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

Feasibility study on alternative ways to mark the end of the  
United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 8 of its resolution 43/98 of 8 December 1988, the General Assembly requested 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, including a review of the global progress achieved and obstacles encountered during the Decade, and a mechanism for preparing the actions needed until the year 2000 and beyond. It also requested that the study be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

2. Subsequently, the Secretary-General, with the generous support of the Government of Finland, convened a meeting of experts, held at Järvenpää, Finland, from 7 to 11 May 1990 to advise him on the preparation of the feasibility study. The Secretary-General also took into consideration, in the documentation and discussions at the meeting, views expressed by Member States and bodies of the United Nations system put forward in responses to his note verbale and letters transmitting General Assembly resolution 43/98.

3. The present report, together with the recommendations of the meeting of experts constitute the mandated feasibility study. The report also singles out some of the main recommendations made by the meeting of experts that have appeared in earlier reports but still remain of crucial importance.

4. A detailed agenda for action (1990-1993) at the national, regional and international levels is presented in section III and a preliminary outline of a long-term strategy to the year 2000 and beyond appears in section IV. Both are also based on the recommendations of the meeting of experts and provide additional background information to the recommendations being presented to the Assembly.

## II. PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5. A careful review of the available information and views shows that the Decade has resulted in many significant initiatives to raise global awareness and improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. However, increased efforts are needed to turn awareness into action to arrive at positive changes enabling equal opportunities and full integration of disabled persons in society.

6. Equalization of opportunities is one of the major objectives of social welfare policies, and enables people to use their own potentials, thereby increasing the human capital available for development efforts. "A society for all", while investing in efforts to accommodate all individual differences, strengthens its developmental potential. Priority should be given to disability issues, which must be reconsidered within the broader overall context of the social dimension of development.

7. In order to achieve the objectives of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/37/351/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII,

recommendation 1 (IV)), additional and adequate resources should be made available at all levels to initiate concrete action of direct benefit to people with disabilities.

8. In view of the severe decline in the number of existing national committees, from 147 in 1981 to only 70 by 1987, and the reported weakening of their co-ordinating role, a national evaluation of progress achieved and obstacles encountered should be undertaken by each Member State to review the effectiveness of existing plans, policies, programmes and legislation for disabled persons and to suggest innovative measures for future actions. A major role should be played by national co-ordinating mechanisms, for which there is an urgent need for revitalization in order to provide an institutional framework for designing national policies (see annex I, paras. 9-11 and 26-28).

9. Member States are encouraged to support the international awareness and fund-raising campaign known as the "Global Project" to promote the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (annex I, para. 8).

10. National, regional and international agendas for action during 1990-1993 should be prepared by Member States, regional commissions and specialized agencies, respectively. The main objectives would be to promote greater awareness on disability issues and to enhance the quality of life of disabled persons at the grass-roots level (annex I, paras. 33-36).

11. In conjunction with the second round of monitoring of the implementation of the World Programme of Action at the end of the Decade, examples of good practice should be distributed as a joint system-wide publication of the United Nations (annex I, para. 12).

12. The central message of the World Programme of Action should be made more accessible to all by producing a shortened and simplified version in pamphlet form (annex I, paras. 3-6).

13. The following continuing concerns in the field of disability, which should be considered in the context of a comprehensive social development approach, are still valid and require continued attention:

(a) Action promoting the full integration of the needs, rights and concerns of disabled persons into planning and decision-making at all levels (annex I, paras. 14-17);

(b) Development of comprehensive national legislation should be supported by efforts to prepare an international legal instrument such as standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons (annex I, paras. 29-32);

(c) Taking into account the circumstances of each country, priority should be given to such measures that promote and support the world-wide concept of independent living of people with disabilities (annex I, paras. 18-23);

(d) Disabled persons and their organizations should be recognized and involved in decision-making as equal partners and as an invaluable source of special expertise (annex I, paras. 37-41);

(e) Increased efforts should be encouraged at all levels to guarantee full accessibility of disabled persons to buildings, meetings and information (annex I, paras. 41 and 42);

(f) Increased efforts should be made to address specific needs of disabled women and children, as well as deaf persons, persons with mental disabilities and people with multiple disabilities (annex I, paras. 44-47);

(g) In view of prolonged economic stagnation or decline in many developing countries and its effect on the vulnerable population groups, effective measures to improve the situation of disabled persons should be implemented in multilateral and bilateral development co-operation programmes (annex I, paras. 48-52);

(h) The end-years of the Decade should be marked by activities that would ensure high visibility of disability issues and, additionally, would provide an optimistic and active transition to the years beyond the Decade (annex I, paras. 53-63).

