national economic, social, political and cultural life.
8. All means of communication and information as well as all cultural media should regard as a high priority their responsibility for helping to remove the attitudinal and cultural factors that still inhibit the development of women and for projecting in positive terms the value to society of the assumption by women of changing and expanding roles.
9. Necessary resources should be made available in order that women may be able to participate in the political life of their countries and of the international community since their active participation in national and world

affairs at decision-making and other levels in the political field is a prerequisite of women's full exercise of equal rights as well as of their further development and of the national well-being.

10. Equality of rights carries with it corresponding responsibilities; it is therefore a duty of women to make full use of opportunities available to them and to perform their duties to the family, the country and humanity.

11. It should be one of the principal aims of social education to teach respect for physical integrity and its rightful place in human life. The human body, whether that of woman or man, is inviolable and respect for it is a fundamental element of human dignity and freedom.

12. Every couple and every individual has the right to decide freely and responsibly whether or not to have children as well as to determine their number and spacing, and to have information, education and means to do so.

13. Respect for human dignity encompasses the right of every woman to decide freely for herself whether or not to contract matrimony.

14. The issue of inequality, as it affects the vast majority of the women of the world, is closely linked with the problem of under-development, which exists as a result not only of unsuitable internal structures but also of a profoundly unjust world economic system.

15. The full and complete development of any country requires the maximum participation of women as well as of men in all fields: the under-utilization of the potential of approximately half of the world's population is a serious obstacle to social and economic development.

16. The ultimate end of development is to achieve a better quality of life for all, which means not only the development of economic and other material resources but also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the human person.

17. In order to integrate women into development, States should undertake the necessary changes in their economic and social policies because women have the right to participate and contribute to the total development effort.

18. The present state of international economic relations poses serious obstacles to a more efficient utilization of all human and material potential for accelerated development and for the improvement of living standards in developing countries aimed at the elimination of hunger, child mortality, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness, which concern all of humanity and women in particular. It is therefore essential to establish and implement with urgency the New International Economic Order, of which the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States constitutes a basic element, founded on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest, co-operation among all States irrespective of their social and economic systems, on the principles of peaceful coexistence and on the promotion by the entire international community of economic and social progress of all countries, especially developing countries, and on the progress of States comprising the international community.

19. The principle of the full and permanent sovereignty of every State over its natural resources, wealth and all economic activities, and its inalienable right of nationalization as an expression of this sovereignty constitute fundamental prerequisites in the process of economic and social development.

20. The attainment of economic and social goals, so basic to the realization of the rights of women, does not, however, of itself bring about the full integration of women in development on a basis of equality with men unless specific measures are undertaken for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them. It is therefore important to formulate and implement models of development that will promote the participation and advancement of women in all fields of work and provide them with equal educational opportunities and such services as would facilitate housework.

21. Modernization of the agricultural sector of vast areas of the world is an indispensable element for progress, particularly as it creates opportunities for millions of rural women to participate in development. Governments, the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other competent regional and international organizations should support projects designed to utilize the maximum potential and develop the self-reliance of rural women.

22. It must be emphasized that, given the required economic, social and legal conditions as well as the appropriate attitudes conducive to the full and equal participation of women in society, efforts and measures aimed at a more intensified integration of women in development can be successfully implemented only if made an integral part of over-all social and economic growth. Full participation of women in the various economic, social, political and cultural sectors is an important indication of the dynamic progress of peoples and their development. Individual human rights can be realized only within the framework of total development.

23. The objectives considered in this Declaration can be achieved only in a world in which the relations between States are governed, inter alia, by the following principles: the sovereign equality of States, the free self-determination of peoples, the unacceptability of acquisition or attempted acquisition of territories by force and the prohibition of recognition of such acquisition, territorial integrity, and the right to defend it, and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States, in the same manner as relations between human beings should be governed by the supreme principle of the equality of rights of women and men.

24. International co-operation and peace require the achievement of national liberation and independence, the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, apartheid, and racial discrimination in all its forms as well as the recognition of the dignity of peoples and their right to self-determination.

25. Women have a vital role to play in the promotion of peace in all spheres of life: in the family, the community, the nation and the world. Women must participate equally with men in the decision-making processes which help to promote peace at all levels.

26. Women and men together should eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, foreign domination and occupation, zionism, apartheid, racial discrimination, the acquisition of land by force and the recognition of such acquisition, since such practices inflict incalculable suffering on women, men and children.

27. The solidarity of women in all countries of the world should be supported in their protest against violations of human rights condemned by the United Nations. All forms of repression and inhuman treatment of women, men and children, including imprisonment, torture, massacres, collective punishment, destruction of homes, forced eviction and arbitrary restriction of movement shall be considered crimes against humanity and in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments.

28. Women all over the world should unite to eliminate violations of human rights committed against women and girls such as: rape, prostitution, physical assault, mental cruelty, child marriage, forced marriage and marriage as a commercial transaction.

29. Peace requires that women as well as men should reject any type of intervention in the domestic affairs of States, whether it be openly or covertly carried on by other States or by transnational corporations. Peace also requires that women as well as men should also promote respect for the sovereign right of a State to establish its own economic, social and political system without undergoing political and economic pressures or coercion of any type.

30. Women as well as men should promote real, general and complete disarmament under effective international control, starting with nuclear disarmament. Until genuine disarmament is achieved, women and men throughout the world must maintain their vigilance and do their utmost to achieve and maintain international peace.

Wherefore,

The World Conference of the International Women's Year

1. Affirms its faith in the objectives of the International Women's Year, which are equality, development and peace;
2. Proclaims its commitment to the achievement of such objectives;
3. Strongly urges Governments, the entire United Nations system, regional and international intergovernmental organizations and the international community as a whole to dedicate themselves to the creation of a just society where women, men and children can live in dignity, freedom, justice and prosperity.

Chapter II

PLANS OF ACTION

A. World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year

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## INTRODUCTION

1. In subscribing to the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations undertook specific commitments: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ... , to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and ... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

2. The greatest and most significant achievement during recent decades has been the liberation of a large number of peoples and nations from alien colonial domination, which has permitted them to become members of the community of free peoples. Technological progress has also been achieved in all spheres of economic activity during the past three decades, thus offering substantial possibilities for improving the well-being of all peoples. However, the last vestiges of alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation, racial discrimination apartheid and neo-colonialism in all its forms are still among the greatest obstacles to the full emancipation and progress of developing countries and of all the peoples concerned. The benefits of technological progress are not shared equitably by all members of the international community. The developing countries, which account for 70 per cent of the population of the world, receive only 30 per cent of world income. It has proved impossible to achieve uniform and balanced development of the international community under the present economic order, and, for this reason, it is urgent to implement a new international economic order in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3201 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974).

3. Conventions, declarations, formal recommendations and other instruments have been adopted since the Charter came into force, 1/ with a view to reinforcing, elaborating and implementing these fundamental principles and objectives. Some of them seek to safeguard and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons without discrimination of any kind. Others deal with the promotion of economic and social progress and development and the need to eliminate all forms of alien domination, dependence, neo-colonialism, and include international strategies, programmes and plans of action. Some have the more specific purpose of eliminating discrimination on the ground of sex and promoting the equal rights of men and women. These documents reflect the ever increasing awareness in the international community of the uneven development of peoples, and of the tragedy of all forms of discrimination, be it on the ground of race, sex or any other ground, and the evident will to promote progress and development in conditions of peace, equity and justice.

4. In these various instruments the international community has proclaimed that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women as well as men in all fields. It has declared that all human beings without distinction have the right to enjoy the fruits of social and economic progress and should, on their part, contribute to it. It has condemned sex discrimination as fundamentally unjust,

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1/ See appendix (p. 47 below).

an offence against human dignity and an infringement of human rights. It has included the full integration of women in the total development effort as a stated objective of the International Development Strategy for the decade of the 1970s. <sup>2/</sup>

5. Despite these solemn pronouncements and notwithstanding the work accomplished in particular by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and the specialized agencies concerned, progress in translating these principles into practical reality is proving slow and uneven. The difficulties encountered in the preparation and implementation of these many instruments are attributable to the complexities created by the considerable differences between countries, regions etc.

6. History has attested to the active role which women played, together with men, in accelerating the material and spiritual progress of peoples and in the process of the progressive renewal of society; in our times, women's role will increasingly emerge as a powerful revolutionary social force.

7. There are significant differences in the status of women in different countries and regions of the world which are rooted in the political, economic and social structure, the cultural framework and the level of development of each country, and in the social category of women within a given country. However, basic similarities unite women to fight differences wherever they exist in the legal, economic, social, political and cultural status of women and men.

8. As a result of the uneven development that prevails in the international economic relations, three quarters of humanity is faced with urgent and pressing social and economic problems. The women among them are even more affected by such problems and the new measures taken to improve their situation as well as their role in the process of development must be an integral part of the global project for the establishment of a new economic order.

9. In many countries women form a large part of the agricultural work force. Because of this and because of their important role in agricultural production and in the preparation, processing and marketing of food, they constitute a substantial economic resource. Nevertheless, if the rural worker's lack of technical equipment, education and training is taken into account, it will be seen that in many countries the status of women in this sector is doubly disadvantaged.

10. While industrialization provides jobs for women and constitutes one of the main means for the integration of women in the process of development, women workers are disadvantaged in many respects because of the fact that the technological structure of production in general has been oriented towards man and his requirements. Therefore special attention must be paid to the situation of the woman worker in industry and in services. Women workers feel painfully the effects of the present economic crisis, the growth of unemployment, inflation, mass poverty, lack of resources for education and medical care, unexpected and unwanted side-effects of urbanization and other migration, etc.

11. Scientific and technological developments have had both positive and negative repercussions on the situation of women in many countries. Political, economic and social factors are important in overcoming any adverse effects of such developments.

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<sup>2/</sup> General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV) of 24 October 1970.

12. During the last decades women's movements and millions of women together with other progressive forces acting in many countries have focused public opinion at the national and international levels on all these problems.

13. However, that public opinion often overlooks the many women of regions under alien domination, particularly those subjected to apartheid who experience daily the terror of repression and who struggle tirelessly for the recovery of the most elementary rights of the human person.

14. The reality of the problems which women still meet in their daily life in many countries of the world in their efforts to participate in the economic and social activities, in the decision-making process and the political administration of their countries, and the loss represented by the under-utilization of the potentialities of approximately 50 per cent of the world's adult population, have prompted the United Nations to proclaim 1975 as International Women's Year, and to call for intensified action to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort, and to involve women widely in international co-operation and the strengthening of world peace on the basis of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities of women and men. The objective of International Women's Year is to define a society in which women participate in a real and full sense in economic, social and political life and to devise strategies whereby such societies could develop.

15. This Plan of Action is intended to strengthen the implementation of the instruments and programmes which have been adopted concerning the status of women, and to broaden and place them in a more timely context. Its purpose is mainly to stimulate national and international action to solve the problems of under-development and of the socio-economic structure which places women in an inferior position, in order to achieve the goals of International Women's Year.

16. The achievement of equality between men and women implies that they should have equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities to enable them to develop their talents and capabilities for their own personal fulfilment and the benefit of society. To that end, a reassessment of the functions and roles traditionally allotted to each sex within the family and the community at large is essential. The necessity of a change in the traditional role of men as well as of women must be recognized. In order to allow for women's equal (fuller) participation in all societal activities, socially organized services should be established and maintained to lighten household chores and, especially, services for children should be provided. All efforts should be made to change social attitudes - based mainly on education - in order to bring about the acceptance of shared responsibilities for home and children by both men and women.

17. In order to promote equality between women and men, Governments should ensure for both women and men equality before the law, the provision of facilities for equality of educational opportunities and training, equality in conditions of employment, including remuneration, and adequate social security. Governments should recognize and undertake measures to implement men's and women's right to employment on equal conditions, regardless of marital status and their access to the whole range of economic activities. The State has also the responsibility to create conditions that promote the implementation of legal norms providing for equality of men and women and in particular the opportunity for all individuals to receive free general and primary education, and eventually compulsory general secondary education, equality in conditions of employment, and maternity protection.

18. Governments should strive to ameliorate the hard working conditions and unreasonably heavy work load, especially those that fall upon large groups of women in many countries and particularly among underprivileged social groups. Governments should ensure improved access to health services, better nutrition and other social services that are essential to the improvement of the condition of women and their full participation in development on an equal basis with men.

19. Individuals and couples have the right freely and responsibly to determine the number and spacing of their children and to have the information and the means to do so. The exercise of this right is basic to the attainment of any real equality between the sexes and without its achievement women are disadvantaged in their attempt to benefit from other reforms.

20. Child-care centres and other child-minding facilities are means to supplement the training and care that the children get at home. At the same time they are of vital importance in promoting equality between men and women. Governments have, therefore, a responsibility to see to it that such centres and facilities are available in the first place for those children whose parents or parent are employed in self-employment and particularly in agriculture for rural women, in training or in education or wish to take up employment, training or education.

21. The primary objective of development being to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual and of society and to bestow benefits on all, development should be seen not only as a desirable goal in itself but also as the most important means of furthering equality of the sexes and the maintenance of peace.

22. The integration of women in development will necessitate widening their activities to embrace all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life. They must be provided with the necessary technical training to make their contribution more effective in terms of production, and to ensure their greater participation in decision-making and in the planning and implementation of all programmes and projects. Full integration also implies that women receive their fair share of the benefits of development, thereby helping to ensure a more equitable distribution of income among all sectors of the population.

23. The promotion and protection of human rights for all is one of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the achievement of which is the goal of all people. An essential element for securing the protection of human rights and full equality between men and women throughout the world is sustained international co-operation based on peace, justice and equity for all and the elimination of all sources of conflict. True international co-operation must be based, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, on fully equal rights, the observance of national independence and sovereignty including sovereignty over natural resources and the right of their exploitation, non-interference in internal affairs, the right of peoples to defend their territorial integrity, and the inadmissibility of acquisition or attempts to acquire territory by force, mutual advantage, the avoidance of the use or the threat of force, and the promotion and maintenance of a new just world economic order, which is the basic purpose of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. <sup>3/</sup> International co-operation and

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<sup>3/</sup> During the World Conference of the International Women's Year some representatives stated that reference to the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States should not be interpreted as indicating a change in the positions of delegations on the Charter as stated at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

peace require national liberation and political and economic independence, and the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, fascism and other similar ideologies, foreign occupation and apartheid, racism and discrimination in all its forms as well as recognition of the dignity of the individual and appreciation of the human person and his or her self-determination. To this end, the Plan calls for the full participation of women in all efforts to promote and maintain peace. True peace cannot be achieved unless women share with men the responsibility for establishing a new international economic order.

24. It is the aim of the Plan to ensure that the original and multidimensional contribution - both actual and potential - of women is not overlooked in existing concepts for development action programmes and an improved world economic equilibrium. Recommendations for national and international action are proposed with the aim of accelerating the necessary changes in all areas, and particularly in those where women have been especially disadvantaged.

25. Since the integral development of the personality of the woman as a human being is directly connected with her participation in the development process as mother, worker and citizen, policies should be developed to promote the co-ordination of these different roles of the woman so as to give the most favourable conditions for the harmonious development of her personality - an aim which is equally relevant to the development of man.

#### I. NATIONAL ACTION

26. This Plan provides guidelines for national action over the 10-year period from 1975 to 1985 as part of a sustained, long-term effort to achieve the objectives of the International Women's Year. The recommendations are not exhaustive, and should be considered in addition to the other existing international instruments and resolutions of the United Nations bodies which deal with the condition of women and the quality of life. They constitute rather the main areas for priority action within the decade.

27. The recommendations for national action in this Plan are addressed primarily to Governments, and to all public and private institutions, women's and youth organizations, employers, trade unions, mass communications media, non-governmental organizations, political parties and other groups.

