



## World Population Plan of Action

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### WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION

The World Population Conference,

Having due regard for human aspirations for a better quality of life and for rapid socio-economic development,

Taking into consideration the interrelationship between population situations and socio-economic development,

Decides on the following World Population Plan of Action as a policy instrument within the broader context of the internationally adopted strategies for national and international progress:

#### A. BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

1. The promotion of development and improvement of quality of life require co-ordination of action in all major socio-economic fields including that of population, which is the inexhaustible source of creativity and a determining factor of progress. At the international level a number of strategies and programmes whose

explicit aim is to affect variables in fields other than population have already been formulated. These include the Provisional Indicative World Plan for Agricultural Development of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations/FAO World Food Programme, the International Labour Organisation's World Employment Programme, the Action Plan for the Human Environment, the United Nations World Plan of Action for the Application of Science and Technology to Development, the Programme of Concerted Action for the Advancement of Women, and, more comprehensively, the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Programme of Action to achieve it, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its sixth special session (resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974), provide the most recent over-all framework for international co-operation. The explicit aim of the World Population Plan of Action is to help co-ordinate population trends and the trends of economic and social development. The basis for an effective solution of population problems is, above all, socio-economic transformation. A population policy may have a certain success if it constitutes an integral part of socio-economic development; its contribution to the solution of world development problems is hence only partial, as is the case with the other sectoral strategies. Consequently, the Plan of Action must be considered as an important component of the system of international strategies and as an instrument of the international community for the promotion of economic development, quality of life, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. The formulation of international strategies is a response to universal recognition of the existence of important problems in the world and the need for concerted national and international

action to achieve their solution. Where trends of population growth, distribution and structure are out of balance with social, economic and environmental factors, they can at certain stages of development, create additional difficulties for the achievement of sustained development. Policies whose aim is to affect population trends must not be considered substitutes for socio-economic development policies but as being integrated with those policies in order to facilitate the solution of certain problems facing both developing and developed countries and to promote a more balanced and rational development.

3. Throughout history the rate of growth of world population averaged only slightly above replacement levels. The recent increase in the growth rate began mainly as a result of the decline in mortality during the past few centuries, a decline that has accelerated significantly during recent decades. The inertia of social structures and the insufficiency of economic progress, especially when these exist in the absence of profound socio-cultural changes, partly explain why in the majority of developing countries the decline in mortality has not been accompanied by a parallel decline in fertility. Since about 1950, the world population growth rate has risen to 2 per cent a year. If sustained, this will result in a doubling of the worlds population every 35 years. However, national rates of natural growth range widely, from a negative rate to well over 3 per cent a year.

4. The consideration of population problems cannot be reduced to the analysis of population trends only. It must also be borne in mind that the present situation of the developing countries originates in the unequal processes of socio-economic development which have divided peoples since the beginning of the modern era. This inequity still exists and is intensified by lack of equity in international economic relations with consequent disparity in

levels of living.

5. Although acceleration in the rate of growth of the world's population is mainly the result of very large declines in the mortality of developing countries, those declines have been unevenly distributed. Thus, at present, average expectation of life at birth is 63 years in Latin America, 57 years in Asia and only a little over 46 years in Africa, compared with more than 71 years in the developed regions. Furthermore, although on average less than one in 40 children dies before reaching the age of 1 year in the developed regions, 1 in 15 dies before reaching that age in Latin America, 1 in 10 in Asia and 1 in 7 in Africa. In fact, in some developing regions, and particularly in African countries, average expectation of life at birth is estimated to be less than 40 years and 1 in 4 children dies before the age of 1 year. Consequently, many developing countries consider reduction of mortality, and particularly reduction of infant mortality, to be one of the most important and urgent goals.

6. While the right of couples to have the number of children they desire is accepted in a number of international instruments, many couples in the world are unable to exercise that right effectively. In many parts of the world, poor economic conditions, social norms, inadequate knowledge of effective methods of family regulation and the unavailability of contraceptive services result in a situation in which couples have more children than they desire or feel they can properly care for. In certain countries, on the other hand, because of economic or biological factors, problems of involuntary sterility and of subfecundity exist, with the result that many couples have fewer children than they desire. Of course, the degree of urgency attached to dealing with each of these two situations depends upon the prevailing conditions within the

country in question.

7. Individual reproductive behaviour and the needs and aspirations of society should be reconciled. In many developing countries, and particularly in the large countries of Asia, the desire of couples to achieve large families is believed to result in excessive national population growth rates and Governments are explicitly attempting to reduce those rates by implementing specific policy measures. On the other hand, some countries are attempting to increase desired family size, if only slightly.

8. Throughout the world, urban populations are growing in size at a considerably faster rate than rural populations. As a result, by the end of this century, and for the first time in history, the majority of the world's population will be living in urban areas. Urbanization is an element of the process of modernization. Moreover, while in certain countries this process is efficiently managed and maximum use is made of the advantages this management presents, in others urbanization takes place in an uncontrolled manner and is accompanied by overcrowding in certain districts, an increase in slums, deterioration of the environment, urban unemployment and many other social and economic problems.

9. In most of the developing countries, although the rate of urban population growth is higher than the growth rate in rural areas, the latter is still significant. The rural population of developing countries is growing at an average rate of 1.7 per cent a year, and in some instances at a faster rate than that of the urban population in developed countries. Furthermore, many rural areas of heavy emigration, in both developed and developing countries, are being depleted of their younger populations and are being left with populations whose age distribution is unfavourable to economic development. Thus, in many countries, the

revitalization of the countryside is a priority goal.

10. For some countries international migration may be, in certain circumstances, an instrument of population policy. At least two types of international migration are of considerable concern to many countries in the world: the movement of migrant workers with limited skills, and the movement of skilled workers and professionals. Movements of the former often involve large numbers and raise such questions as the fair and proper treatment in countries of immigration, the breaking up of families and other social and economic questions in countries both of emigration and immigration. The migration of skilled workers and professionals results in a "brain drain", often from less-developed to more-developed countries, which is at present of considerable concern to many countries and to the international community as a whole. The number of instruments on these subjects and the increased involvement of international organizations reflect international awareness of these problems.

