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**UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)
LATIN AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHIC CENTRE (CELADE)**

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF GOVERNMENT EXPERTS ON POPULATION AND
DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, PREPARATORY
TO THE 1994 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

(Saint Lucia, 6 - 9 October 1992)

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A. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of meeting

1. The Meeting of Government Experts on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, preparatory to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, was held in Saint Lucia from 6 to 9 October 1992 and was organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), and co-sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Attendance

2. Experts from the following countries members of the Commission participated in the meeting: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela. The following associate members of the Commission were also present: British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico and United States Virgin Islands.

3. Representatives of the following United Nations organizations attended the meeting: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO), a specialized agency of the United Nations, was also represented.

4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Alan Guttmacher Institute, APROFAM (Guatemala), Centre ORSTOM de la Guadeloupe, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and Latin American Programme for Population Activities (PROLAP).

Opening meeting

5. At the opening meeting statements were made by Kerstin Trone, Director of the Latin America and the Caribbean Division of UNFPA; Mr. Daniel Blanchard, Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); and Mr. Michael Pilgrim, Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia.

6. The Director of the Latin America and the Caribbean Division of UNFPA said that the meeting, which constituted the first step in the region's preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994, provided an opportunity to draw lessons from the policies and programmes that had been implemented in the region since the International Conference on Population in Mexico in 1984. The discussions that would take place at the present meeting should enable the region to present a forceful message about what still remained to be done at the regional preparatory meeting for the 1994 conference, which was scheduled to take place in Mexico City in 1993. Particular review should be given to the links between population and poverty, inasmuch as the alleviation of poverty was fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development and most of the countries' population policies were still in need of further development. It should at all times be remembered, however, that national policies and programmes must respond to the needs of individuals, particularly women (and within that group, especially poor women).

7. One area of critical concern for women was reproductive health. Quality family planning services were needed, not necessarily for demographic reasons, but rather out of concern for equal opportunities. That need, which was manifested in the large number of illegal abortions in the region and adolescent pregnancies, to cite just two examples, gave rise to all manner of questions, including what should be done to ensure that all in need had access to information and services, how programmes could best be managed, and how to ensure support from the policy level in the absence of any explicit population policy. Another important issue was the matter of resources. In view of the rather discouraging economic situation in both developing and industrialized countries and the reductions being seen in support for the social sectors, a way had to be found to show that increased investment in the population field was crucial for sustainable development.

8. The Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) said that there could be little doubt regarding the growing urgency of dealing forcefully with population issues in the coming decade. The consequences of failing to take action on population questions would have an irreversible impact on future generations. ECLAC and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) had a vital interest in the success of the forthcoming International Conference on Population and Development, and had therefore assigned highest priority to regional preparatory activities. For example, the most recent ECLAC proposal, Social Equity and Changing Production Patterns: An Integrated Approach, had pointed out the benefits to be derived from the recent decline in fertility in the region, but had noted that in the poorest segments, effective fertility greatly exceeded desired fertility, showing the importance of making family planning and responsible parenthood policies available to those groups as a matter of priority.

9. The agenda of the present meeting had been formulated on the basis of the six groups of issues enumerated in Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/93 as those requiring the greatest attention. The Commission hoped that the experts would adopt draft conclusions and recommendations for future action for consideration at the 1993 regional preparatory meeting. Moreover, on the basis of the discussions to be held at the present meeting, the ECLAC secretariat was planning to prepare a document containing a multidisciplinary analysis of population issues in the context of the development process, outlining concrete action proposals to be considered by member Governments.

10. The Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia welcomed the delegates from the Caribbean and Latin America, the ECLAC secretariat and the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. On behalf of the Caribbean delegations, he offered a special welcome to UNFPA and expressed appreciation for the financial support it had provided for the meeting. It was clear that the

future of the population units of Saint Lucia and of a number of other Caribbean countries would be seriously compromised without the continued support of both UNFPA and the Joint ECLAC/CELADE Demography Unit in Port of Spain.

11. The meeting, which constituted a very important activity in the Caribbean, had been organized for the purpose of assessing regional experiences and charting a common position on the development of strategies for the coming decade. The Caribbean countries also viewed it as an opportunity to discuss those population issues of most direct importance to them, including adolescent fertility, improvement of the status of women, the impact of emigration on the economic development and demographic structure of the countries, and the nexus between population and social and economic development. It was his country's hope that the Latin American and Caribbean subregions would be able to form a common position on population and development issues and to put together a package of meaningful recommendations and strategies which reflected the priorities and perspectives of the region within the changing global context.

Election of officers

12. The meeting was presided over by the following officers:

Chairman:	Saint Lucia
First Vice-Chairman:	Colombia
Second Vice-Chairman:	El Salvador
Third Vice-Chairman:	Trinidad and Tobago
Fourth Vice-Chairman:	Brazil
Rapporteur:	Mexico

Agenda

13. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Population growth, structure and distribution in Latin America and the Caribbean: socio-economic trends and implications
4. Population dynamics and development in the Caribbean subregion
5. Population policies and programmes
6. Population growth and distribution: their relation to development and the environment
7. Women and population dynamics
8. Family planning, health and family well-being
9. Conclusions and recommendations.

Adoption of the Rapporteur's report

14. The Rapporteur submitted the draft report of the Meeting and informed the participants about the correct procedures for incorporating, through the ECLAC secretariat, the modifications to parts A and B which they had proposed in their statements.
15. The conclusions and recommendations that had been prepared under the coordination of the Rapporteur from 6 to 8 October by a drafting group open to all the experts from the member countries were submitted for the consideration of the experts.
16. In addition to introducing changes in some of the proposed conclusions and recommendations, the experts approved the inclusion of a tribute to the work of the Latin American Demographic Centre, noting the countries' interest in continuing to receive its valuable collaboration and stressing the need to take the necessary steps to obtain the relevant financial resources. In that regard the importance attached by the region of Latin America and the Caribbean to continuing to receive the necessary resources, thus acknowledging the financial problems of certain bodies in the region, was underlined.
17. The conclusions and recommendations adopted are set forth in part C of this report.

Closing meeting

18. During the closing meeting, statements were made by the Director of the Latin America and the Caribbean Division of the United Nations Population Fund and the Latin American Demographic Centre. They both stressed the importance of the Meeting as a preparatory step for the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Mexico City in 1993, and thanked the government experts for their contributions during the working group meetings.
19. The experts from Uruguay and Barbados, speaking on behalf of all the national experts present, paid tribute to ECLAC and CELADE, together with the United Nations Population Fund, for their support, and the host country, Saint Lucia, for the excellent organization of the Meeting, thanking in particular the officials of Saint Lucia and the secretariat staff who had worked very efficiently behind the scenes.
20. Lastly, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed, expressing his country's satisfaction at having acted as host to such an important conference, and thanking all the experts for their valuable contributions.

B. SUMMARY OF DEBATES

Technical presentation by the Director of CELADE

21. The Director of CELADE referred to the serious crisis experienced by the region in the 1980s and noted that it continued to affect the countries. The peoples and Governments of the region were making a prodigious effort to surmount that crisis, and the strategy which they had chosen for that purpose called for a thoroughgoing, environmentally sustainable change in production patterns coupled with social equity

within a democratic framework providing for full respect for human rights. The crisis had greatly lowered the level of the population's well-being and had raised—in both absolute and percentage terms—the number of poor households. In all fairness, however, it should also be pointed out that quantitative and qualitative progress had been made in improving some classic population variables. For example, considerable advances had been made in the reduction of preventable deaths, especially among infants. The societies of Latin America and the Caribbean had also made important strides in upholding the right of the individual to determine his or her own reproductive behaviour, with the result being a decrease in the total fertility rate. It was noteworthy that the Governments had facilitated the exercise of such reproductive rights as an active expression of respect for those rights. The greater openness with which those issues were currently being discussed at the governmental and social levels was another significant step forward. The valuable contributions made in that regard, both by NGOs working in the sciences and by NGOs concerned with programme implementation, warranted special mention.

