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UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY,  
DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Measures taken to implement the World Plan of Action and related  
resolutions of the World Conference of the International Women's  
Year and to initiate procedures for the review and appraisal  
of the Plan

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX), paragraph 15 of which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

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"Invites the Secretary-General to submit a progress report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the measures taken to implement the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the /World/ Conference /of the International Women's Year/, and on the progress achieved in initiating the procedures for the Plan's review and appraisal by Member States, the United Nations organs, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations concerned".

2. It may be recalled that the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held at Mexico City from 19 June to 2 July 1975, adopted the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace, 1/ the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year, 2/ two regional plans of action for Asia and the Pacific and Africa, respectively, 3/ 35 resolutions and one decision. 4/

3. The General Assembly, in resolution 3520 (XXX) endorsed the action proposals contained in these documents and adopted 10 resolutions containing a number of specific mandates: two on the recommendation of the Second Committee (resolutions 3490 (XXX) of 12 December and 3505 (XXX) of 15 December; seven on the recommendation of the Third Committee (resolutions 3518 (XXX), 3519 (XXX), 3520 (XXX), 3521 (XXX), 3522 (XXX), 3523 (XXX) and 3524 (XXX) of 15 December together with a decision relating to the Voluntary Fund for the International Women's Year; and one resolution on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee (resolution 3416 (XXX) of 8 December).

4. The present progress report provides an over-all picture of the response, at the international and national levels, to the action proposals contained in the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the Conference, and gives an account of the extent to which various specific mandates contained in the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session were carried

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1/ Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.76.IV.1), chap. I.

2/ Ibid., chap. II, sect. A.

3/ Ibid., sect. C.

4/ Ibid., chap. III.

out. It is clear that the wide range and variety of measures to be reported on precludes a detailed description thereof. Hence the nature of the present report, which is more in the vein of a summary of measures as well as a guide to other documents, prepared for the consideration of other United Nations organs in implementation of specific recommendations, which contain a fuller and more complete account of these measures.

5. As the present report shows, there has been a serious commitment to implement the objectives of the World Plan of Action both by the United Nations system of organizations and by Governments. Within the relatively short period of time since mid-December 1975, when the General Assembly endorsed the action proposals adopted at Mexico City, complex and difficult mandates have been carried out; various substantive reports have been prepared for the sixtieth session of the Economic and Social Council, the twenty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the thirty-first session of the General Assembly; and the elaboration of a unique experiment - the joint interorganizational programme for the United Nations Decade for Women - has been prepared and is well under way. At the national level, Governments have translated or are in the process of translating the recommendations of the World Plan of Action into national terms. Evidence of the seriousness of their commitment to the goals of the International Women's Year may be seen in the active planning they have undertaken for the benefit of women. Planning for women - whether integrated or separate - has increasingly become a fact of life and an integral part of development planning.

6. Section II of the present report deals with action taken to implement specific recommendations of the World Conference of the International Women's Year and of the General Assembly. Section III concerns the progress achieved in initiating the procedures for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action and measures taken by Governments to implement the Plan and describes the progress achieved as an input to the process of review and appraisal of progress made under the International Development Strategy of the Second United Nations Development Decade (sect. A). It summarizes briefly measures taken by Governments to implement the Plan as reflected in the report (E/CN.6/598 and Add. 1 and 2) submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-sixth session.

II. ACTION TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR AND  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A. General

7. Since the adoption by the General Assembly of the resolutions and decision mentioned in paragraph 3 above, action has been concentrated mainly on the following activities:

(a) The preparation of revised budgetary estimates for 1977 and of the medium-term plan for 1978-1981, taking into account the requirements of the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the World Conference of the International Women's Year;

(b) The elaboration of a joint interagency programme for the integration of women in development;

(c) The establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women;

(d) The initiation of procedures for a system-wide review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action (see sect. III, A below);

(e) The development of a programme for the United Nations Decade for Women, including preparatory work for the World Conference to be held in 1980;

(f) The development of criteria and the elaboration of a programme for utilizing for the Decade the resources of the Voluntary Fund for the International Women's Year;

(g) The development of regional programmes in implementation of the World Plan of Action.

8. In addition, mention should be made of the preparation of relevant documentation required for the sixtieth session of the Economic and Social Council, the twenty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

9. A report of the Secretary-General on the establishment of an international research and training institute for the advancement of women (E/5772) and a report of the Secretary-General on the Voluntary Fund for the Decade (E/5773) were prepared for submission to the Economic and Social Council at its sixtieth session.