28. Since there are wide divergencies in the situation of women in various societies, cultures and regions, reflected in differing needs and problems, each country should decide upon its own national strategy, and identify its own targets and priorities within the present World Plan. Given the changing conditions of society today, an operative mechanism for assessment should be established and targets should be linked to those set out, in particular, in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, 2/ and in the World Population Plan of Action. 4/

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4/ See Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), part one, chap. I.

29. Changes in social and economic structures should be promoted which would make possible the full equality of women and their free access to all types of development, without discrimination of any kind, and to all types of education and employment.

30. There should be a clear commitment at all levels of government to take appropriate action to implement these targets and priorities. Commitment on the part of Governments to the ideals of equality and integration of women in society cannot be fully effective outside the larger context of commitment to transform fundamental relationships within a society in order to ensure a system that excludes the possibility of exploitation.

31. In elaborating national strategies and development plans in which women should participate, measures should be adopted to ensure that the set targets and priorities should take fully into account women's interests and needs, and make adequate provision to improve their situation and increase their contribution to the development process. There should be equitable representation of women at all levels of policy- and decision-making. Appropriate national machinery and procedures should be established if they do not already exist.

32. National plans and strategies for the implementation of this Plan should be sensitive to the needs and problems of different categories of women and of women of different age groups. However, Governments should pay special attention to improving the situation of women in areas where they have been most disadvantaged and especially of women in rural and urban areas.

33. While integrated programmes for the benefit of all members of society should be the basis for action in implementing this Plan, special measures on behalf of women whose status is the result of particularly discriminatory attitudes will be necessary.

34. The establishment of interdisciplinary and multisectoral machinery within government, such as national commissions, women's bureaux and other bodies, with adequate staff and budget, can be an effective transitional measure for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunity for women and their full integration in national life. The membership of such bodies should include both women and men, representative of all groups of society responsible for making and implementing policy decisions in the public sector. Government ministries and departments (especially those responsible for education, health, labour, justice, communication and information, culture, industry, trade, agriculture, rural development, social welfare, finance and planning), as well as appropriate private and public agencies, should be represented on them.

35. Such bodies should investigate the situation of women in all fields and at all levels and make recommendations for needed legislation, policies and programmes establishing priorities. Follow-up programmes should be maintained to monitor and evaluate the progress achieved within the country to assess the implementation of the present Plan in national plans.

36. These national bodies should also co-operate in the co-ordination of similar regional and international activities, as well as those undertaken by non-governmental organizations, and self-help programmes devised by women themselves.

37. Constitutional and legislative guarantees of the principle of non-discrimination on the ground of sex and of equal rights and responsibilities of women and men are

essential. Therefore, general acceptance of the principles embodied in such legislation and a change of attitude with regard to them should be encouraged. It is also essential to ensure that the adoption and enforcement of such legislation can in itself be a significant means of influencing and changing public and private attitudes and values.

38. Governments should review their legislation affecting the status of women in the light of human rights principles and internationally accepted standards. Wherever necessary, legislation should be enacted or updated to bring national laws into conformity with the relevant international instruments. Adequate provision should also be made for the enforcement of such legislation, especially in each of the areas dealt with in chapter II of the Plan. Where they have not already done so, Governments should take steps to ratify the relevant international conventions and fully implement their provisions. It should be noted that there are States whose national legislation guarantees women certain rights which go beyond those embodied in the relevant international instruments.

39. Appropriate bodies should be specifically entrusted with the responsibility of modernizing, changing or repealing outdated national laws and regulations, keeping them under constant review, and ensuring that their provisions are applied without discrimination. These bodies could include, for example, law commissions, human rights commissions, civil liberties unions, appeals boards, legal advisory boards and the office of ombudsman. Such bodies should have full governmental support to enable them to carry out their functions effectively. Non-governmental organizations could also play an important role in ensuring that relevant legislation is adequate, up to date and applied without discrimination.

40. Appropriate measures should be taken to inform and advise women of their rights and to provide them with every other type of assistance. Accordingly, the awareness of the mass communication media should be heightened so that they may offer their broad co-operation through public education programmes. Non-governmental organizations can and should be encouraged to play similar roles with regard to women. In this context, special attention should be paid to the women of rural areas, whose problem is most acute.

41. Efforts to widen opportunities for women to participate in development and to eliminate discrimination against them will require a variety of measures and action by society at large through its governmental machinery and other institutions.

42. While some of the measures suggested could be carried out at minimum cost, implementation of this Plan will require a redefinition of certain priorities and a change in the pattern of government expenditure. In order to ensure adequate allocation of funds, Governments should explore all available sources of support which are acceptable to Governments and in accordance with Governments' goals.

43. Special measures should also be envisaged to assist Governments whose resources are limited in carrying out specific projects or programmes. The Fund for International Women's Year established under Economic and Social Council resolution 1851 (LVI) of 16 May 1974, in addition to multilateral and bilateral assistance, which is vital for the purpose, should be extended provisionally pending further consideration as to its ultimate disposition in order to assist Governments whose resources are limited in carrying out specific programmes or projects. Women in countries holding special financial responsibilities entrusted by the United Nations and its specialized agencies with a view to assisting developing countries are called upon to make their contribution to the implementation of the goals set in connexion with the governmental assistance earmarked for improving the status of women, especially of those in the under-developed States.

44. It is recognized that some of the objectives of this Plan have already been achieved in some countries, while in others they may only be accomplished progressively. Moreover, some measures by their very nature will take longer to implement than others. Governments are therefore urged to establish short-, medium- and long-term targets and objectives to implement the Plan.

45. On the basis of this World Plan of Action, the United Nations Secretariat should elaborate a two-year plan of its own, containing several most important objectives, directed towards the implementation of the World Plan of Action under the current control of the Commission on the Status of Women and the over-all control of the General Assembly.

46. The achievement of the following should be envisaged as a minimum by the end of the first five-year period (1975-1980):

(a) Marked increase in literacy and civic education of women, especially in rural areas;

(b) The extension of co-educational technical and vocational training in basic skills to women and men in the industrial and agricultural sectors;

(c) Equal access at every level of education, compulsory primary school education and the measures necessary to prevent school drop-outs.

(d) Increased employment opportunities for women, reduction of unemployment and increased efforts to eliminate discrimination in the terms and conditions of employment;

(e) The establishment and increase of the infrastructural services required in both rural and urban areas;

(f) The enactment of legislation on voting and eligibility for election on equal terms with men, equal opportunity and conditions of employment including remuneration, and on equality in legal capacity and the exercise thereof;

(g) Encouragement of a greater participation of women in policy-making positions at the local, national and international levels;

(h) Increased provision for comprehensive measures for health education and services, sanitation, nutrition, family education, family planning and other welfare services;

(i) Provision for parity in the exercise of civil, social and political rights such as those pertaining to marriage, citizenship and commerce;

(j) Recognition of the economic value of women's work in the home in domestic food production and marketing and voluntary activities not remunerated;

(k) The direction of formal, non-formal and life-long education towards the re-evaluation of the man and woman, in order to ensure their full realization as an individual in the family and in society;



(l) The promotion of women's organizations as an interim measure within workers' organizations and educational, economic and professional institutions;

(m) The development of modern rural technology, cottage industry, pre-school day centres, time-and-energy-saving devices so as to help reduce the heavy work load of women, particularly those living in rural sectors and for the urban poor and thus facilitate the full participation of women in community, national and international affairs;

(n) The establishment of interdisciplinary and multisectoral machinery within the government for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full integration into national life.

47. These minimum objectives should be developed in more specific terms in regional plans of action.

48. The active involvement of non-governmental women's organizations in the achievement of the goals of the 10-year World Plan of Action at every level especially by the effective utilization of volunteer experts and in the setting and running of institutions and projects for the welfare of women and in the dissemination of information for their advancement.

## II. SPECIFIC AREAS FOR NATIONAL ACTION

49. The specific areas included in this chapter of the Plan have been selected because they are considered to be key areas for national action. They should not be viewed in isolation, however, as they are all closely interrelated and the guidelines proposed should be implemented within the framework of integrated strategies and programmes.

### A. International co-operation and the strengthening of international peace

50. An essential condition for the maintenance and strengthening of international co-operation and peace is the promotion and protection of human rights for all in conditions of equity among and within nations. In order to involve more women in the promotion of international co-operation, the development of friendly relations among nations, in the strengthening of international peace and disarmament, and the combating of colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign domination and alien subjugation, apartheid and racial discrimination, the peace efforts of women as individuals and in groups, and in national and international organizations should be recognized and encouraged.

51. Women of all countries of the world should proclaim their solidarity in support of the elimination of gross violations of human rights condemned by the United Nations and contrary to its principles involving acts against the moral and physical integrity of individuals or groups of individuals for political or ideological reasons.

52. The efforts of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations having as their aim the strengthening of international security and peace and the development of friendly relations among nations and the promotion of active co-operation among States should be supported, and women should be given every encouragement to participate actively in the endeavours of those organizations.

53. The United Nations should proclaim a special day to be devoted to international peace and celebrated every year, nationally and internationally. Meetings and seminars should be organized for this purpose by interested individuals and groups, with wide coverage in the press and other communications media. Women should lend their full support to these objectives and explore, as co-equals with men, ways to overcome existing obstacles to international co-operation, the development of friendly relations among nations, and the strengthening of international peace. However, it must be emphasized that peace is a matter for constant vigilance and not only for a one-day observance.

54. The free flow of information and ideas among countries should be facilitated, with due regard for national sovereignty and the principles of international law; the exchange of visits between women of different countries to study common problems should be promoted. Educational, cultural, scientific and other exchange programmes should be expanded and new forms developed in order to facilitate mutual understanding among peoples, particularly the young, and develop friendly relations and active co-operation among States. For these purposes the mass communications media should be utilized fully.

55. Women and men should be encouraged to instill in their children the values of mutual respect and understanding for all nations and all peoples, racial equality, sexual equality, the right of every nation to self-determination and the desire to maintain international co-operation, peace and security in the world.

56. Women should have equal opportunity with men to represent their countries in all international forums where the above questions are discussed, and in particular at

meetings of the organizations of the United Nations system, including the Security Council and all conferences on disarmament and international peace, and other regional bodies.

#### B. Political participation

57. Despite the fact that, numerically, women constitute half the population of the world, in the vast majority of countries only a small percentage of them are in positions of leadership in the various branches of government. Consequently, women are not involved in the decision-making and their views and needs are often overlooked in planning for development. As the majority of women do not participate in the formulation of development plans and programmes, they are frequently unaware of their implications and less inclined to support their implementation and the changes the programmes seek to bring about. Many women also lack the education, training, civic awareness and self-confidence to participate effectively in political life.

58. A major objective of this Plan is to ensure that women shall have, in law and in fact, equal rights and opportunities with men to vote and to participate in public and political life at the national, local and community levels, and that they shall be made aware of their responsibilities as citizens and of the problems affecting society and affecting them directly as women.

59. Participation in political life implies participation as voters, lobbyists, elected representatives, trade-unionists and public officials in the various branches of government, including the judiciary.

60. Where legislation does not exist guaranteeing women the right to vote, to be eligible for election and to hold all public offices and exercise public functions on equal terms with men, every effort should be made to enact it by 1976.

61. Where special qualifications for holding public office are required, they should apply to both sexes equally and should relate only to the expertise necessary for performing the specific functions of the office.

62. Governments should establish goals, strategies and time-tables for increasing within the decade 1975-1985 the number of women in elective and appointive public offices and public functions at all levels.

63. Special efforts to achieve these objectives could include:

(a) The reaffirmation of, and wide publicity for, the official policy concerning the equal political participation of women;

(b) The issuance of special governmental instructions for achieving an equitable representation of women in public office, and the compilation of periodic reports on the number of women in the public service, and levels of responsibility in the areas of their work;

(c) The organization of studies to establish the levels of economic, social and political competence of the female compared to the male population for recruitment, nomination and promotion;

(d) The undertaking of special activities for the recruitment, nomination and promotion of women, especially to fill important positions, until equitable representation of the sexes is achieved.

64. Special efforts and campaigns should be initiated to enlighten the female electorate on political issues and on the need for their active participation in public affairs, including political parties and other political organizations such as pressure groups.

65. Educational and informational activities should also be undertaken to enlighten the public at large on the indispensable role of women in the political processes, and on the need to promote their greater political participation and leadership.

66. Special drives should be undertaken to encourage the increased participation of women and girls in rural, community and youth development programmes, and in political activities, and to facilitate their access to training for leadership in such programmes.

### C. Education and training

67. Access to education and training is not only a basic human right recognized in many international instruments, it is also a key factor for social progress and in reducing the gaps between socio-economic groups and between the sexes. In many countries girls and women are at a marked disadvantage. This not only constitutes a serious initial handicap for them as individuals and for their future position in society; it also seriously impedes the effectiveness of their contribution to development programmes and the development process itself.

68. Illiteracy and lack of education and training in basic skills are some of the causes of the vicious circle of underdevelopment, low productivity and poor conditions of health and welfare. In a great many countries illiteracy is much more widespread among women than among men, and the rates are generally higher in rural than in urban areas.

69. In most countries female enrolment at all levels of education is considerably below that of men. Girls tend to drop out of school earlier than boys. Boys are given precedence over girls when parents have to make a choice if education is not free. There is often discrimination in the nature and content of the education provided and in the options offered. Girls' choices of areas of study are dominated by conventional attitudes, concepts and notions concerning the respective roles of men and women in society.

70. As long as women remain illiterate and are subject to discrimination in education and training, the motivation for change so badly needed to improve the quality of life for all will fail, for in most societies it is the mother who is responsible for the training of her children during the formative years of their lives.

71. Governments should provide equal opportunities for both sexes at all levels of education and training within the context of lifelong education, and on a formal and non-formal basis, according to national needs.

72. The measures taken should conform to the existing international standards and, in particular, to the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, 1960, and to the revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education, 1974, of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

73. Educational, training and employment strategies should be co-ordinated and based on population projections. The content and structure of education should be such as to ensure its relevance to the present and future needs of the communities concerned,

taking into account their own culture and the advances made through technical and scientific developments. It should also seek to prepare the individual adequately for an active civic and family life and for responsible parenthood.

74. Target dates should be established for the eradication of illiteracy, and high priority given to programmes for women and girls between the ages of 16 and 25 years.

75. The acquisition of literacy should be promoted as an integral part of other kinds of learning activities of direct interest and value to the daily lives of the people. Parallel with the efforts of Governments, all social institutions, such as co-operatives, voluntary organizations and enterprises, should be fully utilized to overcome illiteracy.

76. Voluntary task forces, especially of young persons, could be established to teach literacy, numbers, nutrition and methods of food preservation during vacations or periods of national service. Such task forces should include both women and men with expertise in the skills needed. The volunteers could also train local personnel to become trainers, thus expanding the available task forces.

77. Integrated or special training programmes should be developed for girls and women in rural areas to enable them to participate fully and productively in economic and social development and to take advantage of technological advances and thereby reduce the drudgery of their daily lives. Such programmes should include training in modern methods of agriculture and use of equipment, co-operatives, entrepreneurship, commerce, marketing, animal husbandry and fisheries, and in health, nutrition, family planning and education.

78. Free and compulsory primary education for girls and boys without discrimination should be provided and effectively enforced as quickly as possible. Every effort should also be made to provide textbooks, school lunches transport and other essentials, wherever possible free of charge.

79. In order to assist in overcoming high drop-out rates among school-age girls and to enable women to participate in literacy and basic skills, programmes, inexpensive child-care and other arrangements should be organized to coincide with school or training hours to free women and girls from confining domestic work.

80. Special programmes for continuing education on a part-time basis should be arranged to ensure retention of what has been learned at school and to assist women in their family, vocational and professional activities.