22. Regarding the subject of spatial distribution, he observed that the urbanization process had continued, but the crisis had eroded the Governments' capacity to meet the greater demand for resources generated by that process, with the result that the overcrowding and lack of sanitation services affecting the most underprivileged sectors of the urban population had reached critical proportions. Even in the case of those variables in which progress had been made, what remained to be done far outweighed the existing gains. In the area of infant mortality, for example, the situation was strikingly unequal in the various social sectors, geographic zones and ethnic subgroups, which underscored the fact that future advances would have to form part of a broader effort to overcome inequality and poverty. The same held true for maternal mortality. A great deal had yet to be done with respect to fertility as well, since demographic surveys revealed the existence of a high rate of unwanted births. That rate, too, was higher in the poorer sectors of the population, a fact which once again brought out the lack of equity in the region.

23. The present Meeting of Government Experts on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean constituted the first milestone along the path leading to the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo in 1994. The views and findings presented by the experts at the current meeting would be transmitted to the countries as inputs for the preparation of country reports and national position papers. In turn, those documents would be examined by the Governments when they met at the regional preparatory meeting in Mexico City in May 1993 to formulate the region's contribution to the 1994 conference. Consequently, the present meeting marked the beginning of a process of the utmost importance.

Population growth, structure and distribution in Latin America and the Caribbean: socio-economic trends and implications (agenda item 3)

24. The Chief of the Demography Area of CELADE said that the relevant basic document served as a frame of reference in considering demographic trends and their relationship to development, illustrated by a series of tables containing the most important indicators. It summed up the most profound changes that had occurred in regional demographic trends in fertility, mortality and urbanization. In view of the diversity of country situations, a typology had been elaborated on the basis of the position of each country in the process of demographic transition. Despite considerable declines in mortality and fertility, differentials by social sector persisted, pointing up existing inequalities.

25. The observed demographic trends had resulted in a slowdown in average annual growth rates and changes in the age structure of the population. Such changes presented challenges in terms of an increase, in the short term, in middle, active and reproductive age groups, with all the demands implied by that increase, while in the medium and long term, the impact of the ageing of the population on the elderly would have to be dealt with. Lastly, the document discussed the trends and patterns of international and internal population movements. With regard to the spatial distribution of the population, it drew attention to the intense process of urbanization and concentration of the population in large cities, and to the decline in its growth rate as a result of declining fertility and new patterns of internal migration.

26. The representative of PAHO/WHO said that the pattern of contagion of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) was undergoing changes, for the disorder was increasingly affecting young women and children. He also noted that the agency's family planning programmes were part of a broad concept of maternal and child health and offered a number of reproductive health services, such as the provision of contraceptives.

27. One participant drew attention to the deterioration of the system of vital statistics, especially the registry of deaths and causes of death, and stressed the need to promote the improvement of that system and to develop new, alternative research methods, taking into account that much of the available information was based on indirect, general estimates. He also suggested examining spatial mobility in the context of the new development model and considering the possibilities of managing the new trends through government actions. He noted the importance of bearing in mind the wave of migration from rural areas to small cities, the latter being the areas with the highest poverty indexes in his country, and of taking into account the considerable migration to outlying areas of large cities.

28. Another expert, after drawing attention to a number of definitions of principle adopted by consensus at the 1974 World Population Conference and the recent United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and said that the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development should concentrate on its fields of competence but should also take environmental issues into account. Specific topics to be examined should include the relation between poverty and high mortality and birth rates, women's reproductive rights, teenage motherhood (in relation to undesired pregnancies, deficiencies in the education system, prejudices and the still current relationship between maternity and sexuality). He also made reference to large-scale urbanization and its impact on both the economy and the environment, and called for the integration of family planning programmes with programmes for women and children, together with the decentralization of the execution of such programmes and the coordination of government actions with private initiatives. At the same time, he noted that there was still a need to raise the awareness of political authorities about population issues, since many Governments did not yet realize how important they were for economic and social development. International cooperation should not be solely directed at family planning but at data collection, data analysis and training as well. He stressed the need for more financial resources for population activities, since the developed countries invested a very small amount, equivalent to 1% of official development assistance (or some US\$600 million to US\$700 million), whereas the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century, held in 1989 in Amsterdam, had set a target of US\$9 billion annually by the year 2000. Although it should be recognized that other regions of the world were also in need of funding, Latin America and the Caribbean could not be left out, nor could the programmes of relevance to the region be suspended.

29. One expert, referring to urbanization and internal and international migration, stressed the importance of migration from small population centres to mid-sized cities and the lack of data on international migration. He also noted the importance of taking cultural aspects into account in family planning programmes. Another participant said that the negative effects of urbanization, such as its impact on the environment, should also be borne in mind. Before seeking new data-collection methods, existing techniques should be improved, including those on vital statistics and international migration, the last-mentioned being very important to the Caribbean subregion.

30. Another participant said that more emphasis should be placed on the incorporation of population issues in development planning and in environmentally related activities. The expert also drew attention to the need to transform words into concrete actions.

31. According to one participant, migratory movements were being affected by socio-political violence which had also caused a large number of deaths. Migrations were having an impact on the spatial distribution of the population and led to more social conflict in the cities, all of which factors had an effect on development policies, including those dealing with population issues. Another participant endorsed that view, saying that in his country mortality and migratory movements had increased as a result of socio-political conflicts.

32. One expert said that human resources were fundamental in order to achieve development and enhance the well-being of the population. Any action plan should be conceived on the basis of the improvement of those resources. He also noted the lack of data and the need for adequate indicators (for example, on employment, quality of education, and nutrition). There was also a need to deal with problems originating in rural-urban migration and to solve such problems by means of integrated social policies.

Population dynamics and development in the Caribbean subregion (agenda item 4)

33. The author of the reference document said that the Caribbean countries possessed social and economic characteristics that made their economies very vulnerable to external shocks: they were small, open, dependent economies which were largely undiversified. The declining economic performance and the structural adjustment programmes of the Caribbean countries in recent years had a negative impact on the living standards of certain population sub-groups, especially women, children and the elderly.

34. High teenage pregnancy rates and low prevalence of contraceptive measures remain, despite the achievements in fertility decline, key issues of concern. The consequences of adolescent fertility in terms of reduced opportunities for improved education and career possibilities were alarming. Government responses to the problem had usually been preventive in nature, with emphasis on family planning and family education. It was being suggested that equal emphasis should be placed on curative programmes to deal with the consequences. Stronger coordination among the relevant agencies responsible for dealing with the various aspects of teenage fertility as well as the adoption of a broader and more integrative approach to resolving the issues were also recommended.

35. The impact of emigration had been so great as to reduce the natural increase of Caribbean populations by as much as 50% to 100%, thereby leading to population declines in many countries. Heavy losses of professional and technical skills, which sometimes accounted for a substantial proportion of the countries' stock of trained persons, had been identified as a major obstacle to the development

efforts of the countries. Intraregional and return migration represented other types of migration also being experienced by the Caribbean countries.