10. Documents prepared for the twenty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, scheduled to be held from 13 September to 1 October 1976 at Geneva, are listed in the annotated provisional agenda (E/CN.6/590). Among the documents prepared for consideration by the Commission, special mention should be made of the working paper on a draft convention on the elimination of all forms of

discrimination against women (E/CN.6/591), prepared in compliance with resolution 1 (XXV), adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women on 25 January 1974. <sup>5/</sup> It may also be recalled that the General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of resolution 3521 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, requested the Commission to complete in 1976 the elaboration of a draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.

11. In addition to the present report the following documents were prepared for the thirty-first session of the General Assembly: a report on the integration of women in the development process, which contains the outline of a study on the participation of women in fields such as agriculture, industry, trade and science and technology (requested by the Assembly in resolution 3505 (XXX)); and a progress report on the establishment of the international research and training institute for the advancement of women (requested by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1998 (LX)).

B. Preparation of revised budgetary estimates for 1977  
and of the medium-term plan for 1978-1981

12. The General Assembly, in resolution 3520 (XXX), requested the Secretary-General to ensure, if possible within existing resources, that the Secretariat unit responsible for women's questions possesses adequate personnel and budgetary resources in order to discharge its functions under the World Plan of Action in co-operation with all organizations of the United Nations system. It further requested the Secretary-General, in the light of the foregoing, to take into account the requirements of the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the Conference in preparing revised estimates for 1977 and the medium-term plan for 1978-1981 and to report thereon to the Assembly at its thirty-first session, in accordance with established procedures.

13. In accordance with these provisions, the Secretary-General is preparing revised estimates for 1977 and has completed the medium-term plan for the period 1978-1981, <sup>6/</sup> taking into account the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the Conference and subsequent decisions of the General Assembly. The revised estimates and the medium-term plan will be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The proposals contained in the medium-term plan were endorsed by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its sixteenth session,

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<sup>5/</sup> For the text of the resolution, see Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 4 (E/5451), chap. XII, sect. A.

<sup>6/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 6A (A/31/6/Add.1 and Corr. 1-5).

which was held from 10 May to 11 June 1976. <sup>7/</sup> The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination was in general agreement with the three subprogrammes dealing with questions relating to women, and recommended that subprogrammes 4 and 5, concerning the integration of women in development and international instruments relating to the status of women, respectively, should have a higher-than-average rate of real growth for the period 1978-1979. The plan was reviewed by the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-first session in July and August 1976, which endorsed the conclusions and recommendations arrived at by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

C. Elaboration of a joint interorganizational programme for the United Nations Decade for Women

14. The General Assembly, in resolution 3520 (XXX), invited all relevant organizations of the United Nations system concerned to develop and implement, during the first half of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, under the auspices of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, a joint interagency programme for the integration of women in development.

15. The purpose of the programme is seen as being to promote effective co-operation and collaboration among all organizations in the United Nations system in order to further the development of programmes relating to women in implementation of the recommendations emanating from the World Conference of the International Women's Year and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 3520 (XXX). It is understood that several activities may be planned and implemented as a joint interorganizational effort, while others may require separate action by individual organizations according to their areas of specialization.

16. An ad hoc interagency meeting was convened from 9 to 13 February 1976 to agree on the conceptual framework for a joint interorganizational programme and to consider proposals for practical action during the period 1976-1980. A preliminary framework was suggested for the joint programme and agreement was reached on a plan for its further elaboration. The plan called for the preparation by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of long-term and detailed objectives, which would be forwarded to all organizations concerned, including the regional commissions, as the basis for the preparation of an inventory of ongoing and planned activities, classified according to the objectives provided. A further ad hoc interagency meeting was held at Geneva from 1 to 8 September 1976. It had before it a synthesis of organizations' ongoing and planned activities for the integration of women in development and an analysis thereof, as well as a background paper on the draft joint interorganizational programme, which contained the framework for the programme proposed at the previous meeting, revised in the light of comments by the organizations concerned.

17. It was agreed that the interorganizational programme for the United Nations

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<sup>7/</sup> For the report of the Committee on its sixteenth session, see ibid., Supplement No. 38 (A/31/38).

Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace should be implemented during the Decade for Women (1976-1985) in two phases; the first would cover the years up to 1980, when a world conference would be held; the second would cover the years 1981-1985. It was also agreed that the interorganizational programme should be based on a conceptual framework, revised objectives and revised contributions to the synthesis of agency activities to be submitted by all organizations. The programme should be finalized by the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs before 31 March 1977 and sent to all participating organizations for final review and endorsement. The results of these consultations will be submitted to the Preparatory Committee and to the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination in the autumn of 1976, and a report will be made to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-second session in April 1977.

