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REPORT OF THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING AND REGIONAL SEMINAR ON  
PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF DISABLED PERSONS (1981)

(Santiago, Chile, 5-11 November 1980)

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## I. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

### Place and date

1. The Regional Technical Meeting and the Regional Seminar, which are part of the preparatory activities for the International Year of Disabled Persons, were held at the headquarters of CEPAL in Santiago, Chile, from 5 to 11 November 1980. The first meeting was held from 5 to 7 November and the second on 10 and 11 November. Both meetings were convened by the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) pursuant to the mandate of General Assembly resolution 34/154, adopted on 17 December 1979.

### Attendance 1/

2. The meetings were attended by representatives of the following member States of CEPAL: Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Haiti, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United Kingdom, United States and Venezuela. The following bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system were also represented: the Executive Secretariat of the International Year of Disabled Persons, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The World Health Organization (WHO) was represented by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) which acts as its regional secretariat.

3. The Organization of American States (OAS) was represented by its specialized agency, the Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI).

4. The following non-governmental bodies and institutions sent representatives to the meetings: Co-operative for American Relief Everywhere, Inc. (CARE), World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS, World Federation of the Deaf, World Council of Churches (WCC), International Cerebral Palsy Society (ICPS), United States Peace Corps, International Council of Nurses, Rehabilitation International, Grupo

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1/ The full list of participants appears in Annex 1.

Latinoamericano de Rehabilitación Profesional, Asociación Médica Latinoamericana de Rehabilitación, Asociación Regional Latinoamericana de Recreación y Tiempo Libre, Corporación Argentina de Discapacitados, Confederación Argentina de Sordomudos, Cruz Roja Chilena, Asociación de Sordomudos de Chile.

5. It should be mentioned that nine of the participants were persons with different disabilities (visual, auditive and motor) of whom two presided government delegations and the rest were members of non-governmental groups.

#### Organization of work

6. The officers were elected and the respective agendas of the Regional Technical Meeting and the Regional Seminar were adopted in principle at a prior meeting of heads of delegations. Both were subsequently ratified at the opening meeting.

7. With regard to the final report, the secretariat was requested to distribute a provisional version to all the countries members of CEPAL, with a deadline of 30 days for the formulation of their comments and observations.

#### Officers

8. The officers of the Regional Technical Meeting were:

Chairman: Jaime Arroyo (Panama)  
Vice-Chairman: James C. Stearns (United States of America)  
Helena Bandeira de Figueiredo (Brazil)  
Rapporteur: Rubén Ricalde Noriega (Mexico)

9. The officers of the Regional Seminar were:

Chairman: Livio Paolinelli (Chile)  
Vice-Chairman: Lionel I. Clarke (Barbados)  
Gérard D. Leon (Haiti)  
Rapporteur: Esther Alicia Amate de Esquivel (Argentina)

/Agendas

Agendas

10. The agenda of the Regional Technical Meeting was as follows:
  1. Election of officers.
  2. Adoption of the agenda.
  3. National measures envisaged towards the attainment of the objectives of the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP).
  4. The implementation of the IYDP Plan of Action to the benefit of the entire population and particularly that in rural areas.
  5. Follow-up action on the activities of the Year.
  6. Other matters relating to paragraph 14 of the Plan of Action (doc. E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.4).
11. The Regional Seminar had the following agenda:
  1. Election of officers.
  2. Adoption of the Agenda.
  3. Statements by representatives of member States on the national situation of disabled persons.
  4. Regional co-operation concerning the prevention of disability and rehabilitation of disabled persons:
    - (a) Major causes of disability in the region and joint action to counteract their effects;
    - (b) Measures of re-education and rehabilitation of disabled persons;
    - (c) Technical co-operation between countries of the region.
  5. Long-Term World Plan of Action.
  6. Other matters relating to paragraph 14 of the Plan of Action (doc. E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.4).

Opening and closing meetings

12. Those who took the floor during the opening session of the Regional Technical Meeting (5 November 1980) included the Executive Secretary of CEPAL, Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias, the representative of the Secretariat of the International Year of Disabled Persons, Mr. Georges Kahale and the Deputy Minister of Health of Panama, Dr. Jaime Arroyo. The closing session of the Meeting was addressed by the Acting Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Daniel S. Blanchard, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for External Affairs /to the

to the Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitation Services of the Education Department of the United States, Mr. James C. Stearns.

13. The Regional Seminar (10 November 1980) was opened by the Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Mrs. Helvi Sipila, the Director of the Social Development Division of CEPAL, Mr. Jorge Graciarena and the National Director of Rehabilitation of Argentina, Dr. Esther Alicia Amate de Esquivel. The Seminar was closed by the representative of Barbados, Mr. Lionel I. Clarke and the Chairman of the Seminar, Dr. Livio Paolinelli of Chile.

#### Documents

14. The list of documents distributed by the secretariat and by different member delegations during the meetings appears in annex 2.

## II. SUMMARY OF THE DEBATES

### Regional Technical Meeting

15. At the inaugural meeting of the Regional Technical Meeting, Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias, Executive Secretary of CEPAL, welcomed the participants. In his statement he pointed out that throughout history the United Nations had put itself at the service of the great ethical causes of mankind and that, owing to that concern for the social cause, in the past five years it had included many new items in its deliberations. He went on to describe how the United Nations handled a question with such characteristics by developing it gradually as the problem evolved. He ended by saying that it was necessary to determine the real reasons why the disabled were not being fully incorporated into society and to identify their fundamental rights, including the right to prepare themselves for playing a role in society.