36. In an effort to deal more effectively with those population problems, many countries (13) had been involved in the population policy formulation process. Countries had experienced a number of constraints in formulating and implementing their population policies, in particular with regard to research, data, methodology and training needs. The last-mentioned constraints had posed obstacles to the incorporation of population issues into the planning process. In addition, a wide gap still existed between Governments' perception of a population problem and the initiatives of intervention programmes to resolve the situation. Recommendations included the need for greater emphasis on information/education/communication programmes targeted to policy-makers and political leaders, and for the strengthening of coordination linkages among the different sectors.

37. Participants from a number of Caribbean countries underscored the importance of the document and highlighted such aspects as the distinctive features of the subregion (small islands, a small population, open yet dependent economies, etc.), the effects of structural adjustment, the significance of international migration (including intraregional migration) and its demographic, social and economic consequences and, in particular, refugee-related problems in the subregion. The representative of UNHCR noted that the refugee problem was an important issue not only in the Caribbean subregion but in Central America and Mexico as well, and felt that the question of repatriation and its consequences should be accorded due consideration.

38. Sixteen Caribbean countries paid tribute to the work carried out by the Joint ECLAC/CELADE Demography Unit in the Port of Spain office. Special emphasis was placed on the work being done to formulate population policies and create national population units and councils. Many countries expressed appreciation to UNFPA for the financial support that had been received over the years. Those countries also stressed the importance they attached to being able to have those activities continue, on a permanent basis, in the future. They also urged ECLAC/CELADE and UNFPA to take note of their concerns with regard to that matter and to make every possible effort to provide a more lasting basis for continued technical support to the Caribbean countries by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean.

39. The issue of teenage fertility in the subregion and its relationship to abortion were discussed. One participant mentioned the increasing importance of the question of ageing in his country and in the subregion as a whole. The importance of the environment was also emphasized.

40. Other experts stressed the importance of gathering reliable information, creating databases and conducting research; it was also pointed out that the countries' needed external financial and technical support in order to pursue the above-mentioned activities. In that connection, particular reference was made to the problems involved in measuring international migration.

41. Participants from the associate members of ECLAC expressed their gratitude for having been invited to participate in the preparatory meetings for the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo in 1994 and indicated their interest in being invited to attend that conference as observers.

Population policies and programmes (agenda item 5)

42. The author of the document "Population policies in Latin America: feasibility and opportunity" noted in his presentation that, on the one hand, the population policy issue could be approached from so many different angles that there was a danger of spreading oneself too thin without arriving at conclusions which could translate into clear messages for political action; on the other hand, the present meeting represented an exceptional opportunity to develop the topic further, updating and enriching it with new ideas and proposals in the light of the recent demographic experience of the countries of the region.

43. The purpose of the document was, first, to summarize what had happened from Bucharest to Saint Lucia in order to draw some lessons from a comparison of what had been proposed with what had actually happened. The second purpose was to ponder the current state of population policies, and, in view of the apparently little progress made in the past 20 years, to take a look at the factors behind that lack of progress. Some of the factors mentioned in the document were more important than others. Thus, the absence of a vision of the kind of society desired, the ecological dimension, the still pending clarification of how the relations between population and development operate and how they can be translated into clear messages for policy-makers, and the continued consideration of population policies as matters outside the normal operations of the State were aspects which had not yet been resolved. The third matter which could be underlined had to do with the incorporation of the population variable into what had become known as the trilogy of the new international order i.e., the new economic, political and international security order. Within this scenario, the population dimension represented an exclusionary, divergent process of which many clear indicators existed with regard to poverty and health conditions.

44. The new political order stressed the principle of individual freedom, but States did not always apply it consistently. A clear definition was needed of what was meant by the full exercise of reproductive rights, on the basis of the system of values and beliefs held by each individual rather than as the representation of an official posture. Such a definition was also lacking with regard to migratory movements.

45. Lastly, with regard to regional experience, the question arose as to whether, instead of promoting the formal adoption of population policies as thus far conceived, it might be better to opt for demographic reforms which were nothing more than effective actions within the normal sphere of competence of the State in order to reduce the inequities affecting increasingly large sectors of the population. At the same time, if a real desire existed to include population within the category of high priority matters, a substantial change in the way budgetary funds and resources were allocated by individual countries and by international cooperation should be promoted. The present amounts, compared to allocations to other fields of action (such as energy, communications or State reform), were negligible and should therefore be multiplied several times over.

46. Introducing the document "Population policies: reflections on the past and future perspectives", the author said that, 18 years after the Bucharest conference, there still existed in Latin America and the Caribbean a tremendous confusion in the field of population policy. The progress, stagnation and regression in that field since the Conference were described in part 3.

47. The document postulated that population policy should combine the features of any public policy, namely, definition of the goal or goals to be achieved, determination of the amount of time needed to achieve them and identification of the tools needed for that purpose. In general, the population policies

of the countries of the region lacked those features, since in most cases policy had been limited to rhetorical statements. Meanwhile, the population dynamics of most of the countries of the region had generally undergone a profound, unforeseen transformation, mainly in response to economic, social and political changes in those countries. As the change in population dynamics had affected the various social groups within countries in different ways, elements of social inequity had been introduced.

48. The document noted that some of the negative social and ecological effects on the countries of the region were not due exclusively to economic factors, but had also been influenced by demographic phenomena. Although it was to be hoped that the demographic transition process in the region would continue and that fertility in a considerable number of countries would continue moving towards zero growth, the document suggested that the absolute growth of the population would continue to pose great challenges, including the following: eliminating indigence and poverty; creating jobs for the large and growing number of unemployed and underemployed; overcoming illiteracy, expanding the coverage of the education system and improving its quality; organizing or modifying social security systems; and protecting natural resources with the aim of achieving sustainable development. Other challenges included those relating to health, the well-being of indigenous populations, genuine social integration of women, international migration and cultural development.

49. To meet all those challenges, it would be necessary to have highly trained and well-paid human resources; high-quality, ongoing research that would coordinate demographic, economic, social, institutional and political dimensions; efficient and permanent communication tools for professionals, intellectuals and administrators; ongoing staff training at various levels; and sufficient technical resources and infrastructure. The national and international funds available to assist population programmes would therefore have to be increased.

50. Lastly, the document stated that population policy should be combined with the basic policy guidelines proposed by ECLAC to the countries of the region in support of the objectives of changing production patterns. According to the document, in the field of population as in many others, the State had the obligation of defining the goals it considered indispensable for providing maximum well-being to a majority of the population.

51. The national experts described in detail the characteristics of population policies formulated or proposed in their countries, noting how the agencies in charge of such functions had evolved, and drawing attention to specific problems they had encountered. In a number of countries, population policies had been incorporated into the national constitution, although that had not always meant that they were systematically carried out.

52. One of the participants stressed the need to incorporate population policy design into the context of the new international order, which would mean redefining the State's role and making it operate more efficiently. A new social and economic strategy was also needed, one whose specific components involved the identification of target populations; that type of approach would lead to a population policy that would promote efficiency and equity.

53. Another expert said that in the past there had been a group of sectors that had been opposed to population policies, including religious circles and the Left, while the State had maintained an indifferent stance on the matter. Population policies had later gained some measure of acceptance, although some officials felt that the adoption of such policies would entail certain political costs that they were not prepared to pay. The gains made included the introduction of population education in secondary schools

and the implementation of family planning programmes with a strong private-sector input. However, serious problems still persisted in incorporating population factors into development programmes and policies; specific social policies should therefore be applied, and more human resources needed to be trained. Similarly, the implementation of population policies would require greater participation on the part of various institutions, together with continued international cooperation.