18. The ad hoc interagency meeting revised and approved the principal and specific objectives which would constitute the basis for the revised synthesis and further elaboration of the programme for the Decade 1976-1985. The following nine principal objectives were approved at the meeting:

(1) To promote the inclusion in national development plans and/or programmes, of measures designed to ensure the full integration of women in society and to develop monitoring systems to assess the progress achieved;

(2) To increase the participation of women in political life and in policy-making at all levels, including international co-operation and the strengthening of international peace;

(3) To promote the equitable and effective participation of women and men in economic life;

(4) To achieve equal access and opportunity for both sexes in education and training of all types and at all levels;

(5) To ensure that women participate equally and freely in all cultural and leisure time activities at all levels;

(6) To stimulate and promote knowledge, attitudes and practices which support women's full participation in the life of their societies;

(7) To promote and improve the physical and mental health, nutrition and social well-being of women;

(8) To improve conditions of family and community life;

(9) To provide for the adequate care and protection of women and children in situations of armed conflict and emergency.



D. Establishment of an International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

19. The mandates for the establishment of an International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women are contained in resolution 26 adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, Economic and Social Council resolution 1959 (LIX) of 28 July 1975 (in which the Council asked the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session), Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX) and Economic and Social Council resolution 1998 (LX) of 19 May 1976.

20. The World Conference had proposed, in its resolution 26, paragraph 1, that the Institute would:

"(a) Undertake research and the collection and dissemination of information as the basis for the formulation of programmes and policies for the effective participation of women;

"(b) Assist in the design of research for the monitoring of changes in the situation of women and the impact on their lives of economic, social and technological changes;

"(c) Develop, adapt and provide training programmes for women, in particular those of the developing countries, which would enable them to undertake national research, to assume leadership roles within their own societies and to increase their earning possibilities."

21. After considering the note by the Secretary-General (A/10340) prepared at the request of the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1959 (LIX), the General Assembly in resolution 3520 (XXX) decided in principle to establish, under the auspices of the United Nations, an International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, which would be financed through voluntary contributions and would collaborate with appropriate national, regional and international economic and social research institutes. The Secretary-General was invited to appoint a group of experts to draw up the terms of reference and structural organization of the Institute, giving special consideration to the needs of women in developing countries. He was further invited to report to the Economic and Social Council at its sixtieth session, on the basis of the recommendations of the Group of Experts.

22. The Group of Experts, which met at United Nations Headquarters from 17 to 23 February 1976, was convinced that there was an urgent need for research and training activities to promote the fuller participation of women together with men in the economic, social and political advancement of each society, and it strongly recommended the early establishment of the Institute as a United Nations institution, to assist in achieving the goals of the World Plan of Action, the Declaration of Mexico, and the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. The Group of Experts suggested that the Institute should

stimulate and assist, through research and training activities, efforts of intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations according to the criterion that programmes would contribute to:

(a) Improvement of the position of women in society, the increase of their participation and the elimination of discrimination;

(b) Consideration of the situation of women as an integral part of the developmental problems of the whole society;

(c) Enhancement of communication among women's organizations, leaders and researchers.

23. It is anticipated that the Institute will support and complement the activities of the United Nations system related to women as well as those of Governments and other bodies, and the Group of Experts recommended that its organizational and administrative structure should facilitate co-ordination and communication with these bodies, and should reflect concern also for multidisciplinary and flexibility. As an autonomous United Nations body, the Institute would be governed by a council or board reporting to the Economic and Social Council through the Commission on the Status of Women or other appropriate body.

24. The council or board of the Institute would consist of a chairman, appointed by the Secretary-General, and 10 members serving in their individual capacity, appointed by the Economic and Social Council, and the criteria for selection would be equitable geographical representation, the particular needs of developing countries, the area of the Institute's activities and the adequate representation of women. The Institute would have a small interdisciplinary staff headed by a director.

25. On the question of financing, the Group was informed that the sum of \$1 million had been pledged to the Secretary-General to assist with the establishment of the Institute and they recommended that the Secretary-General should actively seek further voluntary contributions from sources including Member States, the United Nations system and philanthropic and academic institutions. The Group recognized that, on the basis of financing from voluntary contributions, it was difficult to ensure continuity for the Institute. They considered that its financing should be assured for at least three years, but urged that the need for its work was sufficiently important that the Secretary-General should start the preparatory work immediately, using whatever funds and staff resources could be made available, with the expectation that the Institute could formally be established in 1977.