11. A population's age structure is greatly affected by its birth rates. For example, declining fertility is the main factor underlying the declining proportion of children in a population. Thus, according to the medium projections of the United Nations, the population of less than 15 years of age in the developing countries is expected to decline from an average of more than 41 per cent of total population in 1970 to an average of about 35 per cent in 2000. However, such a decline in the proportion of children will be accompanied by an increase in their numbers at an average of 1.7 per cent a year. The demand for educational services is expected to increase considerably, in view of both the existing backlog and the continuously increasing population of children which ought to enter and remain in schools; therefore the supply of

educational services must be increased. With regard to the population 15 to 29 years of age, an increase in both their proportion and number is expected in the developing countries. Consequently, unless very high rates of economic development are attained in many of these countries, and particularly where levels of unemployment and underemployment are already high, the additional difficulties will not be overcome at least until the end of this century. Furthermore, in both developed and developing countries, the greatly changing social and economic conditions faced by youth require a better understanding of the problems involved and the formulation and implementation of policies to resolve them.

12. Declining birth rates also result in a gradual aging of the population. Because birth rates have already declined in developed countries, the average proportion of the population aged 65 years and over in these countries makes up 10 per cent of the total population, whereas it makes up only 3 per cent in developing countries. However, aging of the population in developing countries has recently begun, and is expected to accelerate. Thus, although the total population of these countries is projected to increase by an average of 2.3 per cent a year between 1970 and 2000, the population 65 years and over is expected to increase by 3.5 per cent a year. Not only are the numbers and proportions of the aged increasing rapidly but the social and economic conditions which face them are also rapidly changing. There is an urgent need, in those countries where such programmes are lacking, for the development of social security and health programmes for the elderly.

13. Because of the relatively high proportions of children and youth in the populations of developing countries, declines in fertility levels in those countries will not be fully reflected in

declines in population growth rates until some decades later. To illustrate this demographic inertia, it may be noted that, for developing countries, even if replacement levels of fertility approximately two children per completed family - had been achieved in 1970 and maintained thereafter, their total population would still grow from a 1970 total of 2.5 billion to about 4.4 billion before it would stabilize during the second half of the twenty-first century. In these circumstances, the population of the world as a whole would grow from 3.6 billion to 5.8 billion. This example of demographic inertia, which will lead to a growing population for many decades to come, demonstrates that whatever population policies may be formulated, socio-economic development must accelerate in order to provide for a significant increase in levels of living. Efforts made by developing countries to speed up economic growth must be viewed by the entire international community as a global endeavour to improve the quality of life for all people of the world, supported by a just utilization of the world's wealth, resources and technology in the spirit of the new international economic order. It also demonstrates that countries wishing to affect their population growth must anticipate future demographic trends and take appropriate decisions and actions in their plans for economic and social development well in advance.

## B. PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

14. This Plan of Action is based on a number of principles which underlie its objectives and are observed in its formulation. The formulation and implementation of population policies is the sovereign right of each nation. This right is to be exercised in accordance with national objectives and needs and without external interference, taking into account universal solidarity in order to improve the Quality of life of the peoples of the world. The main

responsibility for national population policies and programmes lies with national authorities. However, international co-operation should play an important role in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. The Plan of Action is based on the following principles:

(a) The principal aim of social, economic and cultural development, of which population goals and policies are integral parts, is to improve levels of living and the quality of life of the people. Of all things in the world, people are the most precious. Man's knowledge and ability to master himself and his environment will continue to grow. Mankind's future can be made infinitely bright;

(b) True development cannot take place in the absence of national independence and liberation. Alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation, wars of aggression, racial discrimination, apartheid and neo-colonialism in all its forms continue to be among the greatest obstacles to the full emancipation and progress of the developing countries and all the people involved. Co-operation among nations on the basis of national sovereignty is essential for development. Development also requires recognition of the dignity of the individual, appreciation for the human person and his self-determination, as well as the elimination of discrimination in all its forms;

(c) Population and development are interrelated: population variables influence development variables and are also influenced by them; thus the formulation of a World Population Plan of Action reflects the international community's awareness of the importance of population trends for socio-economic development, and the socio-economic nature of the recommendations contained in this Plan of Action reflects its awareness of the crucial role that

development plays in affecting population trends;

(d) Population policies are constituent elements of socio-economic development policies, never substitutes for them: while serving socio-economic objectives, they should be consistent with internationally and nationally recognized human rights of individual freedom, justice and the survival of national, regional and minority groups;

(e) Independently of the realization of economic and social objectives, respect for human life is basic to all human societies;

(f) All couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so; the responsibility of couples and individuals in the exercise of this right takes into account the needs of their living and future children, and their responsibilities towards the community;

(g) The family is the basic unit of society and should be protected by appropriate legislation and policy;

(h) Women have the right to complete integration in the development process particularly by means of an equal access to education and equal participation in social, economic cultural and political life. In addition, the necessary measures should be taken to facilitate this integration with family responsibilities which should be fully shared by both partners;

(i) Recommendations in this Plan of Action regarding policies to deal with population problems must recognize the diversity of conditions within and among different countries;

(j) In the democratic formulation of national population goals and policies, consideration must be given, together with other economic and social factors, to the supplies and characteristics of natural resources and to the quality of the environment and particularly to all aspects of food supply including productivity of rural areas. The demand for vital resources increases not only with growing population but also with growing per capita consumption; attention must be directed to the just distribution of resources and to the minimization of wasteful aspects of their use throughout the world;

(k) The growing interdependence among nations makes international action increasingly important to the solution of development and population problems. International strategies will achieve their objective only if they ensure that the underprivileged of the world achieve, urgently, through structural, social and economic reforms, a significant improvement in their living conditions;

(l) This Plan of Action must be sufficiently flexible to take into account the consequences of rapid demographic changes, societal changes and changes in human behaviour, attitudes and values;

(m) The objectives of this Plan of Action should be consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with the objectives of the Second United Nations development Decade; however, changes in demographic variables during the Decade are largely the result of past demographic events and changes in demographic trends sought during the Decade have social and economic repercussions up to and beyond the end of this century.

