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**SECOND FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN
REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Note by the Secretariat

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I. INTRODUCTION

The sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development met for the first time on 17 and 18 April 1996 in San José, Costa Rica, during the twenty-sixth session of the Commission.

The decision to establish the Ad Hoc Committee had been taken at the twenty-fifth session of the Commission (Cartagena, Colombia, 1994), with the objective of ensuring adequate implementation, follow-up and review of the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development.

At its first meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee, composed of representatives of the member countries of ECLAC, considered the population situation in the region and issues relating to the execution and institutionalization of population policies and programmes.¹ The report on the first meeting is annexed to the present note.

The second meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee will be held during the twenty-seventh session of the Commission (Oranjestad, Aruba, May 1998) in order to continue consideration of the follow-up to the Regional Plan of Action. Background information on this issue is provided in section II below.

As agreed at the first meeting, the issue of the relationship between population, reproductive health and poverty will also be addressed on this occasion. At the request of the Ad Hoc Committee, the secretariat has prepared a document² to help guide the discussion of this topic.

The third topic to be considered by the Committee is the special session of the General Assembly that will be convened from 30 June to 2 July 1998, with participation at the highest level, in order to examine and evaluate the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994). In this evaluation process, known as CIPD+5, the regional forums will have a very important role. Section III of the present note provides information on preparatory activities at the global level and section IV suggestions concerning the preparation of national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action and the Regional Plan of Action.

¹ See reference document "Follow-up report on the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development" (LC/G.1905(SES.26/10)).

² "Population, reproductive health and poverty" (LC/G.2015(SES.27/20)).

II. REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development (Mexico City, 29 April-4 May 1993), convened preparatory to the International Conference on Population and Development, approved unanimously a declaration entitled "Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development" setting out the common position of the countries of the region on population and development issues. The goals and objectives established in this Consensus reflect the views and aspirations of the region concerning the relationship between population, development and the environment, and progress in the field of human rights and in the fight against inequalities in the living conditions of the various social strata, ethnic groups and geographic areas, as well as those between men and women.

Based on the premise that stronger mutual support among the countries of the region would facilitate achievement of these goals and objectives, the delegations at the Regional Conference decided to promote the adoption of a regional plan of action. The general aim of this plan would be to encourage the exchange of past and current national experience gained in formulating and implementing population policies and programmes.

The countries of the region provided strong support for the drafting of this plan at several subregional and regional meetings. The draft regional plan of action was approved at the twenty-fifth session of the Commission (Cartagena, Colombia, April 1994) and at the beginning of 1996 became the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development,³ after being enriched by the results of the Cairo Conference.

It may be recalled that in the Plan the countries agreed upon a set of objectives, goals and recommendations for action, on the basis of an examination of demographic and socioeconomic changes, experience gained in the implementation of population policies and programmes, and the consensus arrived at by the Cairo Conference. Since these objectives apply primarily to the national context, they will be adapted at the national level to suit the special characteristics of each country, and will be pursued through action at that level.

The countries also agreed on the need to identify and carry out complementary action at the regional and subregional levels to support or facilitate national action. The Regional Plan of Action thus provides for such activities, grouped under the following categories:

1. Meetings for overall analysis (including meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development)
2. Seminars for analysis of issues
3. Thematic workshops

³ LC/G.1920; LC/DEM/G.159.

4. Training activities
5. Working groups (supporting the seminars for analysis of issues)
6. Horizontal cooperation among the countries of the region
7. Joint research
8. Data banks and regional information networks

Under each of these categories, various international, regional and national bodies have organized activities at the regional or subregional level, since the twenty-fifth session of the Commission, to support implementation at the national level of the recommendations of the Cairo Conference and the Regional Plan of Action.

It is hoped that, at the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee, member countries and international bodies, particularly the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), will provide information on activities they have undertaken in the spirit of the Cairo Conference and of the Regional Plan of Action.

Activities undertaken by ECLAC and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) during the past biennium were in line with the guidelines for regional action contained in the Consensus and the Plan. CELADE continued its training activities, participated in the organization of various seminar-workshops on specific topics and continued to maintain information systems and networks and to design instruments to facilitate the incorporation of the demographic dimension in development policies and programmes. The working document entitled "Report on the activities of the Commission since April 1996"⁴ provides details of the activities of the secretariat in the field of population and development during the past two years. Applied research, technical assistance and training activities executed or programmed include the relationship between population, development and international migration, the round of censuses being organized in the year 2000, ageing and the senior population, and the incorporation of sociodemographic information in sectoral and local development programmes and projects.

