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**Statement by the Prime Minister of IRELAND,  
His Excellency Mr. Charles J. Haughey**

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Joint Presidents and dear colleagues, this year's report of UNICEF states that in the 1980s a beginning has been made in eradicating preventable killer diseases affecting children. We have seen how—particularly in the poorest countries—the idea of prevention of disease can take hold and thereby save or at least transform the lives of millions.

However, today more than 20 million children suffer from severe malnutrition, and 150 million are underweight. For hundreds of millions of other children inadequate basic health, education and other social services severely constrain prospects for a worthwhile and satisfying life.

The challenges facing the world community to alleviate this situation are therefore immense. The implementation of the objectives and priorities of the World Declaration and Plan of Action will be crucial in achieving success.

In this regard we must in particular commit ourselves as political leaders to ensuring that the ideals of the Convention on the Rights of the Child become a reality which actually improves the daily life of children everywhere. I particularly welcome the emphasis in the Convention on the need to provide for children's development within a secure family setting. It is within the family that cultural identity is established and that moral, intellectual and social development is fostered.

I also welcome the Convention's stress on the need for basic education in all its aspects. Basic education provides a crucial foundation for a life of dignity and self-reliance for every individual in society. It is also required to enable the full realization of the human potential.

The developed countries have a special responsibility in bringing about an international political and economic environment that is just, secure and humane. Such an environment is required to advance the well-being of all the world's children. However, for the developing countries, especially the least developed ones, it is vital to support their development efforts. The success of these efforts, which must be supported by the developed world, offers the best chance for improving the situation of the hundreds of millions of children who even today live in poverty and destitution.

I congratulate our Co-Presidents, the Secretary-General, UNICEF and its Director General on the brilliantly successful organization of this historic Summit, and I pledge Ireland's full support for the Convention, the Declaration and the Plan of Action.

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**Statement by the President  
of the REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU,  
His Excellency General João Bernardo Vieira**

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(delivered in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by Guinea-Bissau)

This assembly is certainly a historic event, but history will recall less the impressive number and high status of the official representatives at the World Summit for Children than their concrete actions. I believe that it is important for us to create, in our respective countries, appropriate machinery to enable us to attain our goals.

Our Plan of Action is undoubtedly ambitious, but given the will on the part of Governments, it can be achieved. I have certainly perceived such a determination in all the statements I have heard. I should like, however, to emphasize the need for proper co-ordination of our efforts through active co-operation on behalf of our noble cause, children, who are the only true wealth of humanity.

From the very beginning Guinea-Bissau supported the idea of convening the World Summit for Children. I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate UNICEF, the initiator of the Summit, which has aroused well-justified hopes among our people.

My country prepared and organized, in co-operation with UNICEF, one national and three regional conferences involving thousands of participants throughout the country. Questions relating to malnutrition received special attention. Maternal health, environment and education were also considered. At the end of its work, the conference adopted a document entitled "Declaration of Bissau". The Declaration analysed the state of children in Guinea-Bissau and made appropriate recommendations on all the specific themes to which I have referred. It also proposed the adoption at the international level of a set of measures up to the year 2000, as well as priority measures to be carried out in the poorest countries.

We feel that the document is very important. It is the fruit of the work of national experts and many others, including children. There is no doubt that it will be instrumental in leading to an appropriate strategy that will enable us to resolve the problems of children. The recommendations contained in the Declaration will be put into effect in the new local administrative structures of my country, in co-ordination with the representatives of the United Nations specialized agencies and with representatives of national and foreign agencies.

Children are the pearl of our struggle and the focus of our efforts for development and well-being for all.

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**Statement by the Prime Minister  
of the REPUBLIC OF POLAND,  
His Excellency Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki**

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(interpretation from French)

The Convention on the Rights of Children, of which Poland was one of the initiators, is an essential component of the international legal machinery in the sphere of human rights. It is precisely on behalf of children that we have been struggling and are continuing to struggle against poverty, violence and mendacity in the various countries of the world.

In my country, such a statement is not mere rhetoric—noble, certainly, but with no basis in reality. My country, Poland, experienced dreadful destruction during the Second World War. For several decades it then endured a type of power imposed by force—a source of suffering for the entire nation. But the children obviously suffered even more than the adults from the effects of totalitarianism.

For the past year, Poland and the other countries of East-Central Europe have embarked upon the path of democracy and the rule of law. That is not, obviously, sufficient to assure happy lives for our children, but it is a prerequisite if the structural sources of their misfortunes are to be eliminated. Democracy and liberty are necessary conditions for confidence, not just among adults but between adults and children.

Our unprecedented meeting is evidence of the importance we all attach to the Convention. One essential task remains—to incorporate the provisions of the Convention into the domestic laws of our countries, and particularly to ensure that they are complied with. That is a challenge commensurate with our hopes for a better world.