16. Mr. Georges Kahale, representing the Executive Secretary of the International Year of Disabled Persons, said the proclamation of the year by the General Assembly showed that the international community felt the current situation in that branch of the social sector was unacceptable and that there was need for concerted action to make the necessary changes. He drew attention to the proposals which in his view should be followed up and the measures which should be adopted if that action was to be effective: the acquisition of information on the existing situation in each country and on the efforts made to improve it; co-ordination of national, regional and global efforts; formulation of long-term plans and definition of priorities on the basis of objectives and resources. He drew attention to the way in which the countries in the region might contribute to the action taken at the international level and referred to the importance which the organizations in the United Nations system attached to the question and the positive significance of the participation of non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, he emphasized that in the last analysis the determining factor for progress in the field was action by governments.

17. In taking the floor on behalf of the participants, Dr. Jaime Arroyo, Vice Minister of Health of Panama, remarked that although the twentieth century had been marked by notable scientific and technological progress, attempts to modify the human condition substantially had not succeeded. "For many reasons, attention to the disabled has been delayed, which makes it necessary to redouble the efforts to co-ordinate action and, as persons, members of institutions and the countries we represent and of the human race to which we belong, to dedicate ourselves to the achievement of targets which, on behalf of the disabled, it is our responsibility to promote." He said he felt the priority objectives should lie in the area of prevention but that "until that goal can be reached, we are responsible for making the response expected from us from those who are now disabled, who are asking mankind to give them the same right to well-being they brothers enjoy".

18. In initiating the work of the meeting, the Chairman asked the non-governmental organizations represented to inform the participants of their views and experience concerning the items to be dealt with during the meetings. He also urged the representatives of the United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attending the meeting to give their views and provide guidance in the matter. At the beginning of the consideration of agenda item 3 (national measures envisaged towards the attainment of the objectives of the International Year of Disabled Persons), the secretariat pointed out that the objective of the discussion was to exchange experience and that each country could benefit from the activities provided for by the other countries.

19. A number of delegations took the floor on this item and provided information on programmes currently underway as well as on projects and outlines of programmes drawn up with a view to their implementation during the Year. Some of the latter, which were in written form, are described in an information document prepared by the secretariat. The participants noted that there were many more points of agreement than there were differences in the programmes and that the differences owed more to cultural singularities and the difference in the degree of development of the countries than to philosophies, policies, and the planning and implementation of action.



20. In almost all the countries, the activities were being conducted through the health, education, labour and social welfare sectors, and there was a consensus concerning the need to increase the participation of the community and the integration of the disabled into society.

21. One delegation pointed out that the integration proposed should be based on a two way plan reciprocally agreed upon between the disabled and those who were not disabled. Although primary and secondary prevention programmes were being developed in all the countries, it was obvious that the emphasis was still on rehabilitation programmes. Preventive action was being carried out at various levels where quality and coverage were concerned; the rehabilitation programmes were more intense. Both types of programme varied in accordance with the economic and technological potential of each country.

22. All the participants referred to co-operation among the various State and non-governmental entities and agreed on the need to increase it with a view to using the resources more effectively.

23. Consensus was reached on the need for more adequate information concerning the problem of the disabled, which would, at the same time involve the formulation of more accurate definitions applicable to the implementation of the action. In that regard, it was concluded that it was essential to have appropriate and comparable statistics for purposes of basic planning in national and regional plans.

24. One delegation announced that its country intended to conduct a household survey which would furnish information on the number, progress and occupation of disabled persons in both rural and urban areas.

25. The delegations agreed that if it was hoped that the disabled would be incorporated into society with all the means at their disposal, rehabilitation must necessarily be integral. In that respect a delegation indicated that in view of the high cost of the process, it was necessary to begin from the assumption that it would be necessary to determine the maximum degree of disability for which rehabilitation aimed at social integration could be effected. Another delegation pointed out that in his country a cost-benefit study had been carried out which showed that investment in rehabilitation was very viable.

26. As a general rule, in referring to the projects in the programmes formulated, the participants indicated that a very important objective was to ensure that society became aware of the problem and that the disabled were incorporated in it; another goal was to strengthen, within the means and possibilities available, the action being carried out in the various countries.

27. Some delegations reported that their policies were aimed at preserving and making the most of the potential of the human resources available and that they were treating the issue as a population problem. One delegation drew attention to the need for a change of mentality so that solidarity rather than charity would be stressed and at the same time for groups of disabled persons already set up or to be set up in the future to become aware not only of their rights but also of their obligations vis-à-vis the society of which they are a part.

28. All the participating delegations indicated their concern for the existing barriers which have been erected against disabled persons carrying out their daily activities as normally as possible. They pointed out that the majority of the programmes formulated were specifically aimed at that situation. In order to get to the very root of the problem it was important to review the laws on disablement in force in each country with a view to considering whether they should be adapted to the new circumstances arising out of integral rehabilitation, including the education, labour and accident prevention laws as conceived at present.

29. The Co-ordinator of the CEPAL secretariat unit for the Integration of Women in Development in Latin America and the Caribbean referred to the predicament of disabled women of all ages and to the resolution which the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women adopted on that issue (Copenhagen, July 1980).

30. Some representatives of bodies in the United Nations system informed the meeting of projects connected with programmes already set out. The representative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) provided information on the co-operation planned by ILO in connexion with the Year and on the Plan of Action of the Regional Office for the Americas, which included a Latin American meeting on topics relating to rehabilitation, which

/would be

would be held in Lima, Peru, in October 1981, and a regional seminar organized by CINTEFOR. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) referred to a document containing projects approved for the period 1981-1983, involving work by UNESCO within the framework of the Year, and described those projects.

31. The representative of the Inter-American Children's Institute, an OAS specialized agency, said that her organization had concentrated its activities for the Year in the realm of prevention, working through its programmes for early intervention and stimulation to extend the assistance provided in marginal areas and particularly in rural areas, bearing in mind that the most vulnerable child population was found in the areas of greatest poverty.