The Plan sets out the activities considered to be priorities for the first years of its implementation. However, whether or not these activities are carried out depends to a large degree on the availability of funds and on any new priorities that the countries of the region may establish. It is hoped to provide information at the second meeting of the Committee on approaches that have been made to various international financing organizations and Governments of developed countries, and on their outcome.

⁴ LC/G.1993(SES.27/8).

Activities carried out in the Caribbean subregion

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, which also acts as secretariat of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC), has coordinated the follow-up activities to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. It has also been responsible for follow-up action and support with respect to the implementation of the Caribbean Subregional Plan of Action on Population and Development, which presents the contents of the Regional Plan of Action and the Conference from the Caribbean perspective and which has served as a guide for action at the national and subregional levels. Technical assistance provided to countries of the subregion—for example in the area of applied research—in implementing the Programme of Action of the Conference has been geared to the specific needs and concerns of the subregion. These include:

International migration. Special emphasis is given to recent migratory patterns in the context of new development strategies; the impact of immigration on small islands and coastal areas; the role and importance of family remittances from abroad; and return migration.

Adolescents. In accordance with the recommendations of the Conference, studies were carried out on adolescent fertility with a view to promoting a support programme for that age group.

Training. This is geared towards enhancing the use of socio-demographic statistics in the design of development programmes and policies and highlighting the appropriate use of indicators both in identifying and targeting vulnerable and poor groups, and in preparing population projections.

Socio-demographic data bank. The purpose of this bank is to support research and training activities. The data are published in the “Regional Digest of Socio-demographic Statistics”.

Lastly, a quarterly newsletter entitled “Caribbean Action on Population and Development, Follow-up to ICPD” is published as a means of disseminating information on activities carried out in the subregion in keeping with recommendations of the Conference and the Subregional Plan of Action. It also enables countries of the subregion to exchange and share experience.

III. FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION ADOPTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD+5)

In its resolution 52/188 of 18 December 1997, the General Assembly of the United Nations, taking note of the recommendations contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/42 and stressing the need to pursue further the implementation of the Programme of Action and for Governments to recommit themselves to achieving its goals and objectives, decided to convene a special session for a duration of three days from 30 June to 2 July 1999, at the highest possible level of participation, in order to review and appraise the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. The General Assembly also made plain that it would not be the purpose of the special session to renegotiate existing agreements contained in the Programme of Action.

As established by the General Assembly, the Commission on Population and Development will serve as the preparatory body for the final preparations for the special session (ICPD+5). It was decided that the thirty-second session of that Commission, scheduled to be held in March 1999, should be open-ended to allow the full participation of all States.

Prior to that date, various preparatory activities of global and regional scope will be carried out. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, the main intergovernmental forum is the ECLAC sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development.

According to information available at the time of writing, the following activities are planned; for the most part they are being organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):⁵

Four round tables on:

Sexual and reproductive health of adolescents (New York, 6-9 April 1998)

Reproductive rights and the implementation of reproductive health programmes (June 1998)

The role and participation of civil society in implementing the Programme of Action (Dhaka, Bangladesh, 7-10 July 1998)

Population and macroeconomic links (Bellagio, Italy, 1-4 November 1998).

⁵ At the UNFPA website, up-to-date information is available on scheduled preparatory activities (Internet address: www.unfpa.org/ICPD/ICPD.HTM).

Seminars and meetings of experts on:

International migration (The Hague, 29 June-2 July 1998)

Ageing (October 1998)

Reproductive health in emerging areas (September 1998).

The outcomes of these meetings and meetings organized by United Nations regional commissions (including the meeting of the ECLAC sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development), together with any other special reports that may be prepared, will serve as inputs for the international forum to be organized by UNFPA (Amsterdam, February 1999), which will be similar to the forum also held in Amsterdam in 1989.

Lastly, the conclusions and recommendations of this forum with respect to future activities and the report of the Population Division of the United Nations on the quinquennial review and assessment of the Programme of Action will be the main inputs for a short report to be produced by the Commission on Population and Development in its capacity as preparatory body for ICPD+5. The Secretary-General will submit this document to the General Assembly at the special session.

**IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF COUNTRY REPORTS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION
ADOPTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN CAIRO**

In order to contribute to the preparation of country reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action, which will be presented at the meeting of the sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development, the ECLAC secretariat, in cooperation with the Latin America and the Caribbean Division of UNFPA, is submitting for the consideration of member country delegations a standard approach to some of the most important issues of this Programme.