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**Statement by the Amir of the STATE OF KUWAIT,  
His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah**

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(interpretation from Arabic)

After our objective and concerned discussion of the issues pertaining to children in the World Summit, which we believe to be the beginning of wide-ranging governmental and popular action on behalf of the children of the world, I should like to express our appreciation for the convening of such a Summit in this venue, a true international forum. By calling for such a Summit, international co-operation between the third world and the developed countries becomes clear and vivid. That indeed is the character of the coming era. It is international co-operation for peace, freedom, and the right of peoples to self-determination.

The question of child care is virtually synonymous with caring for family and society. Children are society's real assets and its hope for the future. If we are to seek a world with greater magnanimity, tolerance and growth, we must emphasize children's importance and rights. They are part and parcel of human rights.

To children in many parts of the world, Kuwait has offered what it could in various areas by helping world organizations concerned for international child care financially, medically and educationally. Kuwait has also fostered and hosted the Kuwaiti Society for the Advancement of Arab Children, which is primarily concerned with Arab children. Our perception of children and childhood is one of interest in humanity and the fulfillment of its needs in the areas of mental health and social care. Our common human values call for the utmost attention to be paid to children, family relations and parenthood, just as our spiritual values call for living in peace, safety and assistance to others whenever possible. That is indeed the teaching of all religions.

As we meet today to discuss the case of children world-wide, which is an issue that concerns us all, I should like to remind you and the entire world that our children, the children of Kuwait, are being subjected to agony and hardship. Their mothers are being tormented and violated. The entire society of Kuwait is being made homeless and displaced. The children of Kuwait enjoyed great attention, and we were keen to provide the best attention to them, believing as we do that they are the assets and resources of the future.

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## **Statement by the Secretary of State of the HOLY SEE, His Eminence Agostino Cardinal Casaroli**

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(interpretation from French)

It is a great honour for me to convey the greetings and best wishes of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the distinguished Heads of State and Government who are participating in the World Summit for Children.

On this occasion, the Holy See would like to solemnly restate its continuing commitment to work for the benefit of those who have so rightly been called the "Springtime of Life".

Children bring to us the benefit of their love, of their trust, of their acceptance of our attempts to respond to their needs as truly human persons whose well-being brings with it the promise of the well-being of society as a whole.

Although with some reservations stemming from serious concerns of an ethical nature which it has always honestly made present, the Holy See's prompt accession to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child shows the Church's firm resolve to continue its two-thousand-year history of unstinting efforts and to collaborate with the whole of mankind—independently of differences in race, culture, faith or conviction—for the true and complete welfare of all the children of the world. In each child the Church, in effect, sees the dignity of a child of God, made in his own image and likeness, endowed from the beginning of his or her existence, already in the mother's womb, with innate and inalienable rights.

In various quarters concern has been expressed about the large increase of population in some parts of the world, while in other regions a considerable fall in the number of births points to a continuing aging of the population, with a growing lack of creative energies and a foreseeable decline of ancient, noble civilizations.

In the face of one and the other of these situations, which need to be considered in a broad and serious global and historical vision, the Holy See reaffirms its absolute conviction that the very grave problems can be solved only on the basis of clear and solid moral principles. These principles, it is convinced, are valid both for those responsible for national and international life, as well as for individual families, whose role and freedom must be acknowledged and respected, in order to avoid the danger of open or veiled intrusions of the State which might threaten the freedom or moral character of peoples.

Much has been done on behalf of the child. But the Holy See hopes and fervently wishes that all Governments and the appropriate international organizations—especially UNICEF—as well as religious agencies and voluntary bodies, will work with renewed commitment to promote programmes aimed at offsetting infant mortality and improving the life prospects of children and mothers around the world, particularly where needs are greatest.

May God bless all the children of the world! May he give us hearts large enough to embrace children everywhere, and hands strong enough to protect them and to help them!

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**Statement by the President of EL SALVADOR,  
His Excellency Lic. Alfredo Félix Cristiani-Burkard**

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(interpretation from Spanish)

When we were invited to take part in this meeting, we accepted enthusiastically, because we felt it could adopt important agreements to resolve or at least to alleviate, in the short term, the serious problems affecting our children, which prevent them from developing and, at times, even from living—although they have a right to live.

Today, we see with great satisfaction that there is an awareness of, and a general interest in overcoming, these problems. These have been embodied in a Declaration and Plan of Action, which we enthusiastically support.

In the course of the day, we have heard about the many problems which exist with regard to children all over the world, and our country is not immune to many of them. We have internal conflict, where we see children being mutilated by mines; very, very young children with guns in their hands; and, of course, the destruction which war entails.

Ours is a small country, and it has a high population density. And, of course, poverty exists in our country; indeed, we are among the poorest countries in Latin America. Nevertheless, in El Salvador we have been able to do something. With the assistance of UNICEF, we have been able to inoculate more than 80 per cent of the children, and I take this opportunity to thank UNICEF and the United Nations for their solidarity with Salvadoran children. The Government has also undertaken to solve all problems of the family, including those of children, and, for the first time in El Salvador, we now have a family agency which works under the presidency of the Republic.