15. Guided by these principles, the primary aim of this Plan of Action is to expand and deepen the capacities of countries to deal effectively with their national and subnational population problems and to promote an appropriate international response to their needs by increasing international activity in research, the exchange of information, and the provision of assistance on request. In pursuit of this primary aim, the following general objectives are set for this Plan of Action:

(a) To advance understanding of population at global, regional, national and sub national levels, recognizing the diversity of the problems involved;

(b) To advance national and international understanding of the interrelationship of demographic and socio-economic factors in development: on the one hand, of the nature and scope of the effect of demographic factors on the attainment of goals of advancing human welfare, and, on the other hand, the impact of broader social, economic and cultural factors on demographic behaviour;

(c) To promote socio-economic measures and programmes whose aim is to affect, inter alia, population growth, morbidity and mortality, reproduction and family formation, population distribution and internal migration, international migration and, consequently, demographic structures;

(d) To advance national and international understanding of the complex relations among the problems of population, resources, environment and development, and to promote a unified analytical approach to the study of these interrelationships and to relevant

policies;

(e) To promote the status of women and the expansion of their roles, their full participation in the formulation and implementation of socio-economic policy including population policy, and the creation of awareness among all women of their current and potential roles in national life;

(f) To recommend guidelines for population policies consistent with national values and goals and with internationally recognized principles;

(g) To promote the development and implementation of population policies where necessary, including improvement in the communication of the purposes and goals of those policies to the public and the promotion of popular participation in their formulation and implementation;

(h) To encourage the development and good management of appropriate education, training, statistical research, information and family health services as well as statistical services in support of the above principles and objectives.

### C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

#### 1. Population goals and policies

##### (a) Population growth

16. According to the United Nations medium population projections, little change is expected to occur in average rates of population growth either in the developed or in the developing regions by 1985. According to the United Nations low variant projections, it is estimated that, as a result of social and

economic development and population policies as reported by countries in the Second United Nations Inquiry on Population and Development, population growth rates in the developing countries as a whole may decline from the present level of 2.4 per cent per annum to about 2 per cent by 1985 and may remain below 0.7 per cent per annum in the developed countries. In this case the world-wide rate of population growth would decline from 2 per cent to about 1.7 per cent.

17. Countries which consider that their present or expected rates of population growth hamper their goals of promoting human welfare are invited, if they have not yet done so, to consider adopting population policies, within the framework of socio-economic development, which are consistent with basic human rights and national goals and values.

18. Countries which aim at achieving moderate or low population growth should try to achieve it through a low level of birth and death rates. Countries wishing to increase their rate of population growth should, when mortality is high, concentrate efforts on the reduction of mortality, and where appropriate, encourage an increase in fertility and encourage immigration.

19. Recognizing that per capita use of world resources is much higher in the developed than in the developing countries, the developed countries are urged to adopt appropriate policies in population, consumption and investment, bearing in mind the need for fundamental improvement in international equity.

(b) Morbidity and mortality

20. The reduction of morbidity and mortality to the maximum

feasible extent is a major goal of every human society. It should be achieved in conjunction with massive social and economic development. Where mortality and morbidity rates are very high, concentrated national and international efforts should be applied to reduce them as a matter of highest priority in the context of societal change.

21. The short-term effect of mortality reduction on population growth rates is symptomatic of the early development process and must be viewed as beneficial. Sustained reductions in fertility have generally been preceded by reductions in mortality. Although this relationship is complex, mortality reduction may be a prerequisite to a decline in fertility.

22. It is a goal of this Plan of Action to reduce mortality levels, particularly infant and maternal mortality levels, to the maximum extent possible in all regions of the world and to reduce national and sub national differentials therein. The attainment of an average expectation of life of 62 years by 1985 and 74 years by the year 2000 for the world as a whole would require by the end of the century an increase of 11 years for Latin America, 17 years for Asia and 28 years for Africa.

23. Countries with the highest mortality levels should aim by 1985 to have an expectation of life at birth of at least 50 years and an infant mortality rate of less than 120 per thousand live births.

24. It is recommended that national and international efforts to reduce general morbidity and mortality levels be accompanied by particularly vigorous efforts to achieve the following goals:

(a) Reduction of foetal, infant and early childhood mortality

and related maternal morbidity and mortality;

(b) Reduction of involuntary sterility, sub fecundity, defective births and illegal abortions;

(c) Reduction or, if possible, elimination of differential morbidity and mortality within countries, particularly with regard to differentials between regions, urban and rural areas, social and ethnic groups, and the sexes;

(d) Eradication, wherever possible, or control of infections and parasitic diseases, undernutrition and malnutrition; and the provision of a sufficient supply of potable water and adequate sanitation;

(e) Improvement of poor health and nutritional conditions which adversely affect working-age populations and their productivity and thus undermine development efforts

(f) Adoption of special measures for reducing mortality from social and environmental factors and elimination of aggression as a cause of death and poor health.

25. It is recommended that health and nutrition programmes designed to reduce morbidity and mortality be integrated within a comprehensive development strategy and supplemented by a wide range of mutually supporting social policy measures; special attention should be given to improving the management of existing health, nutrition and related social services and to the formulation of policies to widen their coverage so as to reach, in particular, rural, remote and underprivileged groups.

26. Each country has its own experience in preventing and

treating diseases. Promotion of interchange of such experience will help to reduce morbidity and mortality.

(c) Reproduction, family formation and the status of women

27. This Plan of Action recognizes the variety of national goals with regard to fertility and does not recommend any world family-size norm.

28. This Plan of Action recognizes the necessity of ensuring that all couples are able to achieve their desired number and spacing of children and the necessity of preparing the social and economic conditions to achieve that desire.