32. The representatives of the non-governmental organizations Rehabilitation International and the Grupo Latinoamericano de Rehabilitación Profesional (GLARP), briefly outlined the goals of their respective institutions and then provided information on the programmes planned for the Year. The objectives of the Support Programme outlined by the representative of Rehabilitation International, an organization embracing all aspects of the prevention of disablement and the rehabilitation of the disabled, are: to co-operate with all United Nations bodies involved in the Year; to ensure the participation of the disabled in the activities planned; to help organizations of the disabled and governments to prepare and implement plans for the Year and to broadcast the principles on which the proclamation formulated by the United Nations was based. In its capacity as secretariat of the World Council of Organizations Interested in the Handicapped, it planned to hold a big conference of non-governmental organizations in 1981, whose main work would relate to co-operation to ensure the continuity of the programmes initiated in the Year. It was also engaged in other activities of world scope and regional support. The representative of GLARP explained that the regional programme for 1981 consisted in four training courses for personnel at the director, professional and technical levels, two regional seminars (one on the integration of the disabled in the economy to be held at San José, Costa Rica, in May 1981, and the other on prevention in rehabilitation to be held in Santo Domingo in January 1982) and three experimental projects based on the community and the adequate use of its resources, on the training of the disabled in the community and on employment /strategies and

strategies and an integral regional programme for the mentally retarded. GLARP is made up of private rehabilitation centres of various Latin American countries and co-ordinates vocational rehabilitation services in the region. The representative of the League of Societies of the Red Cross observed that his presence reflected the interest with which his institution was following the preparation for the Year.

33. At the invitation of the Chairman, other representatives of non-governmental organizations took the floor. The representative of CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS said that the question of the disabled was centred around the ideas of full integration and full participation. The former presupposed the observance of the right to physical rehabilitation and training and the right to compete in the labour market in so far as the degree of physical disablement permitted. In that respect, he pointed out that in Latin America thought might be given to the right to work of those people who had lost up to two thirds of their working capacity. It was necessary to provide training at home to rehabilitate those afflicted with more serious problems, or, in any case, to grant them some kind of pension with an entitlement to medical assistance with a view to eliminating charity as a means of subsistence. As for full participation, he stressed the need to consult with the disabled themselves concerning their problems since it was they who were most aware of the barriers keeping them on the outskirts of society. He ended by saying that the Year should foster hopes rather than illusions, and should be the starting point in the effort to make people aware of the problem and to find ways of integrating the handicapped into the social nucleus to which they belonged.

34. The representative of the World Federation of the Deaf said it was essential to diagnose deafness in children early and that because children were more receptive up to the age of four, it was necessary to improve the pre-school education of the deaf. He added that in so far as education per se was concerned, schooling should be compulsory and free. He also referred to rehabilitation and to the removal of the barrier between the deaf and those with hearing and emphasized that governments should pay greater attention to the concept of equality among the deaf. He ended by pointing out that it was important for governments to establish ties with /associations of

associations of the deaf and dumb and noted that the World Federation had 35 million members. The representative of the Corporación Argentina de Discapacitados remarked that although the communications media were important in influencing the social milieu concerning the integration of the disabled, they needed to change their attitude in order to play that role more successfully. The Corporación was directed by people whose disablement had various causes. He also referred to the importance of relations between national associations and the Government of a country, who were the interlocutors most likely to suggest the improvements needed for greater well-being.

35. The representative of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind pointed out that for the rehabilitation of the blind or of people with limited vision, greater specialization was required since what was needed was not only special attention to the person afflicted but education of his family and of the people with whom he came into contact most frequently. However, this nucleus, through its paternalistic zeal, had a negative impact on the blind person and contributed to his helplessness by not letting him develop his potential and the skills which compensated for sight. He advocated the participation of the blind in the formulation of rehabilitation programmes and suggested the creation of travelling teams to attend to the needs of the blind in rural areas, pointing out that in general efforts at rehabilitation were centred on the big cities.

36. In their consideration of agenda item 4 (the implementation of the IYDP Plan of Action to the benefit of the entire population and particularly those in rural areas) the participants had before them a document prepared by the secretariat containing a note on the various aspects of the item (E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.7). Although they agreed that the Plan of Action should be designed to favour the entire population, they recognized that the practical difficulties were greater in connexion with reaching the rural areas. For this reason, the deliberations focused on this aspect of the matter.

37. The representative of PAHO introduced a document on the outlook for the simplification of rehabilitation at the community level, in which an experiment being conducted by the organization in Teluca, Mexico, was described. Basically, this experiment consisted in the identification of

/disabled persons

disabled persons in the community and in an attempt to increase their opportunities for participating in everyday life through the use of technologies which were already established but could be simplified. For all of this, recourse was had to the services of health promoters. The basic tools of the project were simple, involving house-to-house identification and a handbook entitled "Adiestramiento del Incapacitado en la Comunidad", which contained information on simplified rehabilitation techniques and its final phase would consist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of those techniques. Most of the delegations showed great interest in the project and suggested that the possibility of extending it to other areas in the region should be considered.

38. A representative said that care should be taken to see that no confusion arose between simple physical therapy and the process of rehabilitating the disabled. It was advisable for a patient first to be taken to a centre for diagnosis and if his disablement was limited, he could be reintegrated into his community where appropriate treatment could be given to him. The representative of PAHO explained that the programme was designed to detect problems which could easily be dealt with and stressed that the project took into consideration all possible contingencies, including the illiteracy of the people concerned. He also informed the meeting that the guides and handbooks would be available to interested countries in the region the following year since they were already being prepared.

39. One representative referred to the dilemma confronting those responsible for the policies of rehabilitation in distinguishing clearly between medical assistance and social assistance and said that in his view the intermediate stage, in which basic health care programmes were associated with therapy for rehabilitation, had now been reached. Good results would be obtained if the physician associated with a given community would take an interest in other related problems.