26. The report of the Secretary-General based on the recommendations of the Group of Experts (E/5772) was submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its sixtieth session. In resolution 1998 (LX) of 19 May 1976, the Council decided to establish not later than 1977, providing the necessary financial provisions were made, an International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women as an autonomous body under the auspices of the United Nations, funded through voluntary contributions.

27. The Economic and Social Council decided further that the Institute should work in close collaboration with the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, and national and regional centres having similar objectives; direct its activities with special attention to the needs of developing countries; maintain close co-operation with the Commission on the Status of Women; and develop its activities in stages, starting by building on the collection of existing data on ongoing research and training needs. The Council noted with appreciation the offer of the Government of Iran to act as host to the Institute. It requested the Secretary-General to prepare a time-table and to undertake all other necessary administrative steps for establishing the Institute, if possible by 1977, and to assign staff to initiate the collection of existing data. The Secretary-General was also requested to seek financial and technical support for the Institute, to seek the most suitable location for it and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the progress achieved towards the Institute's establishment.

28. The preparatory work has been initiated, inter alia, by communicating to Member States the content of Economic and Social Council resolution 1998 (LX) and seeking their comments thereon. The responses of Governments will contribute to the report on progress made towards the establishment of the Institute, which the Secretary-General will present to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

E. Development of a programme for the United Nations Decade for Women, including preparatory work for the 1980 World Conference

29. The General Assembly, in resolution 3520 (XXX), proclaimed the period 1976-1985 United Nations Decade for Woman: Equality, Development and Peace, to be devoted to effective and sustained national, regional and international action to implement the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the World Conference of the International Women's Year. It also decided to convene in 1980, at the mid-term of the Decade, a world conference of all States to review and evaluate the progress made in implementing the objectives of the International Women's Year, as recommended by the World Conference of the International Women's Year and, where necessary, to readjust existing programmes in the light of new data and research available.

1. Development of a programme for the Decade

30. The Secretary-General has proposed suggestions for a programme for the Decade in a report entitled "The programmes for the Decade and related questions including technical co-operation activities", which was before the Commission on the Status of Women for its consideration at its twenty-sixth session in September 1976 (E/CN.6/594, sect. III). The proposed programme is based on the mandates of the World Conference and the General Assembly and each activity suggested has as its authority a specific recommendation of the World Plan of Action endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 3520 (XXX).

31. In developing the programme, the Secretary-General has had in mind the

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threefold theme of the decade: equality, development and peace. While all elements of the theme are closely interrelated and cannot be rigidly separated, it is possible to draw certain distinctions and suggest activities geared to each element separately. The Secretary-General has done this in preparing the medium-term plan for 1978-1981 as well as the revised estimates for 1977. Also the broad outline suggested for the agenda of the World Conference to be held in 1980 (see sect. 2 below) follows the same principle.

32. The main features of the proposed programme for the Decade are developed under headings relating to its threefold theme, as presented below:

<u>Decade/Theme</u>	<u>Programme heading</u>
Equality	International standards to eliminate discrimination on grounds of sex.
Development	Integration of women in development.
Peace	Involvement of women in international co-operation and the maintenance of peace.

A fourth heading is included in the programme, which relates equally to all three elements of the Decade's theme: "Review and appraisal of progress made in relation to the threefold theme of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace".

33. It is intended to carry out this programme through a variety of means, including the United Nations regular budget, the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, other international and bilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations.

