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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION CONCERNING  
DISABLED PERSONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF DISABLED  
PERSONS**

**Report of the Third Committee**

**Rapporteur: Mr. Carlos CASAJUANA (Spain)**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1988, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in its agenda the item entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.
2. The Third Committee considered the item jointly with items 89, 90, 93, 107 and 144 at its 15th to 22nd, 25th and 31st meetings, on 20, 21, 24 to 26 and 31 October and 3 November 1988. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/43/SR.15-22, 25 and 31).
3. The Committee had before it the following documentation:
  - (a) Report of the Economic and Social Council for the year 1988, chapter V, section C (A/43/3); 1/

1/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/43/3).

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (A/43/634 and Add.1).

4. At the 15th meeting, on 20 October 1988, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, Head of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and the Director of the Social Development Division of the Centre made introductory statements (see A/C.3/43/SR.15).

## II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.3/43/L.20

5. At the 25th meeting, on 31 October, the representative of the Philippines introduced draft resolution A/C.3/43/L.20, entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons", sponsored by Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Italy, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Senegal, the Sudan, Sweden, the United States of America, Yugoslavia and Zimbabwe, subsequently joined by Bangladesh, Cameroon, Denmark, Guatemala and Kenya and orally revised paragraph 1 (i) of the annex by deleting the words "have sign language accepted as their official language, and to" after the words "including the right to". Samoa later joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At the 31st meeting, on 3 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/43/L.20 without a vote (see para. 7).

## III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

7. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

### Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its relevant resolutions, including resolution 37/52 of 3 December 1982, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, 2/ and resolution 37/53 of 3 December 1982, by which it, inter alia, proclaimed the period 1983-1992 the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons,

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2/ A/37/351/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation 1 (IV).

Recalling its resolution 42/58 of 30 November 1987 and reaffirming all of its relevant provisions,

Noting with appreciation that an interregional meeting of representatives of national disability committees will be held in early 1989 to exchange views and information on enhancing the capabilities of such committees,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/45 of 27 May 1988, by which it, inter alia, reiterated the need to launch a special global awareness and fund-raising campaign to give added momentum to the Decade, and in this regard, welcomed the appointment by the Secretary-General of the Special Representative for the Promotion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons

Noting the important work currently being undertaken by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on human rights and disability, which could serve as a useful basis for the continued efforts to ensure for disabled persons the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Bearing in mind that the mid-decade review to evaluate the implementation of the World Programme of Action was conducted so that a list of priorities could be established for planning global activities and programmes during the remainder of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and beyond, 3/

Taking into account the concrete measures already carried out by the Governments of Member States, the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to implement the objectives of the World Programme of Action within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, and recognizing that much more should be done to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities,

Mindful that Member States bear the ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the World Programme of Action,

Recognizing the pivotal role of the United Nations in promoting the exchange of information, experience and expertise and closer regional and interregional co-operation towards more effective strategies and policies to advance the status and welfare of persons with disabilities,

Stressing that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat is the focal point within the United Nations for the implementation and monitoring of the World Programme of Action,

Noting with appreciation the steps taken by the United Nations system and by the non-governmental organizations concerned to monitor the implementation of the World Programme of Action,

3/ See CSDHA/DDP/GME/7.

Concerned that, at the mid-point of the Decade, the resource base of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons is significantly reduced from that prevailing during the first half of the Decade, and that unless this trend is reversed and the resource capacities of the Fund are strengthened, many priority requests will not be met and the implementation of the World Programme of Action will be seriously affected,

Mindful that, since developing countries are experiencing difficulties in mobilizing resources, international co-operation should be encouraged to assist in national efforts to implement the World Programme of Action and to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, 4/

1. Reaffirms the validity of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons;
2. Stresses that for the second half of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, special emphasis should be placed on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons;
3. Urges Member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned to translate into action at all levels, as appropriate, the priorities for global activities and programmes during the second half of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, such as those set forth in the annex to the present resolution;
4. Renews its invitation to all States to give high priority to projects concerning the prevention of disabilities, rehabilitation and the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons within the framework of bilateral assistance, as well as financial support to strengthen organizations of disabled people;
5. Invites Governments to participate actively in the international co-operation with a view to improving the living conditions of disabled persons by encouraging professional experts, in particular disabled persons, in various aspects of rehabilitation and the equalization of opportunity, including those who are in retirement and willing to work with disabled people;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to encourage all organs and bodies of the United Nations, including regional commissions, international organizations and the specialized agencies, to take into account in their programmes and operational activities the specific needs of disabled persons;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to take, among others, the following measures at the United Nations level:

(a) Disseminate widely the text of the World Programme of Action and all manuals and special publications prepared by the United Nations for the International Year of Disabled Persons, 1981, and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons;

(b) Examine possible ways in which United Nations meetings, information materials and documents can be made more accessible to disabled persons and determine the financial implications thereof;

(c) Assist Member States in establishing and strengthening national committees on disability issues and similar co-ordinating bodies;