40. The representative of IACI said that in order to carry out action in rural areas, it was necessary to determine the problems affecting those areas since disablement was recognized as a result of the interaction between the individual and his environment. She added that a strategy in that regard would make it necessary to develop a new approach in which the  
/characteristics of

characteristics of each region would be reflected and taken into account, and he suggested that on that basis CEPAL should incorporate points in the development plans of the region which would make it possible to identify and propose experimental guidelines for application in such areas.

41. In the course of the deliberations, a number of delegations referred to aspects relating to labour, in connexion with which the representative of ILO contributed actively. One delegation made a statement centred on its country's experience in connexion with vocational rehabilitation co-operatives, in which disabled persons on the fringes of the labour market were provided with the basic tools they needed and later, on their own initiative, created productive group activities setting themselves the task of solving all the problems connected with the activity selected. The experiment had been repeated in the rural area where farming was incorporated in the activities of the workshops.

42. According to the observations made by a number of delegations, it seemed that although the idea was not a new one, since it had been in application for twenty years, progress had not always been made, partly because of difficulties relating to interpersonal relations and to the replacing of members and the lack of evaluation and knowledge of the work. Nevertheless, the co-operatives had the merit of being useful when unemployment was high.

43. One delegation maintained that the best solution would be to let the disabled act on their own behalf and not to impose tasks derived from evaluations on them. The representative of one regional organization informed the meeting that although his organization had focused on prevention in its activities, it had later introduced the concept of work using the family as a go-between.

44. One delegation expressed the view that co-operatives in which the disabled were members in their capacity as human beings with the responsibility for defining their life-styles, resolving their problems and to some extent living their own lives were superior to those whose membership consisted in persons afflicted by a given disability. The

/custom of

custom of making decisions for disabled persons was a bad one, which was why co-operatives had a certain human value. It was true that if everyone had options, formulas must be found to ensure that the disabled were not left out.

45. A number of delegations observed that in some countries different methods had been tried with a view to increasing the opportunities for the disabled to enter the job market, such as the establishment of quotas and incentives for employers for the hiring of the disabled, and for the filling of vacant posts in the Civil Service and the adjustment of entry requirements. However, as a general rule, such methods had not produced positive results.

46. One delegation explained that in its country a national centre offering special education of a normative kind was used to provide technical and financial assistance programmes to systems teaching in rural areas with the idea of training human resources at all levels. Attention was being given to vocational training for the disabled so that they could work in their environment, using the method of sending the best students to enterprises which had already become aware of the problem, on a trial basis, without cost to the entrepreneur, and could later be hired if it was felt that their output was competitive, the method was satisfactory but on a relative scale.

47. Some delegations expressed the view that there was need for centralized co-ordination, standardization and supervision and for decentralized implementation because action frequently overlapped, particularly between the education and rehabilitation sectors. It was therefore agreed that there was need to use permanent national bodies to co-ordinate all the activities involved. It was noted that such co-ordination already existed in some countries in the region although the methods used were different.

48. With respect to agenda item 5 (Follow-up action on the activities of the Year), the secretariat introduced document E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.6, which referred to a number of criteria which it was suggested member States might wish to take note of for use in evaluating the work involved in the implementation of their respective plans of action and to facilitate the task of the United Nations Secretariat in the preparation of the report it must submit to the XXXVII Session of the General Assembly in 1982. Governments must ensure that the report on their activities was submitted to the Secretariat prior to 31 March 1982.



49. The item having been opened for discussion, and following a number of statements by the delegations present and by the secretariat of IYDP and a number of clarifications by the secretariat of CEPAL, it was agreed to adopt the criteria suggested in the document on the understanding that a reference to staff training programmes would be added to them. It was also understood that a clear distinction should be established in respect of the programmes being carried out in each country and those promoted specifically by IYDP.

50. One delegation informed the meeting that a draft long-term plan of action would become available in the second half of 1981 and said it would be advisable to hold a regional meeting before evaluations were made with a view to considering the special IYDP activities and to exchanging ideas on the draft, whose final adoption by the General Assembly was scheduled for 1982. With that in mind, it proposed that consideration be given to the possibility of holding another regional meeting in the second half of 1981 to evaluate the action initiated (of which the secretariat would be informed in March 1982) and to exchange views concerning the contents of the draft long-term plan of action.

51. One delegation gave its views concerning the destination of the funds represented by voluntary contributions to finance the activities of the Year, suggesting that they might be used, among other things, to help countries with financial difficulties to send representatives to this kind of meeting in view of the fact that in general it was those countries whose problems were the most pressing.

52. The representative of the IYDP secretariat reminded the participants that the recommendations made at the meeting should have a global thrust rather than reflecting concrete experiences of countries. He appealed for contributions to the Voluntary Fund, which he said was still very low, and explained that the Fund could be used to finance specific projects submitted by countries in connexion with IYDP. He informed the participants that a meeting would be financed to set up a world organization for the disabled and added that the secretariat of the Year had hired a number of disabled persons who were performing excellently. He said that following the symposium scheduled for 1981, regional seminars would be held, which would

/identify priorities

identify priorities and objectives on the basis of the recommendations of the symposium, thereby combining technical matters with the formulation of policies and making it possible to put the proposals into action.

53. A working group co-ordinated by the delegation of Argentina took responsibility for formulating a draft recommendation of the Technical Meeting on agenda item 4. Similarly, another group, co-ordinated by the delegation of Chile, accepted the task of preparing a draft recommendation on agenda items 3, 5 and 6. It was decided by the Meeting that both drafts could be submitted to the Regional Seminar for consideration, and delegations were invited to submit their observations in writing.