It is suggested that, in addition to the Programme of Action and the Regional Plan of Action, a number of other relevant documents should be used as reference material for the preparation of the country reports, including:

The eighth survey on population and development sent out by the Population Division of the United Nations to the Governments of all States towards the end of 1997 with a request for replies to reach the Secretary-General of the United Nations by 1 March 1998.

The national report prepared by each country as a contribution to the International Conference on Population and Development. On the basis of the information contained therein, it will be possible to evaluate the impact that the Programme of Action adopted at the Conference has had on national activities. The national reports include social and demographic indicators which may be compared with the most up-to-date estimates of the situation in these two areas.

Although the guidelines set out below are not intended to cover the whole range of possible actions relating to population and development, the issues identified constitute a basis for determining the progress achieved and the difficulties faced by each country in implementing the measures and guidelines contained in the Programme of Action.

**A. INTEGRATION OF POPULATION MATTERS IN THE
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

One of the outstanding aspects of the Programme of Action of the Conference —and of the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action— is the explicit integration of the demographic situation and trends into the various national initiatives taken to promote a development process which not only is conducive to sustained economic growth but can also effectively foster social equity and environmental sustainability. This integration is crucial since population variables —fertility and

mortality rates, internal and international migration, marriage rates, spatial distribution of the population, growth, sex and age distribution— interact directly and indirectly with the other aspects of development. Hence, it is imperative that they should be taken into account both in strategic planning and in the itemization of policy actions. In order to form a diagnostic image of the advances made and difficulties encountered by countries in their efforts to integrate population issues into development strategies, it may prove useful to take into account the following questions and to identify illustrative examples.

1. Importance attached by the Government to population and development issues

Is the incorporation of population variables in the development process high on the government agenda?

Is there a sustained effort to achieve a harmonious balance between population dynamics, environment, social equity and economic growth?

2. Institutionalization of mechanisms to incorporate population variables in the development process

Have efforts been made to establish institutional mechanisms for the incorporation of such variables?

Has the incorporation of such variables resulted in programme documents or in sectoral and intersectoral policies and projects, especially relating to the eradication of poverty, the upgrading of human resources and environmental sustainability?

Has the training of technical and professional staff in this area been promoted?

3. Impact of public policies and development strategies on socio-demographic trends

Are the effects of development strategies and sectoral policies (and projects) on population variables systematically evaluated?

Is there explicit recognition of the socio-demographic effects of public policies?

Are policies (and projects) focusing on disadvantaged social groups executed which may influence demographic behaviour?

4. Effects of socio-demographic trends and development strategies

Is there explicit recognition of the effects socio-demographic variables and behaviour have on development strategies and public policies?

Are the repercussions of socio-demographic behaviour on development strategies and public policies assessed?

What criteria are used to determine the influence that socio-demographic trends have on development strategies and sectoral policies (and projects)?

What methods are used to gauge the effects of the trend towards the ageing of the population?

5. Population policies

Is there an explicit population policy in effect, or is one deemed necessary?

Is there an organization in charge of ensuring that population policy guidelines are adhered to?

Is there an organization responsible for following up the agreements and recommendations contained in the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development and in the Regional Plan of Action?

Have efforts been made to promote the development of suitable and feasible population scenarios through deliberate sectoral and intersectoral initiatives?

Have education and communication programmes been developed whose goal is to raise social awareness about population issues and their relationship with sustainable development, social equity and human rights?

Have population policies been put in place that are targeted at the most disadvantaged social groups?

B. GENDER EQUITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Both the Programme of Action approved by the International Conference on Population and Development and the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development emphasize the importance of implementing measures that contribute to improving the conditions and status of women in society. International agreements advocate strengthening women's ability to make decisions at all levels and in all spheres of life and society; that entails deliberate changes to promote equitable relations between men and women. In order to assess achievements and determine what obstacles lie in the way of attaining goals, it is necessary to answer the following questions and review some of the initiatives undertaken.

1. Gender equity and participation in society and politics

Does the political and social will to achieve gender equity exist?

Are there mechanisms available that ensure equitable participation and representation of women and men in the various areas of the political process and public life?

What measures have been adopted to strengthen women's participation in society and enable them to exercise their rights fully (including their reproductive rights)?

What obstacles have hindered the implementation of such measures?

2. Public policies, including those on population and gender

In the design, execution and evaluation of public policies is consideration given to their influence on gender relations?

Do policy programmes and policies incorporate a gender perspective?

3. Eradication of gender disparities and the empowerment of women

In which social and economic areas or variables are gender disparities the most marked?

What types of measures have been adopted to combat discrimination against women in the legal, labour, social and political spheres?

What obstacles have hindered the implementation of such measures?

