

1996/7. Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the future role of the Commission for Social Development

The Economic and Social Council,

Welcoming the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development,²³

Bearing in mind Economic and Social Council resolutions 10 (II) of 21 June 1946 and 830 J (XXXII) of 2 August 1961, by which the Council established the Social Commission and defined its terms of reference, and 1139 (XLI) of 29 July 1966, by which the Council renamed the Commission the Commission for Social Development in order to clarify its role as a preparatory and advisory body of the Council in the whole range of social development policy,

Taking into account General Assembly resolution 50/161 of 22 December 1995 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/60 of 28 July 1995 concerning the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, agreed conclusions 1995/1, approved by the Council on 28 July 1995,²⁰ and Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

I

FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Recalling that the General Assembly, in its resolution 50/161, decided that the Assembly, through its role in policy formulation, and the Economic and Social Council, through its role in overall guidance and coordination, in accordance with their respective roles under the Charter of the United Nations and Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993, and a revitalized Commission for Social Development should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental process in the follow-up to the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development²⁴ and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,²⁵

Convinced that the follow-up to the Summit will be undertaken on the basis of an integrated approach to social development and within the framework of a coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the results of the major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General,²⁶ containing a review of the functioning of the Commission for

Social Development, including its future role in the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development;

2. *Decides* that the Commission, as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, shall have the primary responsibility for the follow-up to the Summit and review of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development;

3. *Calls upon* all relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to be involved in the follow-up to the Summit, and invites the specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen and adjust their activities, programmes and medium-term strategies, as appropriate, to take into account the follow-up to the Summit;

4. *Invites* the United Nations Development Programme, the International Labour Organization and the Bretton Woods institutions to be actively involved in the follow-up to the Summit, in accordance with the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/161, and invites the World Trade Organization to consider how it might contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action;

5. *Decides* that the task forces established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination for the follow-up to the Summit and other related United Nations conferences should inform the Commission and the Economic and Social Council of the progress made in their work for the purpose of system-wide coordination;

6. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring the participation of high-level representatives from the field of social development in the work of the Commission;

7. *Reiterates* the invitation extended by the General Assembly to the Secretary-General, *inter alia*, within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to make appropriate arrangements, which may include joint meetings, for consultations with the heads of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the International Labour Organization, United Nations funds and programmes and other relevant organizations for the purpose of enhancing the cooperation of their respective organizations in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action of the Summit;

8. *Reaffirms* the need for ensuring an effective partnership and cooperation between Governments and the relevant actors of civil society, the social partners and the major groups as defined in Agenda 21,¹ including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in the implementation of and follow-up to the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action, and for ensuring their involvement in the planning, elaboration, implementation and evaluation of social policies at the national level;

²³ *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

²⁶ E/CN.5/1996/2.

9. *Decides*, in view of the traditional importance of non-governmental organizations in the promotion of social development, that such organizations should be encouraged to participate in the work of the Commission and in the monitoring and implementation process related to the Summit to the maximum extent possible, and requests the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements to ensure the full utilization of existing channels of communication with non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate broad-based participation and dissemination of information;

10. *Also decides*, in recognition of the valuable contribution of non-governmental organizations to the Summit, the Council and its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, to review the applications of such non-governmental organizations under Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968 as expeditiously as possible, and further decides that prior to the thirty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development, the Council will decide on the participation of those non-governmental organizations accredited to the Summit that have applied for consultative status, in the Summit follow-up and in the work of the Commission for Social Development, without prejudice to the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Arrangements for Consultation with Non-Governmental Organizations;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General urgently to draw the attention of non-governmental organizations accredited to the Summit to the provisions of the present resolution and to the process established under resolution 1296 (XLIV);

II

TERMS OF REFERENCE

12. *Reaffirms* the existing mandate of the Commission for Social Development as set out in its resolutions 10 (II), 830 J (XXXII) and 1139 (XLI);

13. *Decides* that the Commission, in fulfilling its mandate, shall assist the Economic and Social Council in monitoring, reviewing and appraising the progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and shall advise the Council thereon, and also decides that, to that end, the Commission should:

(a) Improve international understanding on social development through, *inter alia*, the exchange of information and experience;

(b) Integrate, within the framework of the follow-up to the Summit, consideration of issues relating to the situation of social groups, including a review of relevant United Nations programmes of action related to such groups, and consideration of other sectoral issues;

(c) Identify emerging issues affecting social development that require urgent consideration and make substantive recommendations thereon;

(d) Make recommendations regarding social development to the Economic and Social Council;

(e) Elaborate practical measures aimed at furthering recommendations of the Summit;

(f) Identify issues requiring improved system-wide coordination, taking into account substantive inputs from different organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the contributions of other functional commissions concerned, in order to assist the Council in its coordination functions;

(g) Maintain and enhance public awareness and support for the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action of the Summit;

III

STRUCTURE OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

14. *Decides* that the substantive items of the agenda of the Commission for Social Development for its future sessions will consist of the following:

Substantive item: Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development

(a) Consideration of subjects identified in the multi-year programme of work, including the situation of social groups;

(b) Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups, as necessary;

(c) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting social development, as necessary;

15. *Decides* on the following multi-year programme of work for the consideration of priority subjects, bearing in mind that the core issues of the Summit are interrelated and interdependent and that issues relating to the enabling environment for social development (commitment 1 of the Copenhagen Declaration;²⁴ chapter I of the Programme of Action²⁵), the special situation of Africa and the least developed countries (commitment 7 of the Copenhagen Declaration), enhancement of social development goals in structural adjustment programmes (commitment 8 of the Copenhagen Declaration), the mobilization of domestic and international resources for social development (commitment 9 of the Copenhagen Declaration; chapter V of the Programme of Action) and the framework for international, regional and subregional cooperation for social development (commitment 10 of the Copenhagen Declaration) shall be considered every year, and bearing in mind also that the Commission should

apply a gender perspective when discussing the different topics under the multi-year programme of work:

1997: Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development

Theme: "Productive employment and sustainable livelihoods". Under this theme, the following specific topics will be considered:

(a) The centrality of employment in policy formulation, including a broader recognition of work and employment;

(b) Improving access to productive resources and infrastructure;

(c) Enhanced quality of work and employment;

1998: Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development

Theme: "Promoting social integration and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons". Under this theme, the following specific topics will be considered:

(a) Promoting social integration through responsive government, full participation in society, non-discrimination, tolerance, equality and social justice;

(b) Enhancing social protection, reducing vulnerability and enhancing employment opportunities for groups with specific needs;

(c) Violence, crime and the problem of illicit drugs and substance abuse as factors of social disintegration;

1999: Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development

(a) Theme 1: "Social services for all";

(b) Theme 2: "Initiation of the overall review of the implementation of the outcome of the Summit";

2000: Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development

Theme: "Contribution of the Commission to the overall review of the implementation of the outcome of the Summit";

IV

MEMBERSHIP, FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF SESSIONS

16. *Decides* that the Commission for Social Development shall be composed of forty-six members elected from among the States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies according to the following pattern:

(a) Twelve seats for African States;

(b) Ten seats for Asian States;

(c) Nine seats for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Five seats for Eastern European States;

(e) Ten seats for Western European and other States;

17. *Also decides* that the Commission shall meet annually, beginning in 1997, for a period of eight working days in New York;

V

DOCUMENTATION

18. *Requests* that United Nations documentation be kept concise, clear, analytical and timely, with a focus on relevant issues, in accordance with Council resolution 1987/24 of 26 May 1987 and agreed conclusions 1995/1, and that, to the greatest extent possible, use be made of integrated reporting, and also requests that reports contain recommendations for action and indicate the actors, that they be available in all official languages, in accordance with the rules of the United Nations, and that the use of other methods of reporting, such as oral reports, also be explored;

19. *Also requests* that the relevant reports of the meetings of inter-agency mechanisms established by the Secretary-General be transmitted for information to the Commission to ensure coordination, collaboration and coherence in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development;

20. *Decides* that requests for reports of the Secretary-General should be limited to the minimum strictly necessary and that the Secretariat should use information and data already provided by Governments to the maximum extent possible, avoiding duplication of requests to Governments for such information;

21. *Also decides* that the voluntary submission of national information, for example national action plans or national reports by Governments, should be encouraged;

22. *Requests* that, in the preparation of reports, use be made of the practice of assigning task managers under which a United Nations entity is made responsible for coordinating the response of the entire United Nations system on a given subject, including the formulation of recommendations for future action;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General and United Nations bodies to take appropriate measures, in a coordinated manner, to strengthen the United Nations capacity for gathering and analysing information and developing indicators of social development;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit the following reports to the Commission:

(a) An annual analytical report on the thematic issues before the Commission, in accordance with the multi-year work programme, including, as far as possible, progress made in national and international implementation and including

progress made by the Bretton Woods institutions, other United Nations specialized agencies and other relevant entities, based on available existing data and statistics;

(b) A report on emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting social development, including the situation of specific groups;

(c) An overall report, in the year 2000, on the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development;

VI

METHODS OF WORK

25. *Recognizes* that the practice of inviting experts is expected to deal effectively with the priority subjects addressed in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and to contribute to the effective follow-up to the Summit, and to that end, decides that:

(a) Panels of experts shall be formed, including experts appointed by the Secretary-General, experts working within the United Nations system and experts from Governments and civil society;

(b) Experts shall be chosen from the fields of study addressed under the critical areas of concern, taking into account equitable geographical distribution and the involvement of non-governmental organizations;

(c) The selection of experts, the composition of the panels and the allocation of time for dialogue shall be decided inter-sessionally by the Bureau of the Commission, taking into consideration the proposals of the Secretariat: the Secretariat shall prepare a list of candidates for the panels, based on suggestions from States and civil society, and the Bureau shall convene meetings open to the participation of all interested States to ensure a broad base of participation;

(d) Meetings shall be allotted for dialogue within the United Nations system and civil society and among governmental delegations and sufficient time shall be devoted to intergovernmental dialogue;

26. *Decides* that the Bureau of the Commission shall convene open-ended informal consultations of the Commission to improve organizational and procedural aspects of the Commission's sessions, and also decides that the Bureau of the Commission shall meet on a regular basis from 1996 and may consider such issues as recommendations on agenda items and subjects to be discussed, the structure of meetings and lists of guest participants for panel discussions;

27. *Calls upon* the Bureau to monitor the state of preparedness of documentation for the Commission and to take the necessary measures to facilitate its timely issuance in all official languages;

VII

SECRETARIAT

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure an effectively functioning Secretariat within which clear responsibility is assigned to assist in the implementation of the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the servicing of the intergovernmental bodies involved and to ensure close cooperation at the Secretariat level between all the United Nations entities involved in the Summit follow-up;

VIII

REGIONAL DIMENSION

29. *Invites* the regional commissions, within their mandates and in cooperation with regional intergovernmental organizations and banks, to consider convening, on a biennial basis, a meeting at a high political level to review progress made towards implementing the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, to exchange views on the respective experiences of participating bodies and to adopt appropriate measures.

*44th plenary meeting
22 July 1996*