14. As a major activity to mark the end of the Decade, the General Assembly may wish to consider the proposal of the meeting of experts for a ministerial-level world conference to be convened subject to identification of a host country that would meet the full costs of the meeting. In view of a number of international events already scheduled for 1992, such a conference should be convened in 1993 (annex I, paras. 55 and 56). The purpose of the conference would be to adopt a long-term strategy with the theme "A society for all by the year 2010". The experts also proposed that, should extrabudgetary funds be made available, the appointment of a Secretary-General or chairman of the organizing committee for the conference, who could be a disabled person, should be considered (annex I, paras. 57 and 59). The conference would be prepared through regional activities in 1992, which would provide substantive input for the long-term strategy to adequately reflect the different needs and options of each region (annex I, para. 58). The experts also proposed that an institutional framework for the implementation of a long-term strategy following the Decade should be designed (annex I, para. 6).

15. It is recognized that the marking of the end of the Decade, as well as implementation of the long-term strategy until the year 2000 and beyond, would require a number of undertakings on the part of the United Nations. The Secretary-General intends to formulate plans for those activities within the context of biennial programme budgets, subject to any guidance the Assembly may provide.

III. AGENDA FOR ACTION UNTIL THE END OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS AND BEYOND

A. Introduction

16. The following suggested agenda for action, 1990-1993, reflects the recommendations made in the report of the meeting of experts held at Järvenpää, Finland, from 7 to 11 May 1990, to advise the Secretary-General on issues and proposals to be included in the feasibility study on alternative ways to mark the end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. It also includes views expressed by Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

B. Revitalizing the Decade

17. The major achievement of the Decade has been an expansion of knowledge and world-wide increased awareness on disability. While some concrete progress has been made, the international community, particularly the organizations of disabled persons, have advocated that an increased impetus be given to the Decade. During its remaining years, well-focused action at all levels is therefore needed to make a real and lasting impact.

1. Renewed efforts to disseminate the World Programme of Action

18. Since the World Programme of Action reflects the basic goals and programmes of the international community, and since it provides a sound basis for policy development and implementation, it is essential to ensure that its central message is more effectively disseminated, especially among policy makers and the media.

19. Ministries primarily responsible for disability issues should ensure that the World Programme of Action reaches all bodies and agencies, including the business community, involved in designing people's daily environments.

20. Since public awareness is a vital driving force for policy changes, renewed efforts are needed to make the World Programme of Action more accessible to all. The accessibility can be improved by publishing the Programme in an attractive pamphlet form, written in jargon-free language and without distortion of the Programme's basic principles and recommendations. Special emphasis should be placed on the role of disabled people's organizations and the models of empowerment subsumed in the concept of independent living. The pamphlet should be presented to heads of State, with a request that it be translated into national languages and be used as a basis for a major media and public information campaign.

21. The shortened edition of the World Programme of Action should also be disseminated on a larger scale to the general public, schools and work places, primary health centres and other appropriate institutions and organizations. It should be distributed in accessible formats, including Braille, large print and audio-tapes to disabled people.

22. Efforts to increase awareness of disability issues and the objectives of the Decade could include several activities with high visibility, which are to be planned, financed and undertaken as joint efforts of both the public and private sector. Such activities may include, at the national level:

(a) Launching an annual awareness campaign to demonstrate the capabilities of disabled persons and explain the benefits of their full integration into society;

(b) Devoting a special session of the parliament and legislature to disability issues;

(c) Establishing, in close co-operation with non-governmental organizations, a national award or other expression of appreciation to be extended annually to individuals or organizations having outstandingly promoted the aims of the World Programme of Action.

23. All possible support should be given by the United Nations, Member States and members of the international community to the awareness and fund-raising campaign known as the "Global Project" to promote the aims of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons.

## 2. Second round of monitoring as an awareness campaign

24. The second round of monitoring the implementation of the World Programme of Action planned for 1993 should not be viewed merely as a technical data-collection exercise. It is meant to revitalize the awareness of Governments, international bodies and non-governmental organizations about the status of disabled persons and the need for effective action. It should also provide accurate facts and supplement existing data on disability compiled by the United Nations Statistical Office. Additionally, this exercise should provide a basis for establishing an international information network on disability in the United Nations Office at Vienna.