Has the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women been signed?

Are official indicators available to analyse trends in gender-based disparities (be they social, economic, political or cultural)?

Have such disparities eased or worsened over the past five years?

4. Promotion of the role of women in development and gender equity

To what extent have human resources training policies (education, training, skills development, dissemination of know-how) enabled women to realize fully their potential and to contribute to the development process?

What are the recent trends in respect of male and female enrolment rates? How much have male and female illiteracy rates changed in primary and secondary education?

What measures have been adopted to promote recognition of the work performed by women in all spheres?

What kind of contribution has been made to ensure equal employment opportunities for women and men, as well as equal pay?

Are policies and programmes in place that seek to expand women's access to occupations other than those to which they have traditionally been assigned?

What obstacles have hindered the implementation of such measures?

Are legal provisions in place that enable women to combine their maternal roles of giving birth, breast-feeding and raising children with participation in the labour force?

5. Education, gender equity and empowerment of women

What type of programmes have been implemented to eliminate stereotypes that perpetuate subordinate roles for women?

What obstacles have hindered the implementation of such programmes?

Has the gender perspective been incorporated in the design of formal and informal education curricula, with a view to fostering positive changes in attitudes, values and ideas about sexuality and the roles men and women perform in the household?

Has communication on issues relating to gender equity been encouraged in the education system?

6. Men and gender equity

Are men encouraged to participate in programmes that have traditionally been aimed only at women, such as reproductive health and family planning programmes?

Are measures in place to encourage men to share with women the responsibilities involved in household tasks and sexual and reproductive behaviour?

7. Adolescence, sex education and gender equity

Have efforts been made to promote sex education with a gender perspective, targeted chiefly at adolescents?

What programmes have been implemented to help prevent teenage pregnancy?

**C. HEALTH, REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, SOCIAL EQUITY
AND FAMILY WELFARE**

The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Regional Plan of Action both emphasize the promotion and protection of the reproductive health and rights of individuals and couples, and support the function of the family in socializing future generations. Generally, both of these international instruments aim to achieve improvements in the health of the population, particularly reproductive health, and to ensure full exercise of the right of couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, and to have the information, education and means to do so. Follow-up of progress and identification of obstacles to the attainment of these goals can be facilitated by considering the following questions and identifying the measures adopted.

1. Scope of reproductive health programmes

Have reproductive health programmes been established which match the definition contained in the Programme of Action?

Has there been an increase in reproductive health-care coverage in the primary health-care system (at national and local levels) over the past five years, with a view to reaching the entire population of reproductive age by the year 2015?

Is the care offered by reproductive health programmes of a comprehensive nature, in the sense of providing access to all services to ensure safe motherhood (including quantitative and qualitative information on professional care during pregnancy, birth and puerperium)?

Do reproductive health programmes include measures for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS?

2. Reproductive health and social equity

Is there effective integration of reproductive health programmes and intersectoral policies to combat poverty, gender inequalities and early drop-out from the educational system?

Is there clear identification (social and geographical) of vulnerable population groups requiring priority treatment in terms of reproductive health care?

Do reproductive health programmes give appropriate attention to the sociocultural identity of their users?

3. Reproductive health: participation strategies

What measures have been adopted to decentralize reproductive health care programmes?

Have non-governmental organizations (including women's groups) been incorporated, or do they participate, in the governmental decision-making process relating to challenges and problems in the area of reproductive health?

4. Progress towards agreed goals

How much progress has been made over the past five years towards the goal of reducing, by the year 2000, mortality rates among infants and children under five years of age by one third of the 1990 level, or 50 to 70 per 1,000 live births, whichever is less? To what extent is that progress reflected in the level of mortality?

Have measures been adopted to ensure that the most vulnerable population groups are given priority in the allocation of resources for strengthening prevention and primary care in child health services?

Has progress been made over the past five years towards improving life expectancy at birth, so as to achieve the goal of 70 years by the year 2000?

What measures have been adopted during the past five years to attain the goal of reducing maternal mortality by at least one half of the 1990 levels by the year 2000?

What changes have taken place in maternal mortality rates? Has progress been made over the past five years towards a drastic narrowing of disparities in infant and maternal mortality between geographical regions and socioeconomic groups?

5. Unsatisfied demand for family planning

Has the supply of family planning services increased over the past five years towards the goal of reducing unsatisfied demand for contraceptives by 50% by the year 2000? (Unsatisfied demand for contraceptives is defined as the proportion of women exposed to the risk of pregnancy who do not wish to have more children or would prefer to postpone pregnancy, and who are using no contraceptive method.)