29. Consistent with the Proclamation of the International Conference on Human Rights, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the relevant targets of the Second United Nations Development Decade and the other international instruments on the subject, it is recommended that all countries:

(a) Respect and ensure, regardless of their over-all demographic goals, the right of persons to determine, in a free, informed and responsible manner, the number and spacing of their children;

(b) Encourage appropriate education concerning responsible parenthood and make available to persons who so desire advice and the means of achieving it;

(c) Ensure that family planning, medical and related social services aim not only at the prevention of unwanted pregnancies but also at the elimination of involuntary sterility and sub fecundity in order that all couples may be permitted to achieve their desired

number of children, and that child adoption may be facilitated;

(d) Seek to ensure the continued possibility of variations in family size when a low fertility level has been established or is a policy objective;

(e) Make use, wherever needed and appropriate, of adequately trained professional and auxiliary health personnel, rural extension, home economics and social workers, and non-governmental channels, to help provide family planning services and to advise users of contraceptives;

(f) Increase their health manpower and health facilities to an effective level, redistribute functions among the different levels of professionals and auxiliaries in order to overcome the shortage of qualified personnel and establish an effective system of supervision in their health and family planning services;

(g) Ensure that information about, and education in, family planning and other matters which affect fertility are based on valid and proven scientific knowledge, and include a full account of any risk that may be involved in the use or non-use of contraceptives.

30. Governments which have family planning programmes are invited to consider integrating and co-ordinating those services with health and other services designed to raise the quality of family life, including family allowances and maternity benefits, and to consider including family planning services in their official health and social insurance systems. As concerns couples themselves family planning policy should also be directed towards the promotion of the psycho-social harmony and mental and physical

well-being of couples.

31. It is recommended that countries wishing to affect fertility levels give priority to implementing development programmes and educational and health strategies which, while contributing to economic growth and higher standards of living, have a decisive impact upon demographic trends, including fertility. International co-operation is called for to give priority to assisting such national efforts in order that these programmes and strategies be carried into effect.

32. While recognizing the diversity of social, cultural, political and economic conditions among countries and regions, it is nevertheless agreed that the following development goals generally have an effect on the socio-economic context of reproductive decisions that tends to moderate fertility levels:

(a) The reduction of infant and child mortality, particularly by means of improved nutrition, sanitation, maternal and child health care, and maternal education;

(b) The full integration of women into the development process, particularly by means of their greater participation in educational social, economic and political opportunities, and especially by means of the removal of obstacles to their employment in the non-agricultural sector wherever possible. In this context, national laws and policies, as well as relevant international recommendations, should be reviewed in order to eliminate discrimination in, and remove obstacles to, the education, training, employment and career advancement opportunities for women;

(c) The promotion of social justice, social mobility and social

development, particularly by means of a wide participation of the population in development and a more equitable distribution of income, land, social services and amenities;

(d) The promotion of wide educational opportunities for the young of both sexes, and the extension of public forms of pre-school education for the rising generation;

(e) The elimination of child labour and child abuse and the establishment of social security and old-age benefits;

(f) The establishment of an appropriate lower limit for age at marriage.

33. It is recommended that Governments consider making provision, in both their formal and non-formal educational programmes for informing their people of the consequences of existing or alternative fertility behaviour for the well-being of the family, for educational and psychological development of children and for the general welfare of society, so that an informed and responsible attitude to marriage and reproduction will be promoted.

34. Family size may also be affected by incentive and disincentive schemes. However, if such schemes are adopted or modified it is essential that they should not violate human rights.

35. Some social welfare programmes, such as family allowances and maternity benefits may have a positive effect on fertility and may hence be strengthened when such an effect is desired. However, such programmes should not, in principle, be curtailed if the opposite effect on fertility is desired.

36. The projections in paragraph 16 of future declines in rates of population growth, and those in paragraph 22 concerning increased expectation of life are consistent with declines in the birth-rate of the developing countries as a whole from the present level of 38 per thousand to 30 per thousand by 1985 in these projections, birth-rates in the developed countries remain in the region of 15 per thousand. To achieve by 1985 these levels of fertility would require substantial national efforts, by those countries concerned, in the field of socio-economic development and population policies, supported, upon request, by adequate international assistance. Such efforts would also be required to achieve the increase in expectation of life.

37. In the light of the principles of this Plan of Action, countries which consider their birth-rates detrimental to their national purposes are invited to consider setting quantitative goals and implementing policies that may lead to the attainment of such goals by 1985. Nothing herein should interfere with the sovereignty of any Government to adopt or not to adopt such quantitative goals.

38. Countries which desire to reduce their birth-rates are invited to give particular consideration to the reduction of fertility at the extremes of female reproductive ages because of the salutary effects this may have on infant and maternal welfare.

39. The family is recognized as the basic unit of society. Governments should assist families as far as possible to enable them to fulfil their role in society. It is therefore recommended that:

(a) The family be protected by appropriate legislation and

policy without discrimination as to other members of society;

(b) Family ties be strengthened by giving recognition to the importance of love and mutual respect within the family unit;

(c) National legislation having direct bearing on the welfare of the family and its members, including laws concerning age at marriage, inheritance, property rights, divorce, education, employment and the rights of the child, be periodically reviewed, as feasible, and adapted to the changing social and economic conditions and with regard to the cultural setting;

(d) Marriages be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses;

(e) Measures be taken to protect the social and legal rights of spouses and children in the case of dissolution or termination of marriage by death or other reason.

40. It is also recommended that:

(a) Governments should equalize the legal and social status of children born in and out of wedlock as well as children adopted;

(b) The legal responsibilities of each parent towards the care and support of all their children should be established.

41. Governments should ensure full participation of women in the educational, social, economic and political life of their countries on an equal basis with men. It is recommended that:

(a) Education for girls as well as boys should be extended

and diversified to enable them to contribute more effectively in rural and urban sectors, as well as in the management of food and other household functions;

(b) Women should be actively involved both as individuals and through political and non-governmental organizations, at every stage and every level in the planning and implementation of development programmes, including population policies;

(c) The economic contribution of women in households and farming should be recognized in national economies;

(d) Governments should make a sustained effort to ensure that legislation regarding the status of women complies with the principles spelled out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and other United Nations declarations, conventions and international instruments, to reduce the gap between law and practice through effective implementation, and to inform women at all socio-economic levels of their legal rights and responsibilities.