## 2. Preparatory work for the 1980 World Conference

34. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1999 (LX) of 12 May 1976, stressing the importance of a comprehensive and thorough review and appraisal of progress made in meeting the goals of the World Plan of Action, requested the Commission on the Status of Women, at its twenty-sixth session, to consider different aspects of the preparatory work for the World Conference on the Decade, including its agenda.
35. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to transmit the relevant parts of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its twenty-sixth session to the Committee on Review and Appraisal, which is scheduled to meet in May 1977. It decided, further, to consider at its sixty-fourth session, which will be held in March-April 1978, the preparatory work for the Conference, on the basis of the deliberations of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on Review and Appraisal.
36. Accordingly, the Secretary-General prepared a note on the preparatory work for the 1980 Conference for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-sixth session, where certain issues will be raised relating to different aspects of the substantive preparation and the organization of the Conference (E/CN.6/600). The objectives of the Conference are those set forth in the World Plan of Action as specific objectives to be achieved as a minimum in the first half of the Decade and are reproduced in section I of the note. Section II on the substantive preparation of the Conference, includes topics to be discussed, documentation, preparatory meetings, contribution of organizations of the United Nations system and the contribution of intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and of non-governmental organizations. Section III deals with the organizational aspects of the Conference and covers participation, date, duration and site, title, working languages and financial implications. Section IV on parallel activities summarizes the precedent of the Mexico City Conference in this respect in order to give guidance to the Commission. Section V provides suggestions on publicity. The programme budget implications for the Conference (A/C.3/648) are reproduced in an annex to the note.
37. The ad hoc interagency meeting on the recommendations of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, which convened at Geneva from 1 to 8 September 1976, expressed the hope that the preparations for the 1980 Conference would be accorded the same importance as those for other major United Nations conferences, and that adequate resources would be allocated for this purpose. It strongly endorsed the holding in 1979 of regional intergovernmental conferences, which were considered as an essential part of the preparatory work. These conferences would review the progress made in the implementation of the plans of action at the country and also regional levels and propose any revisions of emphasis. Parallel meetings of non-governmental organizations and mass media representatives at the regional level were also considered useful. The meeting further agreed that it would be important to hold ad hoc interagency meetings during the period before the Conference in order to arrange for and co-ordinate the system's inputs to the preparatory work. It suggested that the Preparatory Committee should arrange for such meetings as necessary starting in July 1977, during the sixty-third session of the Economic and Social Council at Geneva.

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F. Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women

38. The General Assembly, at its thirtieth session, 8/ decided without objection that the Voluntary Fund for the International Women's Year, established by Economic and Social Council resolution 1850 (LVI) of 16 May 1974, should be extended to cover the period of the Decade for Women. This idea had originated in resolution 12 of the Conference. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its sixtieth session, giving an accounting report of the Fund, and submitting proposals for its management and the criteria to be applied for disbursements.

39. After considering the Secretary-General's report on this question (E/5773), the Economic and Social Council, in resolution 2005 (LX) of 12 May 1976, recommended for adoption by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session certain criteria for the use of the Fund and proposals for its management.

40. The proposed criteria stress that the resources of the Fund should be utilized to supplement activities in six main areas, "priority being given to the related programmes of the least developed, land-locked and island countries among developing countries". The following six areas are mentioned: (i) technical co-operation activities; (ii) development and/or strengthening of regional programmes; (iii) development and implementation of the joint interagency programme for the advancement of women; (iv) research, data collection and analysis, including preparatory work in connexion with the establishment of the Institute on Research and Training for the Advancement of Women; (v) communication support and public information activities; and (vi) support for activities of non-governmental organizations.

41. In deciding on the use of the Fund for technical co-operation activities, the Secretary-General was requested to consult the Administrator of UNDP.

42. Proposals for the management of the Fund, contained in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005 (LX), include arrangements for solicitation and acknowledgement of pledges and the collection of contributions, for operation and control, and for reporting annually to the General Assembly and, as appropriate, to the Commission on the Status of Women, showing funds available, pledges and payments received, and expenditures made.

43. The Council also recommended the appointment by the President of the General Assembly of a consultative committee, consisting of representatives of five Member States, to advise the Secretary-General on the application to the use of the Fund of the proposed criteria.

44. A programme for using the resources of the Fund in each of the areas suggested by the Council has been proposed by the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and is presently under study within the United Nations.

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8/ Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2441st meeting.

High priority is given to supplementing technical co-operation activities. Assistance is proposed to the development of regional programmes, in co-operation with the regional commissions, to the development and implementation of the joint interorganizational programme for the United Nations Decade for Women and to the preparatory work in connexion with the establishment of the Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, as authorized by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1998 (LX). Proposals are also made to supplement communication support and public information activities during the Decade.

#### G. Development of regional programmes

45. The World Plan of Action, in paragraph 46, sets out 14 objectives, the achievement of which should be envisaged by the midpoint of the Decade for Women in 1980. It recommends further that these objectives should be developed in more specific terms in regional plans of action.

46. Regional seminars, conferences or consultations are now planned in each of the five regions, in close co-operation with the regional commissions, as follow-up action to the Conference. In some instances the seminars are held under the United Nations regular programme of technical co-operation and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs acts as the executing agency in consultation with the regional commissions. In other instances the reverse is the case.

47. The first seminar of the Decade was held in Argentina in March 1976, under the regular programme of technical co-operation, on the participation of women in economic, social and political development and obstacles to their integration. <sup>9/</sup> This seminar, attended by 26 participants from countries in the western hemisphere, recommended that a group of experts be convened to elaborate a regional plan of action before the end of 1976. A regional technical consultation in implementation of this request is presently under consideration. It will be followed by a regional conference for countries of the region, to be organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America in March 1977 in Cuba.