Are current estimates available for unsatisfied demand for family planning?

Have socioeconomic and geographical population groups affected by insufficient availability of family planning services been identified, and what has been done to satisfy their requirements?

6. Expansion and improvement of the availability of contraceptive methods

What changes have taken place recently in the rate of use of modern contraceptive methods?

What measures have been taken over the past five years to improve family planning services by broadening the range of contraceptive options suitable for individuals and couples according to their age, number of children already born and desired family size, while fully respecting personal decisions?

Have mechanisms been designed to strengthen the technical competence of providers of family planning services and their training in interpersonal communication and guidance, and to improve the structure and organization of those services? Have measures been taken to inform

potential users of sterilization regarding the existence of other contraceptive methods and the consequences of choosing a permanent method?

Have strategies been designed with a view to achieving improved participation by men in family planning and encouraging them to take more responsibility in that area?

7. Risks for reproductive health

Have measures been taken for the explicit purpose of reducing abortion and ensuring safe pregnancy and childbirth?

Are there programmes and mechanisms to prevent teenage pregnancy, mitigate its psychosocial consequences and encourage pregnant adolescent girls to continue their education?

8. Reproductive rights and health

In the past five years, has there been any assessment and review of legal provisions which may obstruct the full exercise of reproductive rights?

Has progress been made in the elimination of unnecessary legal, medical and regulatory provisions which obstruct access to family planning information, services and methods?

Have measures been taken to promote the creation of mechanisms that enable couples and individuals to take responsibility for their own reproductive health?

What measures have been adopted to ensure that all persons of reproductive age are well informed of safe contraceptive methods and where to obtain them?

Are information, education and communication strategies in place to achieve equal participation by men and women in decisions concerning their sexual and reproductive life?

Do comprehensive reproductive health-care models for adolescents exist, that include population and family planning education components and are adapted to the sociocultural context in which they are applied?

In the past five years, have legal and regulatory obstacles to the provision of reproductive health information and services to adolescents been eliminated?

9. Reproductive health and family welfare

Does the formulation of government policy incorporate the family dimension, to strengthen the viability of families while ensuring due respect for their ethnic and religious characteristics?

Do programmes exist to promote, within the family context, attitudes in keeping with responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and with mutually respectful gender relations?

Are there programmes to support the family in its fundamental role of socializing new generations, and to provide the means for the diffusion in the family context of shared ethical values and preparation for everyday life?

Have concrete measures such as conciliation mechanisms been implemented in order to prevent all forms of domestic violence?

Have measures been taken to promote educational programmes (formal and informal) and information services in the area of responsible parenthood, family life and sex education?

What initiatives have been implemented in order to help single-parent families and provide them with the necessary means to reconcile employment with family responsibilities?

Annex 1

**REPORT OF THE ECLAC SESSIONAL AD HOC COMMITTEE ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development met on 17 and 18 April with the following officers:

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| <u>Chairman:</u> | Mexico |
| <u>Vice-Chairmen:</u> | Bolivia |
| | Grenada |
| | Netherlands |
| <u>Rapporteur:</u> | Costa Rica |

After adopting the provisional agenda without changes, the Committee heard the report of the Chairman of the Presiding Officers of the Committee of High-level Government Experts (CEGAN) on population concerning the steps which had led to the adoption of the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development, with particular reference to the process of enriching the draft plan through incorporation of the results of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994).

The Director of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) presented the note by the secretariat entitled "Report on the follow-up to the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development" (LC/G.1905(SES.26/10)) and called attention to the considerations on population in relation to changing production patterns with social equity. The delegations expressed their satisfaction with the working document prepared by the secretariat and reported on recent experiences in their own countries in the area of population and development, with particular emphasis on such aspects as gender equity and poverty.

Consideration of the agenda item on follow-up and review of the Regional Plan of Action was opened by the representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), who reported on the priorities and activities of her organization with respect to the Cairo Programme of Action. The General Coordinator of the Latin American Programme of Population Activities then gave a presentation on the links between academic research and the formulation and implementation of population policies.

The delegations heard reports from representatives of CELADE and from the Director of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean on activities carried out under the Regional Plan of Action. They also heard a report from the secretariat on progress in obtaining extrabudgetary financing to carry out the actions called for in the Regional Plan of Action and in particular on the negotiations in progress with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

After a fruitful exchange of opinion between delegations, including a discussion of the usefulness of setting up mechanisms for exchanging information on progress with regard to the Regional Plan of Action, the Committee adopted by consensus a draft resolution to be presented for consideration by the plenary meeting in the technical stage.