The problems of children cannot wait. They call for immediate action. We have heard here in this forum that the solutions are known. They are known to all of us, and we believe that with the two essential ingredients—the political will of each one of us and international solidarity—we will be able to do a great deal. In moral and legal terms, we have the obligation to act promptly, and that is why we will support and we will applaud anything done to implement and follow up the results of this Summit.

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**Statement by the Prime Minister of SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS,  
His Excellency The Hon. Dr. Kennedy A. Simmonds**

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Today's proceedings have indicated that there is a vast variety of issues and perspectives for the international development of children. However, if we are successfully to implement actions and do the things that need to be done, then these perspectives must be reduced to the national level and, even further, be implemented at the community level in each of our countries. In order to do that, I believe it is essential for us to mobilize public support and participation, by clear practical demonstration of our own political will and leadership.

Since the independence of Saint Kitts and Nevis in 1983, I have led my Cabinet on each anniversary in a sponsored walkathon to raise funds to support the Children's Home and the disabled. Each of us can determine how to demonstrate that personal and political commitment in our own way.

It is clear that the health of our children is the key to their development, and to ensure that development, we must continue our programmes of immunization, family planning and pre-natal care. But we must also address the psychological health of our children, which includes the provision of adequate recreation facilities, counselling, and career guidance.

I support the plea made earlier by my colleague the Prime Minister of Dominica for greater assistance in the provision of housing, so that an environment conducive to development may be created.

The implementation programme must address the nutrition of our children. A school-meals programme was introduced in my country, and I was greatly concerned by the fact that there appeared to be very little interest in assisting us to implement it.

Obviously, economic development and the development of our infrastructure are key factors in the general economic climate in which our children grow up. However, it is not possible to evaluate everything on the basis of the rate of economic return; there must be greater sensitivity to the issues of social development, including the provision of school meals, early-childhood education, and the provision of day-care facilities—a necessity as we face the reality of working mothers in today's society.

Better co-ordination between governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations is an issue of extreme relevance in some countries, where international organizations seem reluctant to support agencies and where, therefore, Governments carry great responsibility for implementing programmes.

I should like to make a specific proposal: that UNICEF be mandated to establish, with the help of various Governments, a series of regional workshops, which would bring together the governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations involved in the provision of development assistance for children. These workshops would develop specific plans and programmes on the ground, and the personnel would be assisted to implement them. It would be possible to derive from that a model for each type of society. For example, I should be prepared to make my country available as the

location for a workshop that would address these issues as they relate to developing island countries. A country in southern Africa could be selected to do likewise for sub-Saharan Africa.

Finally, we should intensify international efforts against drug trafficking and organize a conference similar to this one, possibly in two years' time, to evaluate our performance following this event.

**Statement by the President of PANAMA,  
His Excellency Lic. Guillermo Endara Galimany**

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(interpretation from Spanish)

I have a written statement for this occasion, but I must admit that previous speakers have addressed all the aspects we find here. This has been done very clearly and cogently by people who are much better at this than I am. Hence, with regard above all to the theme "Implementation and follow-up", I shall refer to those words that have had major impact, at least in the case of my own delegation.

When the distinguished President of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Mr. Havel, referred to the rights of children under a dictatorship, I was moved deep in my soul. The statement by the Prime Minister of Poland that under a dictatorship, children and young people suffer more than grown-ups was also a major truth.

This major task was initiated by, and has been undertaken with great assistance from, the Group of Seven. For that, I thank them. It would be a good idea to consider President Havel's proposal that there be added to the Convention on the Rights of the Child a clause giving special protection and rights to children living under dictatorial régimes.

Panama has come out of a dictatorship, and I know that the youth of my country do not want another one—indeed, that they would not live under another dictatorship. But we knew, when we were emerging from such a régime, that we had to fight for freedom and democracy throughout the world. We must fight against dictatorships all over the world because we are all interdependent. That is why I ask the Secretary-General to distribute to all countries participating in this Summit a copy of President Havel's excellent proposal for amendment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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**Statement by the Chairman  
of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council  
of the REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN,  
His Excellency Lt. Gen. Omer Hassan Ahmed El Bashir**

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(interpretation from Arabic)

It augurs well for our work that this conference coincides with the anniversary of the birth of the prophet Mohammed. May peace be upon him whose message made the love and protection of children part and parcel of the religion of Islam.

I want to talk about the children who live in difficult circumstances, of whom the children of Sudan are an example. The starting point of Sudan's efforts to safeguard the rights of children in general and those in difficult circumstances in particular is our political commitment to their sacred right to life, protection and development. We are meeting this commitment by giving children priority in all our efforts and in all circumstances. Sudan was one of the first countries to ratify the charter on the rights of the Arab child. We have ratified also the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have undertaken proper scientific preparation for implementation of that Convention by means of legislation, the use of resources, the provision of services, and national strategy towards meeting world targets in the areas of health, pure drinking water, basic education, the provision of the basic needs of mother and child and the establishment of a national council for the welfare of children.