42. Equal status of men and women in the family and in society improves the over-all quality of life. This principle of equality should be fully realized in family planning where each spouse should consider the welfare of the other members of the family.

43. Improvement of the status of women in the family and in society can contribute, where desired, to smaller family sizes and the opportunity for women to plan births also improves their individual status.

(d) Population distribution and internal migration

44. Urbanization in most countries is characterized by a number of adverse factors: drain from rural areas through migration of individuals who cannot be absorbed by productive employment in urban areas, serious disequilibrium in the growth of urban centres, contamination of the environments inadequate housing and services and social and psychological stress. In many developing countries, adverse consequences are due in large part to the economic structures resulting from the dependent situation of those countries in the international economic system; the correction of these shortcomings requires as a matter of priority the establishment of equitable economic relations among peoples.

45. Policies aimed at influencing population flows into urban areas should be co-ordinated with policies relating to the absorptive capacity of urban centres as well as policies aimed at eliminating the undesirable consequences of excessive migration. In so far as possible, those policies should be integrated into plans and programmes dealing with over-all social and economic development.

46. In formulating and implementing internal migration policies, Governments are urged to consider the following guidelines, without prejudice to their own socio-economic policies:

(a) Measures should be avoided which infringe the right of freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State as enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments;

(b) A major approach to a more rational distribution of the population is that of planned and more equitable regional

development, particularly in the advancement of regions which are less favoured or developed by comparison with the rest of the country;

(c) In planning development, and particularly in planning the location of industry and business and the distribution of social services and amenities, Governments should take into account not only short-term economic returns or alternative patterns but also the social and environmental costs and benefits involved as well as equity and social justice in the distribution of the benefits of development among all groups and regions;

(d) Population distribution patterns should not be restricted to a choice between metropolitan and rural life: efforts should be made to establish and strengthen networks of small and medium-size cities to relieve the pressure on the large towns, while still offering an alternative to rural living;

(e) Intensive programmes of economic and social improvement should be carried out in the rural areas through balanced agricultural development which will provide increased income to the agricultural population, permit an effective expansion of social services and include measures to protect the environment and conserve and increase agricultural resources;

(f) Programmes should be promoted to make accessible to scattered populations the basic social services and the support necessary for increased productivity, for example, by consolidating them in rural centres.

47. Internal migration policies should include the provision of information to the rural population concerning economic and social conditions in the urban areas, including information on the

availability of employment opportunities.

48. In rural areas and areas accessible to rural populations, new employment opportunities, including industries and public works programmes, should be created, systems of land tenure should be improved and social services and amenities provided. It is not sufficient to consider how to bring the people to existing economic and social activities; it is also important to bring those activities to the people.

49. Considerable experience is now being gained by some countries which have implemented programmes for relieving urban pressures, revitalizing the countryside, inhabiting sparsely populated areas and settling newly reclaimed agricultural land. Countries having such experience are invited to share it with other countries. It is recommended that international organizations make available upon request coordinated technical and financial assistance to facilitate the settlement of people.

50. The problems of urban environment are a consequence not only of the concentration of inhabitants but also of their way of life which can produce harmful effects, such as wasteful and excessive consumption and activities which produce pollution. In order to avoid such effects in those countries experiencing this problem, a development pattern favouring balanced and rational consumption is recommended.

#### (e) International migration

51. It is recommended that Governments and international organizations generally facilitate voluntary international movement. However, such movements should not be based on racial

considerations which are to the detriment of indigenous populations. The significance of international migration varies widely among countries, depending upon their area, population size and growth rate, social and economic structure and environmental conditions.

52. Governments which consider international migration to be important to their countries, either in the short or the long run, are urged to conduct, when appropriate, bilateral or multilateral consultations, taking into account the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the relevant resolutions of the United Nations system and other international instruments, with a view to harmonizing those of their policies which affect these movements. It is recommended that international organizations make available upon request co-ordinated technical and financial assistance to facilitate the settlement of people in countries of immigration.

53. Problems of refugees and displaced persons arising from forced migration, including their right of return to homes and properties, should also be settled in accordance with the relevant principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments.

54. Countries that are concerned with the outflow of migrant workers and wish to encourage and assist those remaining workers or returning workers should make particular efforts to create favourable employment opportunities at the national level. More developed countries should co-operate, bilaterally or through regional organizations and the international community, with less developed countries, to achieve these goals through the increased availability of capital, technical assistance, export markets and more favourable terms of trade and choice of production technology.

55. Countries receiving migrant workers should provide proper treatment and adequate social welfare services for them and their families, and should ensure their physical safety and security, in conformity with the provisions of the relevant conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation and other international instruments.

56. Specifically, in the treatment of migrant workers, Governments should work to prevent discrimination in the labour market and in society through lower salaries or other unequal conditions, to preserve their human rights, to combat prejudice against them and to eliminate obstacles to the reunion of their families. Governments should enable permanent immigrants to preserve their cultural heritage inter alia through the use of their mother tongue. Laws to limit illegal immigration should relate not only to the illegal migrants themselves but also to those inducing or facilitating their illegal action and should be promulgated in conformity with international law and basic human rights. Governments should bear in mind humanitarian considerations in the treatment of aliens who remain in a country illegally.

57. Since the outflow of qualified personnel from developing to developed countries seriously hampers the development of the former, there is an urgent need to formulate national and international policies to avoid the "brain drain" and to obviate its adverse effects, including the possibility of devising programmes for large-scale communication of appropriate technological knowledge mainly from developed countries to the extent that it can be properly adjusted and appropriately absorbed.