81. Programmes, curricula and standards of education and training should be the same for males and females. Courses for both sexes, in addition to general subjects, should include industrial and agricultural technology, politics, economics, current problems of society, responsible parenthood, family life, nutrition and health.

82. Textbooks and other teaching materials should be re-evaluated and, where necessary, rewritten to ensure that they reflect an image of women in positive and participatory roles in society. Teaching methods should be revised, wherever necessary, to make sure that they are adapted to national needs and to promote changes in discriminatory attitudes.

83. Research activities should be promoted to identify discriminatory practices in education and training and to ensure educational equality. New teaching techniques should be encouraged, especially audio-visual techniques.

84. Co-education and mixed training groups should be actively encouraged and should provide special guidance to both sexes in orienting them towards new occupations and changing roles.

85. Widely diversified existing and new vocational programmes of all types should be equally accessible to both sexes, enabling girls and boys to have a wide choice of employment opportunities, including those which require higher skills, and to match national needs with job opportunities. Both sexes should have equal opportunities to receive scholarships and study grants. Special measures should be developed to assist women who wish to return to work after a comparatively long absence, owing in particular to family responsibilities. Multipurpose training centres could be established in rural and urban areas to provide education and training in various techniques and disciplines and to encourage a self-reliant approach to life.

86. Girls and boys alike should be encouraged through vocational and career guidance programmes to choose a career according to their real aptitudes and abilities rather than on the basis of deeply ingrained sex stereotypes. They should also be made aware of the education and training required to take full advantage of the employment opportunities available.

87. Informational and formal and non-formal educational programmes should be launched to make the general public, parents, teachers, counsellors and others aware of the need to provide girls with a solid initial education and adequate training for occupational life and ample opportunities for further education and training. Maximum use should be made of the mass communications media, both as a tool for education and as a means for effecting changes in community attitudes.

#### D. Employment and related economic roles

88. This Plan seeks to achieve equality of opportunity and treatment for women workers and their integration in the labour force in accordance with the accepted international standards recognizing the right to work, to equal pay for equal work, to equal conditions of work and to advancement.

89. Available data show that women constitute more than a third of the world's economically active population and approximately 46 per cent of women of working age (15 to 64 years) are in the labour force. Of these, an estimated 65 per cent are to be found in the developing countries and 35 per cent in the more developed regions. These data, together with the many economic activities of women that are not now included in the official statistics (see chap. III, below) demonstrate that women's contribution to the national economy and development is substantial and has not been fully recognized. Further, the occupations in which most women workers are concentrated are not the same as those in which most men are employed. The vast majority of women are concentrated in a limited number of occupations at lower levels of skill, responsibility and remuneration. Women frequently experience discrimination in pay, promotion, working conditions and hiring practices. Cultural constraints and family responsibilities further restrict their employment opportunities. Where job opportunities are severely limited and widespread unemployment exists, women's chances of obtaining wage-earning employment are in practice further reduced, even where policies of non-discrimination have been laid down.

90. Governments should formulate policies and action programmes expressly directed towards equality of opportunity and treatment for women workers and the guarantee of their right to equal pay for equal work. Such policies and programmes should be in conformity with the standards elaborated by the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation. They should include legislation stipulating the principle of

non-discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status, guidelines for implementing the principles, appeals procedures, and effective targets and machinery for implementation.

91. Special efforts should be made to foster positive attitudes towards the employment of women, irrespective of marital status, among employers and workers and among women and men in society at large, and to eliminate obstacles based on sex-typed divisions of labour.

92. In attempting to achieve gainful employment for women and to deal with problems of unemployment and underemployment, special efforts should be made to create a variety of economic roles and to encourage and support self-employment and self-help activities, especially in rural areas. Existing self-help activities should be encouraged and strengthened through the participation of women.

93. Governments should seek new sources of self-help activities, such as training programmes in community development and entrepreneurial skills, which should be open on an equal basis to both sexes.

94. In order to extend women's range of economic roles, co-operatives and small-scale industries could be developed and encouraged with the necessary help and support of government. Where co-operatives already exist, women should be encouraged to take an active part in them. New co-operatives and, where appropriate, women's co-operatives should be organized, especially in areas where women play a major role, such as food production, marketing, housing, nutrition and health. Co-operatives may also be the most appropriate and feasible arrangement for child-care and could also provide employment opportunities.

95. Essential to the effective implementation of such programmes is the provision of adequate training in co-operatives and entrepreneurial skills, access to credit and necessary seed capital for improved tools, assistance with marketing, the provision of adequate rural social services and amenities, decentralized development of towns in rural areas and basic infrastructural arrangements, such as child-care arrangements, transportation and conveniently situated water supplies.

96. Special efforts should be made to increase the participation of rural women in the formulation of national plans for integrated rural development. Policies and programmes for rural development should take into account the creation of employment opportunities along with other essential related components, such as projects for diversification, import substitution and expansion of rural activities for farming, forestry, fisheries, animal husbandry and agro-industries.

97. Specific target dates should be established for achieving a substantial increase in the number of qualified women employed in skilled and technical work.

98. Special efforts should also be made to increase the number of women in management and policy-making in commerce, industry and trade.

99. Access to skills and the provision of institutional and on-the-job training should be open to women in the same way and on the same conditions as to men so as to make them equally eligible for promotion.

100. Governments, employers and trade unions should ensure to all women workers the right to maternity protection, including maternity leave with a guarantee of returning to their former employment, and to nursing breaks, in keeping with the principles laid

down in the International Labour Organisation Convention concerning maternity protection (revised) and Recommendation, 1952. Provisions relating to maternity protection should not be regarded as unequal treatment of the sexes.

101. Special attention should be given to the need for multilateral approaches to facilitate the combination of family and work responsibilities. These could include: a general reduction and/or staggering of working hours; flexible working hours; part-time work for women and men; child-care facilities and child-care leave systems to assist parents to take care of their children; communal kitchens; and various kinds of facilities to help them discharge household tasks more easily. Governments and trade unions should ensure that the economic and social rights of part-time workers are fully protected.

102. Protective legislation applying to women only should be reviewed in the light of scientific and technological knowledge, and should be revised, repealed or extended to all workers as necessary.

103. Minimum wages, which play an important role in the improvement of working conditions of women, should be enforced and made applicable to cottage industries and domestic work.

104. Special measures should also be taken to eliminate the exploitation of female labour, in particular that of young girls, wherever it exists.

105. Discriminatory treatment of women in national social security schemes should be eliminated to the maximum extent. Women workers should be covered equally with men by all aspects of such schemes.

106. Governments should encourage and stimulate concerted efforts, in particular on the part of employers' and workers' organizations, to bring about a marked improvement in the position of women in employment and should co-operate with all voluntary organizations concerned with the status of women workers in economic life and in society as a whole.

107. Trade unions should adopt policies to increase the participation of women in their work at every level, including the higher echelons. They should have special programmes to promote equality of opportunity for jobs and training for women workers and leadership training for women. They should play a leading role in developing new and constructive approaches to problems faced by workers, paying special attention to the problems of women workers.

#### E. Health and nutrition

108. While everyone has an undeniable right to health, conditions in many countries, and especially in rural areas, have often precluded the actual enjoyment by women of this right equally with men. The situation becomes more accentuated in societies with considerable shortages of health personnel and facilities and constitutes a high cost to the family, society and development by impairing the productivity of women. Women also need special care during pregnancy, delivery and lactation.

109. Adequate nutrition is of fundamental importance for the full physical and mental development of the individual, and women have a vital role to play in this area in the production, preparation, processing and consumption of food. When food is scarce women often experience a greater degree of malnutrition than men, either because they deprive themselves for the sake of their families or because society places a lesser value on women.



110. Improved access to health, nutrition and other social services is essential to the full participation of women in development activities, to the strengthening of family life, and to a general improvement in the quality of life. To be fully effective, these services should be integrated into over-all development programmes with priority being given to rural areas.

111. Governments should ensure adequate investments in public health programmes, especially in rural areas.

112. Comprehensive simple community health services could be developed in which the community identifies its own health needs, takes part in decisions on delivery of health care in different socio-economic contexts, and develops primary health care services that are easily accessible to every member of the community. Women themselves, especially in rural areas, should be encouraged, through adequate training programmes, to provide such health care services to their communities. Provision should be made to ensure that women shall have the same access to that care as men. Travelling clinics and medical teams should make periodic visits to all communities.

113. Within the context of general health services, Governments should pay particular attention to women's special health needs by provision of: pre-natal and post-natal and delivery services; gynaecological and family planning services during the reproductive years; comprehensive and continuous health services directed to all infants, pre-school children and school children, without prejudice on grounds of sex; specific care for pre-adolescent and adolescent girls and for the post-reproductive years and old age, and research into the special health problems of women. Basic health services should be reinforced by the use of qualified medical and paramedical personnel.

114. Programmes should be formulated for the reduction of infant, child and maternal mortality by means of improved nutrition, sanitation, maternal and child health care and maternal education.

115. Education programmes should be developed to overcome prejudices, taboos and superstitions that prevent women from using existing health facilities. Special efforts should be made to inform the urban poor and rural women about existing medical facilities.

116. Within the context of a massive programme of health education and services, courses in health education, maternal and child care could be organized in rural and urban neighbourhoods, and women should be actively encouraged to participate. These classes should be advertised by the communication media and by all existing social networks. They should include information about what medical facilities are available, and how to reach them. Physicians should periodically conduct physical examinations of the participants in as many of these classes as possible.

117. In view of the importance of women not only as users but as providers of health care, steps should be taken to incorporate them as fully informed and active participants in the health-planning and decision-making process at all levels and in all phases. Efforts should be made to encourage women to participate actively in community efforts to provide primary health care and improve coverage. Women should also be trained as paramedics and encouraged to organize health co-operatives and self-help programmes. Recruitment and training should be undertaken at the village level to prepare villagers as health workers to provide basic health services for their community.

118. Women should have the same right of access as men to any training establishment or course for any health profession and to continue to the highest levels. Practices which exclude women from certain health professions on traditional, religious or cultural grounds should be abolished.

119. Improved, easily accessible, safe water supplies (including wells, dams, catchment piping etc.), sewage disposal and other sanitation measures should be provided both to improve health conditions of families and to reduce the burden of carrying water which falls mainly on women and children.

120. In national food and nutrition policies Governments should give priority to the consumption by the most vulnerable groups in the population (adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and young children) of certain types of food produce, such as milk and milk products, and especially nutritious foods. The practice of breast feeding and good feeding practices for the weaning period should be encouraged. Supplementary food programmes for mothers and children at imminent risk of malnutrition should be introduced. Nutritional deficiencies should be prevented through fortification of staples or other widely consumed foods or by direct distribution of the deficient nutrients.

121. Techniques and equipment for food processing, preservation and conservation at the local village level should be improved and made available to rural women. Co-operatives for the production, quality improvement and distribution of food should be organized to give impetus to this effort and, where appropriate, campaigns to educate the consumer should be organized.

122. Opportunities should be created for women to contribute more efficiently to the production of proper types of food through vegetable gardens in rural and urban areas and through the provision of better tools, seeds and fertilizer. Girls and boys should also be encouraged to grow food in school gardens to supplement daily school meal programmes.

123. Campaigns on nutrition education should be launched through the communications media to explore the most effective techniques for introducing previously unacceptable nutritious foods into the daily diets of people. These campaigns should also inform women how to use the family income most economically towards the purchase of more nutritious foods and to eliminate wastage of food. The exchange of experience on effective nutrition programmes through seminars, informal visits and publications should be arranged.

#### F. The family in modern society

124. The institution of the family, which is changing in its economic, social and cultural functions, should ensure the dignity, equality and security of each of its members, and provide conditions conducive to the balanced development of the child as an individual and as a social being.

125. In the total development process the role of women, along with men, needs to be considered in terms of their contribution to the family as well as to society and the national economy. Higher status for this role in the home - as a parent, spouse and homemaker - can only enhance the personal dignity of a man and a woman. Household activities that are necessary for family life have generally been perceived as having a low economic and social prestige. All societies should, however, place a higher value on these activities if they wish the family group to be maintained and to fulfil its basic functions of the procreation and education of children.

126. The family is also an important agent of social, political and cultural change. If women are to enjoy equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities, and contribute on equal terms with men to the development process, the functions and roles traditionally allotted to each sex within the family will require continual re-examination and reassessment in the light of changing conditions.

127. The rights of women in all the various forms of the family, including the nuclear family, the extended family, consensual union and the single-parent family, should be protected by appropriate legislation and policy.

128. Legislation relating to marriage should be in conformity with international standards. In particular it should ensure that women and men shall have the same right to free choice of a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent. A minimum age for marriage should be fixed by law and be such as to provide a sufficient period of education for girls and boys, but particularly girls, to enable them to complete their education and develop their potentialities prior to marriage. Official registration of marriages should be made compulsory.

129. All institutions and practices which infringe these rights should be abolished, in particular, child marriage and the inheritance of widows.

130. Legislative and other measures should be taken to ensure that men and women shall enjoy full legal capacity and the exercise thereof relating to their personal and property rights, including the right to acquire, administer, enjoy, dispose of and inherit property (including property acquired during marriage). Limitations, where such exist, should apply to both partners alike. During marriage the principle of equal rights and responsibilities would mean that both partners should perform an active role in the home, taking into account the importance of combining home and work responsibilities, and share jointly decision-making on matters affecting the family and children. At the dissolution of marriage, this principle would imply that procedures and grounds of dissolution of marriage should be liberalized and apply equally to both spouses; assets acquired during marriage should be shared on an equitable basis; appropriate provisions should be made for the social security and pension coverage of the work contributed by the homemaker; and decisions relating to the custody of children should be taken in consideration of their best interests.

131. In order to assist in the solution of conflicts arising among members of the family, adequate family counselling services should be set up wherever possible and the establishment of family courts staffed with personnel, including women, trained in law as well as in various other relevant disciplines should be considered.

132. Programmes of education for personal relationships, marriage and family life, health, including psycho-sexual development, should be integrated into all school curricula at appropriate levels and into programmes for out-of-school education, to prepare young people of both sexes for responsible marriage and parenthood. These programmes should be based on the ideals of mutual respect and shared rights and responsibilities in the family and in society. Child-rearing practices within each society should be examined with a view to eliminating customs that encourage and perpetuate ideas about superiority or inferiority on the basis of sex.

133. In recognition of the growing number of single-parent families, additional assistance and benefits, wherever possible, should be provided for them. The unmarried mother should be granted full-fledged status as a parent, and children born out of wedlock should have the same rights and obligations as children born in wedlock. Special nursing homes and hostels should be established for married and unmarried mothers, before and after delivery.

134. Social security programmes should, to the maximum extent, include children and family allowances in order to strengthen the economic stability of family members. Cross-cultural studies might be undertaken of the influence upon the condition of women in the family and in society of family and children's allowances and benefits, motherhood awards and similar measures.

#### G. Population

135. Social, economic and demographic factors are closely interrelated, and change in one or more invariably involves changes in others. The status of women is both a determinant and a consequence of these various factors. It is inextricably linked with both the development process and the various components of demographic change: fertility, mortality and migration (international and internal and the latter's concomitant, urbanization).

136. The status of women and, in particular, their educational level, whether or not they are gainfully employed, the nature of their employment, and their position within the family are all factors that have been found to influence family size. Conversely, the right of women to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information and means to enable them to exercise that right has a decisive impact on their ability to take advantage of educational and employment opportunities and to participate fully in community life as responsible citizens.

137. The exercise of this right and the full participation of women in all aspects of national life are closely interrelated with such crucial demographic variables as age at marriage, age at birth of first child, the length of interval between births, age at termination of child-bearing, and total number of children born.