Sudan's achievements in the two major areas of child protection clearly demonstrate the results that may be achieved through political commitment, sound planning and international management and co-operation. Those two areas are: first, Sudan's unprecedented initiative, known as "Lifeline Operation", which has been undertaken in the context of international co-operation under the auspices of the United Nations and, in its first phase, under the capable supervision of the Executive Director of UNICEF. The aim has been the provision of food and medication to civilians in zones of military operation in the South, particularly children and mothers, regardless of security considerations as we give the protection of children the highest priority over any other consideration.

Second, the comprehensive campaign of immunization, which I have led personally in line with the decision by the Revolutionary Council. I have immunized the first child in the capital and in a number of provinces. Thanks to this campaign, the rate of immunization has been increased from 30 per cent in 1985 to more than 50 per cent at the end of 1989. We are still striving to meet the world objective by the end of this year.

On the occasion of the convening of this Conference and as a result of our concern for the protection of Sudanese children, I hereby declare a period of tranquillity until the end of this year so that all children can be immunized. If some of the rebels respond positively to our call, we would be prepared to declare a permanent cease-fire and

continue to negotiate in search of peace. We look forward to more responsible international co-operation that would enable us to implement our programmes dedicated to children.

At a time when we join hands and undertake to protect children, I may be permitted to ask: and who will protect the stone-throwing children whose voice is stifled in the occupied Palestinian territories? We call for an international political commitment in accordance with the statements in the Convention, in the Declaration and in the Plan of Action in order to bring happiness to the children of the world and safeguard their future.

Thank you.

**Statement by the Prime Minister of the REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE,  
His Excellency Mr. Lunda Bululu**

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(interpretation from French)

In the field of the protection of children, my country has worked for many years to set up an institutional framework to provide children with legal, health and educational protection. Legally speaking, our protection of children is based on a number of legal instruments which, in many respects, provide for the concerns expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Zaire ratified on 22 August last. As regards the family, all laws are based on a fundamental political principle that each child must have a father. Every child, whether born in or out of wedlock, has the right to equal protection by society. From the point of view of health, a sectoral strategy has been set up. There are a number of projects which deal specifically with the health of children. These include an expanded programme of vaccination, national centres for nutrition, adequate birth services and the rural and urban health centres, with their eight components. From the educational point of view, my Government has sought to establish free primary and secondary education.

Since 28 April 1990, Zaire has resolutely embarked upon the course of the democratization of its institutions. A new political climate, we are confident, will establish conditions capable of guaranteeing the full flourishing of the child, thanks to the equality of opportunity provided for them. We are quite sure that our efforts to provide children with harmonious development of their capabilities are not adequate. That is why we very much hope that this Summit will help set up new political strategies to provide children with a radiant future as we approach the year 2000.

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**Statement by the Chairman of the Presidium  
of the Supreme Soviet  
of the BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC,  
His Excellency Mr. Nikolai Ivanovich Dementei**

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(interpretation from Russian)

All of us who have gathered here are united by our desire to give the children of the world a better future. This lofty goal is promoted by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted last year, which the Byelorussian SSR has ratified, as well as by the draft Universal Declaration for Children and the Plan of Action to implement it, drawn up just before this meeting, which are also designed to promote that aim. We believe the commitment contained in the draft Declaration to ameliorate the plight of millions of children who live under especially difficult circumstances, and to meet the needs of the victims of man-made disasters to be of special importance. I see this as further evidence of the concern shown for the children of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the Russian Republic who suffered as a result of the Chernobyl accident. As a result of that accident, radioactive substances were expelled into the atmosphere to an extent several times greater than was the case with the explosion of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima. Seventy per cent of those radioactive substances fell over our long-suffering land. The Parliament of the Republic proclaimed the entire territory of the Republic an ecological-disaster zone. Among the urgent purposes and tasks of our programme to eliminate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, the protection of the health and well-being of all people and particularly children has first place. Our Supreme Soviet recently adopted a Declaration on the State Sovereignty of the Byelorussian SSR, which emphasized this very point.

The magnitude of the disaster that struck our people and the fraternal peoples of the Ukraine and Russia was so enormous and unprecedented that co-ordinated international action was needed to help, particularly within the framework of the United Nations. In this connection, we place great hope in the decisions that the General Assembly is about to take at its forty-fifth session.

I wish, on behalf of thousands of mothers and fathers, to thank all who have offered their help. I convey my thanks to all of you. I thank you, and I bow to you.

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**Statement by the Prime Minister of SAINT LUCIA,  
His Excellency The Hon. John G.M. Compton**

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Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me congratulate you and the other initiators of this Summit for bringing us together in what is the parliament of the world.

It is a good thing for us to meet here because just across the street you can see the words written in a tablet of stone that "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks". Perhaps at this meeting we should update that a little bit and speak about converting our bombs into books and our spy satellites into lecture rooms, because, as men have now eaten from the tree of knowledge, we have available to us an awesome array of instruments which can abolish from the face of this Earth man's ancient enemies, ignorance, poverty, hunger and disease, which very often are the root causes of war, and the children are the greatest victims.