58. Developing countries suffering from heavy emigration of

skilled workers and professionals should undertake extensive educational programmes manpower planning, and investment in scientific and technical programmes. They should also undertake other programmes and measures to better match skills with employment opportunities and to increase the motivation of such personnel to contribute to the progress of their own country. Measures should be taken to encourage the return of scientists and skilled personnel to specific job vacancies.

59. Foreign investors should employ and train local personnel and use local research facilities to the greatest possible extent in conformity with the policies of the host country. Subject to their consent, the location of research facilities in host countries may aid them to a certain extent in retaining the services of highly skilled and professional research workers. Such investment should, of course, in no circumstances inhibit national economic development. International co-operation is needed to improve programmes to induce skilled personnel to return to, or remain in, their own countries.

60. Where immigration has proved to be of a long-term nature, countries are invited to explore the possibilities of extending national civil rights to immigrants.

61. The flow of skilled workers, technicians and professionals from more developed to less developed countries may be considered a form of international co-operation. Countries in a position to do so should continue and increase this flow with full respect for the sovereignty and equality of recipient countries.

62. Countries affected by significant numbers of migrant workers are urged, if they have not yet done so, to conclude bilateral or multilateral agreements which would regulate

migration, protect and assist migrant workers, and protect the interests of the countries concerned. The International Labour Organisation should promote concerted action in the field of protection of migrant workers, and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights should help, as appropriate, to ensure that the fundamental rights of migrants are safeguarded.

(f) Population structure

63. All Governments are urged, when formulating their development policies and programmes, to take fully into account the implications of changing numbers and proportions of youth, working-age groups and the aged, particularly where such changes are rapid. Countries should study their population structures to determine the most desirable balance among age groups.

64. Specifically, developing countries are urged to consider the implications which the combination of the characteristically young age structure and moderate to high fertility has on their development. The increasing number and proportion of young persons in the populations of developing countries requires appropriate development strategies, priority being accorded to their subsistence, health, education, training and incorporation in the labour force through full employment as well as their active participation in political, cultural, social and economic life.

65. Developing countries are invited to consider the possible economic, social and demographic effects of population shifts from agriculture to non-agricultural industries. In addition to fuller utilization of labour and improvements in productivity and the levels of living, promotion of non-agricultural employment should aim at such changes in the socio-economic structure of manpower and

population as would affect demographically relevant behaviour of individuals. All countries are invited to consider fully giving appropriate support and assistance to the World Employment Programme and related national employment promotion schemes.

66. Similarly, the other countries are urged to consider the contrary implications of the combination of their aging structure with moderate to low or very low fertility. All countries should carry out as part of their development programmes, comprehensive, humanitarian and just programmes of social security for the elderly.

67. In undertaking settlement and resettlement schemes and urban planning, Governments are urged to give adequate attention to questions of age and sex balance and, particularly, to the welfare of the family.

## 2. Socio-economic

policies

68. This Plan of Action recognizes that economic and social development is a central factor in the solution of population problems. National efforts of developing countries to accelerate economic growth should be assisted by the entire international community. The Implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, and the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the New International Economic Order as adopted at the sixth special session of the General Assembly should lead to a reduction in the widening gap in levels of living between developed and developing countries and would be conducive to a reduction in population growth rates particularly in countries where such rates are high.

69. In planning measures to harmonize population trends and socio-economic change, human beings must be regarded not only as

consumers but also as producers. The investment by nations in the health and education of their citizens contributes substantially to productivity. Consequently, plans for economic and social development and for international assistance for this purpose should emphasize the health and education sectors. Likewise, patterns of production and technology should be adapted to each country's endowment in human resources. Decisions on the introduction of technologies affording significant savings in employment of manpower should take into account the relative abundance of human resources. To this end it is recommended that efforts should be intensified to determine for each country the technologies and production methods best suited to its working population situation and to study the relationship between population factors and employment.

70. It is imperative that all countries, and within them all social sectors, should adapt themselves to more rational utilization of natural resources, without excess, so that some are not deprived of what others waste. In order to increase the production and distribution of food for the growing world population it is recommended that Governments give high priority to improving methods of food production, the investigation and development of new sources of food and more effective utilization of existing sources. International co-operation is recommended with the aim of ensuring the provision of fertilizers and energy and a timely supply of food-stuffs to all countries.

### 3. Promotion of knowledge and policies

71. In order to achieve the population objectives of this Plan of Action and to put its policy recommendations adequately into effect, measures need to be undertaken to promote knowledge of

the relationships and problems involved, to assist in the development of population policies and to elicit the co-operation and participation of all concerned in the formulation and implementation of these policies.

(a) Data collection and analysis

72. Statistical data on the population collected by means of censuses, surveys or vital statistics registers, are essential for the planning of investigations and the provision of a basis for the formulation, evaluation and application of population and development policies. Countries that have not yet done so are urged to tabulate and analyse their census and other data and make them available to national policy-making bodies in order to fulfil these objectives.

73. It is up to each country to take a population census in accordance with its own needs and capabilities. However, it is recommended that a population census be taken by each country between 1975 and 1985. It is also recommended that those censuses give particular attention to data relevant to development planning and the formulation of population policies. In order to be of greatest value, it is recommended that the data be tabulated and made available as quickly as possible, together with an evaluation of the quality of the information and the degree of coverage of the census.

74. All countries that have not yet done so are encouraged to establish a continuing capability for taking household sample surveys and to establish a long-term plan for regular collection of statistics on various demographic and interrelated socio-economic variables, particularly those relating to the

improvement of levels of living, well-being and level of education of individuals factors which relate closely to problems affecting population. All countries are invited to co-operate with the World Fertility Survey.

75. In line with the objectives of the World Programme for the Improvement of Vital Statistics, countries are encouraged to establish or improve their vital registration systems as a long-term objective, and to enact laws relevant to the improvement of vital registration. Until this improvement is completed, the use of alternative methods is recommended, such as sample surveys, to provide up-to-date information on vital events.

