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Title

Message of the Prime Minister of India on the occasion of the World Summit for Children

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Notes

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Print Name of Person Submit Image

Signature of Person Submit

Number of images without cover



Prime Minister of India

CE/NYH/OSEB/HST/1996-179

New Delhi

CF/RAI/USAA/OBOI/HS/1996-0179

September 29, 1990

Message

The World Summit for Children is a unique international event. It will promote a new commitment, at the highest political levels, to goals and strategies for ensuring the survival, protection and development of children all over the world.

Children constitute the most important segment of any society. The very future of mankind depends, in a large measure, on the health and development of children. Both the Declaration and the Plan of Action prepared for adoption by the Summit provide for a set of achievable goals and strategies for attaining them in the course of 1990s. India will be happy to endorse these documents.

The central issue facing millions of children in developing countries is not only the absence of material resources, but even the lack of basic health facilities, adequate nutrition, shelter and education. It is our duty to improve and enrich their lives and to give them a chance to have the joys of childhood.

India has adopted a number of programmes for the welfare and development of children. An Integrated Child Development Programme consisting of a package of services of supplementary nutrition, immunization, referral services and pre-school education launched in the mid-70s has completed 15 years of operation this year. Starting with a mere 33 projects in 1975, the programme covers approximately 40% of the country today through a network of 2424 projects. It has led to the reduction of the infant mortality rate per thousand live birth from 139 in 1972 to 94 in 1988. A Technology Mission for universal immunization has successfully covered 85% of the districts under its programme. Efforts are now being made to achieve cent per cent coverage of women and 85% of children in all the districts by the end of this year.

A literate population and universal education are critical for nation building. 1990 is the International Literacy Year. It is also the SAARC Year of the Girl Child. Earlier this year UNICEF, together with three other UN bodies, set the goal of basic education for all by the year 2000. Our national endeavour is fully in consonance with this objective. India has recently given a new thrust to elementary education. The emphasis in educational programmes is on universal involvement and free and compulsory education of children upto 14 years of age. India has also made substantial improvements in the quality of education.

I wish the Summit every success in achieving a better, safer, healthier world for children to live in.

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