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NY/OAU/SOC/20/92

The Executive Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions of Governments invited to the International Conference on Assistance to African Children (ICAAC) to be held in Dakar, Senegal, 25 to 27 November 1992 and has the honour to forward the enclosed documents for comments that should be received by 6 November 1992:

(i) copy of the draft ICAAC Declaration, under the title, the Consensus of Dakar; and

(ii) copy of the draft agenda for the Conference.

The Executive Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions of Governments invited to the International Conference on Assistance to African Children the assurances of its highest consideration.

New York, 27 October %?%

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We have gathered in Dakar, concerned by the grave and deteriorating situation of children in so many countries of Africa. Children are caught in conflict or suffering the consequences of famine and drought. Even when free from these extremes they are held back by poverty and malnutrition, ill health and lack of education. The numbers are staggering. More than 30 million African people, mainly women and children, continue to suffer - victims of natural disasters, war and civil strife. At least

20 million continue to suffer as refugees and displaced. More than 200 million throughout the continent live in absolute poverty. More than 15,000 children still die each day largely

from preventable causes. Millions more are denied adequate nutrition, rudimentary health services; clean water, proper sanitation and basic education.

Such suffering and death must stop. Such experience in most of a continent is not only morally repugnant but is also a threat to peace, prosperity and security throughout the

world. Africa must be supported in its efforts to address its special development problems,

particularly those related to children and women. Africa's children can and must have a better future.

More than ever before, Africa now needs to hold out hope for all of its people and for its children in particular. The nations of Africa have entered a period of democratic transition; of greater integration among themselves and increasing cooperation with the rest

of the world. ' 1

The issues of war and peace, poverty and development, and environmental degradation and ecological renewal are inextricably intertwined. These problems need support at the international and regional levels, in support of national and local initiatives and

actions. In recent months, such actions have been taken and are now beginning to accelerate

in several countries afflicted by conflict and drought. These must be sustained.

In addition, we reaffirm the need to translate the commitments of the World Summit for Children into concrete and implementable programmes of action at national and international levels. Only thus can Africa lay a foundation in this decade for a period of progress and sustained human development in the 21st century.

Constrained by unprecedented levels of debt and economic difficulty, many African countries have not sufficient resources to provide on their own for the basic social needs

of all their children. We now call for a full appreciation of the situation in Africa and for

international policies and action which will harness the newly released hope and energy, translating into reality the noble concept captured by the World Summit for Children - that of

"First Call for Children". We therefore commit ourselves individually and collectively to the following:

1. NATIONAL PROGRAMMES OF ACTION

African countries commit themselves to develop and implement National Programmes of Action and to recognize and address human development issues as central to national development plans and programmes. Action for African children must be part of a broader accelerated programme of development and poverty alleviation. African countries and their donor partners commit themselves therefore jointly to incorporate the National Programmes of Action into their bilateral and multilateral consultative processes and development. African countries and their donor country partners commit themselves to encourage the international financial and development institutions to give greater priority to African overall development in their assistance programmes and, in particular, to support of human development.

African countries (211, internationally, for the establishment of the principle that the resolution of conflicts should not be a precondition for provision of humanitarian relief and assistance, and instead that political and humanitarian actions with regards to conflicts be taken simultaneously.

African countries commit themselves to provide humanitarian assistance to the extent possible, and call upon donor countries to commit themselves to provide humanitarian assistance as well as to provide political support to African countries for the resolution of conflicts.

2. CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT

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3.. v EILST CALL ON AVAILABLE RESOURCES

At National Level

African countries commit themselves to priority action to meet basic needs of children and women. This will include

- (i) adoption of specific goals for achieving a priority list of goals for children and women, from the core adopted at the World Summit for Children;
- (ii) restructuring government budgets to favour child survival, protection and development, and to support the key goals for children and women in particular;
- (iii) an increase of domestic resource mobilization needs to be supported through other actions, such as national tax reform, the encouragement of community actions and contributions ;
- (iv) additional resources can further come from the restructuring of government expenditure in favour of child development and the shifting of resources away from non-productive uses, such as the military/internal security expenditure and inefficient parastatals.

4. T I N A L L E V E L

We recognize that action at national level needs to be complemented by supportive action launched by Regional Economic Communities, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and other development partners. The scale and complexity of action required is such that all of these will need to play a role in alleviating the plight of African children.

Regional Economic Communities are a special potential in developing and implementing Programmes of Action for African children, on areas of common interests - such as desertification or disease control or AIDS prevention - to the region so as to complement efforts at national level. These could provide important support for National Programmes of Action and National Compacts for Children.

. 5. A N A L L E L

Donors in the programmes of cooperation with African countries, commit themselves to the objectives and strategies developed in the National Programme of Action, and to undertake short-term, medium-term and long-term actions aimed at alleviation of the problems facing African children. In view of the critical situation, they also commit themselves to make every effort to expand Official Development Assistance (ODA) in support of African countries and especially in support of African actions of child survival, protection and development, in line with the goals of the World Summit for Children. Donor countries also commit themselves to:

(i) exploring medium and long-term commitments of resources to support health, nutrition, basic; education, water and sanitation as set out in specific sector(s). and sub-2

sector(s) of National Plans of Action;

(ii) increase ODA disbursements to social priority sectors to 20 per cent by the year 1995 or to achieve a two-fold increase over current levels, whichever is the greater, and to sustain this real increase of human development and social sector support to Africa over the 1990s;

(iii) increased support for regional, national and local research, technology development and adaptation in favour of child-oriented programmes;

The international community also commits itself to exploring ways to reduce substantially the external debt of African countries, whenever possible linked to increased support for social development programmes.

IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

At National level

(i) If implementation of the NPAs is to be broad-ranging and effective, it will be necessary to involve a wide range of governmental agencies, national NGOs, civil organizations, women and children organizations, professional and religious associations and many, many parts of the private sector;

(ii) the proposed National Compact for Children (NCC) is recommended as one of the important modalities for cooperation in the implementation of the NPAs;

(iii) countries that have not been able to develop an NPA should be assisted to do so.

7. FOLLOW-UP AT REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL LEVELS

We acknowledge the need for action-oriented follow-up mechanisms at subregional, regional and continental levels to implement the commitments of the Dakar Conference. To this end, African countries request the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, with the support of UNICEF, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and other relevant organizations to assess, monitor and report regularly to

the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government on actions taken by Member States, sub-regional, regional and the international community to further social and human development in Africa.

In this regard, we also undertake to establish a continental follow-up mechanism under the auspices of the OAU, with the financial and technical support of UNICEF, which will monitor the overall formulation and implementation of the NPAs and submit progress reports to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity.

We further call upon the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to
,. present the Consensus of Dakar to the Twenty-Ninth Assembly of Heads of State and
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Government for information and endorsements.

8. COMMITMENT

The Dakar Conference has provided a new opportunity filled with promise and
renewed hope. We end it by issuing an invitation to individuals and governments, to
organizations and community groups in Africa and beyond to take up the challenge, help A
frica respond to the needs of its children and, in so doing to provide a better future fo
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Africa's children in this century and beyond.

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OAU INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
 4 ASSISTANCE FOR AFRICAN CHILDREN

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ORGANBAUONDEUUNHEAFMCAD E INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS
PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AND PROGRAMME

23 - 27 November 1992

The Meridien President

Dakar, Senegal

MONDAY 1 23 NOVEMBER.

10:00 - 13:00 Registration and Accreditation.

15:00 - 19:00 Registration and Accreditation.

TUESDAYI 24 NOVEMBER.

10:00 - 13:00 Registration and Accreditation.

16:00 - 17:00 MEETING OF HEADS OF DELEGATION

15:00 - 19:00 Registration and Accreditation.

WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER. 1

08:00 - 09:15 Registration and Accreditation. Venue: Lounge 1.

08:00 - 09:15 GATHERING OF DELEGATES. Venue: Lounges.

09:15 - 09:30 SEATING FOR OPENING SESSION.

09:30 - 11:15 OPENING PROGRAMME, Venue: Amghitheater.

- Statements by children.

- Statement by OAU Secretary-General.

- Statement by UNICEF Executive Director.

- Statement by UN Secretary-General.

- Thematic statements by attending Heads of State or

Government.

- Statement by Host Country Head of State.

11:15 - 11:20 BREAK.

11:20 - 11:45 PLENARY SESSION 1. Venue: Amphitheater.

- Election of officers. Adoption of agenda, and organization of work.

ICAAC SCHEDULE

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11:45 - 12:00 BREAK.

12:00 - 13:00 PARALLEL WORKING COMMITTEES. Morning Sessions.

Working Committee 1 Venue: Conference Room 1.

Topic: Nutrition.

Working Committee t2, Venue: Conference Room 12.

Topic: Health.

Working Committee 3 Venue: Conference Room 3.

Topic: Education.

13:00 - 14:30 LUNCH BREAK.

14:30 - 19:00 PARALLEL WORKING COMMITTEES. Afternoon Sessions.

Working Committee 1 Venue: Conference Room 1.

Topic: Nutrition.

Working Committee t2. Venue: Conference Room i2.

Topic: Health.

Working Committee 3 Venue: Conference Room 3.

Topic: Education. I

(NOTE: Drafting rooms available as needed.)

19:00 PRESS BRIEFING.

19:00 - 21:00 RECEPTION.

THURSDAYI 26 NOVEMBER.

09:30 - 11:00 PLENARY SESSION II. Venue: Amghitheater.

- Reports of the working committees.

- Adoption of working committee reports.

11:00 - 11:15 BREAK.

11:15 - 13:00 PARALLEL WORKING COMMITTEES. Morning Sessions.

Working Committee t1. Venue: Conference Room t1.

Topic: Women and the Girl Child.

ICRAC SCHEDULE

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Workin Committee 2 Venue: Conference Room 2.

Topic: Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances.

Workin Committee 3 Venue: Conference Room 3.

Topic: Water and Environment.

13:00 - 14:30 LUNCH BREAK.

14:30 - 18:00 PARALLEL WORKING COMMITTEES, Afternoon Sessions.

Workin Committee 1 Venue: Conference Room 1.

Topic: Women and the Girl child.

Workin Committee 2 Venue: Conference Room 2.

Topic: Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances.

Workin Committee 3 Venue: Conference Room 3.

Topic: Water and Environment.

(NOTE: Drafting rooms available as needed.1

18:00 PRESS BRIEFING.

FRIDAY 27 NOVEMBER.

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09:30 - 11:15 PLENARY SESSION III. Venue: Amphitheater.

- Reports of the working committees.

- Adoption of working committee reports.

- Adoption of consensus statement.

11:15 - 11:30 BREAK.

11:30 - 12:30 CLOSING PROGRAMME, Venue: Amphitheater.

- Statements by children.

- Thematic statements by attending Heads of State or Government.

- Closing statement by Host Country Head of State.

12:45 CLOSING PRESS CONFERENCE