54. At the closing meeting of the Regional Technical Meeting, Mr. Daniel Blanchard, Acting Secretary of CEPAL, took the floor and explained what action the secretariat would take after the meeting on the basis of the views expressed by the delegations and described the possible role of CEPAL in IYDP as suggested by the recommendations put forward by them. He also expressed gratitude for the facilities which the delegations had given the secretariat for performing its work and for the help provided by the participating officials. Immediately following these remarks, Mr. James C. Stearns, Vice-Chairman of the Meeting thanked those present for the effective way in which they had worked in the short amount of time at their disposal and declared the meeting closed.

#### Regional seminar

55. At the inaugural meeting of the Regional Seminar, Mr. Jorge Graciarena, Director of the Division of Social Development of CEPAL, welcomed the participating delegations and experts on behalf of the Executive Secretary. In his statement he reviewed the discrepancies with regard to a proper social distribution which were usually the result of accelerated economic growth and referred to the contrast between the constantly growing majority of people living at basic subsistence level and the privileged minority of consumers. He also analysed the different causes of disablement and made a distinction between handicaps caused by specific biological factors and those which, in many cases, consisted in a combination of elements of undeniably social origin. He reviewed all the factors which lead to disablement, such as malnutrition, lack of education, chronic unemployment and generalized

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underemployment and drew attention to other results of urban development, air and water pollution and critical psychological tension. He said he felt it was for the experts, within the perspectives and objectives of IYDP, to identify the various kinds of handicaps so as to be able to treat their causes and symptoms more effectively and in a manner related to the activities which the United Nations were carrying out in the field of social development. He ended by drawing attention to the difference in the ground covered by the Regional Technical Meeting which had already ended and the seminar which was being opened.

56. Mrs. Helvi Sipila, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, took the floor on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and of Mrs. Zala N'Kanza, Executive Secretary for IYDP, who had not been able to attend for reasons of health. Mrs. Sipila announced that the United Nations General Assembly had just adopted a far-reaching resolution on IYDP, which included an appeal to the regional economic commissions to set up programmes with a view to the adoption of regional plans providing for consultations among the States members of each commission and envisaged the holding of a second seminar to study the best way of putting the recommendations arising out of the meetings held in 1980 into action. She specified that the long-term plan to be formulated by the Secretary-General on the basis of the consultations to be held with governments, among others, was expected to reflect the main spheres of interest for the region. She stressed the importance for Latin America of the General Assembly decision to accept Argentina's offer to host the international symposium of experts in 1981. She ended by saying that IYDP would help countries to become aware of the problems related to the disabled and to reach conclusions on the importance of acknowledging their rights, including that of participating in the life and development of society at all levels.

57. Taking the floor on behalf of the participants, Dr. Alicia Amate de Esquivel, National Director of Rehabilitation of Argentina, pointed out that there was need to make an effort to ensure that governments put into practice the undertakings they had assumed at various international forums, which implied coming to a decision and taking action in respect of

/rehabilitation. She

rehabilitation. She pointed out that the region should request the bodies in the United Nations system to carry out technical studies during IYDP to compensate for the inability of the developing countries to carry out such studies, which would facilitate subsequent action. She stressed the importance of joint action by countries and said that it should be made easier for those countries with financial difficulties to attend meetings since that was the only way to achieve effective action. She said she hoped that each country would make its experience available to the others as a way of informing them of the various aspects of rehabilitation. In her capacity as representative of Argentina, she stressed the importance which her country attached to its undertaking to host the 1981 International Symposium of Experts, which was the main event in IYDP and had great significance for the region.

58. In considering agenda item 3, the representatives of the participating countries gave a brief description of the situation with regard to the disabled. These statements threw light on the rather lopsided development of the various sectors which played a part in the process of rehabilitation in the countries of the region and also on the lack of co-ordination, the shortage of adequately trained personnel and, in general, the failure to integrate rehabilitation programmes in national planning.

59. In her capacity as Vice-President of the Advisory Committee for IYDP, Dr. Alicia Amate de Esquivel of Argentina introduced document A/AC.197/W.P.2 containing a basic outline of a long-term world action programme, which had been prepared by that Committee, with a view to its consideration under agenda item 5 (Long-Term World Plan of Action).

60. In its consideration of items 4 (Regional co-operation) and 5 (Long-term World Plan of Action), the Seminar decided to set up open working groups for each item, which were chaired by Brazil and Argentina, respectively.

61. With regard to agenda item 4 (Regional co-operation), the Secretariat introduced a document containing notes on the subject (E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.8). All the delegations had an opportunity to express their points of view, and from what they said it could be deduced that the main causes of disablement in the region were accidents, neuro-virus diseases, diabetes, silicosis and malnutrition and that perinatal and congenital diseases were two of the physical disabilities most frequently encountered.

62. Representatives of bodies in the United Nations system and in the Latin American region also participated actively in the deliberations as did the representatives of the non-governmental organizations present.

63. As a result of the far-reaching discussion which took place and taking the scope of the item into account, the working group formulated 10 draft recommendations, some on co-operation between the region and a number of bodies including UNDP, UNIDO, UNICEF, PAHO, ILO, ILPES, IACI and the CEPAL secretariat itself. Other recommendations were directed to the governments and concerned the establishment of permanent national co-ordination bodies, priorities in the formulation of national plans, the training of personnel, the exchange of technological information and of experts and the formulation of regional programmes.

64. For its part, the working group responsible for Agenda item 5 (Long-Term World Plan of Action) considered the document referred to in paragraph 51 together with document E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.5 containing the "Preliminary Draft for the Long-Term World Plan of Action", prepared by the United Nations Secretariat in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 34/154 of 17 December 1979 entitled "International Year for Disabled Persons".

65. The working group felt that it would be advisable for it, in addition to giving its views on the draft, to set the priorities for the region, which it did following a full and knowledgeable discussion among its members. The draft recommendations submitted in plenary by the working group concerning this agenda item enjoyed the support of the delegations.