48. In the Asian region, which already has a regional plan of action endorsed at the World Conference in Mexico, a regional follow-up seminar is scheduled to be held in Nepal in February 1977 on the participation of women in political, economic and social development (with special emphasis on machinery to accelerate the integration of women in development). This seminar is being organized under the regular programme of technical co-operation by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific is developing a regional action programme in co-operation with the Centre, with support from the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women.

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<sup>9/</sup> For the report of the seminar, see ST/ESA/SER.B/9.

49. In Africa, which has a regional plan of action, endorsed by the World Conference, and an ongoing action programme of several years' standing, a regional conference is being planned by the Economic Commission for Africa, with support from the Voluntary Fund for the Decade. The conference is tentatively scheduled to be held in November 1976 and it is anticipated that 35 participants will attend. The objectives of the conference will be to review progress in the implementation of plans of action for the integration of women in development at the national and regional levels and to propose further activities, including ways in which organizations and agencies working at the regional level can co-operate with each other.

50. A regional consultation, scheduled to be held at Beirut in 1975 within the framework of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, had to be cancelled. It is hoped that such a meeting can be held within the region early in 1977 and consultations with interested Governments are currently under way.

51. In Europe, the Division of Social Affairs of the United Nations Office at Geneva is planning a seminar, to be held in the Netherlands in April 1977, on the changing roles of men and women in modern society, their functions, rights and responsibilities. The main focus of the seminar will be the new relationship between men and women in the family, in employment, in public life and so forth in those societies which are trying to shake off the vestiges of sex-oriented prejudices and barriers.

52. Two intergovernmental organizations reported the adoption of regional plans of action. During the fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Arab Women of the League of Arab States, held from 22 to 25 November 1975, the question of the implementation of the World Plan of Action was considered. The Commission adopted resolution 27/Ses.4, which approved an Arab plan of action on "the increase of women's participation in national development operations during the United Nations Decade for Women 1976-1985". The Council of the League of Arab States adopted it by resolution 3446/Ses.65 of 21 March 1976. The text of the Plan is reproduced in an annex to the report of the Commission on the Status of Arab Women prepared for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-sixth session (E/CN.6/597, annex ).

53. The Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States, at its eighteenth session held in Miami, Florida, from 27 July to 5 August 1976, adopted a resolution entitled "Implementation of the Regional Plan of Action", which approved a Regional Plan of Action derived from the World Plan of Action and based on the strategies already established by the Inter-American Commission of Women. The provisional text of the Plan is reproduced in an annex to the report of the Inter-American Commission prepared for the consideration of the Commission of the Status of Women at its forthcoming twenty-sixth session (E/CN.6/596).



III. PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN INITIATING THE PROCEDURES FOR THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PLAN OF ACTION AND MEASURES TAKEN BY GOVERNMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

A. Progress achieved in initiating the procedures for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action

54. The present section describes the progress achieved in initiating the procedures for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year as an input to the process of review and appraisal of progress made under the International Development Strategy of the Second United Nations Development Decade.

55. In resolution 3490 (XXX) of 12 December 1975 on the implementation of the World Plan of Action, the General Assembly affirmed that a system-wide review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action should be undertaken, in the years of the biennial review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy (namely 1977-1979) as an input to the process of review and appraisal of progress made under the Strategy. The Assembly requested the Commission on the Status of Women to consider reports on measures undertaken in implementation of the World Plan of Action, in accordance with the International Development Strategy, and to report its findings and conclusions on major trends and policies with regard to the status of women, particularly the integration of women in development, to the Economic and Social Council through the Committee for Development Planning and the Committee on Review and Appraisal. The Secretary-General was invited to make appropriate arrangements for the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action.

56. In resolution 3520 (XXX) on the World Conference of the International Women's Year, the General Assembly also affirmed that a system-wide review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action should be undertaken biennially and should constitute an input to the process of review and appraisal of progress made under the International Development Strategy, adding that such reviews and appraisals should take into account the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the decisions resulting from the sixth and seventh special sessions of the Assembly.

57. The Secretary-General prepared a report on measures undertaken under the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade and in implementation of the World Plan of Action (E/CN.6/598 and Add.1 and 2) for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-sixth session. The report is an analysis of information provided by Governments, in response to two requests made on 5 November 1974 and on 25 May 1976, respectively, which was received in time for the preparation of the report.