54. One participant noted that the incorporation of the ecological dimension into the design of population policies should be one of the priority recommendations in 1994, with greater stress being placed on slowing down the growing inequity of Latin American and Caribbean societies. With regard to the incorporation of demographic variables into economic and social development, it was important to take into account the idea that universality—still a nebulous concept—was not necessarily a prerequisite to the formulation of relevant sectoral programmes, even though those programmes might be independent of each other. Support should be given to developing research projects on the subject, promoting communication among intellectuals and decision-makers, and documenting demographic planning experiences. Lastly, it was important to strengthen horizontal cooperation among the countries of the region, although cooperation with developed countries could be a vitalizing factor in those efforts.

55. Another expert stressed the importance of identifying the role of public and private institutions in the formulation of population policies and programmes so as to promote consensus between the various sectors of society. Decentralization was one strategy to that end, since it was also a way of mobilizing resources within countries. That type of approach would also help to make the policies more operationally efficient and would thus require mechanisms for consultation and discussion among the various socio-political institutions.

56. The participant referred to the effort to arrive at a social consensus regarding population policies. As an irrefutable responsibility of the State, that effort entailed integrating not only formal policy statements but also the various cultural groups and the Catholic Church. Even under authoritarian political systems, society had maintained its orientations and values, and that fact underscored the need to establish broad forms of dialogue.

57. An observer from one non-governmental organization said that when that organization had looked into the question of why there was so little effective policy-making in the field of population in Latin America and the Caribbean, two reasons had been found. The first was that the formulation of effective policies required a political commitment which was not always forthcoming; the second was the difficulty of determining the interrelationships between population and development. Given that difficulty, the idea was to make gradual progress in specific sectors, rather than trying to arrive at an understanding of all such interactions; that approach was, moreover, in keeping with the compartmentalized nature of governmental action. Another factor to be borne in mind was that individuals must not be used as the only reference point; efforts ought to refer to all levels, from that of the individual to the family, the neighbourhood, the community and the whole of society. Finally, there was a need for a systematic evaluation of all actions from the standpoint of a public ethic in respect of population policies.

58. One expert stated that while it was true that agencies had been created to implement population policies and that those agencies enjoyed genuine support, their work was being hampered by a lack of suitable information and research.

59. Another participant felt that inroads had indeed been made in the field of population policy since the 1974 Bucharest conference; that progress was evident in a greater awareness of and growing interest in population issues. Advances had also been made in reducing mortality, but little headway had been made in respect to the spatial distribution of the population. While it was feasible to arrive at consensus regarding objectives in terms of mortality rates, it was more difficult to reach agreement concerning other demographic variables. Changes had occurred that reflected the effects of implicit policies, however. In relation to reproductive rights, for example, efforts in the fields of education and health had permitted progress towards the realization of families' goals in terms of the desired number and spacing of births. Emphasis was placed on the State's responsibility for incorporating population factors into social policies. The expert also stressed the importance of international migration, observing that if developed countries wished to avoid receiving waves of immigrants, they would have to provide collaboration in the form of resources for development in a variety of fields, including population.

60. A number of experts said that their countries' population policies were developed with strong support from information, education and communication programmes. Other participants underlined the importance of taking the institutional aspects of policy into consideration and of adopting decentralized approaches as a means of heightening the social effectiveness of population policies and programmes. It was also essential to have a broader base of reliable, up-to-date data. Finally, attention was drawn to the contribution made by technical cooperation in the implementation of population activities.

Population growth and distribution: their relation to development and the environment (agenda item 6)

61. The author of the basic document, summarizing its contents, said that the cultural, economic and ecological diversity of Latin America was the most salient feature of an analysis of population, environment and development. The response with which the idea of sustainable development had met internationally must be followed by the refinement of population thinking if that factor was to be properly incorporated into development practice. The discussion of the carrying capacity of distinct ecosystems within national territories—a departure from its use at highly aggregated levels—would contribute to an evaluation of the trade-offs implicit in national development policy. The great regional diversity pointed to the need for such specific, local ecosystemic planning. At the same time, an analysis of the environmental determinants and consequences of the components of population growth was a means of separating the relevant factors of specific problems, offering a more objective basis for policy-making.

62. While the comparative study of ecosystems and their socially defined vocation might help to direct economic investment across the national space, the demographic factors which could be most readily incorporated into environment/development planning were health and population distribution. In highly urbanized Latin America, basic water and waste treatment was a priority goal. Poorly controlled use of toxic substances in industry and agriculture provoked serious health consequences—directly through exposure to those substances and indirectly by compromising air and water quality.

63. Despite the serious and diversified nature of the problems within the region, the large resource base, declining fertility rates and relatively low density in much of the region signaled the potential for conciliating development and resource preservation in Latin America.

64. One participant felt that the paper provided a solid foundation for the ensuing debates, but suggested that emphasis should be placed on those aspects of the interaction among development, the environment and population which the paper had not dealt with in sufficient detail. Such aspects included

deforestation, urbanization, natural resource management and their links to poverty, which was sometimes an effect and sometimes a cause of certain types of environmental deterioration. The expert also pointed out that, at the global level, environmental sustainability was closely related to production and consumption patterns, especially in the industrialized countries.

65. Bearing in mind the recent United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), a careful analysis of Agenda 21 was recommended with a view to ensuring that its contents would be reflected in the final version of the documents issued by the present meeting. It was noted that the developed countries needed to make a stronger commitment to solving environmental problems. Furthermore, it was important to provide the population with access to sanitation infrastructure and to identify possible population-generated natural-resource pressure points.

66. Another expert felt that the concept of population carrying capacity had a number of disadvantages. It could not be used, for example, to account for involuntary migration caused by political or economic problems. Although a sizeable number of demographic studies had been carried out, the needs in that area should be systematized so that they could be translated into viable projects.

67. A greater coordination effort among the various international and national organizations was recommended with a view to optimizing the implementation of integrated programmes. The expert went on to caution that population policies should not be confused with development policies, noting that population issues had not been exhaustively discussed at UNCED and that the possibility of doing so at the present time should therefore be considered.

68. Another participant felt that the spatial distribution of the population was a subject of the utmost importance because it was a worldwide concern and thus warranted a specific recommendation. A coherent population policy should take spatial distribution into account and should fulfil the following four requirements: a) continuity in planning, b) the inclusion of clear-cut strategies, c) political determination, and d) a strong role for the State in guiding the process.

69. Another expert drew attention to the need to consider the relationships between population dynamics and the environment within the context of the development process. The countries also needed to become more knowledgeable about indigenous groups and their demographic profiles, since they were being strongly affected by the current economic dynamic. Greater awareness of this question was necessary at the world level.

70. Another expert stated that Agenda 21 and the Rio de Janeiro Declaration on Environment and Development constituted fully valid international commitments. It was essential to bear in mind that the indispensability of additional financial resources (to be provided chiefly by the industrialized countries) to permit the implementation of sustainable development practices in the developing countries had been emphasized at UNCED. One of the most far-reaching accomplishments of the Rio conference had been its reaffirmation of the "right to development" for all.

71. Another participant said that although a number of scholarly studies on the interrelationship among population, development and the environment had been carried out, the praxis in that field within the region was still quite limited, which did nothing to promote coherent decision-making regarding such matters. An effort therefore had to be made to move beyond the academic realm in order to strengthen the policy-based and institutional aspects of planning at all levels of government.