76. Developing countries should be provided with technical co-operation, equipment and financial support to develop or improve the population and related statistical programmes mentioned above. Provision for data-gathering assistance should cover fully the need for evaluating, analysing and presenting the data in a form most appropriate to the needs of users.

77. Governments that have not yet done so are urged to establish appropriate services for the collection, analysis and dissemination of demographic and related statistical information.

(b) Research

78. This Plan of Action gives high priority to research activities in population problems (including unemployment, starvation and poverty) and to related fields, particularly to research activities that are important for the formulation, evaluation and implementation of the population policies consistent with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as

recognized in international instruments of the United Nations.

Although research designed to fill gaps in knowledge is very urgent and important high priority should be given to research oriented to the specific problems of countries and regions, including methodological studies. Such research is best carried out in the countries and regions themselves and by competent persons especially acquainted with national and regional conditions. The following areas are considered to require research in order to fill existing gaps in knowledge:

- (a) The social, cultural and economic determinants of population variables in different developmental and political situations, particularly at the family and micro levels;
- (b) The demographic and social processes occurring within the family cycle through time and, particularly, in relation to alternative modes of development;
- (c) The development of effective means for the improvement of health, and especially for the reduction of maternal, foetal, infant and early childhood mortality;
- (d) The study of experiences of countries which have major programmes of internal migration with a view to developing guidelines that are helpful to policy makers of those countries and of countries that are interested in undertaking similar programmes;
- (e) Projections of demographic and related variables including the development of empirical and hypothetical models for simulating possible future trends
- (f) The formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies including: methods for integrating population

inputs and goals in development plans and programmes; means for understanding and improving the motivations of people to participate in the formulation and implementation of population programmes; study of education and communication aspects of population policy; analysis of population policies in their relationship to other socio-economic development policies, laws and institutions, including the possible influences of the economic system on the social, cultural and economic aspects of population policies; translation into action programmes of policies dealing with the socio-economic determinants of fertility, mortality, internal migration and distribution, and international migration;

(g) The collection, analysis and dissemination of information concerning human rights in relation to population matters and the preparation of studies designed to clarify, systematize and more effectively implement those human rights; (h) The review and analysis of national and international laws which bear directly or indirectly on population factors;

(i) The assessment and improvement of existing and new methods of fertility regulation by means of research, including basic biological and applied research; the evaluation of the impact, both in short-term and long-term effects, of different methods of fertility regulation on ethical and cultural values and on mental and physical health; and the assessment and study of policies for creating social and economic conditions so that couples can freely decide on the size of their families;

(j) The evaluation of the impact of different methods of family planning on the health conditions of women and members of their families;

(k) The interrelationships among patterns of family formation, nutrition and health, reproductive biology, and the incidence, causes and treatment of sterility;

(l) methods of improving the management, delivery and utilization of all social services associated with population, including family welfare and, when appropriate, family planning;

(m) Methods for the development of systems of social, demographic and related economic statistics in which various sets of data are inter linked, with a view to improving insight into the interrelationships of variables in these fields.

(n) The interrelations of population trends and conditions and other social and economic variables, in particular the availability of human resources, food and natural resources, the quality of the environment, the need for health, education, employment, welfare, housing and other social services and amenities, promotion of human rights, the enhancement of the status of women, the need for social security, political stability, discrimination and political freedom;

(o) The impact of a shift from one family size pattern to another on biological and demographic characteristics of the population;

(p) The changing structure, functions and dynamics of the family as an institution, including the changing roles of men and women, attitudes towards and opportunities for women's education and employment; the implications of current and future population trends for the status of women; biomedical research on male and female fertility, and the economic, social and demographic benefits to be derived from the integration of women in the development

process;

(q) Development of social indicators, reflecting the quality of life as well as the interrelations between socio-economic and demographic phenomena should be encouraged. Emphasis should also be given to the development of socio-economic and demographic models.

79. National research requirements and needs must be determined by Governments and national institutions. However, high priority should be given, wherever possible, to research that has wide relevance and international applicability.

80. National and regional research institutions dealing with population and related questions should be assisted and expanded as appropriate. Special efforts should be made to co-ordinate the research of those institutions by facilitating the exchange of their research findings and the exchange of information on their planned and ongoing research projects.

(c) Management, training, education and information

81. There is a particular need for the development of management in all fields related to population, with national and international attention and appropriate support given to programmes dealing with its promotion.

82. A dual approach to training is recommended: an international programme for training in population matters concomitant with national and regional training programmes adapted and made particularly relevant to conditions in the countries and regions of

the trainees. While recognizing the complementarity of these two approaches, national and regional training should be given the higher priority.

83. Training in population dynamics and policies, whether national, regional or international, should, in so far as possible, be interdisciplinary in nature. The training of population specialists should always be accompanied by relevant career development for the trainees in their fields of specialization. Training should deal not only with population variables but also with interrelationships of these variables with economic, social and political variables.

84. Training in the various aspects of population activities, including the management of population programmes should not be restricted to the higher levels of specialization but should also be extended to personnel at other levels, and, where needed, to medical, paramedical and traditional health personnel, and population programme administrators. Such training should impart an adequate knowledge of human rights in accordance with international standards and an awareness of the human rights aspect of population problems.

85. Training in population matters should be extended to labour, community and other social leaders, and to senior government officials with a view to enabling them better to identify the population problems of their countries and communities and to help in the formulation of policies relating to them.

86. Owing to the role of education in the progress of individuals and society and the impact of education on demographic behaviour, all countries are urged to further develop their formal

and informal educational programmes; efforts should be made to eradicate illiteracy, to promote education among the youth and abolish factors discriminating against women.

87. Educational institutions in all countries should be encouraged to expand their curricula to include a study of population dynamics and policies, including, where appropriate, family life, responsible parenthood and the relation of population dynamics to socio-economic development and to international relations. Governments are urged to co-operate in developing a world-wide system of international, regional and national institutions to meet the need for trained manpower. Assistance to the less developed countries should include, as appropriate, the improvement of the educational infrastructure such as library facilities and computer services.