58. The first request was in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1855 (LVI) of 16 May 1974, in which the Council had reaffirmed that the

Commission on the Status of Women had an important role to perform in assisting the Council in the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy, and had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Commission, at its twenty-sixth session, on the participation of women in achieving the goals and objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade and of General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, on a programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women.

59. The second request was concerned with bringing up to date information previously provided under that resolution, taking into account the World Plan of Action, in compliance with General Assembly resolutions 3490 (XXX) and 3520 (XXX). In particular, Governments were invited to provide information on the steps already taken or contemplated to implement the World Plan of Action at the national level, such as those suggested in paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX), namely:

(a) The establishment of short-term, medium-term and long-term targets, and priorities to this end, taking into account the guidelines set forth in sections I and II of the World Plan of Action, including the minimum objectives recommended for achievement by 1980; 10/

(b) The adoption of national strategies, plans and programmes for the implementation of the recommendations within the framework of over-all development plans, policies and programmes;

(c) The undertaking of regular reviews and appraisals of progress made at the national and local levels in achieving the goals and objectives of the World Plan of Action within the framework of over-all development plans, policies and programmes.

60. The report prepared for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-sixth session is divided into three sections. Section I deals with the review and appraisal of progress made to implement the goals of the International Development Strategy and of General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV) (E/CN.6/598). Section II is concerned with the review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action for the implementation of the objectives of the International Women's Year and of the International Development Strategy (E/CN.6/598/Add.1). Section III deals with findings and conclusions on major trends and policies with regard to the status of women (E/CN.6/598/Add.2).

61. The report is the first step towards the review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action as an input to the review and appraisal of the progress achieved in the implementation of the International Development Strategy of the Second United Nations Development Decade. Following the consideration of this report and in compliance with paragraph 4 of General

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10/ Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.1), chap. II, sect. A, para. 46.

Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX), the Commission on the Status of Women will report to the Economic and Social Council on its findings and conclusions on major trends and policies with regard to the status of women, particularly the integration of women in development, through the Committee for Development Planning at its thirteenth session, which is scheduled to be held from 11 to 22 April 1977, and the Committee on Review and Appraisal at its fourth session, which is scheduled to be held from 16 May to 3 June 1977.

B. Measures taken by Governments to implement the World Plan of Action

62. The above-mentioned report on measures undertaken under the International Development Strategy of the Second United Nations Development Decade and in implementation of the World Plan of Action (E/CN.6/598 and Add.1 and 2) is analytical in nature and does not reproduce the texts of the replies on which it is based. It was implicit that such a review would afford an opportunity to make a broad appraisal of past performance and draw therefrom implications for the future.

63. Section I of the report on the review and appraisal of progress made to implement the goals of the International Development Strategy and of General Assembly resolution 2716 (XXV) (E/CN.6/598) gives an overview of the extent to which Governments have paid special attention to the fuller participation of women in the development process and contains a review and appraisal of progress made at the national level in the promotion of the condition of women and their integration in development. It is based exclusively on the replies of Governments, received as at 31 January 1975 to the Secretary-General's note verbale of 5 November 1974.

64. Section II of the report on the review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year and of the International Development Strategy (E/CN.6/598/Add.1) is based on the replies of Governments, received as at 15 August 1976, to the note verbale circulated by the Secretary-General on 25 May 1976.

65. Section II completes and brings up to date information included in section I and analyses steps already taken or contemplated to implement the World Plan of Action at the national level. Subsection A on general objectives of national action to achieve the objectives of the International Women's Year analyses information on: (a) national legislation relating to the status of women; (b) development of large-scale educational and information programmes; (c) elaboration of short-term, medium-term and long-term plans for the implementation of the World Plan of Action; and (d) the establishment of implementation machinery and procedures. Subsection B analyses the following seven specific areas for national action: (i) international co-operation and the strengthening of international peace; (ii) political participation; (iii) education and training; (iv) employment and related economic roles; (v) health and nutrition; (vi) the family in modern society; and (vii) population.

66. Section III of the report (E/CN.6/598/Add.2) on findings and conclusions on major trends and policies with regard to the status of women was prepared in order to assist the Commission on the Status of Women to report to the Economic and Social Council on major trends with regard to the status of women, particularly the integration of women in development, in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 3490 (XXX). A succinct analysis of the main features of the measures taken or contemplated by Governments to implement the World Plan of Action, based on the report, is given below.