Women and population dynamics (agenda item 7)

72. The author of the corresponding basic document said that it sought to incorporate a series of priority issues relating to population and women into the debate. It drew upon the studies which ECLAC periodically conducted on the subject in accordance with its mandates based on papers prepared in connection with population activities, particularly those presented at the meeting of experts organized by UNFPA in Gaborone, Botswana, in June 1992.

73. Major changes had taken place in the status of women during the past few decades. Examples included women's incorporation into education and employment on a mass scale, the possibility of separating their sexuality from reproduction, the lengthening of their life spans and their tendency to bear fewer children. For economic and cultural reasons, such changes took very different forms from one country to another, but in all the countries they had forged a different reality that called for a new analysis of the status of women and the formulation of new models of interpersonal relations. At the regional level, reproduction was still centred primarily around women, since the views reported in surveys were those of women, and women were almost entirely responsible for contraception. It was therefore essential that society as a whole should consider the question from the standpoint of cross-gender equity. As regards future action, she stressed the importance of incorporating a gender-based perspective into global issues, noting that a consensus on that point existed within the United Nations system at the regional level.

74. Some participants felt that the highest-priority areas within that perspective were employment, education and training for women, especially young women. The type of education provided should be such as to prepare both men and women to assume the new roles involving greater sharing within the family which were necessary when women worked. With respect to employment, it was generally agreed that women continued to be the object of discrimination, which was reflected in the under-recording of the work they performed, especially in the case of domestic work, and in the particularly vulnerable position of female heads of household in that connection.

75. Experts from the Caribbean spoke about the specific situation of women in the subregion and the need for better statistics on their actual contributions and participation and on the special problems they faced. Emphasis was also placed on the subject of violence within the home and the violence suffered by women refugees and displaced women, particularly in Central America. It was essential that the compilation of data in that area and research on those subjects should be intensified despite the existing shortage of resources.

76. It was recommended that the central role and leadership positions of non-governmental organizations and of women's organizations and movements should be strengthened in view of the part which they did or could play in population programmes. It was also noted that discrimination owing to the persistence of cultural stereotypes continued to be a problem, and programmes should be carried forward to raise women's self-esteem and help them assume a stronger leadership role in decision-making.

Family planning, health and family well-being (agenda item 8)

77. The author of the corresponding basic document began by drawing a distinction between family planning and birth control. She then traced the history of family planning and highlighted the role played by non-governmental organizations and private commercial systems in the provision of such services. The work of those groups ought to be reinforced at the same time that stronger governmental support in that area was sought. Various topics relating to current contraception use levels and the demand for certain specific methods were analysed. She noted that there were still some countries in which such methods were scarcely used at all; in others, the sterilization of women was the chief form of contraception while in still others quite ineffective methods, such as the rhythm method or withdrawal, were employed. Mention was also made of family planning's contributions to the health of mothers and their children; in that connection, it was important to improve the provision of contraceptive services, education and information to the population in order to reduce the increasing frequency of induced abortions performed under hazardous conditions. Finally, she examined the existing situation with regard to the quality of care and the coverage of services, noting that some groups still lacked access to care owing to the unavailability of such services.

78. The fact that differences were recognized between what was meant by family planning programmes as a human right and birth control caused many participants to draw attention to the need to strengthen and expand those programmes in the countries of the region. At the same time, it was noted that family planning programmes had been set up as a prime element of population policies and they should be given a juridical and legal framework to ensure their continuity. In that context, a number of experts stressed the need for continued financial support through international cooperation (from both countries and international agencies). Such assistance was regarded as indispensable, not only in order to provide additional services but also to ensure the continuity of other services currently being consolidated.

79. A number of experts noted the contributions made by non-governmental organizations in the past and underlined that they still had an important role to play, in combination with government efforts. Their work could help in the expansion of programmes, collaboration with the communications media and decision-making.

80. One expert said it was important to establish services for the treatment of infertility. Such a step would allow for the incorporation of various sectors of the society, such as groups with different beliefs and cultural patterns, into an overall family planning programme. In view of the declining fertility rate in a number of countries, two challenges presented themselves. The first, of a social nature, was directed to rural women with lower levels of education, a group for which the coverage in those services was still quite limited. In the second, of an operative nature, there was an outstanding need to improve planning, education and evaluation techniques and promote the decentralization of programmes to smaller political and administrative units. In that regard, one participant said that the policy of decentralization towards regions and municipalities was having encouraging results.

81. Several experts drew attention to the need to strengthen and expand information and education programmes, using new techniques and taking advantage of mass communications media. With regard to research, one participant said that it would be helpful to have studies on individual and family behaviour that would provide a better understanding of how decisions on reproductive matters were taken and of what value was attached to children in certain geographic and cultural contexts. It would also be useful to gain a better understanding of non-users, since information had thus far been concentrated on user groups.

82. A number of participants referred to induced abortion, recognizing that various positions existed in Latin America, ranging from countries where the practice contravened individual principles and beliefs and prevailing law, to others in which abortion was permitted under certain conditions. In any case, it was acknowledged that further attention must be devoted to the topic.

83. Many statements referred to the need to reinforce human resources training for action and research. Thus, there was not only a growing need for such resources, but also a reduction in their availability in some cases. A belief existed that Latin America and the Caribbean had the capacity to generate their own resources with their own means, which was a view that did not correspond to the reality of the situation. In that regard, a number of experts noted the difficulties that existed in follow-up, evaluation and analysis, owing to inadequate statistical systems.

84. One participant's country was facing serious problems with regard to family planning programmes, since the structure of the State's health services had been drastically changed and a large proportion of them had been privatized. Thus, a significant percentage of the population living under the poverty line had been left without access to health services. The situation was becoming worse because of the lack of information programmes.

Final comments

85. At the request of many of the experts, the authors of the document on population policies and programmes presented some final comments on the topic.

86. One expert said that the document she had presented had not been intended to spread pessimism but rather to inject a note of realism into the participants' discussion of population policy. The document set forth the advances made in the adoption of legal provisions and in the organization of administrative mechanisms, while other positive elements had been brought up in the course of the discussion, such as an increased pool of knowledge, more and better trained personnel and recognition of the political sector. It was clear, however, that constitutional provisions and laws on the subject would not work the miracle of mobilizing effective action for the achievement of demographic goals.

87. The document talked about "one or several goals" and said that various sectors would contribute to their achievement. The debates had enriched the document's contribution: underscoring the desirability of decentralizing population policy action at local levels was one of the enriching elements, as was the idea that the executive branch could make it mandatory for all government sectors to carry out population policy directives, and that of providing funds to the various sectors that were in a position to meet their obligations in terms of implementing that policy.

88. The recognition of the need for structural adjustment programmes to address social needs provided an opportunity for those Latin American and Caribbean countries that did not yet have such a social policy to define one which would help them to deal with demographic factors. The move to focus social spending more accurately could open up the possibility of directing more attention to population issues.

89. A number of statements made during the meeting highlighted the fact that virtually all the countries represented were carrying out activities designed to modify demographic variables. What seemed to be lacking in some cases was an overall framework that would lend greater coherence to those activities. It appeared that by the time the regional preparatory meeting was held in Mexico City in 1993, the countries

would be quite far along in the process of incorporating population variables, not in general terms into economic planning, but rather into the activities carried out by the various sectors of government (health, education, employment, industry, etc.).

90. A staff member of CELADE said that experiences with population policies in recent years in Latin America and the Caribbean provided telling evidence of the absence of a political class at all levels. Political parties' programmes, campaign platforms and government programmes either referred to them very rarely or did not even mention them at all. In many countries, the institutional incorporation of population-related questions was still linked to matters of internal State security and had very little influence on other spheres. The expert added that the preparatory work begun in Saint Lucia offered an exceptional opportunity to make significant progress towards achieving a commitment on the part of the political class to the integration of population issues on the priority basis it warranted.