66. The Seminar took note of the recommendations of both working groups and of the two recommendations submitted by the Regional Technical Meeting. After examining and discussing these resolutions and amending some of them, the seminar adopted a total of eleven recommendations including those submitted by the Regional Technical Committee, which it endorsed. Taken together, these recommendations constitute the response of the member States represented at both these meetings to the problems and questions raised by the respective agendas submitted for their consideration.

/67. The

67. The member States welcomed the announcement that the offer of Argentina to host the International Symposium of Experts in 1981 had been accepted, and conveyed their approval to the delegation of that country in a unanimously adopted decision.

68. At the closing meeting of the Regional Seminar, Mr. Lionel I. Clarke, representative of Barbados, took the floor on behalf of the delegations and referred to the positive results to which, in his view, the seminar had led. He thanked all the delegations for the readiness to reach agreement which had predominated at the meetings and praised the work of Mr. Rubén A. Chelle, the Secretary of the Seminar, and the CEPAL secretariat and its personnel for the efficiency with which it had organized the meeting and kept pace with its work.

69. In a short statement, Dr. Livio Paolinelli, the Chairman of the Seminar, thanked all the participants for their presence and for the interest they had shown in the work accomplished and pronounced the Regional Seminar closed.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

70. During the discussions of the Regional Technical Meeting and the Regional Seminar various draft recommendations were introduced and submitted to the delegations taking part for their consideration. Eleven recommendations and one agreement were finally adopted, the texts of which appear below. Recommendations 1 and 2, "The implementation of the Plan of Action for the International Year of Disabled Persons to the benefit of the entire population and particularly those in rural areas" and "Measures envisaged towards the attainment of the objectives of the International Year of Disabled Persons", were prepared and adopted by the Regional Technical Meeting. The Regional Seminar endorsed both recommendations in a decision adopted at the meeting of 11 November 1980.

#### Recommendation No. 1

The implementation of the Plan of Action for the International Year of Disabled Persons to the benefit of the entire population and particularly those in rural areas

The Regional Technical Meeting,

Takes the view, for the operational aspects of the applicability of national or regional actions to the Plan of Action for the International Year of Disabled Persons, that the scope of the expression "rural areas" should be defined, so that disabled persons living in these areas may receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

Takes the view that the critical areas for rehabilitation are not only rural areas, but also isolated, marginal and impoverished areas.

Takes the view that the Declaration of Alma-Ata containing the concept of primary health care elaborated by PAHO/WHO implies the criterion of simplified rehabilitation, and that consequently the governments of member States must be convinced of the urgent need to apply it as an extremely valid element of disability prevention. Consequently, programmes for simplified rehabilitation must be implemented simultaneously with primary health care programmes.

/Considers that

Considers that the region should test, in a number of areas having different characteristics, the feasibility of implementing the "rural areas" programmes which PAHO has already drawn up. To that end, PAHO and CEPAL should co-ordinate their activities in order to define the areas suited to such experiments.

In order to evaluate the results obtained from the experiments in those areas, a regional meeting should be programmed to review:

- (1) the number of populations covered;
- (2) the number of inhabitants reached;
- (3) the percentage of disabling diseases detected;
- (4) the number of rural social workers trained; and
- (5) the co-ordination and follow-up systems implemented or designed.

Attaches enormous importance to the implementation of the programme to extend coverage to critical areas and should make member Governments aware of the need to co-ordinate the services provided by the various social sectors so as to avoid overlapping of efforts and unnecessary budgetary expenditures (document E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.4, paragraph 12 (h)).

Urges the member States to comply in so far as possible with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, its organs and specialized agencies (ILO, WHO, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, etc.) and with those of the regional intergovernmental bodies (OAS and its specialized agency ICI), regarding the rehabilitation of disabled persons, including the international instruments which refer to the rights of the citizens of each country which should be made in practice to extend to these persons.

#### Recommendation No. 2

#### Measures envisaged towards the attainment of the objectives of the International Year of Disabled Persons

#### The Regional Technical Meeting,

#### A

Takes the view, in accordance with the theme of the International Year of Disabled Persons, that disabled persons should be considered as having equal rights and duties and the possibility of full participation.

/Considers, that



Considers, taking into account that rehabilitation activities have been organized and implemented for many years in the different countries of Latin America, that the IYDP should strengthen such efforts and at the same time ensure that they receive due priority in national plans and policies, and also that this year must be the starting point for specific new programmes for integral rehabilitation.

Recommends in this regard that:

1. All integral rehabilitation programmes should envisage the following aspects:

- (a) medical rehabilitation and prevention measures;
- (b) regular and special educational, cultural, recreational and sports facilities;
- (c) vocational training and access to jobs;
- (d) removal of architectural barriers;
- (e) review of existing legislation to ensure the legal rights of disabled persons.

2. Efforts should be made to ensure that the needs and priorities of disabled persons channelled through associations or confederations should be considered within integral rehabilitation programmes so that the latter constitute an adequate response to the real needs.

3. Using all information and communication media, society should be made aware and educated concerning the problem of disability, the prevention of disability and the possible solutions offered by integral rehabilitation to the point of achieving the total dynamic integration of disabled persons in society.

B

With regard to follow-up action on the activities of the Year referred to in Agenda item 5 (document E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.4) the Regional Technical Meeting recommends that:

- Governments should submit a national report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations before 31 March 1982 on measures taken in observance of the Year;

/- This

- This report should take account of the ten points proposed by the Secretary of the Year as criteria for evaluating the implementation of the Plan of Action, adding to point 9 of the proposals the elaboration of staff training programmes which include the corresponding fellowships;
- Expected results should be quantified to allow them to be evaluated, initially taking into account the socio-economic and political circumstances which may obstruct or limit the achievement of the objectives proposed; and
- In the report, a distinction should be made between aspects corresponding to programmes which were being carried out in each country, and activities promoted specifically for the International Year of Disabled Persons.