25. The second round of monitoring should be conducted within a framework that would actively involve Governments, United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations, particularly disabled people's organizations.

26. In this context, each Member State should undertake, in close co-operation with its national co-ordinating mechanism, a national evaluation of the implementation of the World Programme of Action, with a view to rekindling the Decade's objectives. Member States could use this opportunity to review their plans, policies, legislation and programmes pertaining to disabled persons. Special attention is needed to be focused on the most vulnerable groups of disabled persons.

## 3. Dissemination of successful practices

27. The United Nations should produce a major system-wide publication containing an account of examples of successful policies, programmes and projects that have

been developed during the Decade. It would reflect the concerted effort of the United Nations system in the disability field, especially through its technical co-operation activities.

C. Aiming at a society for all by the year 2010

28. Disability concerns cannot be solved in isolation from the general social concerns of societies and the overall social responsibilities of national Governments. Attention should therefore be given to the concerns discussed below.

1. Integrating the needs and concerns of disabled persons into the planning process

29. Full integration of disabled persons should take into account needs, interests and concerns as well as rights of all citizens. Planners and decision-makers should be able to adjust or accommodate, in an early stage, their planning formulae to take into account the needs and concerns of people with disabilities.

30. At national level, efforts to integrate the needs and concerns of disabled persons call for:

(a) Promoting an integrated and interdisciplinary approach;

(b) Reviewing existing programmes and legislation to ensure that people with disabilities are provided rehabilitation, required services, education and training, employment, equipment and technical aids;

(c) Establishing a mechanism that would ensure recognition and implementation of the World Programme of Action and United Nations guidelines and manuals by relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies, including the business community, that are involved in planning the human environment.

31. At the regional level, the following steps should be considered for the integration of disability issues into the regular work programme of the United Nations regional commissions:

(a) To establish and strengthen a focal unit on disability within social development divisions;

(b) To strengthen collaboration among United Nations bodies having offices at the site of each regional commission and co-ordinate programmes in the social field.

32. At the global level, the organizations of the United Nations system should consider the following measures:

(a) To review how disability issues and the special needs of disabled persons are integrated in their policies, programmes and projects, and to submit a comprehensive report thereon to the Secretary-General;



(b) To establish a mechanism to ensure that the World Programme of Action, the guidelines and manuals prepared by the United Nations be fully implemented in their field operations.

## 2. From a care-taking approach to independent living

33. Full integration of disabled persons into society is made possible by refocusing policies, programmes and projects from care-taking to independence. In this exercise, disabled people should be considered a vital resource for development.

34. When disability issues are considered, institutional and patronizing approaches seem to be common. Freedom to make one's own choices should be recognized as a basic right of disabled people.

35. A prerequisite for self-reliance is a guaranteed income as an alternative to charity. Increased efforts should be made to create work opportunities for disabled persons and encourage their engagement in income-generating activities.

36. Additionally, the possibility of establishing facilities to provide interest-free loans to enable disabled persons to establish their own businesses, and develop co-operatives and self-employment schemes should be considered. In this context, the feasibility of establishing an international development fund may be explored.

37. United Nations bodies should examine their employment policies and develop an affirmative action plan to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

38. The Tallinn Guidelines for Action on Human Resources Development in the Field of Disability (General Assembly resolution 44/70, annex) provide a valuable insight on redirecting the focus from disabilities to the abilities of people with functional limitations.

## 3. Improving the conceptual framework

39. Efforts to equalize the opportunities of persons with disabilities and enable them to realize their own aspirations as full members of society still encounter deeply-rooted prejudices. These are often founded on limited knowledge and stereotypes. Ongoing efforts to revise the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps may result in a more adequate conceptualization of handicaps, thereby reflecting the role of external barriers as a source of disadvantages.

40. In order to facilitate the elaboration of concepts, an international expert meeting on definitions and concepts related to disability should be organized by 1992 on the understanding that a host country would offer all facilities for such a meeting.

4. Strengthening national co-ordinating mechanisms

41. One of the key elements for the success of the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981 was the vital role played by national co-ordinating committees, of which there were 147. At the mid-point of the Decade only 70 remained. The lack or the weakening of focal points for co-ordinating activities has undoubtedly been one of the main obstacles to implementing the World Programme of Action at the national level.