91. One expert then expressed his appreciation to all the institutions which had participated in the meeting, to the Government of Saint Lucia for its magnificent hospitality and, in particular, to CELADE for the part it had played in the preparation of the excellent papers presented at the meeting. Those documents, whether prepared by CELADE's own experts or by outside consultants, had provided the participants with a clear picture of the present situation with regard to demographic issues. He hoped that CELADE would continue to provide its assistance both in the forthcoming meetings on population and in the execution of relevant tasks by the countries of the region in the future.

C. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

92. A drafting group, open to all the experts from the member countries, was formed. It met from 6 to 8 October 1992 to elaborate some conclusions and recommendations on the basis of the general debate. These are set forth below.

1. Population growth, structure and distribution in Latin America and the Caribbean: socio-economic trends and implications

Population dynamics, development and equity

1. Latin America and the Caribbean have made great strides in the demographic transition process; however, the regional average masks considerable country-to-country differences and variations within countries depending on social group, geographic area and ethnic group. The differences in demographic behaviour by sector are an expression of the social inequalities that persist in the countries. Although in the past decade some social progress has been made in the region, it stands in contrast to the increase in poverty, malnutrition and health problems.

2. To ensure their success, strategies for development with social equity and environmental sustainability should take into account population variables and trends.

3. The average annual growth rate of the population has declined in recent decades, primarily as a result of the drop in fertility. However, this growth continues at relatively high levels owing to the persistence of a high fertility rate in some countries and population groups, and to demographic inertia stemming from a high concentration of women in child-bearing age groups.

4. Population growth, both in general and by age groups, is an important factor in formulating programmes designed to meet the sectoral needs of the population, such as housing, health services, employment and social security.

5. In view of the fast growth and increased longevity of the elderly population in many countries of the region, there is a need for national, regional and local Governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, to design and execute programmes to meet the demands of older persons for health care services, social security, recreation and social participation. Thus, organizations such as senior citizens' councils and educational and training institutes should be established or strengthened in order to help older people live a fuller life.

Fertility

6. Fertility rates have declined, mainly among women over age 35, and this has helped reduce high-risk births for both mother and child. However, high fertility rates persist among the teenage population, a fact which constitutes a cause for concern because of reproductive health risks and the problems they entail. This situation makes it difficult for women to gain access to education and jobs and creates unfavourable conditions for child-raising, both of which factors aggravate the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Governments are encouraged to undertake programmes to deal with the consequences of teenage pregnancy and to assist adolescents in re-entering the school system and the labour market.

7. In order to reduce teenage pregnancies, family planning programmes need to redefine their target groups among adolescents, taking into account their differing needs. Communication messages, strategies and service programmes should be devised accordingly. Governments are urged to accelerate the pace of institutionalization of family-life education programmes in schools.

8. In addition to family planning, family-life and sex education aimed at discouraging pregnancies too early in life, Governments are encouraged to undertake programmes to deal with the consequences of teenage pregnancy and to assist adolescents in re-entering the school system and the labour market.

Mortality

9. The changes that have taken place in mortality and in the age structure of the population have led to modifications in epidemiological profiles. The many countries that have not yet fully solved the problem of the higher incidence of contagious diseases among the poorest strata should also give due attention to the diseases which entail higher health-care costs.

10. The high incidence of unwanted pregnancies, primarily among young women, leads to the use of illegal abortion, with negative effects on health such as the persistence of high maternal mortality rates, which are many times higher than those of the developed countries.

Spatial distribution and migrations

11. Prevailing economic development strategies, which give priority to the opening of international markets and (sub)regional economic integration, could lead to increases in international migration, the free movement of populations and a change in migration patterns, with varied effects on demographic trends that should be taken into account.

12. Although the rate of urban growth has declined, the levels are very high and the concentration of the population in large cities has led to an increased incidence of poverty and a deterioration of the urban environment.

13. Existing data sources for the study of migration and development at the intraregional and interregional levels should be fully utilized. Data collection needs for better information on temporary or circular forms of international migration should be identified, emphasizing the requirements for decision-making. Measures for sharing the data and information should be adopted. Ad hoc surveys should be undertaken which focus on specific critical groups such as illegal migrants, refugees and return migrants.

14. In both the Caribbean and Latin America, there should be greater cooperation among countries and areas of the region to ensure that the human rights of international migrants are protected and that their working and living conditions are safeguarded.

15. The rights of refugees should likewise be guaranteed in accordance with international conventions on refugees. Governments should be aware that large-scale return migration may alter demographic trends and thus seriously affect the allocation of resources for social and economic programmes.

Resources and institutions

16. Although Latin America and the Caribbean have made great strides in their demographic transition process, serious problems persist which require national and international financial resources to improve the quality of information, to expand research efforts and to extend action programmes. Needs for international technical cooperation also exist with regard to specific population issues. Official development assistance in support of population programmes should be increased.

17. The participants pay tribute to the valuable support provided to the region by UNFPA. They also express their concern at the reduction of the resources provided to UNFPA and especially the cut in the amount of funds allocated by UNFPA to Latin America and the Caribbean.

18. The participants express their appreciation for the work that has been done by CELADE on socio-demographic research, human resources training and technical assistance activities in support of population policies and programmes, and they note that the countries of the region are interested in receiving the same valuable cooperation in future. The participants stress the need to take the necessary steps to obtain resources for this purpose.

Participation of non-independent countries in the preparatory meetings and the international conference

19. It is recommended that the associate members of United Nations regional economic commissions be invited to participate in the Preparatory Committee and in the International Conference on Population and Development in observer capacity, recalling that such a status was adopted for these countries at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

Support for the Joint ECLAC/CELADE Demography Unit of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean

20. The participants from the Caribbean subregion wish to emphasize their appreciation to UNFPA for the support which that agency has been providing to ECLAC/CELADE and to the Joint ECLAC/CELADE Demography Unit in Port of Spain. Through the very valuable work of the Demography Unit a number of Caribbean countries have been able to adopt a more focused approach to dealing with problems of population and development in their countries, including the establishment of population units and population councils.

21. While recognizing the financial constraints under which UNFPA operates, the Caribbean countries also wish to express their grave concern about the reduction of financial support to ECLAC/CELADE and, in particular, about the possible termination of the activities of the Demography Unit at the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean as a consequence of the cessation of UNFPA financial support to this unit at the end of December 1992, under current financing arrangements. This could have very adverse effects on the work of fledgling population units in some of the countries and more generally on the efforts of Caribbean countries to integrate population considerations into economic and social development planning.

22. The experts from the Caribbean subregion wish to urge ECLAC/CELADE and UNFPA to take note of the concerns of their countries in regard to this matter and to make every possible effort to provide a more lasting basis for the provision of continued technical support to the Caribbean countries by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean.

2. Population policies and programmes

1. Reaffirming the principles of the World Population Plan of Action, it should be emphasized that the formulation and implementation of population policies is the sovereign right of each nation.

2. It should be reiterated that in order for couples and individuals to exercise their right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, States should ensure that all social groups have access to the necessary information and methods.

3. A population policy should form part of an economic and social strategy for sustainable development and should not be regarded as a substitute for that process. Moreover, to ensure the effectiveness of that policy, efforts should be made to eliminate the stumbling-blocks which make it difficult, in the current context of international economic relations, and domestic and regional obstacles

for the region to gain a better position in the international context, significantly limiting its possibilities for development.