If we of the developing world are to catch up and give our children an opportunity in this world, we have to educate them. Let me just quote from an ancient Chinese proverb, which says, "If you are to plan for one year, you plant rice; if you are planning for five years, you plant trees; if you are planning for a generation and for the future, you educate your children".

I believe that is the task before us today, and that is what I invite this historic assembly to endorse.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Statement by the President of the REPUBLIC OF MALI,  
His Excellency General Moussa Traoré,  
Co-President of the World Summit for Children**

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(interpretation from French)

We have had a very rich debate, which has enabled us to focus on the whole range of problems confronting children throughout the world. Questions involving the survival, protection and development of children have been considered.

We have all remembered that we have all been children ourselves. Today we are not only fathers and mothers but also, and above all, the leaders of this planet. In that capacity we bear a dual and heavy responsibility: on the one hand, for meeting the aspirations of our peoples and, on the other hand, for building the future.

The child is at the centre of those two objectives and of the primary concerns of any family and any society. A Malian song goes: "Children are not merchandise. They cannot be bought. They are a gift of God".

We cannot build a future without concerning ourselves with children and meeting their aspirations. What do children want? First of all, they want love, as well as peace and security, without which nothing can be done. Then they want their rights to be preserved—first and foremost the right to food, to health, to education, to housing and, above all, hope. Lastly, they want justice, equity and a healthy environment in which they can fully develop.

The Declaration and the Plan of Action, which are the outcome of a far-reaching and world-wide consensus, can meet those expectations. All that is needed is for the political will that has made possible the holding of this unprecedented Summit to take concrete form also in following up and, above all, implementing the Declaration and the Plan of Action.

Our World Summit for Children has already aroused great hope among children and among all people of good will who work for children and for mothers—and mothers must necessarily be involved in anything done for the benefit of children.

The non-governmental organizations of the whole world have asked me to convey to those assembled here the message that they are available to work in following up the Summit and implementing the Plan of Action, in close co-operation with Governments and international organizations.

We must all seize this unique opportunity to advance the peace and happiness of mankind by translating into concrete actions the political will that has been so evident during this Summit.

The closing decade of this century must be the decade of children so that the twenty-first century can be the century of peace, prosperity and well-being to which mankind aspires.

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**Statement by the Prime Minister of SWEDEN,  
His Excellency Mr. Ingvar Carlsson,  
to Introduce the Draft Declaration and Plan of Action**

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Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, Heads of State and Government, ladies and gentlemen, this Summit has already become a historic event. Never before have so many Heads of State and Government come together for one single meeting. But also—never before has such an important topic been the subject of a world summit: a better future for all children. So we are making history today.

On behalf of all the participants I want to thank you, Prime Minister Mulroney, and you, President Traoré, for the excellent way in which you have presided over us. You have been firm but friendly.

The real importance of this meeting will be measured by the results which emanate from it. So the question is: What happens next?

We have in front of us a draft Declaration and a draft Plan of Action, which have been prepared to answer that question.

The draft Declaration presents a challenge and an opportunity. It deals with the tasks we face and also presents a commitment to act.

To build a better future for the world's children touches upon all aspects of human activities. During the important early years, human beings are dependent on, and need, a supportive and enabling environment. In that period, we grow and gain strength—if we get enough food and clean drinking water; if we are protected from illnesses, abuses and violence; if we are sheltered from heat, cold and rain. In this period we form our personalities; we develop our life skills; our minds mature as we are cared for, loved, encouraged, stimulated and educated.

This period is childhood. It is the unique part of a person's life when that person's future is formed.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasizes respect for each child's need for protection, provision and participation. It urges us to safeguard the best interests of the child, in good times as well as in bad. This requires political decisions. It requires priorities for children.

We live in a year of great changes in world politics. Confrontation and rearmament are replaced by dialogue and disarmament. Never has there been a better time for shifting resources from engines of war and destruction towards that human development that has its roots in children.

The draft Declaration lists the tasks in front of us and suggests a ten-point commitment. In the Plan of Action, a very precise agenda has been spelled out.

The text deals with health and education; with poverty and environment. It deals with casualties of war and violence; with resources for development. It deals with the role of the family; with the role of women; with the special situation of the girl child.

But this time, this text is more than just words. It represents a commitment to take action: a commitment for each of us, in our nations, but also together in joint efforts.

To this commitment we will be held accountable—and rightly so.

Reporters will soon ask us: What did you do? Our voters will eventually ask the same. And our children will eagerly put the same question.

Judging from the discussions today, at the World Summit for Children, I am sure that we will be able to answer these questions, both in substance and in words.

And therefore it is an honour for me to propose that the participants in this Summit adopt the draft World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children.

*Prime Minister Mulroney:* I thank Prime Minister Carlsson, who has proposed the adoption of this momentous Declaration and Plan of Action for the 1990s and beyond. I will now call upon six young people to read the draft Declaration before this assembly. Each child will read a passage of the Declaration in one of the six official languages of the United Nations. I call on our young readers.