(d) Promote and support the establishment of strong national organizations of disabled persons;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to conduct a feasibility study on the substantive, financial and administrative implications of alternative ways to mark the end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons in 1992, which would include a review of the global progress achieved and obstacles encountered during the Decade and which would provide a mechanism for preparing the actions needed until the year 2000 and beyond, and to submit the study to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to strengthen the regional commissions to enable them to promote technical co-operation activities and the sharing of national resources for personnel training, the exchange of information, policy and programme development and research and the participation of disabled persons;

10. Endorses the measures proposed by the Secretary-General in his report 4/ to strengthen the programmes and activities of the agencies and bodies of the United Nations system and to improve the co-ordination of inter-agency efforts on behalf of disabled persons;

11. Invites the Secretary-General and Member States to involve disabled persons to a greater extent in United Nations programmes and activities, inter alia, through the provision of employment opportunities;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to consider, within existing resources, alternative structures to ensure that the issue of disability is accorded high visibility and to develop the Disabled Persons Unit of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs as a specialized facilitating agent engaging the available resources of the United Nations system and relevant networks outside the United Nations;

13. Invites the Centre to expand its close collaboration with intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations active in the field of disability, in particular organisations of disabled persons, and to consult with them on a regular and systematic basis on matters relating to the implementation of the World Programme of Action;

14. Calls upon Member States, national committees, the United Nations system and non-governmental organisations to assist in a global information and fund-raising campaign to publicize the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons through all appropriate means;

15. Recognises the important role of non-governmental organisations, especially those representing persons with disabilities, in the effective implementation of the World Programme of Action, in raising international awareness of the concerns of persons with disabilities and in monitoring and evaluating progress achieved during the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons;

16. Requests the Secretary-General to inform the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-first session of the progress of work of the Special Representative for the Promotion of the Decade of Disabled Persons;

17. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to administer donated funds, using them for projects under the present structure of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, and, in addition, to continue to make new provisions in order to offer a selection of projects to donor countries that might be willing to finance a particular programme under the "Special Purpose Contributions";

18. Reaffirms that the resources of the Voluntary Fund should be used to support catalytic and innovative activities in order to implement further the objectives of the World Programme of Action within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, with priority given, as appropriate, to programmes and projects of the least developed countries;

19. Invites Governments and non-governmental organisations to continue their contributions to the Voluntary Fund and calls upon Governments and non-governmental organisations that have not yet done so to consider contributing to the Fund so as to enable it to respond effectively to the growing demand for assistance;

20. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

21. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session the item entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons".

ANNEX

Priorities for global activities and programmes during the second half of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons

1. Member States, which have the main responsibility for the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, are urged:

(a) To develop and implement national plans of action, using a multisectoral, interdisciplinary approach in consultation with organizations of disabled persons;

(b) To promote the development and functioning of organizations of disabled persons by providing technical and financial support;

(c) To establish and/or strengthen national committees or similar co-ordinating bodies;

(d) To launch a public information and education campaign in which disabled persons are portrayed as equal members of society;

(e) To support cultural activities to promote awareness of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons by giving disabled people the opportunity to participate in musical, artistic and drama activities;

(f) To review, update and, where necessary, improve national legislation to ensure general conformity with international standards;

(g) To consider incorporating in their legislation and planning the rights of the disabled, including those of persons who are:

(i) Hearing-impaired, including the right to have sign language interpretation;

(ii) Visually impaired, including access to Braille material, audio aids and large print information;

(iii) Mentally impaired, including access to easy reading materials;

(iv) Speech-impaired, including access to new technologies;

(h) To formulate and implement disability-related projects for inclusion in technical co-operation programmes financed by the United Nations Development Programme through the country programmes funded by the indicative planning figures;

(i) To review and extend services and benefits available to disabled people and their families, aimed at ensuring basic level income maintenance and promoting self-directed personal assistance, housing, transport and other facilities needed for independent living;

(j) To train personnel, including disabled persons, to build a national capability to deal with disability;

(k) To establish machinery for appropriate data collection on disabilities, to be used in national planning;

(l) To use indigenous raw materials, scientific expertise and production facilities for the manufacture and local repair of appropriate technical aids and appliances needed by disabled persons;

(m) To accede to and implement the provisions of the Nairobi Protocol to the Florence Agreement concerning the duty-free international movement of equipment and material needed to assist the daily living of disabled people;

(n) To ratify, if they have not yet done so, International Labour Organisation Convention No. 159 of 1983 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons;

(o) To support research into the special needs of disabled persons and into programmes to benefit them and their families;

(p) To develop services and facilities to promote the rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities of disabled women, elderly disabled people, mentally ill and other mentally impaired people, multiple disabled persons, disabled refugees and disabled migrants.

2. Intergovernmental organizations are urged to give priority to issues concerning disabled persons and to take initiatives to implement the World Programme of Action.

3. Non-governmental organizations, which play an important role in the implementation of the World Programme of Action, are urged during the remainder of the Decade:

(a) To establish regular and systematic contacts with the United Nations system and other non-governmental organizations in collecting and disseminating information and research findings, planning activities and sharing innovative experiences and in maximizing the use of available resources;

(b) To mobilize their networks and resources to publicize the aims and objectives of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons;

(c) To provide regular information on their activities and meetings to the Disabled Persons Unit of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and actively to support its activities.