42. National co-ordinating committees should provide an institutional framework for multidisciplinary and multisectoral approaches in designing national policies. Member States should be called upon to establish and strengthen such mechanisms on disability in line with the Secretary-General's letter to Governments of 15 May 1989.

43. In order to reflect the needs of disabled persons, the committees should have an adequate representation of disabled people. The national co-ordinating committees should report directly to the highest governmental level. Additionally, they should be provided with adequate resources and autonomy to fulfil their tasks as both advisory and co-ordinating bodies.

5. Comprehensive legislation to guarantee the rights of disabled persons

44. The equalization of opportunities is ultimately the responsibility of national Governments. To implement the World Programme of Action, it is necessary for Member States to create, through legislation, the legal basis and authority.

45. Governments should therefore be invited:

(a) To promote legislation in support of full participation and integration of persons with disabilities into society, thus eliminating all forms of discrimination against them, and to co-operate with the United Nations Office at Vienna in its preparation of a manual on national disability legislation in developing countries;

(b) To ratify and implement, if they have not already done so, the following specific international legal instruments directly related to disability:

(a) International Covenants on Human Rights (Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI)); (b) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (resolution 34/180, annex); (c) Convention on the Rights of the Child (resolution 44/25, annex); (d) ILO Convention No. 159 on the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons and Recommendation No. 168; and (e) Florence Agreement and its Protocol on the importation of educational, scientific and cultural materials.

46. Governments should be encouraged to consider appointing an ombudsman or designating a focal point to which complaints on violation of disabled people's rights could be directed.

47. At the international level, the initiative already taken to elaborate a legal instrument concerning the rights of disabled persons should be supported. It should be noted that the Economic and Social Council, at its first regular session of 1990, authorized the Commission for Social Development to consider, at its thirty-second session, the establishment of an ad hoc open-ended working group of government experts, funded by voluntary contributions, to elaborate standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled youth and adults. The Commission should be requested to finalize the text of those rules for consideration by the Council at its first regular session of 1993 for its submission to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

#### 6. Focus on grass-roots level action

48. Wide differences exist among regions and countries in the status of disabled persons. To be more effective, the World Programme of Action and the implementation thereof should be adapted to the social, economic, political, cultural and technological realities of each region, country and community.

49. Design of action plans should begin at the grass-roots level, with guidance from appropriate agencies. The mobilization of local expertise and locally available resources should form the foundations of realistic planning. In the adaptation of the World Programme of Action to local conditions, its general principles should be fully observed.

50. Community-based activities have been successful in reaching disabled people, the majority of whom are living in rural communities. Community-based approaches should be recognized as alternatives, whenever appropriate, to the institution-centred approach, as the latter method of caring for disabled persons has proved unsustainable in large parts of the world.

51. Developing small-scale decentralized activities in the field of rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities for disabled persons should therefore be given more support.

#### D. Promoting the involvement of disabled persons and their organizations

52. Awareness-raising efforts in many countries have been very effective and resulted in action benefiting disabled persons. Such achievements are not directly related to the level of economic development, but rather to the strength of disabled people's organizations. Those organizations have emerged as a result of the efforts and demands of disabled persons themselves.

53. Organizations of disabled persons should not be considered as pressure groups alone; they should be considered a valuable resource for national development.

54. Persons with disabilities or those with extensive personal experience of disability should be consulted in identifying obstacles to self-reliance.

Expertise on how those obstacles could be removed or avoided by planning barrier-free environments can often be found in disabled people's organizations. This resource should be fully utilized by involving these organizations in the planning process.

55. In order to improve the opportunities of disabled persons and their organizations to participate in decision-making, particularly in matters immediately concerning them, the following measures should be taken:

(a) To develop and strengthen existing organizations of disabled persons, both at the national and international levels;

(b) To design mechanisms that would allow direct representation of disabled persons and their organizations in decision-making processes. Intergovernmental bodies should be encouraged to consult the international organizations of disabled people. Guidelines on consultations between the United Nations and disabled peoples' organizations should be prepared on the basis of the relevant rules set by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

56. Governments should increase their efforts to ensure access of disabled persons to buildings, meetings and information.

57. The United Nations should be a model in conforming with the spirit of the World Programme of Action and in implementing guidelines on accessibility. A step-by-step programme is needed to be designed to make buildings, including conference rooms, barrier-free. Furthermore, disabled people should have access to all relevant information and documents.