C

With regard to regional activities, the Regional Technical Meeting recommends that:

- the programmes to be carried out should be suited to regional conditions and that actions proposed for each country should offer practical solutions corresponding to their priorities and to feasibility of implementation;
- the plans and programmes should be extended for the entire decade of the 1980s;
- that the countries and entities represented at this Meeting should make the delegations of their respective countries which will be attending the nineteenth session of the Commission aware of the importance of including rehabilitation programmes in the international development strategy in relation to Latin America;
- the Voluntary Fund for the IYDP should be used as a matter of priority in projects directly benefiting disabled persons and the participation of technical delegations in regional meetings, on the understanding that in the work of the region the active participation of all the countries composing it should be ensured.

D

Finally, the Regional Technical Meeting recommends the governments:

- (a) to promote the training of rehabilitation staff on a level allowing the entire region to achieve a development suited for the provision of their respective services;
- (b) to make available to persons involved in political and economic decision-making permanent information on (i) the problems of disability, (ii) the scope of integral rehabilitation programmes and (iii) the place they should occupy within the development plans of the countries of the region.

Recommendation No. 3

Projects in favour of disabled persons using UNDP resources

The Regional Seminar,

Strongly recommends that member States should include at least one project for the prevention of disability, the education or training of the disabled and their socio-economic rehabilitation in their technical co-operation programmes financed by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resources through the Indicative Planning Figure assigned to the countries.

Likewise urges that this network of projects at the national level should constitute a main activity among the regional activities of the International Year of Disabled Persons.

Recommendation No. 4

Permanent national co-ordination bodies

The Regional Seminar,

Recommends to the governments of member States that after the ending of the International Year of Disabled Persons action should continue through permanent bodies for the co-ordination of all activities relating to the processes of prevention of disability and integral rehabilitation of the disabled, and that these bodies should consult the associations and confederations of the disabled as regards their needs and priorities, and, wherever possible, form part of them.

/Recommendation No. 5

Recommendation No. 5

Co-operation of ILPES and UNICEF

The Regional Seminar,

Recommends that the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) should be requested to include approaches and methodologies for the formulation of programmes and projects for disabled persons in its regular training courses for planners.

Also requests the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to give support to experimentation in prevention and rehabilitation among disabled children at the level of basic services in marginal rural or urban communities, in co-ordination with Rehabilitation International.

Recommendation No. 6

Participation of UNIDO

The Regional Seminar,

Recommends that the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) should be requested to participate actively in programmes of co-operation supporting the development of preventive vaccines, the mass-production and possible formation of banks of prostheses, wheelchairs and other rehabilitation equipment, and the selection of appropriate technologies facilitating the full incorporation of the disabled into the working world.

Recommendation No. 7

Exchange of technological information and experts in Latin America

The Regional Seminar,

Considering that the participants in the Regional Seminar observe the need for an exchange of technological information and experts in Latin America,

Recommends that the competent bodies in each field should assist the programmes on training and exchange of experts and that the information centres should constitute a network to collect and disseminate information with the aims of exchanging information, documents and experts, organizing  
/surveys or

surveys or workshops and seminars or both and preparing specialized consultation publications. The organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system should give clearly-defined and specific support to these aims.

Recommendation No. 8

National priorities and programmes

The Regional Seminar,

Recommends that, in developing national programmes for the International Year of Disabled Persons, the following priority areas should be kept in mind:

- Education of the population on the prevention of handicaps and attitudes towards the various impediments or disabilities.
- Organization of appropriate prevention and early detection activities.
- Ensuring the informed participation of parents and families.
- Expansion of integral rehabilitation training programmes (teachers, doctors, nurses and other professionals) so that they may better serve those with special needs and simultaneously facilitate their integration into schools and life.
- Creation of working opportunities in areas where training, professional instruction, or both activities are being carried out.

Consequently, the kinds of programmes which must be planned in relation to the above-mentioned priorities should cover the following fields:

(a) prevention; (b) early detection; (c) timely intervention and for treatment; (d) participation of parents and teachers; (e) personnel training; (f) special education; (g) training and professional instruction; (h) integration of disabled children and young people into normal educational structures and active life; (i) education of children; (j) economic support of governments to established private institutions which are carrying on the work of rehabilitation; (k) economic measures enabling employers to hire the rehabilitated; and (l) legal measures suited to the working capacity of the disabled.

Recommendation No. 9

Personnel training

The Regional Seminar,

Recommends the formulation of training programmes in the plans of activities prepared by the governments of member States for the International Year of Disabled Persons. These training programmes should primarily consist of:

- (a) Specialized postgraduate courses;
- (b) Integral rehabilitation courses forming part of the regular teacher-training programme;
- (c) Training courses in different aspects of integral rehabilitation and special education for regular teachers;
- (d) Training courses for technical auxiliaries in health and education which may be of assistance in dealing with disabled persons with special needs, and short sessions for training non-professional staff for specific tasks of rehabilitation.

Recommendation No. 10

Dissemination of technical information

The Regional Seminar,

Recommends that the use of videocassettes and other modern means of communication be increased as a useful form of disseminating technical information to public and private organizations responsible for the prevention of disability and the rehabilitation of the disabled.

Recommendation No. 11

Long-term World Plan of Action

The Regional Seminar,

Having analysed the Preliminary Draft for the Long-term World Plan of Action (E/CEPAL/Conf.72) and the Basic Outline of a Long-term World Plan of Action 1/ prepared by the Advisory Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons at its second session (Vienna, 20 to 29 August 1980).

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1/ A/AC.197/W.P.2.

/Recognizing that

Recognizing that conceptually and in general terms, the document of the Advisory Committee corresponds to the fundamentals and objectives established for the Year, that is to say, that full integration and participation will be achieved through prevention and rehabilitation.