138. The hazards of child-bearing, characterized by too many pregnancies, pregnancies at too early or too late an age and at too close intervals, inadequate pre-natal, delivery and postnatal care and resort to illegally induced abortions, result in high rates of maternal mortality and maternity-related morbidity. Where levels of infant and early childhood mortality as well as of foetal mortality are high, their reduction - a desirable end in itself - may also be a prerequisite of the limitation of the number of pregnancies that the average woman will experience, and of the society's adoption of a smaller ideal family size where this is a desired goal. Fewer pregnancies may be more easily achieved when there is a reasonable expectation that children born will survive to adulthood.

139. In some parts of the world, urbanization involves mainly a migration of young men; in other parts, young women constitute the major component in the rural-to-urban migratory stream. Such situations partly reflect differences in women's opportunities to work in either urban or rural occupations, and these are related to cultural variations in the acceptance of women in diverse roles. While differences in women's social status are among the causes of diverse sex selections in the migration to cities and towns, the consequences of such selective migration are to be found in resulting sex imbalances, in both the urban and the rural population. These population imbalances can be detrimental to individual and family welfare and to the stability of either urban or rural residence. Just over half of the total female population of the world currently resides in rural areas of developing countries. In the light of the particular demographic, economic and social problems of rural communities in these regions, special development efforts are required.

140. This Plan endorses the recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action, especially those relating to the status of women.

141. In the elaboration and execution of population policies and programmes, within the framework of over-all development, Governments are urged to pay particular attention to measures designed to improve the situation of women, especially with regard to their educational and employment opportunities, conditions of work, and the establishment and enforcement of an appropriately high minimum age at marriage.

142. While States have a sovereign right to determine their own population policies, individuals and couples should have access, through an institutionalized system, to the information and means that will enable them to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to overcome sterility. All legal, social or financial obstacles to the dissemination of family planning knowledge, means and services should be removed. Every effort should be made to improve knowledge and identification of the causes of involuntary sterility, subfecundity and congenital birth defects and to secure their reduction.

143. Family planning programmes should direct communication and recruitment efforts towards women and men equally, since successful fertility regulation requires their mutual understanding and co-operation. This policy would enable women to exercise equally with men their right to decide how many children they will bear and the timing of the births. Attainment of these goals requires the development of means of contraception and birth control that will be both efficient and compatible with cultural values prevailing in different societies. Family planning programmes should be integrated and co-ordinated with health, nutrition and other services designed to raise the quality of family life.

144. Governments should make concerted efforts systematically to ameliorate conditions of mortality and morbidity as part of the development process, and pay particular attention to the reduction of those risks that especially affect the health of women.

145. Policies and programmes to improve the status of women and to enable them to contribute fully to social and economic development must take into account migration and the ways in which it affects the family and working lives of women.

146. Both the causes and the consequences of varied modes of urbanization should be examined carefully, so as to yield the information needed to devise appropriate social policies, especially those designed to meet the varying needs of women.

147. Rural development programmes, including the creation of suitable industrial and employment opportunities, should be initiated or expanded to reduce the migration to urban areas and its attendant problems. Decentralization of education and health facilities to rural areas should also be promoted, as an aid to lowering rural rates of illiteracy, mortality and fertility, which have traditionally been higher than those in urban communities. These measures would bring rural women into greater contact with the mainstream of national life and release opportunities for their contribution to the progress and prosperity of their country.

## II. Housing and related facilities

148. The majority of women still spend more of their time in and around the house than do men; thus, the improvement of the house, its related facilities and its neighbourhood will bring about a direct improvement in their daily lives. In addition to the considerations of health and comfort, well-designed and suitably furnished houses

and related facilities, as well as neighbourhoods, offer comparative relief from monotony and drudgery, making easier the pursuit of other interests and activities, and bringing women's lives closer to the demands of human dignity.

149. Legislative and other measures should be taken to guarantee that the views and needs of women are taken into account in the planning and design of urban and housing development as well as human settlements.

150. The design of the house should take into account the needs of the entire family, especially the women and children. Use of the following should be encouraged: (a) building materials that require minimal or no maintenance; (b) equipment and appliances that do not present safety hazards; (c) labour-saving interior finishes and surfaces conducive to comfort and hygiene; (d) furniture that is movable, storable and easily replaceable; and (e) where feasible and appropriate, an area for women to undertake activities such as reading, sewing and weaving (in some societies this may be a communal space to increase social cohesion).

151. In the projection of the house into a neighbourhood, designs should provide for services and utilities and neighbourhood facilities that respond, inter alia, to the expressed needs of women, and reduce labour as well as travel for vital needs such as water, food, fuel and other necessities.

152. In the design of a network of neighbourhoods, consideration should be given to accessibility of neighbourhood centres for the women and children.

153. Training and orientation courses should be organized in the use of new facilities made available to women, as well as in various aspects of home ownership and maintenance.

#### I. Other social questions

154. Social services play a crucial role in anticipating social problems deriving from rapid modernization and industrialization and in reducing the need for remedial measures at a later stage. Women are usually affected by these social problems to a greater extent than men, especially in the initial stages of the development process.

155. Governments should therefore encourage the development of social services as a useful tool in mobilizing human and technical resources for the benefit of all marginal and social groups, bearing in mind the contribution that non-governmental organizations can offer.

156. Special efforts should be made to provide for the needs of migrant women whether from rural areas or from abroad, and for women workers and their families who live in urban slums and squatter settlements. Training, job counselling, child-care facilities, financial aid and, where necessary, language training and other forms of assistance should be provided.

157. Special attention should also be given to the needs of elderly women, who frequently receive less protection and assistance than men. They predominate numerically in the age group of 50 years and over, and many are indigent and in need of special care.

158. In the area of the prevention of crime and treatment of offenders, special attention should be paid to female criminality, which is increasing in many parts of the world, and to the rehabilitation of female offenders, including juvenile delinquents

and recidivists. Research in this field should include study of the relationship between female criminality and other social problems brought about by rapid social change.

159. Specific legislative and other measures should be taken to combat prostitution and the illicit traffic in women, especially young girls. Special programmes, including pilot projects, should be developed in co-operation with international bodies and non-governmental organizations to prevent such practices and rehabilitate the victims.

160. Governments which have not already done so should ratify or accede to the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. 5/

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5/ General Assembly resolution 317 (IV) of 2 December 1949.

### III. RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

161. This Plan gives high priority to national, regional and international research activities, and to data collection and analysis on all aspects of the situation of women, since adequate data and information are essential in formulating policies and evaluating progress and in effecting attitudinal and basic social and economic change.

162. A major difficulty in assessing the economic contribution of women at the present time is lack of or incomplete data and indicators to measure their situation as it affects the process of development and is in turn affected by it.

163. Many women are automatically excluded from the economically active population in national statistics because they are homemakers only and homemaking is nowhere considered to be an economic activity. Another large group of women are erroneously classified as homemakers only because it is assumed that women have no economic activity and their status is therefore not carefully investigated. This occurs particularly in relation to women who, in addition to their homemaking activities, are also self-employed handicraft and other home industry workers or unpaid family workers in subsistence agriculture. Further, statistics on unemployment often present an inaccurate picture of the situation because they omit women who are not recognized as part of the economically active population (e.g., women classified as homemakers or housewives). They may, however, in fact be in need of and available for employment.

164. Among other data biased by preconceptions are those on heads of households or families, when it is assumed that a woman can be the head only in the absence of a man. Many households actually headed by women are therefore erroneously classified as having male heads.

165. Differences in these and other national statistical practices also make cross-country comparisons of data very difficult. In the non-market sector, for example, the distinction between economic and non-economic activities is seldom clear and the criteria used are often arbitrary and vary from country to country.

166. A scientific and reliable data base should be established and suitable economic and social indicators urgently developed which are sensitive to the particular situation and needs of women as an integral part of national and international programmes of statistics.

167. All census and survey data relating to characteristics of individuals (e.g., urban/rural residence, age, marital status, including consensual unions, literacy, education, income, level of skills and participation in both modern and traditional economic activities) and to household and family composition should be reported and analysed by sex.

168. In the collection of such data special efforts should be made to measure:

(a) The participation of women in local and national planning and policy-making in all sectors of national life;

(b) The extent of women's activities in food production (cash crop and subsistence agriculture), in water and fuel supply, in marketing, and in transportation;



(c) The economic and social contribution of housework and other domestic chores, handicrafts and other home-based economic activities;

(d) The effect on the national economy of women's activities as consumers of goods and services;

(e) The relative time spent on economic and household activities and on leisure by girls and women compared to boys and men;

(f) The quality of life (e.g., job satisfaction, income situation, family characteristics and use of leisure time).

169. The United Nations system should extend the scope of its standards for data collection, tabulation and analysis to take the above recommendations into account. National statistical offices should adhere to the standards established by the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

170. The United Nations should prepare an inventory of social and economic indicators relevant to the analysis of the status of women as soon as possible and not later than 1980, in co-operation with the interested specialized agencies, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the regional commissions and other relevant bodies.

171. This Plan gives high priority also to cross-cultural studies, especially of the causes of discriminatory customs, practices, attitudes and beliefs, which impede women's contribution to the development process, and of the mechanisms of change.

172. Research oriented towards specific country and regional problems should be made by competent women and men acquainted with specific national and regional conditions.

173. The wide exchange of information and research findings should be promoted and maximum use made of existing national and regional research institutes and universities, including the United Nations University, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and the United Nations Social Defence Institute. A network of such institutes and universities should be built up to facilitate the regular exchange of information and knowledge in co-operation with the United Nations.

#### IV. MASS COMMUNICATION MEDIA

174. A major obstacle in improving the status of women lies in public attitudes and values regarding women's roles in society. The mass communication media have great potential as a vehicle for social change and could exercise a significant influence in helping to remove prejudices and stereotypes, accelerating the acceptance of women's new and expanding roles in society, and promoting their integration into the development process as equal partners.
175. At the present time, the media tend to reinforce traditional attitudes, often portraying an image of women that is degrading and humiliating, and fail to reflect the changing roles of the sexes. They may also have harmful effects in imposing alien cultures upon different societies.
176. Mass communication media should be understood as encompassing not only radio, television, cinema, press (newspapers, periodicals, comic strips and cartoons), advertising, and public meetings and similar forums but also traditional types of entertainment such as drama, story telling, songs and puppet shows, which are essential for reaching the rural areas of many countries.
177. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should encourage and support national, regional and international research to determine the image of women and men portrayed by the media; and the negative and positive influences exercised by them in their various roles as conveyors of information, entertainers, educators and advertisers.
178. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should also take steps to ensure that information shall be provided on the current situation of women in various countries, with particular emphasis on the changing roles of both sexes.
179. Those in control of the media should seek to raise public consciousness with respect to these changing roles, and the serious concern that both women and men have about important issues that affect their families, communities and society at large. They should be urged to project a more dynamic image of women (as well as of men) and to take into account the diversity of women's roles and their actual and potential contribution to society.
180. They should depict the roles and achievements of women from all walks of life throughout history, including women in the rural areas and women of minority groups. They should also seek to develop in women confidence in themselves and in other women, and a sense of their own value and importance as human beings.
181. Women should be appointed in greater numbers in media management decision-making and other capacities, as editors, columnists, reporters, producers and the like, and should encourage the critical review, within the media, of the image of women projected.

## V. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ACTION

### A. Global action

182. The United Nations should proclaim the decade 1975-1985 as the United Nations Decade for Women and Development in order to ensure that national and international action shall be sustained throughout the period.

183. The decade and this Plan of Action call for a clear commitment on the part of the international community to accord importance and priority to measures to improve the situation of women, both as a means of achieving the goals of social progress and development and as an end in itself. The plan envisages that all organizations of the United Nations system should take separate and joint action to implement its recommendations, including the relevant United Nations organs and bodies, especially the regional commissions, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, and the specialized agencies. Their activities should be properly co-ordinated through the existing machinery, especially the Economic and Social Council and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. Each organization should evaluate what it has done to improve the status of women and enhance their contribution to development and identify the measures needed to implement this Plan.

184. International and regional intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system are also urged to develop programmes to implement this Plan and achieve the objectives of International Women's Year during the proposed decade.

185. International non-governmental organizations and their national affiliates should also act jointly and separately, within their particular spheres of interest, to give effect to the recommendations of the Plan within the 10-year period.

186. The Plan endorses programmes and strategies setting forth similar or related objectives; in particular, the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, the Programme of Concerted International Action for the Advancement of Women, the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the World Population Plan of Action, the recommendations of the World Food Conference, and the regional plans of action for the integration of women in development, adopted in 1974 for the regions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Africa. 6/

187. Women should be fully involved in policy-making at the international level as well as the national level. Governments should make sure that they are equitably represented among the principal delegates to all international bodies, conferences and committees, including those dealing with political and legal questions, economic and social development, disarmament, planning, administration and finance, science and technology, the environment and population. The secretariats of the international organizations should set an example by eliminating any provisions or practices in their employment policies that may be discriminatory against women. They should also take all necessary measures to ensure that an equitable balance between men and women staff members shall be achieved before the end of the Second United Nations Development Decade, and establish goals, strategies and time-tables to achieve this end. The equitable balance should apply to all substantive areas, and to field posts where operational programmes are initiated and carried out.

6/ For the regional plans of action, see sect. C below.

188. International organizations should review the implications of the Plan in the context of their own existing and new programmes, and should make appropriate recommendations to their governing bodies on any revisions of their financial and administrative arrangements that may be required to implement the Plan.

189. International action should support existing programmes and expand their scope in the following main areas: (a) research, data collection and analysis (see chap. III above); (b) technical co-operation, training and advisory services, including co-ordination with national and regional activities of organizations within the United Nations system; (c) elaboration and ongoing review of international standards; (d) dissemination and exchange of information and liaison with non-governmental organizations and other groups; (e) review and appraisal, including monitoring of progress made in achieving the aims and objectives of the Plan; and (f) executive and management functions including over-all co-ordination with all the organizations of the United Nations system, and with the national and regional machinery referred to in the Plan.

## 2. Operational activities for technical co-operation

190. The United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations specialized agencies, including the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund, the regional commissions, intergovernmental organizations, bilateral assistance agencies and foundations, and international and regional development banks and other international financial institutions, all carry out their work through projects that are highly specific in terms of the objectives to be reached, the resources to be employed, and the target areas and populations for which they are intended. Given the scope and diversity of the world-wide system of assistance agencies, action can be initiated in a large number of areas without delay once the needs are understood and diffused throughout the United Nations system.

191. A deliberate and large-scale effort should therefore be made to ensure that high priority and attention shall be given by Governments and the international community to programmes, projects and activities that give women the skills, training and opportunities necessary to improve their situation and enable them to participate fully and effectively in the total development effort.

192. Field surveys should be undertaken in each region to assist Governments and the international community by establishing the necessary data base to develop projects that will implement the objectives of the Plan.

193. All existing plans and projects should be scrutinized with a view to extending their sphere of activities to include women. New and innovative projects should also be developed to include women.

194. The following areas are of special importance:

(a) Integrated rural development. Special attention should be given to women's role as producers, processors and vendors of food, stressing the need for training women and girls. Training is especially needed in modern methods of farming, marketing, purchasing and sales techniques; basic accounting and organizational methods; fundamentals of hygiene and nutrition; training in crafts and co-operatives;

(b) Health, reproduction and growth and development, including family health and child health, family planning, nutrition and health education;

(c) Education and training at all levels and in all sectors related to the creation of employment opportunities so that women can play an economic role;

(d) Youth projects, which should be examined to make sure that they include adequate emphasis on the participation of young women;

(e) Public administration, with the aim of preparing women to participate in development planning and policy-making, especially in middle- and higher-level posts.

195. The resident representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should play a key role in helping Governments to formulate requests for such assistance within the framework of country programming. Advisory services provided by the specialized agencies in the form of special consultants or task forces could also render assistance in the formulation of project requests. Periodic reviews should be initiated to suggest crucial areas where special support might be needed. Projects should be constantly reviewed and evaluated to determine their impact and success in improving the position of women.