88. Governments are invited to use all available means for disseminating population information.

89. Governments are invited to consider the distribution of population information to enlighten both rural and urban populations, through the assistance of governmental agencies.

90. Voluntary organizations should be encouraged, within the framework of national laws, policies and regulations, to play an important role in disseminating population information and ensuring wider participation in population programmes, and to share experiences regarding the implementation of population measures and programmes.

91. International organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, should strengthen their efforts to distribute

information on population and related matters, particularly through periodic publications on the world population situation, prospects and policies, the utilization of audio-visual and other aids to communication, the publication of non-technical digests and reports and the production and wide distribution of newsletters on population activities. Consideration should also be given to strengthening the publication of international professional journals and reviews in the field of population.

92. In order to achieve the widest possible dissemination of research results, translation activities should be encouraged at both the national and international levels. In this respects the revision of the Multilingual Demographic Dictionary 1/ and its publication in additional languages are strongly recommended.

93. The information and experience resulting from the World Population Conference and the World Population Year relating to the scientific study of population and the elaboration of population policies should be synthesized and disseminated by the United Nations.

(d) Development and evaluation of population policies

94. Where population policies or programmes have been adopted, systematic and periodic evaluations of their effectiveness should be made with a view to their improvement.

95. Population measures and programmes should be integrated into comprehensive social and economic plans and programmes and this integration should be reflected in the goals, instrumentalities and organizations for planning within the countries. In general, it is suggested that a unit dealing with

population aspects be created and placed at a high level of the national administrative structure and that such a unit be staffed with qualified persons from the relevant disciplines.

#### D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

##### 1. Role of national Governments

96. The success of this Plan of Action will largely depend on the actions undertaken by national Governments. To take action, Governments are urged to utilize fully the support of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

97. This Plan of Action recognizes the responsibility of each Government to decide on its own policies and devise its own programmes of action for dealing with the problems of population and economic and social progress. Recommendations, in so far as they relate to national Governments, are made with due regard to the need for variety and flexibility in the hope that they may be responsive to major needs in the population field as perceived and interpreted by national Governments. However, national policies should be formulated and implemented without violating, and with due promotion of, universally accepted standards of human rights.

98. An important role of Governments with regard to this Plan of Action is to determine and assess the population problems and needs of their countries in the light of their political, social, cultural, religious and economic conditions; such an undertaking should be carried out systematically and periodically so as to promote informed, rational and dynamic decision-making in

matters of population and development.

99. The effect of national action or inaction in the fields of population may, in certain circumstances, extend beyond national boundaries; such international implications are particularly evident with regard to aspects of morbidity, population concentration and international migration, but may also apply to other aspects of population concern.

## 2. Role of international co-operation

100. International co-operation, based on the peaceful coexistence of States having different social systems, should play a supportive role in achieving the goals of the Plan of Action. This supportive role could take the form of direct assistance, technical or financial, in response to national and regional requests and be additional to economic development assistance, or the form of other activities, such as monitoring progress, undertaking comparative research in the area of population, resources and consumption, and furthering the exchange among countries of information and policy experiences in the field of population and consumption. Assistance should be provided on the basis of respect for sovereignty of the recipient country and its national policy.

101. The General Assembly of the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Fund for Population Activities and other competent legislative and policy-making bodies of the specialized agencies and the various intergovernmental organizations are urged to give careful consideration to this Plan of Action and to ensure an appropriate response to it.

102. Countries sharing similar population conditions and problems are invited to consider jointly this Plan of Action, exchange experience in relevant fields and elaborate those aspects of the Plan that are of particular relevance to them. The United Nations regional economic commissions and other regional bodies of the United Nations system should play an important role towards this end.

103. There is a special need for training in the field of population. The United Nations system, Governments and, as appropriate, non-governmental organizations are urged to give recognition to that need and priority to the measures necessary to meet it, including information, education and services for family planning.

104. Developed countries, and other countries able to assist, are urged to increase their assistance to developing countries in accordance with the goals of the Second United Nations Development Decade and, together with international organizations, make that assistance available in accordance with the national priorities of receiving countries. In this respect, it is recognized, in view of the magnitude of the problems and the consequent national requirements for funds, that considerable expansion of international assistance in the population field is required for the proper implementation of this Plan of Action.

105. It is suggested that the expanding, but still insufficient, international assistance in population and development matters requires increased co-operation; the United Nations Fund for Population Activities is urged, in co-operation with all organizations responsible for international population assistance, to produce a guide for international assistance in

population matters which would be made available to recipient countries and institutions and be revised periodically.

106. International non-governmental organizations are urged to respond to the goals and policies of this Plan of Action by co-ordinating their activities with those of other non-governmental organizations, and with those of relevant bilateral and multilateral organizations, by expanding their support for national institutions and organizations dealing with population questions, and by co-operating in the promotion of widespread knowledge of the goals and policies of the Plan of Action, and when requested, by supporting national and private institutions and organizations dealing with population questions.

### 3. Monitoring, review and appraisal

107. It is recommended that monitoring of population trends and policies discussed in this Plan of Action should be undertaken continuously as a specialized activity of the United Nations and reviewed biennially by the appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, beginning in 1977. Because of the shortness of the intervals, such monitoring would necessarily have to be selective with regard to its informational content and should focus mainly on new and emerging population trends and policies.

108. A comprehensive and thorough review and appraisal of progress made towards achieving the goals and recommendations of this Plan of Action should be undertaken every five years by the United Nations system. For this purpose the Secretary-General is invited to make appropriate arrangements taking account of the existing structure and resources of the United Nations system, and in co-operation with Governments. It is suggested that the first

such review be made in 1979 and be repeated each five years thereafter. The findings of such systematic evaluations should be considered by the Economic and Social Council with the object of making, whenever necessary, appropriate modifications of the goals and recommendations of this Plan.

109. It is urged that both the monitoring and the review and appraisal activities of this Plan of Action be closely co-ordinated with those of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade and any new international development strategy that might be formulated.

1/ United Nations publication, Sales No. 58.XIII.4.

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