4. Within the context of changing production patterns with social equity, endorsed by the countries of the region, and the agreements under Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, population policies and programmes must be integrated.

5. An essential prerequisite to the design of population policies is to forge a consensus among the various groups of society. These policies should give due respect to the cultural and ethical values of that society, with special attention being given to each member of the family and to the family itself in its broadest sense. This presupposes respect for human rights and individual liberty. All groups concerned with the topic, including non-governmental organizations, should have a real opportunity to participate.

6. The importance of the participation of the private sector in population programmes is recognized. It is, however, highlighted that the formulation of a population policy is the ineluctable responsibility of the State.

7. To overcome difficulties encountered in incorporating demographic factors into development policies and programmes, it is necessary to take the following steps:

- a) Promote awareness on the part of political decision-makers about the importance of population policies and programmes in their spheres of action;
- b) Further develop research efforts in support of the formulation of population policies;
- c) Strengthen population and development centres aimed at conducting research, teaching and technical assistance.
- d) Better define and communicate research findings to make them available to political leaders and the public at large;
- e) Strengthen human resources training in research, design, and management and evaluation of population policies and programmes.

8. Population policies form part of the broadest definition of social policy, involving actions in sectors such as education, health, social security and employment. In addition, they must be included in other policies, such as those dealing with regional and urban development and environment. Thus, specific sectoral programmes may be formulated which will have an impact on population dynamics even in the absence of explicit population policies.

9. The primary responsibility for population policies and programmes rests with the individual countries. Latin American and Caribbean countries need new, additional resources to finance their population programmes and policies. Thus, efforts must be made to ensure that increased international cooperation, for which the developed countries have an irreplaceable responsibility, is forthcoming on a continuing basis.

10. Some countries of the region have made significant headway in the formulation and implementation of population policies and programmes. The experience and knowledge gained in the

process are very valuable and can be shared with other members that are still striving to attain desired population goals. The former group of countries may wish to assist in the transfer of knowledge and skills to other countries which are in the initial stages of attaining their demographic goals and objectives through the exchange of expertise, the sharing of information and knowledge and the facilitation of training. Such technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) should be encouraged. Within the framework of existing institutions, appropriate mechanisms need to be identified to facilitate TCDC in the region and with other regions. It is suggested that this cooperation be strengthened through external financial support.

11. Population policies should be implemented in combination with socio-economic policies which are designed to reduce the inequities that are reflected in differences in fertility and mortality. In formulating the relevant programmes, special attention should be given to the specific needs of disadvantaged groups and individuals in eliminating these inequities. Population policies and programmes have an important role in efforts to eradicate poverty.

12. Economic policy measures aimed at increasing competitiveness, such as structural adjustment programmes, may have a negative impact on social equity and the environment; it is the State's responsibility to anticipate these effects on demographic variables and take action to correct them.

13. Population policies should take indigenous populations and minority ethnic groups explicitly into consideration in order to breach the cultural barriers that hinder their full participation in society, and should ensure the preservation of their values and traditions.

14. The incorporation of the geographical and gender dimensions into the formulation of population policies is an element that could help to reduce the present inequities in Latin American and Caribbean societies, so that the most pressing needs can be addressed and existing resources can be channelled to the most vulnerable groups at the subnational level.

15. Internal and international migration, especially the existence of refugees and displaced populations, must be duly taken into account by States, as these factors will determine the relevance of population policies and the social and economic programmes associated with them.

16. In the design and execution of population policies, due account should be taken of any interactions between the environment and the behaviour of demographic trends.

17. A necessary component of population policies and programmes concerns population distribution and, in this respect, some salient challenges are the phenomena of mega-cities, dispersed settlements and the economic and social problems of rapidly growing urban centres.

3. Population growth and distribution: their relation to development and the environment

1. The full validity of the instruments adopted by the United Nations concerning the environment and development should be underscored, particularly the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the Tlatelolco Platform on Environment and Development, adopted at the Latin American and Caribbean regional preparatory meeting for UNCED. In respect of Agenda 21, it is particularly necessary to take into account chapter

5, on demographic dynamics and sustainability; chapter 7, on promoting sustainable human settlement development; and chapter 26, on recognizing and strengthening the role of indigenous people and their communities. These chapters establish the groundwork for the preparatory tasks for the International Conference on Population and Development.

2. It is reiterated that the right to development should be exercised so that the development and environmental needs of present and future generations may be met in an equitable manner. To achieve sustainable development and a better quality of life for all, States should reduce or eliminate unsustainable production and consumption patterns and should promote appropriate population policies.

3. The International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994, will provide a unique opportunity to arrive at significant agreements that will ensure the incorporation of the population dimension into the countries' economic and social development processes. This will help to demonstrate the need to increase the supply of additional financial resources required to fulfil the recommendations to be adopted at that conference.

4. The predominant development styles in the region have led to a marked skewing between the distribution of the population and the location of services to meet their basic needs, and these development styles have also had severe environmental impacts. To deal with these problems, a form of institutional decentralization needs to be promoted which will ensure genuine participation by the population while at the same time supporting regional and local planning.

5. The spatial distribution of the population is related to natural resources and environmental conditions and is determined to a large extent by internal migration. The design of programmes on internal migration therefore warrants much more attention than it has thus far received.

6. A definite need exists for a fuller understanding of the interrelationships between population, development and the environment and for human resources training in this field.

7. This meeting takes note of the recommendations made at the symposium of experts from the Caribbean subregion held in Antigua on 19-22 July 1992 to review the World Population Plan of Action. The recommendations which the experts from the subregion consider to be particularly relevant to their countries are as follows:

"a) Any analysis of the interrelationships among population, environment and development should recognize i) that poverty is both a cause and an effect of environmental degradation and should be integrated into planning for sustainable development; and ii) that unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly in developed countries, are a major cause of global environmental degradation.

"b) Countries need to develop their capacity to plan for sustainable population and natural resource use and to assess the implications of current and projected population growth and distribution patterns, together with their potential impact on the natural resource base and sustainable development.

"c) Countries should develop special programmes for certain population groups (poor rural populations, squatter settlements, low-lying coastal populations) which have been affected by, or are vulnerable to, environmental degradation and its consequences.

"d) Recognition should be given to the demographic correlates of the world's "bottom billion" people (limited income, education and access to basic sanitation), who live in poverty and are forced to use and/or over-exploit the environmental resource base; strategies to address these issues should be developed and implemented.

"e) Areas where great demographic pressure is being exerted upon natural resource bases should be identified, and appropriate policies and programmes for minimizing these problems should be designed and implemented.

"f) There is a need to formulate and implement specific policies and programmes in response to unsustainable consumption and production patterns, particularly in developed countries, which are major causes of the degradation of the global environment. The countries responsible should also bear the major responsibility for addressing these problems.

"g) Special emphasis should be placed on the effective integration of population, environment and development, particularly as regards developing countries and small island States. This will require a favourable economic environment, access to new and additional financial resources, and access to and transfer of environmentally sound technology."

4. Women and population dynamics

1. The Meeting of Government Experts notes the importance of the instruments adopted by the United Nations for the advancement of women, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development, adopted by the members of ECLAC in 1977, all of which are still in force. The meeting also attaches great importance to the preparations for the 1994 regional conference on the integration of women, including the elaboration of recommendations to complement the prevailing plans in accordance with the current regional scenario. In that context, it is recognized that the coordination being initiated by ECLAC as part of its mandates contributes to furthering the analysis and will also strengthen the implementation of concrete programmes and promote a better use of resources.