#### General objectives of national action

67. The establishment or the elaboration of short-term, medium-term or long-term plans for the integration of women in the development process to implement the objectives of the World Plan of Action was widely reported. Indeed, in various instances where the goals of equality between men and women and the integration of women in development were said to have been achieved, it was noteworthy that additional action was either taken or contemplated to improve further the condition of women.

68. In some cases, the approach to planning was an integrated one in that in the elaboration of over-all national strategies and development plans, measures were taken to ensure that the set targets and priorities took women's interests and needs fully into account and made adequate provision to improve their situation and increase their contribution to the development process. In other cases, the plan established or in preparation was a plan for the advancement of women aimed at the realization of the goals of the International Women's Year in national terms. The plan would often lay down a comprehensive set of short-term and long-term measures to enable women to share their responsibilities in society equally with men. In still other instances, Governments reported that they were in the process of deciding upon their own national strategies and of identifying their own targets and priorities in accordance with the World Plan of Action.

69. Recognizing the difficulty of implementing the postulate of equality without providing the necessary and adequate legal framework for it, Governments reported special efforts in this area. In some instances, such efforts were aimed at enacting constitutional or legal provisions promoting the principle of equality to the status of a national objective. In other instances, efforts were aimed at reviewing or making plans for the review of legislation affecting the status of women. Such reviews were either comprehensive, that is, embracing most or the whole spectrum of women's rights and obligations, or would focus on some specific sectoral areas deemed priority areas for legal action, such as family law and economic equality, including labour matters with, in some instances, an added emphasis on the protection of working women.

70. In order to accelerate progress in achieving the goals of equality between men and women and the full participation of women in the development effort, the establishment or preparations for the establishment of national machinery for that purpose were usually reported. The types and nature of machinery described

varied and, while reliance on existing governmental departments was reported, in other instances, new governmental agencies, bureaux or committees, or new socio-political women's organizations or special sections within established parties, trade unions and other organizations would be entrusted with such responsibility.

71. It was usually stressed that, in order to achieve national objectives established in accordance with the World Plan of Action, the public at large should be informed of the various measures taken by Governments so as to enlist the support of the people to implement such measures and induce a change of attitude towards traditional sex-stereotypes. To that effect, the development of large-scale educational and information programmes, including sometimes the extensive use of the mass communication media, was reported or contemplated and, in such efforts, either the Government or the machinery overseeing the implementation of the objectives of the Plan would take a leading role.

#### Specific areas for national action

72. In the field of education and training, women in rural areas are receiving increased attention. Efforts are aimed mostly at reducing illiteracy and at involving women more fully in the development of their community through access to integrated or special training programmes. Also the expansion of non-formal and life-long education for women as well as special efforts to encourage girls and women to engage in a wider range of occupations by offering them a broader curriculum to choose from at school and better career counselling were reported.

73. In the field of employment Governments stressed their efforts to implement the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and to formulate policies and action programmes expressly directed towards equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women workers. The establishment of appeals procedures and of other types of machinery for the implementation of the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status was often mentioned. The extension of co-educational technical and vocational training in basic skills for women and men in the industrial and agricultural sectors was reported. Again, women in rural areas are being given special consideration through the encouragement and support of self-employment and self-help activities and through the creation of remunerable employment opportunities and training in agriculture.

74. Other issues which are receiving increased attention are the improvement of the working and living conditions of gainfully employed women, including measures to assist women in combining family and work responsibilities, as well as the use of modern technology to help reduce the heavy workload of women in rural sectors and the urban poor. Also, the recognition of the economic value of women's work in the home, in domestic food production and other activities not traditionally remunerated is beginning to be given serious attention.

75. With respect to the contribution of women to international co-operation and the strengthening of international peace as well as their political participation, a few Governments reported that efforts were or would be made to encourage women

to play a greater role in these fields. Recent increases in the number of women in high governmental positions are reported and the focus of governmental action is on the exercise in fact by women of their political rights. The issue of special rules for achieving an equitable representation of women in public office, as well as the initiation of special campaigns to stimulate women into active participation in policy-making at all levels, were reported in some instances.

76. In the field of health and within the context of general health services, increased attention is being paid to women's special health needs and their children, particularly infants, pre-school and school children. Also women are actively encouraged to participate in health education courses and programmes both in rural and urban areas. The establishment of family planning programmes, some of which are integrated and co-ordinated with health, nutrition and other services designed to raise the quality of family life, was reported.

77. The family has also been an area of concern to Governments. Not only has legislative action been taken (or is under consideration) which would establish a minimum age for marriage and the right to free choice of a spouse and would afford equal status of the spouses, but increased efforts are also being made to improve the living conditions of the family, including the single parent family.

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