58. Member States are called upon to co-operate closely with the United Nations Office at Vienna in its efforts to strengthen national disabled persons organizations.

#### E. Groups in need of special attention

59. Certain groups of people with disabilities have been particularly affected and continue to be discriminated against, even in countries with most advanced disability policies. They include, in particular, the following:

(a) Deaf people, as their needs during the Decade were largely overlooked;

(b) Persons with multiple disabilities, such as the deaf-blind, because of the special arrangements needed to enable them to live independent lives;

(c) Mentally disabled persons, because their rights tend to be undermined;

(d) Disabled women, because of the double disadvantage they encounter by virtue of being both female and disabled;

(e) Disabled children, in order to prevent future generations from becoming marginalized from the very beginning of their lives.

60. Priority should be given to adopting policies and legislation to reduce obstacles encountered by specific groups with disabilities in their efforts towards self-determination.

61. The following activities are therefore suggested:

(a) Incorporating in studies, policies, programmes and projects the special needs of disabled women and children, deaf persons and people with mental or multiple disabilities;

(b) Developing special support services for such specific groups to lower the risk of their being deprived of services and opportunities available to others.

62. On the basis of the foregoing, the United Nations, in collaboration with the World Federation of the Deaf, should support a project for the development of a model programme of applied research and training for indigenous sign languages in developing countries.

**F. Improving the status of disabled persons in developing countries**

63. Improving the living conditions of disabled persons is particularly difficult in those developing countries which encounter severe economic constraints, induced by heavy external indebtedness and the adverse social consequences of economic adjustment programmes. As a result, basic needs are often not even met and the social dimension of development is too often given low priority. Disabled persons, having limited access to adequate income-generating activities in a competitive market, are particularly affected by cuts in social programmes.

64. However, considerable progress can be made, at a relatively low cost, to improve opportunities and the status of disabled persons. When public resources are scarce, the mobilization of community resources and the resources of disabled persons themselves assume special importance.

65. Integrated approaches to disability should be developed to substitute for special service models in all parts of the world regardless the level of economic development. In developing countries, such approaches would include using primary health care resources for prevention and medical rehabilitation, locally produced technical aids and integrated schools and promoting co-operatives of disabled persons and creating self-employment opportunities.

66. Governments should be requested to take the following measures:

(a) To review technical co-operation programmes of all sectors to ensure that disability issues are adequately recognized and taken into account in the planning and implementation process;

(b) Give a higher priority to disability issues in development and international co-operation policies, as stipulated in the World Programme of Action.

67. At the international level, the United Nations should integrate specific components that address the needs of disabled persons, both in less developed and in other countries in need of special assistance, into social and economic programmes within the context of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade.

G. Alternative ways to mark the end of the Decade and to ensure continuation of implementation of the World Programme of Action beyond 1992

68. Many of the suggestions received concerning alternative ways to mark the end of the Decade have emphasized the need to ensure the continuation of the implementation of the World Programme of Action.

69. United Nations bodies should be invited to develop an agenda for action for the period 1990-1993, in their respective area of work as it relates to disability.

70. Several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have indicated that they are planning major international meetings in 1992 to mark the end of the Decade. Full support to these activities should be given by Member States. In view of the concentration of these events in 1992, it is suggested that major global end-Decade observances by the Secretariat should be postponed to 1993.

71. Most events scheduled for 1992 are substantive in nature. A ministerial-level world conference should be scheduled for 1993 and should have a political agenda to ensure that the Decade ends on a note of sustained political commitment by Member States.

72. Should extra-budgetary resources be available, the appointment of a Secretary-General or chairman for the proposed conference, who could be a disabled person, should be considered.

73. In order to reflect adequately the differences and varying options between regions, preparatory activities relevant to the proposed conference should be undertaken by the five United Nations regional commissions in co-operation with other concerned regional organizations.

74. The purpose of the conference should be to adopt a long-term strategy to the year 2000 and beyond with the objective of reaching "A society for all by the year 2010".

75. The Decade of Disabled Persons has been a decade of sensitization and awareness-raising. In order to convert awareness-raising into action, much additional effort is required. This calls for a forward-looking review of present national and international policies and programmes. A long-term strategy should, therefore, be formulated and based on a renewed international consensus and political commitment.

76. An institutional framework for the implementation of a long-term strategy, following the current Decade, should be designed, either as a second decade of disabled persons, or as an extension of the first Decade.