196. Women should participate fully in planning and implementing UNDP country programmes and regional, interregional and global projects under the auspices of the United Nations and other international agencies. Governments should bear in mind the importance of including, in national planning organizations and other bodies responsible for public policy-making and management, persons with special competence in the subject of women's integration in development.

## 2. Formulation and implementation of international standards

197. The preparation of international conventions, declarations and formal recommendations, and the development of reporting systems and other procedures for their implementation are important elements of international programmes and should be continued.

198. High priority should be given to the preparation and adoption of the convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, with effective procedures for its implementation.

199. Studies should be undertaken by the appropriate organizations of the effectiveness of the implementation of existing instruments and periodic reviews made to determine their adequacy in the light of changing conditions in the modern world, and of experience gained since their adoption.

200. The need for the development of new standards in new fields of concern to women should be kept constantly under review in relation to the implementation of the present Plan. Appropriate research and studies should be undertaken to determine the need for such new standards.

## 3. Exchange of information and experience

201. The exchange of information and experience at the international level is an effective means of stimulating progress and encouraging the adoption of measures to eliminate discrimination against women and encourage their wider participation in all sectors of national life. Countries with different political, economic and social systems and cultures and at differing stages of development have benefited from the common knowledge of problems, difficulties and achievements and from solutions worked out jointly.

202. Effective international machinery should be established or existing bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, utilized to afford women in all regions of the world the opportunity to support one another in mutual understanding of their national and local problems and fight for the elimination of all forms of discrimination and oppression.

203. Meetings and seminars, including those organized under the United Nations technical co-operation programme, which have proved to be most valuable in providing a regional and international exchange of information and experience, should be continued.

204. Educational and informational programmes supported by the international community should be developed and extended to make all sectors of the population aware of the international norms established, the goals and objectives of this Plan of Action, and the findings of research and data envisaged under the relevant chapter of the Plan.

205. Material documenting the situation of women in specific countries of the world should also be prepared and widely distributed. It should be issued in the form of a yearbook or almanac containing facts which should be maintained and kept up to date. Material should also be prepared and widely publicized on methods and techniques that have proved useful in promoting the status of women and integrating them into the process of development.

206. International organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, should strengthen their efforts to distribute information on women and related matters. This could be done through periodic publications on the situation of women, their changing roles and their integration into the development effort through the planning and implementation of policies, as well as through the utilization of communication media and aids, and the wide distribution of newsletters, pamphlets, visual charts and similar material on women.

#### B. Regional action

207. The regional commissions for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and Western Asia should stimulate interest in the Plan and provide national Governments and non-governmental organizations with the technical and informational support they require to develop and implement effective strategies to further the objectives of the Plan in the regions. Where they have not already done so, the regional commissions should establish appropriate machinery for the purpose. This might include a regional standing committee of experts from countries of the region to advise the commission on its activities directed towards the integration of women in development in relation to those of Governments and other agencies in the region. The committee's functions could include the following:

(a) To initiate country studies and assist national institutions to identify the types of information needed for a proper understanding of the situation of women and the factors facilitating or limiting their advancement;

(b) To assist with the design and implementation of surveys for the collection of data and other information;

(c) To give leadership in the methods of reporting on the situation of women and in the development of indicators for assessing the progress made towards the goals of this Plan in conjunction with regional statistical bodies and international efforts to this end;

(d) To provide a clearing-house for the exchange of information which would facilitate co-ordination and mutual support between programmes for the advancement of women at various levels, and for the sharing of relevant experience among the countries of the region.

208. States members of the regional commissions, in requesting technical and financial assistance, should endeavour to raise the priority accorded to projects to enhance opportunities for women and increase recognition of the importance of these projects for over-all development in consultation with regional offices of the United Nations Development Programme.

209. The regional commissions should provide assistance to governmental and non-governmental organizations to identify needed action, develop policies, strategies and programmes for strengthening women's role in national development, and formulate requests for technical and financial assistance for such programmes. They should encourage training institutions in the region to expand their curricula to encompass topics related to the integration of women in development, and assist in the development of training programmes, particularly those whose initial aim is to increase women's potential for leadership and develop the cadres for formulating the programmes and implementing the activities indicated by this Plan.

210. The regional commissions should also promote technical co-operation between the countries of the region, utilizing the existing talent available. Trained women could, for example, offer short-term assistance to women in countries other than their own on a voluntary basis, or as part of a special task force. Special advisers should be attached to the regional field offices in order to strengthen the regional field structure and carry out more effectively the functions and aims described above. They could also seek to stimulate increased contributions of funds for financing programmes for the advancement of women from existing sources of multilateral and bilateral assistance, and to secure new sources of funds, including the establishment of revolving funds at the national and local levels.

211. In the implementation of the Plan, special efforts should be made by the commissions and other United Nations bodies having regional offices to co-ordinate their programmes with those of existing United Nations and other regional centres whose fields of competence relate to the aims of the Plan, such as centres for research and training in development planning, literacy, social welfare, social defence, employment, health and nutrition and community development.

212. Regional development banks such as the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank as well as subregional banks, such as the Central American Bank for Economic Integration and the East African Development Bank, and bilateral funding agencies should be urged to accord high priority in their development assistance to projects that include the integration of women into the development effort and the achievement of equality. Such assistance would stimulate national support for innovative national and local programmes, including self-help activities.

## VI. REVIEW AND APPRAISAL

213. A comprehensive and thorough review and appraisal of progress made in meeting the goals of this Plan should be undertaken at regular intervals by the United Nations system. Such an exercise should be part of the procedures for the review and appraisal of progress made under the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, and closely co-ordinated with any new international development strategy that may be formulated.

214. The General Assembly has already made provision in its resolution 3276 (XXIX) of 10 December 1974 to consider relevant recommendations of the World Conference of the International Women's Year at its seventh special session and at its thirtieth session in 1975. The Plan should also be considered at the sixtieth session of the Economic and Social Council in the spring of 1976. The Secretary-General should be invited to make appropriate arrangements for the first biennial review of progress in 1978, in co-operation with Governments and taking into account the existing structure and resources of the United Nations system. The Economic and Social Council should review the findings of such a systematic evaluation with the object of making, whenever necessary, appropriate modifications in the goals and recommendations of the Plan.

215. The monitoring of trends and policies relating to women and relevant to this Plan of Action should be undertaken continuously as a specialized activity of the United Nations. They should be reviewed biennially by the appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, beginning in 1978. Because of the shortness of the intervals, such monitoring would necessarily be selective and focus mainly on new and emerging trends and policies.

216. The Plan of Action should also be considered by the regional commissions, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the relevant specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations at their meetings following the World Conference. The discussions and decisions of these bodies concerning the Plan should be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and its relevant functional commissions and advisory bodies (the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission for Social Development, the Population Commission, the Statistical Commission, the Committee for Development Planning, and the Committee on Review and Appraisal) at their sessions in 1976 and 1977. An item on action on the implementation of the Plan should be included in the agenda of the sessions of all these bodies at intervals of no longer than two years.

217. At the regional level, the regional commissions should assume responsibility for monitoring progress towards the greater and more effective participation of women in all aspects of development efforts. Such monitoring should be carried out within the framework of the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The commissions should include information on the integration of women in development in their reports to the Economic and Social Council on the social and economic situation in the regions. They should also discuss at appropriate intervals (such as every two years) the progress made towards achieving the aims of this Plan of Action. They should encourage Governments to provide equal opportunities for women to be represented on their delegations to the sessions of the commissions and to other relevant meetings.



218. At the national level, Governments are encouraged to undertake their own regular review and appraisal of progress made to achieve the goals and objectives of the Plan and to report on its implementation to the Economic and Social Council in conjunction, where necessary, with other existing reporting systems (e.g., those of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, the World Population Plan of Action, the recommendations of the World Food Conference, and the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and of the Programme of Concerted International Action for the Advancement of Women).

219. Governments should, in the context of their own development plans, evaluate the implications of this Plan and make any necessary financial and administrative arrangements for its implementation.

## Appendix

### RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

#### A. United Nations instruments

##### 1. General instruments

Charter of the United Nations

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Optional Protocol (1966)

Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1949)

Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (1956)

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)

Declaration on Social Progress and Development (1969)

International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (1970)

World Population Plan of Action (1974)

Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (1974)

Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (1974)

##### 2. Instruments relating specifically to the status of women

Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952)

Convention on the Nationality of Married Women (1957)

Convention and Recommendation on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1962 and 1965)

Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (1967)

Programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women (1970)

#### B. Specialized agency instruments

##### 1. International Labour Organisation

Convention concerning the employment of women on underground work in mines of all kinds, No. 45, 1935

Convention concerning night work of women employed in industry (revised), No. 89, 1948

Convention concerning equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value, No. 100, 1951; and Recommendation No. 90, 1951

Convention concerning minimum standards of social security, No. 102, 1952

Convention concerning maternity protection (revised), No. 103, 1952; and Recommendation No. 95, 1952

Convention concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, No. 111, 1958; and Recommendation No. 111, 1958

Convention concerning employment policy, No. 122, 1964; and Recommendation No. 122, 1964

Recommendation concerning vocational training, No. 117, 1962

Recommendation concerning the employment of women with family responsibilities, No. 123, 1965

2. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)

Protocol instituting a Conciliation and Good Offices Commission to be responsible for seeking a settlement of any disputes which may arise between States Parties to the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1962)

## B. Statements made by participants on the World Plan of Action

1. The representatives of Australia, Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone, among others, stressed that in order to achieve increased co-operation among all women of the world, the link between women's problems in developed and developing countries should be emphasized.
2. Colombia, Fiji, Egypt, Jamaica, Lebanon, New Zealand, Spain and Romania, among others, stressed the need, in the implementation of the Plan, to give special priority to the needs of women in the developing countries, and among them to the needs of women in rural and lower-income urban areas, especially in education, vocational training, employment and housing, in action-oriented programmes and pilot projects.
3. The representatives of Albania, China, Egypt, India, Jamaica, the Niger, Peru, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yugoslavia, among others, stressed that problems of women were an integral part of the contemporary problems of society. They stated that the struggle for national liberation and political and economic independence, the elimination of colonialism, neo-colonialism, alien occupation, apartheid and all forms of racial discrimination was a prerequisite and should be adequately reflected in the Plan.
4. Several representatives submitted specific suggestions as follows:

Albania: Many parts of the Plan did not adequately reflect the concerns of the women of the world. The introduction and chapter I had not been improved to the point desired and the struggle for women's emancipation had to be waged first and foremost against colonialism, racism and apartheid.
5. Argentina: Chapter II G on "Population" should conform to the World Population Plan of Action and reaffirm in stronger terms the principle of national sovereignty in population policy, since any international population policy should draw a distinction between overpopulated and underpopulated countries and the different problems they faced. In chapter III "Research, data collection and analysis", mention should be made of the creation of a network of permanent centres, institutes, universities or forums which should analyse and evaluate women's problems and provide for the exchange of experience at the international level.
6. Australia: The adoption of this Plan should be considered as only the beginning of a long and hard struggle. In order for the Plan and the Conference to go beyond token gestures, hollow promises and unfulfilled hopes and expectations for women, Governments, together with the women of their countries, should give high priority to formulating and genuinely implementing national plans of action. Sexism should be added after racism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, wherever these terms appeared since this term referred explicitly to the attitudes, expectations, myths and prejudices which were the cause of discrimination against women. Three principles should be included in the Plan, namely: (a) that policies and programmes relating to women, especially their employment, should not be discriminatory on the ground of sex, age, sexual preferences, or marital status; (b) that women had a right to be healthy in their own right, and not just as producers or reproducers, as mothers, wives, housewives or paid workers; (c) that it was the right of women to decide freely whether or not to have children.

7. In section "i" of chapter II on "Other social questions", it should be emphasized that legal systems and not female offenders required rehabilitation. Prostitution should be considered and separated from the serious, but quite different, problem of the illicit traffic of women.
8. Bangladesh: The voluntary fund established under Economic and Social Council resolution 1850 (LVI) should provide assistance especially to developing countries fighting such problems as hunger, malnutrition and illiteracy. Machinery should be established which would review the utilization of the fund in the most appropriate manner. Social security and assistance should be offered to women victims of emergency and armed conflict, especially of rape and for the children born of such situations.
9. Brazil: The Plan would have been more effective if it had established more priorities. It was regrettable that time had not permitted greater participation of non-governmental organizations in its planning and formulation.
10. China: The Chinese delegation declared that it had not participated in the Committee's decision to adopt the World Plan of Action because of its reservation of principle concerning such important questions as how to achieve women's emancipation, the theme of the International Women's Year, and mention of disarmament in the World Plan of Action.
11. Ecuador: The Plan should make reference to the physical conditions of birth and environment, as well as to the questions of equality and leisure for women, and the access of the masses of women to the arts, sports and culture.
12. Egypt: Reference to consensual unions (para. 127) was unacceptable as it negated the traditions and concepts of the country. Egypt stated that the Plan would be viewed within the context of the Constitution and the law.
13. Holy See: The representative objected to the use of the word "individuals" in paragraph 19 of the introduction in the interest of safeguarding the family.
14. Honduras: The Plan should be considered by a group of experts in order to have effective follow-up action and to ensure the full participation of women in all fields.
15. India: The Plan should provide a mechanism whereby action in spheres such as education, employment, health, and political participation at various levels, could be monitored. Social and political emancipation of women should go hand in hand with development. Women should be involved in the assessment of the Plan, and family planning should be linked with social security. The principles stated in paragraph 128 with respect to the acceptance of international standards relating to marriage and to co-education was acceptable at the elementary level but because of cultural conditions was unacceptable at all levels. The representative suggested a system of co-ordination among the United Nations bodies at different levels and the creation of monitoring spheres within the United Nations bodies and specialized agencies to review the progress made. The need to include mention of women's right to leisure in the Plan and of the role of women in sports and culture was stressed.
16. Ireland: The words "through an institutionalized system" in paragraph 142

of chapter II G, on "Population", were considered inconsistent with the first sentence of the same paragraph, which referred to the sovereign right of States to determine their own population policies.

17. Italy: It was important to make extensive use of existing bodies and not recommend the establishment of new international machinery for review and appraisal of the Plan in order to ensure that women's problems should not be considered in isolation from problems of over-all development.

18. Jamaica and Malaysia: The addition to the Plan of provisions designed to protect the rights of consumers from exploitation, manipulation and fraud were suggested, as well as consideration by the General Assembly of a model consumers' code. The representative of Jamaica wished to strengthen the section on vocational training, to emphasize its relationship to employment, as this would in turn contribute to the solution of the problem of migration. A provision should be added on non-discrimination in the educational system of young women unable to complete training because of pregnancy. It was said that the section on "Housing and related facilities" (chap. II B) did not adequately reflect the real problems of housing shortages and overcrowding in the vast majority of countries.

19. Japan: Paragraphs 100 and 102 in chapter II D, on "Employment and related economic roles", and paragraph 130 in chapter II F on "The family in modern society" required strengthening.

20. Jordan: The creation of a special women's committee to investigate the violation of human rights of women was proposed. In order to make the proposed special day to be devoted to international peace (para. 53) more meaningful, the United Nations and its specialized agencies should strive to seek release of political detainees and freedom fighters. It was proposed that in paragraph 183 of chapter V on "International and regional action", a provision should be added stipulating that women should be involved and represented on commissions where international years had been declared by the United Nations, starting with the international year for human settlements, so as to ensure that the concerns and desires of women should be considered and included.

21. Kuwait: Acceptance of certain paragraphs in the spirit of compromise and understanding should not be construed as a departure from certain beliefs which were predicated on the premise that the World Plan of Action was compatible with the domestic jurisdiction of the country.