*The World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children was read aloud by six children, in their respective languages.*

(French)

*"World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children*

- "1. We have gathered at the World Summit for Children to undertake a joint commitment and to make an urgent universal appeal—to give every child a better future.*
- "2. The children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy and peace, of playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and co-operation. Their lives should mature, as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experiences.*
- "3. But for many children, the reality of childhood is altogether different.*

*"The challenge*

- "4. Each day, countless children around the world are exposed to dangers that hamper their growth and development. They suffer immensely as casualties of war and violence; as victims of racial discrimination, apartheid, aggression, foreign occupation and annexation; as refugees and displaced children, forced to abandon their homes and their roots; as disabled; or as victims of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.*
- "5. Each day, millions of children suffer from the scourges of poverty and economic crisis—from hunger and homelessness, from epidemics and illiteracy, from degradation of the environment. They suffer from the grave effects of the problems of external indebtedness and also from the lack of sustained and sustainable growth in many developing countries, particularly the least developed ones.*
- "6. Each day, 40,000 children die from malnutrition and disease, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), from the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation and from the effects of the drug problem.*
- "7. These are challenges that we, as political leaders, must meet.*

(Russian)

"The opportunity

- "8. *Together, our nations have the means and knowledge to protect the lives and to diminish enormously the suffering of children, to promote the full development of their human potential and to make them aware of their needs, rights and opportunities. The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a new opportunity to make respect for children's rights and welfare truly universal.*
- "9. *Recent improvements in the international political climate can facilitate this task. Through international co-operation and solidarity it should now be possible to achieve concrete results in many fields—to revitalize economic growth and development, to protect the environment, to prevent the spread of fatal and crippling diseases and to achieve greater social and economic justice. The current moves towards disarmament also mean that significant resources could be released for purposes other than military ones. Improving the well-being of children must be a very high priority when these resources are reallocated.*

"The task

- "10. *Enhancement of children's health and nutrition is a first duty, and also a task for which solutions are now within reach. The lives of tens of thousands of boys and girls can be saved every day, because the causes of their death are readily preventable. Child and infant mortality is unacceptably high in many parts of the world, but can be lowered dramatically with means that are already known and easily accessible.*
- "11. *Further attention, care and support should be accorded to disabled children, as well as to other children in very difficult circumstances.*

(Spanish)

- "12. *Strengthening the role of women in general and ensuring their equal rights will be to the advantage of the world's children. Girls must be given equal treatment and opportunities from the very beginning.*
- "13. *At present, over 100 million children are without basic schooling, and two thirds of them are girls. The provision of basic education and literacy for all are among the most important contributions that can be made to the development of the world's children.*
- "14. *Half a million mothers die each year from causes related to childbirth. Safe motherhood must be promoted in all possible ways. Emphasis must be placed on responsible planning of family size and on child spacing. The family, as a fundamental group and natural environment for the growth and well-being of children, should be given all necessary protection and assistance.*

- "15. All children must be given the chance to find their identity and realize their worth in a safe and supportive environment, through families and other care-givers committed to their welfare. They must be prepared for responsible life in a free society. They should, from their early years, be encouraged to participate in the cultural life of their societies.*
- "16. Economic conditions will continue to influence greatly the fate of children, especially in developing nations. For the sake of the future of all children, it is urgently necessary to ensure or reactivate sustained and sustainable economic growth and development in all countries and also to continue to give urgent attention to an early, broad and durable solution to the external debt problems facing developing debtor countries.*
- "17. These tasks require a continued and concerted effort by all nations, through national action and international co-operation.*

(Arabic)

"The commitment

- "18. The well-being of children requires political action at the highest level. We are determined to take that action.*
- "19. We ourselves hereby make a solemn commitment to give high priority to the rights of children, to their survival and to their protection and development. This will also ensure the well-being of all societies.*
- "20. We have agreed that we will act together, in international co-operation, as well as in our respective countries. We now commit ourselves to the following 10-point programme to protect the rights of children and to improve their lives:*
- "(1) We will work to promote the earliest possible ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Programmes to encourage information about children's rights should be launched world-wide, taking into account the distinct cultural and social values in different countries.*
- "(2) We will work for a solid effort of national and international action to enhance children's health, to promote prenatal care and to lower infant and child mortality in all countries and among all peoples. We will promote the provision of clean water in all communities for all their children, as well as universal access to sanitation.*
- "(3) We will work for optimal growth and development in childhood, through measures to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and famine, and thus to relieve millions of children of tragic sufferings in a world that has the means to feed all its citizens.*
- "(4) We will work to strengthen the role and status of women. We will promote responsible planning of family size, child spacing, breastfeeding and safe motherhood.*

(Chinese)