2. The meeting reiterates the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, especially article 16, which provides "that States Parties ...shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women... the same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights".

3. Reaffirming the recommendations made by the International Conference on Population held in Mexico City in 1984, the meeting expresses interest in strengthening the incorporation of women's issues into population-related activities, and stresses the importance of "mainstreaming" women's concerns and developing integrated programmes. Within this context, concern for women's health and well-being is fundamental, and gender equity should be considered an essential element.

4. There is a need to analyse population dynamics and programmes from a gender perspective. Accordingly, it is of interest to improve statistics, desegregating them by gender, and to promote research projects on women.

5. The heterogeneity of the region and the specific features of each subregion and country should be taken into consideration in research projects, policy-making and programme design. This is particularly true of the Caribbean countries and of countries having indigenous communities.

6. Special importance is attached to educational programmes, especially those that train women and give them access to employment, and those that relate to their sexuality and reproductive health; these help women to take decisions regarding all aspects of their lives and in particular, to exercise their right to plan their families.

7. In view of the high rates of maternal morbidity and mortality and of illegal abortions performed under high-risk conditions, special importance is attached to reproductive health programmes and to adequate access to family planning information and programmes. The need for these programmes is even more urgent in the case of low-income women and adolescent women. Particular importance is also attached to strengthening research on this subject.

8. There is a need to promote and adopt concrete measures for achieving equality in men's and women's roles, both in the labour market and in the home. To this end, such measures as maternity and paternity leave, the promotion and establishment of child-care facilities, and flexible or staggered working hours are recommended.

9. Programmes are needed to help eliminate the violence which vast numbers of women face both within the home and outside of it, in the streets and in the workplace. Laws should be passed which prohibit sexual harassment on the job and in educational institutions and which help to prevent domestic violence.

10. Programmes which raise the self-esteem of women, and most especially of young women, are regarded as essential in order to eliminate women's vulnerability to physical and psychological violence and to improve their living conditions. In the case of adolescents, this is viewed as a crucial factor in the prevention of unwanted pregnancies.

11. The problem of poverty and women's participation in the work force is particularly prevalent among female heads of household. Specific programmes should be promoted to mitigate these poverty-related conditions. For example, efforts should be made to facilitate women's participation in economic activities (such as small-scale agro-industrial production) and their access to rural credit and public services in order to help them to earn higher incomes.

12. Recognizing that the informal sector plays an increasingly important role in the absorption of the female work force and that the job opportunities opened up by this sector are generally low paying and lacking in social security benefits, it is recommended that research projects and specific programmes concerning this matter be promoted. For example, production-oriented skill-building and training programmes, the expansion and enhancement of opportunities for marketing goods and services, access to special lines of credit and social security and job protection schemes would certainly improve the working conditions and remuneration of women employed in the informal sector.

13. Refugee and displaced women and those who return to their home countries are particularly vulnerable and need to have access to services that will permit their integration into the development process of their host countries or their countries of origin.

14. The participation of non-governmental organizations and private institutions in programmes on women and population is recognized as being important. However, the State should play a crucial role in providing services to women in order to ensure social equity and equal rights. Governments should accelerate the institutionalization of family-life education programmes within the educational system.

15. An important role can and should be played by women's organizations, particularly community organizations, in the elaboration and implementation of programmes for women and concerning population. These organizations are fundamental agents in the formulation of family survival strategies for dealing with the crisis, in creating a greater awareness about issues relating to women and population and in promoting social change.

16. The use of all available communications media is considered particularly important in consciousness-raising and in changing societal patterns with regard to efforts to integrate women into development and to provide them with access to population programmes.

5. Family planning, health and family well-being

1. The benefits of family planning are recognized in terms of, inter alia, improving reproductive health, reducing maternal and child morbidity and mortality and preventing the social consequences of unwanted pregnancies, especially among adolescent women.

2. The fact that vast population segments lack access to family planning methods is one manifestation of social inequity and represents a constraint on the reproductive rights of the population. Thus the State, even where public funds are limited, should ensure the provision of education and family planning services to low-income groups.

3. It is necessary to create greater awareness on the part of decision-makers and national, regional and local leaders about the importance of providing adequate education and family planning services. In that task, information, education and communication activities play an important part.

4. Programmes should be designed as part of the framework of the decentralization of public administration, ensuring the participation of communities and of the private sector, including both non-profit organizations and commercial enterprises or agents (such as pharmacies or private physicians), subject to the normative functions of government.

5. Women's community organizations should take an active role in the promotion and implementation of family planning programmes so that the needs of their communities can be met and at the same time in order to ensure the democratization of those programmes. In that context, there is also a need to expand the range of human resources trained in various fields who participate in furnishing family planning services.

6. Family planning programmes should be integrated and should take into consideration the various aspects of sexual and reproductive health, such as infertility, sterility and sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS.

7. Due consideration should be given to the quality of health care, including information on, and availability of, the widest possible range of contraception methods so that all sectors of the population may choose freely among them.

8. Since the importance of information, education and communication services to support and improve the performance of family planning services is well documented, these activities should be expanded to prevent teenage pregnancies and unwanted pregnancies in women of all ages and to integrate men's participation in family planning.

9. Family planning services must be provided for young people as a special target group, in efforts to limit the rise in teenage pregnancies. These services must include family-life and sex education and counselling services, as well as re-education and aptitude training programmes.

10. The social communications media should be used to create an awareness on the part of the population about family planning. Steps should also be taken to ensure that the coverage of such services is extended to include, in particular, low-income sectors.

11. It is essential to establish the legal frameworks needed to guarantee the rights of individuals and couples to have access to the information and methods they require to plan their families and to ensure that actions are institutionalized and continued.

12. The establishment and institutionalization of family planning programmes require political support and substantially more funding from both national and international sources.

13. The impact of family planning programmes needs to be gauged; to this end, information systems should be developed for the follow-up and evaluation of those programmes. There is a special need for socio-demographic as well as practical and biomedical research on this subject.

14. Sustained efforts should be made for greater involvement of males in family planning. In this regard, communication strategies should be evolved to inform and educate men about family planning and fertility regulation.

15. Non-governmental organizations should continue their roles in support of official family planning programmes. Governments should enhance the potential of these organizations by encouraging them in the development of innovative programmes, especially for vulnerable segments of the population.

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Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LC/L.697(Conf.81/1)/Rev.1	Provisional agenda
LC/L.698(Conf.81/2)/Rev.1	Annotated provisional agenda
DDR/1	Latin America and the Caribbean: The dynamics of population and growth (Juan Chackiel and Miguel Villa)
DDR/1/Add.1	Latin America and the Caribbean: The dynamics of population and growth. Summary (Juan Chackiel and Miguel Villa)
DDR/2	Population dynamics and development in the Caribbean (With special emphasis on adolescent fertility, international migration and population policy and development planning) (Barbara Boland)
DDR/3	Population policies: reflections on the past and future perspectives (Carmen Miró)
DDR/4	Population policies in Latin America: feasibility and opportunity (Guillermo Macció)
DDR/5	Population growth and distribution: their relations to development and the environment (Daniel Hogan)
DDR/6	Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: Potential leadership in the area of population (Miriam Krawczyk)
DDR/7	Family planning in Latin America (Elena Prada)
DDR/8	Population growth, structure and distribution in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas: Socio-economic trends and implications (Carmen Gómez)
DDR/9	Bolivia: estrategia de población (Population Policy Unit, Ministry of Planning and Coordination of Bolivia)