22. Lebanon: The Plan should reinforce certain concepts, stressing the human aspects in the developing areas. (This point was also emphasized by the representative of Peru.) It was pointed out that paragraph 94, which referred to women's co-operatives, seemed to be in contradiction with the principle of non-discrimination. The same comment was made with respect to paragraph 117 and the reference to paramedical services. The need to include in paragraphs 88 and 89 of chapter II D, on "Employment and related economic roles", a reference to equal competence along with equal pay for equal work was emphasized. Democratization of means of information and the mass media to benefit rural areas (chap. II C on "Education and training") was also suggested.

23. Morocco: The revised wording of paragraph 2 of the introduction and other parts of the Plan were not entirely satisfactory.

24. Netherlands and New Zealand: The measures proposed in the Plan were not intended to make women participate more in a man-made society. The representative of the Netherlands hoped that the Conference on Human Settlements would deal with the problem from the women's point of view as it was urgent for the relationship between women's status and urbanization to be worked out. The representative of New Zealand stated that too much emphasis was placed on improving the quality and range of the contribution of women to economic well-being and not enough on social development and that the text should provide for more services such as child-care and housing, and for the equal participation of men and women and that these should be considered skilled occupations; that urban poor women and migrant groups did not receive adequate attention; and finally that in the implementation and in review and appraisal, women themselves and through non-governmental organizations should contribute to the review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action.

25. Niger: The revised wording of paragraph 15 of the introduction had been weakened as a result of compromises made.

26. Pakistan: Chapter II F, on "The family in modern society", should contain specific reference to such serious crimes against women as child marriages, divorce and the repudiation of unilateral divorce by the man and should consider fully the close biological relationship between the mother and the young child.

27. Peru: The Plan should refer to the political participation of women in a broad sense. It should include women's political and social struggle through different organizations and in different levels of decision-making to change old economic, social and political structures. Women's political participation should be linked to efforts to establish a new international economic and social order. Educational systems should try to develop a critical spirit in each child so that it could grow up with a capacity to determine its own life and to orient its own destiny, and to achieve the full development of human potential. Such educational systems in turn needed the active and constant participation of all men and women. Demographic aspects influenced socio-economic aspects and vice versa, but were not without determinants. Each State defined its own population policy. The recommendations contained in the Plan regarding this principle should stress the right of each couple to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children. Measures should be adopted to halt the process of dehumanization, to eliminate all forms of subjugation, slavery, discrimination on any ground, domination or aggression and to create the conditions that will allow for the real emancipation of all countries and full realization of all human beings.

28. Romania and Turkey: Regret was expressed that lack of time had precluded the discussion of chapter V on "International and regional action", which should be undertaken immediately by the United Nations family of organizations, to ensure full equality of men and women and to take concerted international action for the full integration of women in the development process in the Second United Nations Development Decade.

29. Sierra Leone: While it was regrettable that the Committee had failed to study in depth the problems and needs of women, it was essential for each representative at the Conference to pressure his or her Government to take action to implement the Plan and to make periodic reports on review and appraisal to the appropriate United Nations bodies.

30. Spain: Emphasis was placed on the fact that it was important for women to occupy posts of responsibility, on literacy campaigns in both rural and urban areas and on co-education and professional training. The Plan should refer not only to expansion of such programmes but also to their establishment in areas where they did not exist. Detailed reference should also be made to pre-school education and to day-care centres.

31. Sri Lanka: Greater emphasis should be given to the educational and technical training facilities and programmes envisaged in paragraph 77, chapter II C, on "Education and training", on the encouragement of community development, self-employment and self-help activities in section D on "Employment and related economic roles" and on the increased participation of women in the formulation of plans and action-oriented pilot projects for integrated rural development (paras. 92, 93 and 101). Further strengthening of paragraphs 54 and 66 was suggested, to improve the status of girls and young women, and of paragraph 36 to emphasize the need to provide appropriate education and vocational training to boys and girls without discrimination. She underlined the need to strengthen paragraph 43, which envisaged international assistance by the United Nations and its agencies in carrying out national projects or programmes; and of chapter III on "Research, data collection and analysis", for the identification of problems related to the status of women, as well as regional action, especially by the regional commissions and at both the regional and international levels, and closer co-ordination of efforts between women's groups, between the developed and the developing countries.

32. Switzerland: The World Plan of Action should contain provisions that men and women could understand in their everyday life and at all levels about the status and needs of women in a large number of countries.

33. Thailand: Stronger provisions should be included in the Plan relating to leadership training of women in educational programmes, involuntary prostitution and the use of mass communications media for the education of women.

34. United States of America: Chapter II D, on "Employment and related economic roles", should provide that Governments, employers and trade unions should ensure to all women workers freedom from discrimination because of pregnancy, in hiring, leave, insurance, re-employment, and all other conditions of employment. Disabilities caused or contributed to by child-birth and pregnancy-related conditions should be treated for all job-related purposes as for any other temporary disability. Leave for child-rearing purposes should be liberal, especially in the early years, and should be available to either parent (para. 100). Chapter II F on "The family in modern society", should stipulate that appropriate temporary or permanent allowances should be provided for disabled spouses and spouses who had lost opportunities for education or employment because of homemaking responsibilities or because of providing education for the other spouse. Each parent should be liable for the support of children within the parent's means, taking into account the desirability of the spouse with custody of the children remaining at home. In chapter III, on "Research, data collection and analysis", provisions should be added to indicate that more data needed to be collected on women in particular but it is equally important to establish their relative position vis-à-vis men. Research and data analysis should, therefore, relate to both women and men. Paragraph 166 should include provision for funds and staff to be allocated by Governments and international agencies to develop a



scientific and reliable data base. Chapter VI, on "Review and appraisal", should state that, beginning in 1976, all appropriate bodies of the United Nations system should include in their development assistance plans, programmes, sector analysis, and project documents, where relevant and feasible, a statement of how the proposed assistance activities will affect women as participants and beneficiaries. These statements would serve both as guides to the design, review and implementation of appropriate assistance activities and as standards for their later evaluation.

35. Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Although the USSR delegation noted with satisfaction the unanimous approval of the Plan, it regretted that, owing to the lack of time, amendments and proposals relating to chapters II to VI had not been considered. It hoped they would be taken into account in the course of the implementation of the Plan.

36. Uruguay: The importance of the educational role of the mother and her fundamental contribution to the development of the community were not sufficiently emphasized in the Plan. The Plan should also stress the promotion of the dignity of women as persons in order to enable them to attain true equality with men, and should suggest measures to eliminate the exploitation of women as sex objects for commercial purposes and the distortion of the images and roles of women.

37. Venezuela: The Plan should make it clear that participation of women should not mean participation because they were women but because of their capabilities to perform a specific role. The Plan should also emphasize that Governments should create the supportive services, such as day-care centres, school cafeterias, laundries and other low-cost facilities required to allow the real participation of women in the development process. More emphasis should be given to the need to eliminate all legislative measures that discriminated against women, especially in private law; in particular, the domicile of the married couple, the guardianship of children, and the administration of the couple's property should be the equal responsibility of both spouses. Legislative provisions which provided disadvantaged treatment of women such as "crimes of honour" should be eliminated. Special attention should be given to women prisoners, especially mothers, who should be provided with facilities to enable them to serve their sentences without abandoning their children and to prevent children born in prisons from spending the first years of their lives in prison.

38. Yugoslavia: The Plan should be implemented in the framework of important decisions adopted by the United Nations such as the implementation of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session in 1974.

39. Representatives of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the World Food Programme, the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Atomic Energy Agency expressed support for the World Plan of Action and pledged their full support for its implementation. They believed that its implementation would be strengthened by a unified effort on the part of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. They expressed the interest of the agencies in the discussions of the Conference,

and noted that many of the recommendations in the Plan involved programmes of the agencies.

40. The representative of the World Health Organization stated that the words "health services" had been wrongly translated as servicios médicos, which was a much more restrictive term, in the Spanish text of paragraphs 108 to 123. She noted further that a new and broader policy on health was being implemented by WHO, <sup>1/</sup> which was not reflected in chapter II E of the World Plan of Action. The term "teams of health workers", for example, should be used instead of the term "medical teams" and "primary health care" should be used rather than "paramedics". If this new terminology was not adopted, a unique opportunity to introduce the new elements of world health policy into the World Plan of Action would be lost. The Plan should emphasize the health care of women during their entire life cycle. It was also necessary to concentrate national and international resources and efforts on the underprivileged and rural groups. The Plan should contribute to establishing primary health services in communities, with emphasis on services for mothers and children.

41. The representative of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development drew attention to the role of the Bank in financing projects requested by Governments. She stated that the Bank was prepared to take steps to achieve the objectives of chapter V, on "International and regional action", and that the Plan would be a useful guide in that respect.

42. The representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency spoke of the special role of her agency in the context of chapter II A, on "International co-operation and the strengthening of international peace".

43. The observer of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, a non-governmental organization in category II consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, speaking on behalf of 39 non-governmental organizations, expressed the view that the World Plan of Action contained guidelines for useful action on the national, regional and international levels. She pointed out that non-governmental organizations could perform a useful function in assessing progress under chapter VI, on "Review and appraisal". She stated that the non-governmental organizations would consider the World Plan of Action at international meetings and would make every effort to publicize the Plan through their affiliates.

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<sup>1/</sup> See "The health of women: how it affects their needs and status" (E/CONF.66/BP/14).

### C. Regional plans of action

#### 1. Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development adopted for the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific <sup>1/</sup>

We, the representatives of the Governments members of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, 2/ assembled at Bangkok from 13 to 17 May 1974 for the Regional Consultation for Asia and the Far East on the Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors,

Gravely concerned over current demographic, economic, political and social conditions and over the situation of women, particularly of those living in the rural areas, and their lack of educational and employment opportunities,

Appreciating the growing realization of the importance of the role of women in integrated development and the aspirations of Asian women to contribute to development,

Recognizing the close interrelationship of the status of women and the determinants of population growth and family size,

Reaffirming the recommendations on the draft World Population Plan of Action made by the International Forum on the Role of Women in Population and Development held in New York in February 1974, and the principles of the Regional Consultation Preparatory to the World Population Conference held at Bangkok from 7 to 10 May 1974.

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 2626 (XXV) of 24 October 1970 on the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade and 2716 (XXV) of 15 December 1970 on programmes of concerted international action for the advancement of women,

Recalling also resolution 135 (XXIX) of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East on the integration of women in the development process, 3/ and the Declaration of Population Strategy for Development 4/ adopted by the Second Asian Population Conference held in Tokyo from 1 to 13 November 1972.

Noting that the thirty-first session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East will take place in International Women's Year,

Hereby submit our proposals for a Plan of Action for the consideration of the Executive Secretary of the Commission and for submission to the Commission at its

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<sup>1/</sup> Formerly issued under the symbols ST/ESA/SER.B/5/Add.1 and E/CONF.66/BP/2.

<sup>2/</sup> In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1895 (LVII) of 1 August 1974, the name of the Commission was changed to "Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific".

<sup>3/</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 9 (E/5277), part III.

<sup>4/</sup> E/CN.11/342.

thirty-first session, with a view to obtaining its endorsement, and urge members and associate member countries of the Commission to strengthen their national efforts and extend full support at the subregional and regional levels for concerted action for the implementation of the Plan of Action.

## PLAN OF ACTION

### Introduction

The deliberations of the regional consultation covered a vast and insufficiently explored area. In order to stimulate follow-up action on the part of national Governments and local bodies, and international and regional organizations, it was felt desirable to elaborate proposals indicating areas in which action was required. The consultation endorsed the recommendations of the International Forum on the Role of Women in Population and Development on the draft world population plan of action and of the ECAFE pre-world population conference consultation.

While recognizing that the situation of women in urban areas required urgent attention, the Consultation was of the opinion that the highest priority should be accorded by Governments to integrated programmes for the advancement of women in rural areas. Programmes should be designed so that women as well as men would be motivated and given possibilities to improve their productivity and quality of life and devote a share of their increasing income to improve the economic, social and cultural infrastructure of the location in which they were living. Such integrated programmes should aim at rural modernization and should incorporate land reform, vocational guidance, education and training, creation of job opportunities for women, health and nutrition, and family planning, as well as rural services and amenities for working mothers.

In formulating programmes aimed at the advancement of women, Governments, ECAFE and non-governmental organizations might as an initial step establish separate programmes exclusively for women where their status is particularly low and where discriminatory attitudes towards them are strong. The aim of programmes for the advancement of women, however, is ultimately to integrate their activities with those of men in all sectors so that women do not remain isolated in their activities. Separate programmes for women should therefore be appropriately phased out as women gain more confidence in themselves and as men accept more readily the role of women as equal partners in development.

It is important that progress towards the integration of women in development be monitored by national, regional and international agencies. Such monitoring should be carried out within the framework of the Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

In developing plans of action based on the proposals herein, Governments should aim at implementation within a specific time period, such as a decade, providing also for a review and appraisal of progress at the mid-point of the period.

## Funding

In order to implement a programme of the broad scope envisaged here, it is necessary to marshall all available resources for its support. The financial means should be provided by local communities, national Governments and intergovernmental organizations, and through the channels of multilateral and bilateral assistance.

At the community level, resources may be provided voluntarily by citizens. Initiative at the national level may be taken by ministries and/or commissions concerned, and provision for financing population programmes and programmes fully to integrate women in development should, as a matter of priority, be included in the national economic and social development plans.

The inclusion of such programmes with high priority in national development plans will facilitate its consideration within the country programming procedures of the United Nations Development Programme, and technical assistance and financing from the United Nations system should be requested by Governments for the development of programmes designed to enhance the status and opportunities for women. Private foundations and institutions also represent sources of financial support for various aspects of population programmes and programmes having as their aim to integrate women into the development process. The need for financial support to non-governmental organizations working towards these aims should be recognized.

The Consultation stressed the importance of widening awareness, on the part of donor countries and the recipient countries requesting the technical co-operation which was offered, of the impact on development of the issues with which the Consultation dealt.

## Regional action

1. The Executive Secretary of ECAFE is invited to ensure that the development and implementation of a comprehensive regional programme for the integration of women in the development effort is undertaken at the earliest possible opportunity. For this purpose the Executive Secretary should, through existing channels for the co-ordination of regional programmes in the fields of population and social development, seek the co-operation of other interested organizations so as to ensure an integrated approach.

2. A dynamic long-term programme for this purpose should be drawn up by the units of ECAFE primarily concerned, namely the Population and the Social Development Divisions, giving consideration to the proposals of this Consultation. The already existing long-term programme for the advancement of women, in operation in ECA for the period of 1972-1976, could be used as a guideline for the establishment of a similar one in the ECAFE region.

3. The functions of the proposed programme might include:

(a) Assisting national Governments and non-governmental organizations to develop policies, strategies and programmes for strengthening women's role in national development, especially in rural areas.

(b) Promoting action-oriented research and collection of data as a basis for the formulation of programmes and evaluation of progress towards the effective integration of women in development;

(c) Exchanging information between countries on relevant programmes and services;

(d) Strengthening existing training institutions to increase women's potential for local, national and regional leadership;

(e) Helping to promote women's organizations at local, subregional and regional levels;

(f) Assisting Governments in formulating requests for technical and financial assistance for its programmes in this area.

4. The Executive Secretary of ECAFE is requested to seek adequate financial and staff resources for such a work programme, which, bearing in mind the context of cultural practices prevailing in the region, should include action and assistance to Governments in the fields hereinafter discussed.

## B. Education and training

A definite correlation has been found to exist between women's educational level and smaller family size in developing countries, but the effect of education on fertility is often reduced when female education does not result in gainful employment. Education, training, and employment strategies should therefore be co-ordinated. In order to ensure equal opportunities for participation in economic activities, modification of old patterns of sex-selective training programmes through changes in legislation and other measures including those aimed at changing the attitudes and social practices which limit women's participation is essential. Since women are lagging behind men, special provisions in education and training programmes should be made for women and girls.