- "(5) We will work for respect for the role of the family in providing for children and will support the efforts of parents, other care-givers and communities to nurture and care for children, from the earliest stages of childhood through adolescence. We also recognize the special needs of children who are separated from their families.
- "(6) We will work for programmes that reduce illiteracy and provide educational opportunities for all children, irrespective of their background and gender; that prepare children for productive employment and lifelong learning opportunities, i.e., through vocational training; and that enable children to grow to adulthood within a supportive and nurturing cultural and social context.
- "(7) We will work to ameliorate the plight of millions of children who live under especially difficult circumstances—as victims of apartheid and foreign occupation; orphans and street children and children of migrant workers; the displaced children and victims of natural and man-made disasters; the disabled and the abused, the socially disadvantaged and the exploited. Refugee children must be helped to find new roots in life. We will work for special protection of the working child and for the abolition of illegal child labour. We will do our best to ensure that children are not drawn into becoming victims of the scourge of illicit drugs.
- "(8) We will work carefully to protect 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. We will promote the values of peace, understanding and dialogue in the education of children. The essential needs of children and families must be protected even in times of war and in violence-ridden areas. We ask that periods of tranquillity and special relief corridors be observed for the benefit of children, where war and violence are still taking place.

(English)

- "(9) We will work for common measures for the protection of the environment, at all levels, so that all children can enjoy a safer and healthier future.
- "(10) 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 developing countries, and in particular the least developed ones, deserve priority. But growth and development need promotion in all States, through national action and international co-operation. That calls for transfers of appropriate additional resources to developing countries as well as improved terms of trade, further trade liberalization and measures for debt relief. It also implies

*structural adjustments that promote world economic growth, particularly in developing countries, while ensuring the well-being of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, in particular the children.*

"The next steps

- "21. *The World Summit for Children has presented us with a challenge to take action. We have agreed to take up that challenge.*
- "22. *Among the partnerships we seek, we turn especially to children themselves. We appeal to them to participate in this effort.*
- "23. *We also seek the support of the United Nations system, as well as other international and regional organizations, in the universal effort to promote the well-being of children. We ask for greater involvement on the part of non-governmental organizations in complementing national efforts and joint international action in this field.*
- "24. *We have decided to adopt and implement a Plan of Action, as a framework for more specific national and international undertakings. We appeal to all our colleagues to endorse that Plan. We are prepared to make available the resources to meet these commitments, as part of the priorities of our national plans.*
- "25. *We do this not only for the present generation, but for all generations to come. There can be no task nobler than giving every child a better future.*

*"New York, 30 September 1990."*

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## Adoption and Signature

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*Prime Minister Mulroney:* Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, children: First of all, may I ask you to join me in a special word of congratulations to a remarkable group of young people who have done a tremendous job this afternoon.

This is a happy, but solemn, occasion because the Declaration and the Plan of Action, which we are about to adopt, represent the promise of world leaders to succeeding generations.

It is our pledge to protect the future of this planet by ensuring the special well-being of all children by providing as best nations can for every child.

The draft Declaration and Plan of Action are the result of careful and extensive negotiations. They represent the consensus of Governments from all regions of the world, all cultural traditions, economic conditions, religious beliefs and political systems.

May I take it that it is the solemn wish of all the Heads of State or Government participating in this World Summit to adopt by acclamation the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for Implementing the Declaration in the 1990s?

*It was so decided.*

*Prime Minister Mulroney:* It is fitting that we have invited young people to witness the historic signing of the Declaration and then to take symbolic custody of this document. The realization of their full potential and that of their peers for decades to come will be the ultimate testament to the success of the efforts we undertake today.

I now invite President Traoré to join me in signing the Declaration in testament to its adoption by the Heads of State or Government here assembled.

*President Traoré and Prime Minister Mulroney jointly signed separate copies of the Declaration on the podium.*

*Prime Minister Mulroney:* Before there is a final word, on your behalf I want to express a special word of thanks to Mayor Dinkins of New York City and to the City of New York and all the members of the various policing institutions—from the police of the City of New York to the secret service—all of whom have looked after us so well. I want to offer them special thanks.

I also want to pay a special tribute to an individual who has come to represent the very best of what the United Nations is and has become. He was here during its greatest challenges from the beginning and then, over the period of years, at moments, in my judgement, of its greatest accomplishments. I refer to an individual who is again with us today and without whose support this day would not have been possible: the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

And so we have come, colleagues, to the end of this Summit, an important step on the road to better lives, we all hope, for the children of the world. We have issued a Declaration, and we have endorsed a Plan of Action. A better world for children is within our reach, but as many of the Heads of Government pointed out today, it is not yet within our grasp.

It is too early to say whether or not this Summit has indeed been a success. Its success will be measured in two, in five, or in ten years—in terms of whether our nations, individually or collectively, attain the aims they have set for themselves. It will depend on the number of deaths we prevent, the number of lives we improve, and the extent to which children's right to life is respected and their interests are protected.

Our efforts are directed towards the best of all possible causes: the future of our children. It is time, as many of you have said, to match our words with action. The real work starts now.

I declare this Summit over. God bless you all.