Accordingly agreeing with the definitions of rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities contained in the document reviewed,  
The Regional Seminar,

Recommends the establishment of the following priorities for the area:

- (a) To mobilize human resources for training, information and motivation in order to achieve the target set for rehabilitation, that is, full integration and participation;
- (b) To carry out permanent national campaigns for immunization and mother and child assistance;
- (c) To wage permanent educational campaigns at all levels for the prevention of traffic, labour and domestic accidents;
- (d) To contribute to the improvement of the environment through mass education and information and specific actions;
- (e) To ensure the access to all educational levels of disabled persons in regular programmes, where possible;
- (f) To ensure the inclusion of rehabilitation content in the courses of the schools of medicine, architecture and education;
- (g) To establish organizations of disabled persons to collaborate in related activities.

Recommends that the bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system (CEPAL, ILO, WHO, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, etc.) and regional intergovernmental organizations (IACI, PAHO, CINTEFOR, etc.) should be requested to ensure technical co-ordination among themselves in order to facilitate information on their activities.

Suggests that this co-ordination should be evaluated through periodical regional meetings of the above-mentioned organizations.

Recommends that in carrying out these activities:

- (a) appropriate contacts and consultations should be established with the national commissions for the IYDP of the countries of the region or the bodies which the respective governments may indicate, in addition to those which they maintain among themselves;

/(b) links

(b) links should be maintained with non-governmental organizations interested in these issues; and

(c) as part of the activities organized, impetus should be given to programmes of intra-regional exchange in the context of the IYDP Plan of Action, so as to offer the developing member countries of each region the possibility of enriching their own plans for the Year through action co-ordinated with the pertinent authorities of the member countries, aiming at taking the best possible advantage of the human and technical resources which the region possesses and can offer in terms of horizontal co-operation. In this regard assistance and advisory services should be received from the bodies specializing in different areas and acting in the region. The programmes of this type should include, in addition to the relevant administrative infrastructure, activities such as the holding of regional technical and practical multidisciplinary seminars with the participation of specialists from the countries of the region, the promotion of the exchange of experience among them in the field of rehabilitation, including the participation of disabled persons and short courses for professionals, technical auxiliaries and non-professionals working in the areas of the prevention of disabilities and rehabilitation of the disabled, given by specialists from the countries of the region.

#### AGREEMENT

##### Venue of the International Symposium (1981)

##### The Regional Seminar,

Mindful of the United Nations General Assembly resolution accepting the offer of the Government of the Republic of Argentina to host the International Symposium for the International Year of Disabled Persons;

Agrees to congratulate the Argentinian delegation and through it the Argentinian Government on the honour received;

Expresses the hope that this decision will act as a stimulus for the other Governments of the region in the preparation of their activities for the Year, thus contributing to the Argentinian effort.



Annex 1

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Annex 2

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. Documents distributed by the CEPAL secretariat

- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.1 Regional Technical Meeting, provisional agenda (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.2 Regional Seminar, provisional agenda (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.3 General Assembly resolutions relating to the International Year of Disabled Persons (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.4 Plan of Action adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 34/154 of 17 December 1979 on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee for the International Year for Disabled Persons set up under resolution 32/133 of the United Nations General Assembly (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.5 Preliminary Draft for the Long-term Plan of Action, prepared by the United Nations Secretariat in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 34/154 of 17 December 1979 entitled "International Year for Disabled Persons" (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.6 Suggestions for criteria for appraising the implementation of the Plan of Action in 1982 (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.7 The implementation of the IYDP Plan of Action to the benefit of the entire population and particularly those in rural areas (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.8 Regional co-operation concerning the prevention of disability and rehabilitation of disabled persons (English and Spanish)
- E/CEPAL/Conf.72/L.9 Draft Final Report (English and Spanish)

2. Other documents

- "Draft plans of action for the International Year of Disabled Persons".  
Background document prepared by the Secretariat of the Regional Technical Meeting indicating draft plans of action for the IYDP submitted by the representatives of Brazil, Haiti, Mexico, the Netherlands (Dutch Antilles), Panama and Venezuela
- "Questionnaire on the world situation of disabled persons". Prepared by the IYDP Executive Secretary (English, French and Spanish)
- "Interim report on field investigation into the application of simplified rehabilitation techniques at the community level". Dr. R. Hindley-Smith, Regional Adviser on Rehabilitation, Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) (English and Spanish)
- "Improvement of the situation of disabled women of all ages". Resolution 2 of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, development and peace, Copenhagen, 1980 (English and Spanish)
- "Women of advanced age and economic security". Resolution 4 of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, development and peace, Copenhagen, 1980 (English and Spanish)
- "Plan de acción para 1981 de la Oficina Regional de la OIT para las Americas". Document Submitted by Mr. Antonio Lacal Zuco, ILO Regional Adviser in Vocational Rehabilitation (Spanish)
- "L'Année internationale des personnes handicapées, Activités Prévuees au Programme Approuvé (1981-1983)". Document circulated by the delegation of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (French)
- "La cooperativa como recurso de rehabilitación laboral". Study submitted by the Argentinian delegation (Spanish)
- "Address by Mr. Francis Blanchard, Director-General of the ILO". Informal consultative meeting on the IYDP, Geneva, 11 August 1980 (Spanish)
- "Readaptación profesional". ILO. Extract from Governing Body document 9B.214/2/1 - 214th informal consultative meeting on the IYDP, Geneva, November 1980 (Spanish)
- "Año internacional de los impedidos". ILO. Extract from Governing Body document 9B.214/2/1 - 214th informal consultative meeting on the IYDP, Geneva, November 1980 (Spanish)
- "International Year of Disabled Persons Support Programme - 1981". Rehabilitation International (English)