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Notes

Preparatory & Reference Documentation on the World Summit for Children: this reference book contains background & preparation material for the World Summit in Five Chapters: 1-The Planning Committee; 2-Schedule & Program of the World Summit for Children; 3-draft Declaration of the World Summit for Children and draft Plan of Action; 4-Report of Meetings; 5-UNICEF Executive Board

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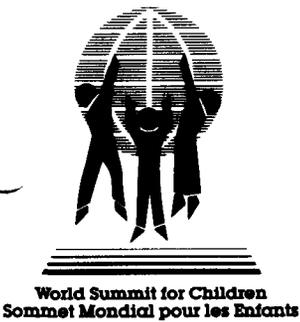
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Planning Committee

DRAFT DECLARATION

CF/WSC/1990/PC-031

18 July DRAFT

DRAFT DECLARATION
from the World Summit for Children

- (1) We have gathered at the World Summit for Children to make a joint commitment and to issue an urgent appeal on behalf of children everywhere.
- (2) The children of the world are the most innocent, vulnerable and dependent, and also most important members of society.
- (3) Their time should be one of joy and play, of learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and cooperation. Their lives should mature, as perspectives widen and experiences are gained.
- (4) But for all too many of these children, the life they meet is of another nature.
- (5) Each day, countless children around the world are exposed to immense suffering as casualties of war and violence; as victims of racial discrimination, apartheid, foreign occupation; as refugees and displaced children, forced to abandon homes and roots; or as victims of neglect, cruelty and exploitation in the workplace.
- (6) Each day, 40 000 children are dying -- from malnutrition and readily preventable diseases, from lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation, from diseases including AIDS or as victims of the drug problem.
- (7) Each day, millions of children are the first to suffer from other scourges of poverty and economic crisis -- from hunger and homelessness, from epidemics and illiteracy, from the degradation of the environment, from the effects of the debt crisis and from lack of sustained and sustainable growth, particularly in the least developed countries.
- (8) These are challenges which must be met by political leaders. Together, our nations have the means and the knowledge to halt the suffering of all children, and to promote the development of their full human potential. In the spirit of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, we declare that we will do our utmost to make respect for children's rights and welfare truly universal.

- (9) The recent improvements in the international political climate can facilitate this task. Through international cooperation and solidarity it should now be possible to reach concrete results in many fields -- to reverse the arms race, to revitalize economic growth and development, to protect the environment, to prevent the spread of mortal and crippling diseases, and to reach greater social and economic justice.
- (10) The recent moves towards disarmament also mean that substantial resources can be released which previously were devoted to the military. To improve the well-being of children must be a very high priority when these resources are reallocated.
- (11) Enhancing children's health and nutrition is a first duty, and also a task which is easy to fulfill. The lives of tens of thousands of boys and girls can be saved, every day, because the causes of their death are readily preventable.
- (12) Child and infant mortality is unacceptably high in many parts of the world -- but can also be dramatically lowered through measures that are already available and easily accessible.
- (13) Half a million mothers die each year from causes related to child birth. Safe motherhood must be promoted in all possible ways. Emphasis must be placed on family planning, especially for child spacing and the prevention of children bearing children. The family is the natural environment and cornerstone for the growth and well-being of children, and should be given all necessary protection and assistance.
- (14) To strengthen the role of women in general, and ensuring their equal rights, will also be to the advantage of the world's children. Girls must be given equal opportunity for growth and development.
- (15) At present, one hundred million children are without basic schooling -- of whom two-thirds are girls. Few things can better contribute to the development of the world's children than to provide basic education and literacy for all. Children must be able to find their identity and worth in a safe and supportive environment, through families and other caregivers committed to their welfare. They must early be introduced into the cultural life of their societies, and their own cultural creative activities should be promoted.
- (16) Economic conditions will continue to determine the fate of children, especially in developing nations. For the sake of the future of all children, it is necessary to reactivate sustained and sustainable economic growth and development in these countries. We also recognize the urgent need to find ways to solve the debt crisis. These tasks require a continued and concerted effort by all nations, through national action and international cooperation.
- (17) The issue of children's survival, protection and development requires political action at the highest level. We are determined to take that action.

- (18) We have agreed that we will act together, in international cooperation -- as well as in our respective countries. We have also agreed on the following ten points, as key elements in a program to protect the rights of children and to improve their lives:
- (19)
1. We will work for a solid effort of national and international action to enhance children's health, and to lower infant and child mortality in all countries and among all peoples.
 2. We will work for optimal growth and development in childhood, through measures to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and famine, and to thus relieve millions of children of tragic sufferings in a world that has the means to feed all its citizens.
 3. We will work for the provision of clean water in all communities for all their children, as well as universal access to sanitation.
 4. We will work to strengthen the roles of women, and to promote safe motherhood, birth spacing and family planning. We will respect the roles of the family in providing for their children, and will support the efforts of parents to nurture and care for their children, from the earliest stages of childhood through adolescence.
 5. We will work for programs which provide educational opportunities for all children, irrespective of their background and gender; which reduce illiteracy everywhere; which prepare children for productive employment and lifelong learning opportunities, i.a. through vocational training; and which enable children to grow to adulthood within a supportive and maturing cultural and social context.
 6. We will work for increased attention to the millions of children who live under especially difficult circumstances -- orphans and street children and children of migrant workers; refugees, displaced and victims of natural disasters; the disabled, abused and exploited. We will work for the special protection of the working child, and an effective abolition of child labour. We will do our best to ensure that children are not drawn to and become victims of the scourge of drugs.
 7. We will work to carefully protect of children from the scourge of war, and to take measures to prevent further armed conflicts, in order to give children everywhere a peaceful and secure future. The essential needs of children and families must be protected even in armed conflicts. We ask that periods of tranquility and special relief corridors be observed for the benefit of children, where war and violence are still taking place.
 8. We will work for common measures for the protection of the environment, at local, national, and international levels, so that all children can have a safer and healthier future in a world which can supply the needs of all.

9. We will work for a global attack on poverty, which would have immediate benefits for children's welfare. The vulnerability and special needs of the children of the least developed countries deserve priority. But growth and development need promotion in all states, by national action and through international cooperation. That would include transfers of additional resources to developing nations and structural adjustments in these countries, as well as significant trade liberalization and measures for debt relief.
 10. We will work to promote consideration of earliest possible ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Programs to encourage information about children's rights should be launched worldwide, taking into account the distinct cultural and social values in different countries.
- (20) The World Summit for Children has presented us with a challenge to take action. We have agreed to answer that challenge.
 - (21) Among the allies we seek, we turn especially to children themselves. As young citizens, children are often the first to perceive injustices and omissions -- and among the first to ask "Why must this be?" We appeal to children to help us, for the sake of children worldwide.
 - (22) We also ask for the support of the United Nations system, in the work for children's well-being. Likewise, we seek the involvement of non-governmental organizations, for both national efforts and joint international action in this field.
 - (23) We ourselves hereby make a solemn commitment to give highest priority to the rights of children, to their survival and to their protection and development.
 - (24) We have decided to adopt and implement a Plan of Action, as a framework for more specific national and international undertakings. We also appeal to all our colleagues to endorse that plan. We are prepared to make available the resources to meet these commitments, in the context of our national plans.
 - (25) We do this for the future generation -- but also in the interest of all others, and all who will succeed us. There can be no task more noble for any of us than to help provide a better future for the world's children.

New York
September 30, 1990

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