**REPORT TO  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**PRESENTATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION ADOPTED  
BY WORLD LEADERS AT THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN**

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**Report by the Prime Minister of CANADA,  
His Excellency The Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney,  
Co-President of the World Summit for Children**

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On behalf of my Co-President, President Traoré of Mali, I have the honour to submit a report on our deliberations this weekend.

No one suffers more from poverty than children. And never has that suffering been more evident to the people of the world. Everyday, 365 days a year, 40,000 children around the world die entirely preventable deaths. Millions more go hungry or are denied education or are abused.

Seventy-one world leaders came to New York this weekend to do something about the suffering these numbers represent. Yesterday's gathering of world leaders shed greater light on some of the world's darkest secrets: child hunger, poverty, homelessness, disease, exploitation and illiteracy. We saw the faces of joy as well as the tears of pain in the video produced for the Summit.

We discussed issues never before on a Summit agenda—childhood diseases, family planning, the responsibility of parents towards children.

No one who came to this Summit is satisfied with the status quo. We all agreed that the problems confronting the world's children must be addressed urgently. The question is not simply that of poverty; many are neglected in affluent modern societies as well. We also found that the healthy development of children involves a number of aspects—economic, medical and technological.

On a subject that lends itself so easily to generalizations, the goal of the Summit was to catalyze practical action by Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and families—who will always have the major responsibility to provide a loving environment for the children of the world. The objective was to move the issue of children higher up on the policy agendas of all participating countries.

At the Conference, 71 world leaders, including leaders who will follow me to the rostrum—the President of Mexico, the President of the United States and others—endorsed a common Declaration and an important Plan of Action.

In the Declaration, they pledged to obey ten main principles covering all of the areas from immunization to clean water, touching upon planned parenthood and the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Words don't fix problems, especially problems as pervasive and persistent as child poverty. But around the world in the past two years, voices lifted in hope and determination have summoned individuals in the millions to acts of courage and determination that have inspired us all.

With the cold war over and the United Nations functioning in magnificent style, as its architects envisioned it would, with Germany uniting and the Soviet Union undergoing profound reforms, it is clear that humanity is capable of profound change and new directions. The lesson is that our past does not have to dictate our destiny, that new futures are possible if we set our minds to the task.

The endorsement of the Declaration and the Plan of Action this weekend was an indispensable step to bringing all Governments to act. It would be premature to say the Summit was a success. The true success of the Summit will be discernible only in the years ahead, as nations implement their commitments and invest strategically in their most valuable resource, their children.

I have already been in contact with the heads of the major multilateral financial institutions, and their response has been most encouraging. Already, the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and other, regional banks is shifting to complement the efforts of national Governments.

The World Bank's intention to increase its lending for primary health care to 5 per cent of its total lending will mean half a billion dollars a year for primary education and basic health measures. This increase should make a most important contribution in improving the lives of children, particularly children in developing countries, who so urgently and desperately need the help not only of lending agencies but of every person in the Assembly today. By bringing the leaders of the world to a common determination to take up this challenge, the Summit, largely a creation of Jim Grant and his excellent staff at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has given the issue of children some important impetus. And now political will must keep the ball rolling.

It is my privilege to join with my Co-President, President Traoré, in presenting the Conference Declaration to the President of the General Assembly. On behalf of the 71 world leaders who have signed them, we sincerely commend these documents to all of you, to all countries, to the United Nations and to its constituent agencies and to communities everywhere.

May I once again express the gratitude of all members, and that of the 71 leaders who participated, to the Secretary-General and his remarkable staff for their contribution, to Jim Grant and all the people of UNICEF for having made it such a marvellous success. My thanks to all of you.

**Statement by the President  
of the UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY,  
His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco (MALTA)**

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It will give me great pleasure to accept the Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted by world leaders at the World Summit for Children.

It is for me a source of deep satisfaction that my term as President of the General Assembly coincides with the holding of the World Summit for Children. The gathering this weekend of 71 Heads of State and Government to apply their wisdom, vision and political commitment to goals and strategies for the survival, protection and development of children throughout the world is a unique occasion. It signifies the determination to act in concert on behalf of the millions of suffering children, not only out of a feeling of compassion but as an expression of political will and regard for improving the human condition of children.

In assessment of the Organization's achievements, the adoption by the General Assembly on 20 November 1989 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which came into force on 2 September, is generally recognized as a landmark event which embodies a comprehensive list of goals for the well-being of children.

I am convinced that the adoption of the Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, along with a very specific Plan of Action, by the participants in the World Summit for Children will accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I should like to extend my warm congratulations to the six initiating Governments of the World Summit which, with the support of UNICEF, organized the Summit. I also wish to pay tribute to our Secretary-General, who provided the good offices of the United Nations in support of this historic initiative.

The well-being of children was the theme of the Summit. Let us seek to harmonize and renew our efforts so that we may hand on to the "succeeding generations", to which our Charter appropriately refers, a world in which starvation, disease, poverty and privation are memories of the past and not the inheritance of the future.

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