### Proposals for action

1. Adopt dynamic programmes to eradicate illiteracy and to establish a specific target date for its elimination; to encourage functional literacy and post-literacy activities as a part of literacy campaigns; to include teaching on a number of subjects such as civic education, nutrition and hygiene.
2. Provide and enforce as quickly as possible free and compulsory primary education, overcome low rates of school enrolment and high rates of drop-out especially among girls, and provide programmes for out-of-school youth.
3. Provide reform of school curricula and equal curricular choices ensuring that the content of educational and training programmes is relevant to national development and the prevailing eco-system, and that educational material does not perpetuate sex-role stereotypes.
4. Integrate into school curricula the study of agricultural and other vocational subjects and techniques including the use of new tools and equipment with a view to developing in the younger generation a sense of pride in, and attachment to, the land and environment.
5. Ensure that courses on population education and on family life education are integrated into school curricula at all levels and in programmes of non-formal education, to raise awareness of the relationship between demographic trends and social, economic and cultural conditions and to prepare young people and adults of both sexes for responsible marriage and parenthood.
6. Provide vocational guidance and counselling to girls as well as boys in accordance with the requirements of national development.
7. Provide courses in home economics for boys and men as well as for girls and women.
8. Provide special incentives and facilities for women to encourage their participation in technological and scientific skills.
9. Make special arrangements for training for women at the village level for agricultural work, making use of modern farming principles and new intermediate technology.

10. Arrange, as part of rural development projects intended to cut down the rate of rural unemployment, training programmes for small-scale rural industries.
11. Organize training programmes in various activities related to entrepreneurship, commerce and marketing, for example, co-operatives and loan societies, access to credit, book-keeping methods, assessment of market fluctuations.
12. Provide, in view of the acute shortage and uneven distribution of doctors, nurses, paramedicals, lawyers and social workers, especially in rural areas, adequate professional and vocational training for women at all levels.
13. Provide the necessary supporting measures to give effect to these proposals, such as establishing training centres, organizing programmes for training of trainers and of volunteers, and mobilizing national and international resources for obtaining funds and technical assistance.

### C. Employment

While unemployment and underemployment are major problems in the region, the key to elevating the role of women in economic development will depend largely on their increasing participation in economic activities.

It is frequently argued that, where jobs are scarce, priority should be given to males, overlooking the fact that the percentage of women household heads is large and that women are entitled to general access to the labour market on equal terms. Greater participation by women in all areas of employment (and not only those traditionally associated with the woman's role) is a prerequisite to attaining the objectives of development itself. The potential for creating more paid jobs for all workers should therefore be stressed. Given training at different levels, both formal and non-formal, women's chances of employment and their contribution to economic productivity would improve considerably, as would their position and prestige in the family and in society. Increased gainful employment outside the home and opportunities for self-employment can be expected to contribute to needed changes in fertility levels.

#### Proposals for action

1. Specifically incorporate provision of employment opportunities for women in employment policies and strategies which should recognize woman's dual role and provide the services and facilities necessary to enable her to take advantage of these opportunities. In principle, services for working mothers, day care centres, crèches etc. should be provided in living areas.
2. Integrate manpower and education policies.
3. Establish in government departments and other appropriate bodies positive policies and targets for employing women in both the public and the private sectors, with special emphasis on employment of women at the policy and planning levels. The principles of equal access to the whole range of economic activities, and of equal pay should be applied.
4. Seek new ways of developing community and entrepreneurial skills especially among rural women, for small business ventures, manufacturing, food processing, cottage and handicraft industries, community development and social welfare activities.



5. Ensure for women access to credit on equal terms with men and encourage the establishment of co-operatives.
6. Promote integrated rural development so as to increase employment opportunities for women as well as men, to increase food production and to help reduce the rate of migration to urban areas; income-earning self-employment (outside of agriculture) and expansion of village-based services in fields such as public health, literacy and social welfare.
7. Since increasing participation by women in employment is strongly related to their access to education and training, to attitudes towards family planning, to cultural attitudes towards the role of women, and to attitudes of employers, recognize these related factors as essential elements in the approach to employment.
8. Ensure that the services required to support the employment policy are developed.

#### D. Health, nutrition and other social services

Programmes relating to health, nutrition and other social services should be integrated into over-all developmental programmes. While social and economic development is their primary objective, they have a significant impact on fertility and population growth.

#### Proposals for action

1. Give high priority to programmes of nutrition, nutrition education and maternal and child health care among all sectors of the population; include family planning as a part of these programmes, recognizing that the right to determine freely the number and spacing of children includes the right of the child and of the mother to survive and to enjoy a healthy life.
2. Strengthen basic health services and in view of the scarcity of medical doctors in many areas of the region use trained paramedical workers to the fullest extent, inter alia for such services as the provision of contraceptives and adequate follow-up for protection of the health of the users.
3. Establish or expand programmes of old age and unemployment insurance and social welfare assistance in order to guarantee a minimum level of social and economic security to all persons.
4. Provide supporting services for the family, recognizing that it continues to be an essential social institution.
5. Promote the redistribution of industry and of health, education and other services and reorder routes of transportation so as to reduce the migration particularly of males, thereby protecting mothers and children from the effective dislocation of the family and providing rural women and men with greater opportunities for employment.

## E. Population

Social, economic and demographic factors are inextricably interrelated, and change in one or more invariably involves all. To alter the pattern whereby women are denied full participation in the development process involves, inter alia, a change in certain crucial demographic variables, such as age at marriage, age at birth of first child, total number of children and the interval between births, and age at termination of child-bearing. Enabling women to determine, in relation to work and family values whether, when and how often to undertake pregnancies is an essential factor in such change.

### Proposals for action

1. Raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years, reducing the total number of years exposed to risk of child-bearing and increasing the number of years that may be devoted to education.
2. Make available to individuals and couples through an institutionalized system, such as a national family planning programme, such information, service and means as will enable them to determine freely the number of their children and the intervals at which they will have them.
3. Collect and analyse data needed to determine the level of aggregate fertility that is compatible with the national welfare, establish targets to meet that goal and to educate individual families to see that achieving it is in their interest.
4. Engage men as well as women in the effort to ensure responsible parenthood.
5. Because of the shortages of medical and paramedical personnel, promote wide community-based distribution of non-clinical methods of contraception.
6. Promote awareness of, and means for, improvements in conditions of infant and early childhood mortality, so as to reduce the lag in time between the decline of mortality and the decrease in fertility.
7. Utilize all humanitarian means of discouraging large families, including social security for the aged.
8. Ensure balanced demographic, economic and social development by closely relating population policies and programmes with measures adopted to improve the status of women.
9. Establish effective machinery within Governments with responsibility for ensuring that priority attention is accorded to the population and family-planning fields and for planning evaluation and analysis of programmes in their areas.

## F. Research, data collection and analysis

In spite of a mass of demographic as well as social economic data, social indicators which would explain the status of women, and data which would give a more concrete and clearer picture of their situation are not available. Programmes of analytical research and evaluation should be promoted to permit realistic planning and assessment of the evolution of the situation of women, its causes and processes and of the effects thereon of development efforts.

### Proposals for action:

1. Facilitate international comparisons and exchange of information by taking steps to harmonize statistics.
2. Obtain statistics in censuses and surveys on women's education, levels of skill, their participation in economic activities and on interrelated social-economic variables. These and all other statistics on social, economic and demographic characteristics should be broken down by sex, age and marital status to provide bases for comparative studies of males and females.
3. Improve the quality, coverage and definition of concepts in vital registration systems and other related systems of data collection in order to provide a sound basis for research on the role of population factors in the integration of women in development and their labour force participation.
4. Undertake and encourage in-depth studies and surveys on economic, social and demographic benefits as related to the integration of women in the development process.
5. Develop and review social indicators in order to assess periodically the status of women in development.
6. Encourage in-depth studies of the family and household situation.
7. Encourage universities and other academic institutions and governmental and non-governmental organizations to conduct research in these fields and to conceptualize the interrelationship between the status of women and fertility.
8. Ensure co-ordination between the information gathering services and the use of the data for all purposes, including programme development, evaluation of progress and communications.

### G. Legislative and administrative measures

The integration of women into the development processes, both as contributors and as beneficiaries, depends on the attitudes and values of women as well as on the opportunities offered to them by the society. Although values and attitudes are the products of a long socialization process, Governments can, by enacting legislative measures and taking administrative action, greatly influence people's behaviour and this will gradually affect changes in attitudes. Legislative and administrative measures are therefore important instruments for guiding and institutionalizing change. As a matter of urgency, relevant measures should be included in national development plans and sufficient resources should be allocated for their implementation.

### Proposals for action

1. Review and enact legislation and regulations that have or may have a bearing on the status of women, their role in development and population change, including laws related to age of marriage, legal capacity, rights and responsibility when entering into, and during, marriage and at its dissolution, laws on taxation, inheritance, migration, education, employment (including choice of work and profession) and choice of domicile; ensure that such legislation and regulations are in accordance with the relevant United Nations instruments, including the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the international labour standards.

2. Ensure that laws provide for a minimum age of marriage for women of not less than 18 years, the registration of all marriages, the contracting of marriage only with the full and free consent of intending spouses, equal rights and duties in matters relating to their children and for the protection of the children's interest in case of dissolution.
3. Accord to women equal right with men to acquire, administer, enjoy, dispose of and inherit property, including property acquired during marriage and to ensure for women the fullest possible protection against consecutive and other marriages; ensure that all men and women know their legal rights and when possible are given legal aid free of charge in their communities.
4. Remove all legal and other restrictions on the dissemination of information on contraceptives and on the sale and distribution of family planning devices.
5. Establish appropriate administrative structures and procedures for data collection, formulation and implementation of policies and programmes, and evaluation of their implications and impact.
6. Establish national commissions and sub-commissions, committees or working groups under the appropriate national machinery, which could undertake fact-finding and comprehensive studies, paying special attention to the needs and problems of women in both rural and urban areas.
7. Establish special units to study the present situation of women in the different government departments, and to promote ameliorative action.
8. Establish within the national machinery an interdepartmental body of experts from various fields such as health, education, nutrition, agriculture, training employment, social affairs, population policies, law, trade and industry, consisting of men and women and, where appropriate, local commissions or committees with a mandate to review, evaluate and recommend measures and priorities for the integration of women in all sectors of national life and at all levels to be included into national development plans.
9. Undertake a series of assessments of the situation of women at the national, provincial and local levels, which would include a realistic appraisal both of progress and of obstacles to it.
10. Establish channels of communication and measures for co-operation with national non-governmental organizations for the advancement of women and their integration in development.
11. Ensure that qualified women are included in due proportion among their countries' representatives at international conferences, seminars, fellowship programmes etc. in development fields.
12. Provide for intergovernmental co-operation within the region, for example in the form of special commissions, committees or similar bodies.

## H. Non-governmental organizations

Non-governmental organizations, especially women's organizations, national family planning and other population organizations, welfare agencies, trade unions, co-operative and religious bodies constitute important resources for development and vehicles for change. Their increased effectiveness depends on the policies of Governments and the increasing involvement of trained educated younger women and men. Steps should be taken to ensure that there is co-ordination of the activities of such bodies at the national and local levels with the activities of Governments, United Nations organizations and other intergovernmental bodies.

### Proposals for action

1. Assist women to organize and press for representation on decision-making and policy-formulating bodies.
2. Participate in the formulation and implementation of national development plans, translating them into concrete national programmes at local and central levels, and encourage and co-ordinate similar programmes at the regional and international levels.
3. Exercise vigilance on and encourage the formulation and implementation of legislation to guarantee women equal rights in all fields, and make themselves heard at the local, national and regional levels.
4. Work towards changing attitudes and influencing public opinion by providing information nationally and locally to support activities which foster awareness among men and women that the emancipation of women is related to the emancipation of men and to the country's development.
5. Promote at the community level, understanding, acceptance and practice of family planning.
6. In relation to all forms of discrimination, explain to women their rights and responsibilities, discuss their problems and give them legal and social assistance.
7. Offer assistance as appropriate in the fields of education, training and retraining, literacy campaigns, civic education, leadership training and the forms of training discussed in section I.
8. Supplement public educational and training facilities by providing private schools, kindergartens, semi-boarding and boarding schools, as well as equipment, materials, finance and personnel for training programmes especially for rural women, offering scholarships to women for study within their country and abroad.
9. Help working parents with family responsibilities by setting up day-care centres and other support services for general social welfare.
10. Encourage women to achieve equal participation in decision-making at all levels and in all groups by education, legislation, changes in the attitudes of men and women and by the reshaping of public opinion.
11. Encourage further research by Governments, universities and private research organizations locally and regionally on social indicators and data collection systems as a prerequisite of more effective assessment of women's progress in development and factors influencing population growth.

12. Create opportunities for part-time employment of women, assist them in establishing income earning projects, and encourage them to become entrepreneurs in commerce and industry.

13. Promote international exchange of information on the status of women with the aim of increasing understanding and co-operation among women as well as among non-governmental organizations working for the same human goals.

#### I. Exchange of information and experience

##### Support communication

An essential prerequisite to the integration of women in development is the changing of certain deep-rooted traditional attitudes in men and women regarding the role of women in present-day society. For this, the planned and sensitive use of communication media will be vital. By "communications media" should be understood, not only the "mass media" such as radio, press, television and cinema, but also the millions of governmental and non-governmental change agents and opinion leaders who are the key communicators in development at the group and interpersonal levels. The planned combination of the mass media with the change agents is necessary for effective support communication. All proposed operational programmes and projects for the integration of women in development should have properly researched and built-in communication components, including budgets. This requires not only the incorporation of budgetary provisions for audio-visual services, but the infusion of cultural and attitudinal research and communication analysis into the formulation of such programmes and projects.

##### Proposals for action

1. Ensure that those responsible for the selection of news and other programme emphases in the mass media shall give adequate recognition to the roles and the special achievements in national life, history and present-day development of all women, including rural women with whom a far larger number of women will identify and whose roles a far larger number of men will have to acknowledge.

2. Exert vigilance on media programmers against degrading depiction of women in, for example, drama and other entertainment, make efforts to sensitize writers, producers and editors to their daily responsibility for the perpetuation of traditional male-dominating attitudes through the reproduction and repetition of old stereotypes.

##### Information exchange

Effective programming and project formulation for the integration of women in development will also require an adequate flow of factual information and of relevant experience in this field to and from the national policy-makers and planners in each country, and their international assistance collaborators.

Within each country, interested and collaborating organizations should establish an information reference centre on the status and role in development of women, in their country and abroad, and should publicize this central resource to the maximum. These national information reference centres should become the key repositories and points of two-way communication at the international level, including the storage and re-dissemination of documented experience on the integration of women in development from the agencies of the United Nations system, especially the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

Each national centre should become an indispensable source of professionally sound, accurate and relevant information and data in this field for government authorities, academic institutions, international organizations, the media and all others for the integration of women in national development. Proper funding should be provided for this purpose.

#### J. Summary

Women in the ECAFE region have a crucial role to play both in the development of their countries and in the solution of problems arising from current and future demographic trends. In recognition of this, the recommendations of the Consultation have as their aim, to draw greater integration of women in development. The guidelines include both short-run and long-term strategies for change, and they give special attention to basic improvements at the local level. Although specifics on the condition of women and on the current activities of Governments vary throughout the region, broad agreement has been possible on several general areas deserving priority attention. It is therefore hoped that improving conditions for women, and expanding their opportunities in such fields as education and training, employment, health and public life, will be seen not only as a matter of social justice, but also as a significant means of achieving developmental and desired population goals.

2. Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development adopted for the region of the Economic Commission for Africa 1/

Introduction

Examination of the situation of women, their integration in development, and population factors, 2/ has revealed these current realities:

(1) Women are fully engaged in economic and social tasks in the traditional sectors of African life, often to the point of exhaustion and ill health, yet little progress has been achieved in making their tasks less burdensome and more productive.

(2) The traditional role of African women in economic life is neither evident nor acknowledged in the modern sectors of agriculture, industry, commerce and government, 3/ nor is their potential contribution to the modern sector included in development planning.

(3) The lag in opportunities for women has a serious effect on population factors, and both have detrimental effects on development. High rates of birth, coupled with high rates of maternal, infant and child mortality are the commonest pattern in Africa, although low fertility among women in some areas, resulting from the poor situation and poor health of women, also occurs, causing anxiety in those families and countries affected.

At the Regional Seminar for Africa on the Integration of Women in Development, with Special Reference to Population Factors, Addis Ababa, June 1974, guidelines were drawn up by which national Governments and local bodies, as well as international and regional organizations, might take action to integrate women more fully into development and influence population factors. These guidelines constitute this Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development.

Participants at the Seminar recommended that each country should identify its own priorities within the Plan, as appropriate to the national development strategy. It was recognized and welcomed that the Plan of Action would in some areas reinforce current national development plans.

The Plan should be implemented within 10 years, with a mid-term review of progress. It will commence in 1975, International Women's Year, and have its mid-term review in the final year of the Second United Nations Development Decade, 1980.

As many of the changes are achievable only on a long-term basis, the guidelines include both short-run and long-run strategies. Because the vast majority of African people still live in rural areas, where poverty is often acute, actions related to rural life are given greater attention than those directed to urban areas.

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1/ Formerly issued under the symbols ST/EFA/SER.B/6/Add.1 and E/CONF.66/BP/3.

2/ "The data base for discussion on the interrelations between the integration of women in development, their situation on population factors in Africa" (E/CN.14/SW/37), May 1974.

3/ See Report of the Regional Conference on Education, Vocational Training and Work Opportunities for Girls and Women in African Countries, Rabat, Morocco, 20-29 May 1971, para. 22.



The situation of women varies across the continent. Thus implementation of the Plan, and the urgency of particular actions within it, may also be expected to vary from country to country.

The participants in the Seminar laid special emphasis on the importance of ensuring the availability of resources, both human and financial, for the implementation of the Plan. With regard to financial resources it was stressed:

(a) That all available sources of support should be explored, including community resources and those of the various private funding agencies;

(b) That programmes for implementing the proposals should be given priority in national development plans, and that this could improve their chances of attracting international and bilateral assistance;

(c) That special efforts should be made to inform both the donors and the recipients of such assistance regarding the importance of the integration of women in the process of development.

#### A. Organizational machinery

Efforts to widen opportunities for women to participate in development will require action by society at large through its governmental machinery, non-governmental organizations, and other groups and individuals, all of which may be supported by international and regional organizations. Appropriate machinery and administrative procedures are essential.

#### Plan of action

(1) On the national level: Where such machinery does not already exist on the national policy and planning level, the following should be established:

National commissions on women and development, consisting of leading men and women who would make policy recommendations and action proposals; 4/

Women's bureaux or permanent secretariats of national commissions, to undertake research, to formulate projects and programmes, and in general to seek the integration of women in all sectors of economic and social development; 4/

An interdepartmental body of experts, consisting of men and women from various fields (such as health, education, nutrition, agriculture, training, employment, social affairs, communications and information, population, law, trade, industry), to ensure co-ordination of programmes and adequate representation within national policies and planning;

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4/ Ibid., chap. I, sect. E.

A non-governmental organizations co-ordination committee, which might assist in organizing women to seek representation in decision-making bodies, to work towards changing attitudes, to supplement public resources and facilities, and to promote international collaboration and exchange of information and experience. The non-governmental organizations should also take action to implement recommendations of national, regional and international conferences relevant to women's roles.

(2) On the regional level: The Economic Commission for Africa is unique among the regional commissions in that it has already established a long-term programme for the integration of women in development. The role of the Commission in stimulating national implementation of the Plan of Action was explored and the establishment of the following additional machinery was proposed:

Africa Regional Standing Committee on the Role of Women in Development, 4/ to co-ordinate the work of the national commissions, to advise the ECA Women's Programme, and to co-operate with international and regional organizations, especially the All-Africa Women's Conference;

Pan-African Research and Training Centre for Women, 5/ to assist Governments and voluntary agencies, including women's organizations, in strengthening the roles of women in the Africa region. The functions of the Centre would include:

Itinerant national training in rural development techniques, small industries, co-operatives, and communications;

Research and collection of information, with special attention to harmonization of data, development of indicators of women's participation, and diffusion of information;

A revolving fund, to support co-operative and/or individual entrepreneurship among women;

An African Women's Development Task Force, which would allow skilled women from one part of the region to serve in another area when so requested.

The programme of the Centre should stress subjects such as those related to lightening women's work, to improving administrative procedures for women's organizations, co-operatives or trade unions, to generating income-producing activities, to family life, education, and to establishing national machinery to augment women's work for development. Moreover, it would assist national organizations in their submission of applications for foreign assistance. It should also act as a clearing-house for the exchange of innovative ideas among the countries of the region. The subregions of Africa should be represented on the staff of the Centre, and particular attention should be given to top-level representation from French-speaking countries.

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5/ Recommended by the All Africa Women's Conference, the Addis Ababa Regional Meeting, 1969 and the Rabat Regional Conference 1971.

(3) By the mass media: Special measures should ensure that wide publicity is given to the Plan of Action through all means of communication - radio, press, television and cinema. Efforts would also be made to enlist the energies of those agents of change and opinion leaders who communicate the ideas of development at the local group and interpersonal levels.

#### B. Education and training

The failure of girls and women to be educated and trained equally with men leads to the marginal participation of women in development efforts and in modern economic activities. The results are limited roles for women and inadequate training for the employment opportunities that may be available. A definite correlation has been found to exist between education for females and smaller family size, but the effect of education on fertility is often lost when the education does not result in rewarding employment. Co-ordination of education, training and employment strategies is therefore desirable for both developmental and demographic reasons.

It was deemed necessary to ensure equal access by girls and boys to education at all levels and to encourage parents to permit girls to continue their education beyond the primary level. Special efforts should be devoted to reducing the school drop-out rate among girls. There should be an integrated approach to education and training, emphasizing needed community skills.

#### Plan of action

(1) Provide short-term compensatory programmes for women and girls - in literacy, numbers and non-formal education programmes;

(2) Introduce training programmes for women at the village level in modern farming principles and use of equipment, agriculture and fishing, co-operatives, entrepreneurship, commerce and marketing (for example credit, book-keeping, and consumer education);

(3) Reform school curricula and ensure equal curricula choices for girls and boys, including agriculture and other employment-oriented subjects;

(4) Revise educational material to fit national needs and facilitate changes in attitudes, and include courses on population education and family life education in school curricula at all levels as well as in programmes of non-formal education;

(5) Provide social and vocational guidance for girls as well as boys, encouraging girls to equip themselves for a wide choice of employment opportunities.

#### C. Employment

To be integrated into the development effort means to have the legal right, as well as access, to the available means for self-improvement and societal improvement. Important in this respect are opportunities for both wage-employment and the generation of income through self-employment or family-employment. Unless there is greater participation by women in all areas of employment, the objectives of development itself will be hindered. Moreover, increased gainful employment and opportunities for self-employment can be expected to contribute to changes in fertility levels. Government departments and other appropriate bodies should establish positive policies and targets for the employment of women in both the public and the private sectors. Special emphasis should be given to the employment of women at the policy and planning

levels, including service on international bodies and representation on delegations to foreign countries, and service in the secretariats of the United Nations and in other organizations within the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies.

#### Plan of action

- (1) Promote employment policies and strategies to incorporate specifically provisions for wage and salaried employment, co-operative and self-employment for women;
- (2) Provide public services and facilities, including those for child care, in order to support women in their multiple roles of employee, homemaker, and mother;
- (3) Integrate manpower and education policies;
- (4) Apply principles of equal access to all economic activities, including equal pay, availability of credit, technical services, and training;
- (5) Promote opportunities for employment of women in decision-making and policy positions;
- (6) Develop programmes for integrated rural development to increase gainful employment opportunities for both men and women, and improve rural infrastructure (roads, water supplies, electricity, village-based services);
- (7) Recognize the major role of rural women in the agricultural and marketing sectors, and provide training, equipment, village technology, public transportation, water and other facilities to increase their productivity and to improve their lives and the lives of their families and societies.

#### D. Communications mass media

Because the mass media may influence thinking and shape opinions, they can play an important role in the formation of new attitudes concerning the roles of men and women in society. The mass media may promote the integration of women in development by helping to remove prejudices by publicizing the need for women to contribute their talents as full partners with men and their capability of doing so.

#### Plan of action

- (1) Support of governmental and non-governmental organizations for research on the mass media to determine the image of men and women they portray, their influence in changing attitudes on traditional roles of women, and their capacities to stimulate those legislative and cultural changes resulting in greater equality of men and women.
- (2) Vigilance by governmental and non-governmental organizations over communications material to ensure that information shall be provided to men and women on the current situation of women and how such a situation can be improved, on the changing roles of men and women in contemporary society, and on employment and training programmes for the advancement of women.
- (3) Efforts by governmental and non-governmental organizations to achieve a greater share for women of the decision-making positions within mass-media employment.

## E. Health, nutrition and social services

Improved access to health, nutrition and other social services is essential to the full participation of women in development activities, and to a general improvement in the quality of life. To be fully effective, these services should be integrated into over-all development programmes, with priority given to rural areas. While the primary objective of such services is social and economic development, they also have a significant impact on fertility and on population growth.

### Plan of action

- (1) Provide easily accessible water supplies (including wells, dams, catchments and piping) for safe potable water to improve health conditions and to reduce the burden of carrying water (which falls mainly on women and children);
- (2) Strengthen basic health services, using trained medical and paramedical workers to the fullest extent, including in such services the provision of contraceptives with adequate follow-up for protection of the health of the users;
- (3) Develop nutrition programmes for boys and girls, women and men, including nutrition education in all schools, and improve local food production, processing, preparation, storage and conservation;
- (4) Provide supportive services for the family, including unified health care delivery systems, child care, assistance to the mother, and advice on the growing and use of local foods;
- (5) Expand the coverage of programmes for old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, and social welfare assistance, in order to help guarantee a minimum level of social and economic security for all persons.

## F. Population

Social, economic, and demographic factors are closely interrelated, and change in one or more invariably involves all. Alterations to the pattern in which women have been denied full participation in the development process involves, among other things, changes in certain crucial demographic variables such as age at marriage, age at birth of first child, spacing of children, and total number of children. A decisive factor in such changes is enabling women to determine, in relation to work and family values, when and how often to bear children.

### Plan of action

- (1) Raise the minimum age of marriage where appropriate;
- (2) Make available to individuals and couples, through an institutionalized system such as a national family planning programme, the information and means to enable them to determine fully the number and spacing of their children, and to overcome sterility;
- (3) Involve men as well as women in the effort to ensure responsible parenthood;
- (4) Ensure balanced demographic, economic and social development by closely relating population policies and programmes with measures to improve the situation of women;
- (5) Utilize all humanitarian means (including adequate social security for the aged) to encourage the family size that is appropriate to national objectives;

(6) Promote awareness of the deleterious effect, on the health of the mother, of pregnancies during early adolescence and beyond the age of 35 years, and awareness of the decreased chance of survival of the child;

(7) Provide education on maternal and child health, and on the means for improving the conditions of infants and young children;

(8) Provide services to improve the conditions of elderly persons, particularly in the rural areas.

### G. Research, data collection and analysis

Despite a relative abundance of some varieties of demographic, economic and social data, the indicators which would explain the situation of women are not readily available. These indicators can be developed, however, once the need for them is understood. It is difficult, but not impossible, to measure the extent of women's present involvement in economic activities, and the positive and negative impact of modernization and development efforts on their work-loads and their lives. Moreover, the various factors that may facilitate or constrain the provision of wider opportunities for women and the establishment of population policies are not adequately studied. Such data are needed as bases for action programmes, for the evaluation of interrelationships, and for assessing the effectiveness of programmes.

#### Plan of action

(1) Promote collection of relevant material and develop simple indicators on the quality of life; and on changing conditions of women, including those pertaining to education, employment, food and nutrition, access to health services, and availability and disposition of income;

(2) Include, in censuses and surveys, data according to urban and rural residence within that collected for sex, age, marital status, family composition, education and skill levels, and participation in both modern and traditional economic activities;

(3) Measure the extent of women's activities as regards food production (cash-crop and subsistence), water and fuel supply, marketing, transportation, and participation in local and national planning and policy-making;

(4) Study the causes and effects of the prevailing images of women and their roles, including cultural roles;

(5) Study the division of labour and the time-budgets for women as compared with those of men, with regard to both economic and household activities;

(6) Encourage data collection as a part of all programmes and encourage universities and other bodies to conduct research on family and household situations including the extent of households in which the head is a woman, and on the economic, social and demographic benefits of the wider participation of women;

(7) Establish mechanisms for the exchange of information and experience;

(8) Conduct research to support the planned use of communications media and of agents of change within activities for the integration of women in development and for the modification of demographic patterns;

(9) Carry out studies on the effects of polygamy upon women, for example on the threat posed by younger wives to continuation of economic and social security for older wives.

#### H. Legislative and administrative measures

Legislative and administrative measures can be instruments for accomplishing the full integration of women in development. The passage of laws, the enactment of administrative measures, and the enforcement of these can open up equal opportunities and equal responsibilities for women in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their countries. Through them, Governments can guide and institutionalize changes in attitudes towards the role of women and can enable women to achieve the equality with men that is envisioned in the Charter of the United Nations, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in various international labour standards, and in other international instruments.

Where such legislation does not exist, women's organizations should support its introduction, and where the legislation does exist, they should investigate the extent of its implementation. Public information campaigns should also ensure that women as well as men shall have a full understanding of their legal and civil rights, and that they shall be aware of measures they can take to enforce those rights.

#### Plan of action

(1) Accord women equal rights with men in the field of civil law and, in particular:

(a) The right to equality in legal capacity, including the right to contract, sue and be sued;

(b) The right to acquire, administer, enjoy, dispose of and inherit property, including property acquired during marriage;

(c) The same rights as men with regard to the law on the movement of persons;

(2) Accord women equal status with men in marriage and, in particular:

(a) The same right as men to free choice of a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;

(b) The same rights as men during marriage and at its dissolution, particularly in respect to property rights;

(c) The same rights as men with respect to parental rights and duties;

(3) Remove legal and other restrictions on the dissemination of information concerning family planning and on the sale and distribution of contraceptive devices;

(4) Provide legal aid, where possible free of charge, in both rural and urban areas;

(5) Promote the ratification by national Governments of the conventions of the International Labour Organisation, especially where these concern the provision of benefits to women.

#### I. Summary

Women in the region of the Economic Commission for Africa have a crucial role to play both in the development of their countries and in the solution of problems arising from current and future demographic trends. In recognition of this, the recommendations of the Seminar seek to draw greater attention to the needs and the possibilities for action related to promotion of greater integration of women in development. The guidelines include both short-run and long-term strategies for change, and they give special attention to basic improvements at the local level. Although specifics on the condition of women and on the current activities of Governments vary throughout the region, broad agreement has been possible on several general areas deserving priority attention. It is therefore hoped that improving conditions for women, and expanding their opportunities in such fields as education and training, employment, health, and public life, will be seen not only as a matter of social justice, but also as a significant means of achieving developmental and desired population goals, and further enrichment of the culture and personality of all African peoples.