#### IV. A PRELIMINARY OUTLINE OF A LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO THE YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND: A SOCIETY FOR ALL

77. The World Programme of Action adopted in 1982 provides an essential instrument for the forward movement and continued progress of disabled persons. It serves as a guiding philosophy for action now and in the years ahead. It does not necessarily call for replacement by a new action plan. The mid-term analysis of progress achieved and obstacles encountered during the Decade has clearly indicated, however, the need for the formulation of priorities, identification of crucial areas of concentration as well as elaboration of appropriate measures and provision of specific guidelines for new efforts. A long-term strategy would then comprise a new set of practical objectives designed both to secure and to strengthen progress already attained and also to speed up advancement of disabled persons in all aspects of political, social, cultural and economic life. The theme of such a long-term strategy would be "A society for all".

78. It is anticipated that the task of preparing a detailed strategy would be entrusted to an appropriate intergovernmental body, to be subsequently finalized by the proposed ministerial-level world conference in 1993. The following is a preliminary outline of such a strategy.

##### A. General considerations

79. The framework of the strategy should be based on the changing economic and social situation and political realities.

80. Major international concerns such as violation of human rights, poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, illiteracy, debt crisis, environmental pollution, armed conflicts, and their implications on disabled people should be duly taken into account.

81. In identifying specific issues, careful consideration should be given to the mid-term review of the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons carried out in 1987, as well as to the monitoring exercise to be completed in 1992.

82. The strategy should be based on the priority themes of equalization of opportunities, full recognition of the rights of disabled persons, and independent living.

83. The philosophy of self-advocacy and self-determination has to be constantly emphasized and pursued through practical action.

84. Emphasis should be placed on the following measures:

(a) Designing and implementing programmes that would enhance the positive changes that have already taken place as a result of the Decade and would bring about full integration of disabled persons into their societies;

(b) Formulating innovative measures for effective implementation of the World Programme of Action, including those which could not be realized during the Decade;

(c) Developing innovative approaches to take advantage of the new developments in science and technology;

(d) Prescribing effective solutions to obstacles encountered in the follow-up to the World Programme of Action;

(e) Launching a vigorous programme of technical co-operation and international assistance to developing countries.

#### B. Proposed structure of the long-term strategy

85. The proposed long-term strategy would consist of the following four sections: introduction; global trends and perspectives that affect the advancement of disabled persons; national strategies and their implementation; and regional and international strategies.

86. The purpose of the section on global trends and perspectives that affect disabled persons would be to anchor the proposed strategies of implementation in the realities of the world, to provide an objective background of socio-economic trends, both past and prospective, and to highlight the various existing approaches to socio-economic development and change.

87. The section on national strategies would contain proposals on specific methods and measures for implementation to accelerate progress towards the goals and objectives of the World Programme of Action. Such national strategies would be aimed at confirming and consolidating the goals already achieved so that they might be translated into policies and programmes. These would be both in areas in which progress has been slow and in areas of priority identified in the course of the preparations for the proposed conference.

88. The proposals would draw upon both the positive and negative lessons of the past. Thus, the measures and approaches taken during the Decade that did not prove successful or that encountered major obstacles would be adapted or replaced, while those that showed a measure of usefulness and success would be strengthened and further adjusted to the conditions of the future. Those measures that were deemed truly effective would be reiterated as examples to be followed and adjusted according to the special circumstances in each country. In addition, new methods of implementation would be proposed to accelerate progress.

89. The strategy to be proposed would aim at increasing and enhancing the participation of disabled persons in society, both as the agents of change and beneficiaries. This would also aim at ensuring that plans, programmes and projects



are formulated and implemented with this objective in mind. The strategy would address the action to be taken at all levels.

90. Strengthening co-ordinating mechanisms or procedures at the national level would be elaborated. The achievements of participation and equalization in terms of a change of attitudes concerning the role of disabled persons in society would also be emphasized.

91. In all sectoral areas identified, importance would be given to improved planning, monitoring, strengthening co-ordination and communication to ensure that development policy, planning and implementation respond to the needs and circumstances of disabled persons in all facets of the development process.

92. The section on regional and international strategies would propose essential mechanisms for progress, which would include monitoring the implementation of the World Programme of Action, review and appraisal, technical co-operation and co-ordination among institutions and organizations.

#### Notes

1/ The report of the Meeting of Experts on Alternative Ways to Mark the End of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, Järvenpää, Finland, 7 to 11 May 1990, is available upon request.

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