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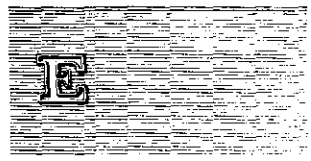

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E C L A

Economic Commission for Latin America

Twentieth session

Lima, Peru, 29 March to 6 April 1984

REPORT OF THE LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION, HELD WITHIN THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF HIGH-LEVEL GOVERNMENT EXPERTS */

(Havana, Cuba, 16-19 November 1983)

*/ Documents presented at the seventh session of CEGAN bear the symbols E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.1 to L.6.

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/I. ORGANIZATION

I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. Place and date

1. The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on Population scheduled to take place in Mexico in August 1984 was convened by the Executive Secretary of ECLA and held within the framework of the seventh session of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN), which took place at Havana, Cuba, from 16 to 19 November 1983. It was held in accordance with resolution 449 (PLEN.16) on the programme of work and calendar of conferences of ECLA and in the light of resolution 357 (XVI) of the Commission which assigned the topic of population, among others, to CEGAN.

2. Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States of the Commission: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guyana, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela.

3. The United Nations Secretariat was represented by a member of the staff of the Population Division. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies also participated: the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In addition, the following United Nations specialized agencies were represented: the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

4. Representatives of the following intergovernmental bodies also attended: the Intergovernmental Committee for Migrations (ICM) and the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

3. Election of Officers

5. The Meeting elected the following Officers:

Chairman:	Cuba
Vice-Chairmen:	Brazil
	Ecuador
Rapporteur:	Mexico

4. Agenda

6. At its first plenary meeting the Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda

/3. Latin American

3. Latin American demographic trends and economic and social development:
   a) Salient aspects of demographic evolution in the last ten years
   b) Prospects up to the year 2025
   c) Population and economic and social development
4. Application of the World Population Plan of Action in Latin America:
   a) Appraisal of its operation as an action instrument
   b) Proposal by the Committee to the International Conference on Population (Mexico City, August 1984)
5. ECLA Regional Population Programme. Action by CELADE and guidelines for the period 1984-1987
6. Discussion and adoption of the final report of the meeting.

5. Opening meeting

7. At the opening meeting statements were made by Mr. Ernesto Meléndez, Acting Minister of the State Committee on Economic Collaboration (CECE) of Cuba; Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias, Executive Secretary of ECLA, and Mr. Luis Olivos, Chief of the Latin American and Caribbean Branch of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. Mr. Meléndez, speaking on behalf of the host Government, then declared the seventh session of CEGAN open.

8. In his statement, the acting Minister of CECE welcomed the participants, pointing out that the main purpose of the meeting was to examine and adopt common positions of the countries of the region with a view to the forthcoming International Conference on Population. He noted that Latin America was facing the most severe economic and social situation of the postwar period and said that that situation was detrimental to the harmonization of demographic trends and policies with the economic and social development process.

9. In that respect he added that, according to the World Population Plan of Action adopted at Bucharest, the development of peoples was itself a factor which obviously led to a reduction in the birth rate. It would be possible to speak of birth control, family planning and demographic policy on a moral, ethical and really human basis, if the first action taken was directed precisely at the solution of the causes of the problem.

10. After pointing out that in a very simplistic way, poverty, hunger and economic and social underdevelopment in general were sometimes attributed to the rapid growth of population, he noted that the World Plan of Action specified that the changes needed in the demographic pattern depended on whether decisive changes had already been made in the socioeconomic structure.

11. The Executive Secretary of ECLA thanked the Government of Cuba for its co-operation in the organization of the meeting. He went on to point out that population was not a new subject either for Latin America or for the United Nations. Within ECLA, the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) was responsible for the execution of the Regional Population Programme and for promoting studies in the countries of the region aimed at increased knowledge of their true demographic situation.

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12. In recent years, financial support from UNFPA had enabled CELADE to meet its objectives, and, through the world population conferences, the United Nations had helped to ensure that population was regarded as an integral part of economic and social development policies.

13. He added that when consideration was given to the prospects for Latin America and to what had happened in the past 30 or 40 years, it was impossible not to see that demographic development had both determined and been determined by the processes of economic and social development. Today Latin America was facing its biggest crisis in the past 50 years -a crisis which primarily affected the urban middle classes and, as a result, was more complex than the former crises, which had been easier to overcome because of the existence of a rural moderating or support component.

14. The economic and social problems which had emerged from the current crisis existed against the background of a given demographic structure. Latin America was, for example, obliged to double the number of jobs in the next 20 years -an enormous task considering that in some Latin American countries the unemployed population had reached alarming proportions (between 20% and 30% in some cases). Challenges of that sort made it necessary to think about kinds of development which must needs be different from those of the past.

15. Mr. Luis Olivos, Deputy Chief of the Programme Division of UNFPA and Chief of its Latin American and Caribbean Branch, representing the Executive Director of UNFPA, thanked the Government of Cuba for the hospitality received at the Meeting and ECLA and CELADE for preparing the documents to be used in examining the existing population situation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

16. He noted that UNFPA, at the request of the governments, was co-operating with projects in every country in the region; it was helping to formulate population policies to meet the needs of each country and, finally, it was making a technical and financial contribution to the implementation of those policies. Thus, it was acting in consonance with its objective of making the different countries awareness of the population situation.

17. He said that the Fund was also co-operating actively with a number of United Nations bodies, and in that respect he drew attention to the valuable participation of CELADE in training, technical co-operation and research in the field of population.

18. He underlined the importance of the current meeting for the forthcoming International Conference on Population, which was to be held in Mexico City in August 1984. In that respect, he reminded the participants that the countries were expected to review the progress made and difficulties experienced in the implementation of the World Plan of Action adopted ten years ago, to consider the new problems which had arisen in connection with population, and to decide what programmes they should initiate in order to cope with those problems in a concerted way.

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19. He said that Mr. Rafael M. Salas, the Executive Director of UNFPA, as Secretary-General of the Conference, was awaiting with real interest the results of the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting, which would be submitted to the twentieth session of ECLA (Lima, 29 March to 6 April 1984).

20. He recalled with special satisfaction that the first co-operation agreement between Cuba and the Fund had been signed in 1974 during the World Population Conference at Bucharest and said that since that time, the World Population Plan of Action had been vigorously applied in Cuba in terms both of political decision and of institutional development.

6. Closing meeting

21. At the closing meeting the floor was taken by Mr. Oscar Bardeci, Director of CELADE; by Mr. José García Ramírez, Under-Secretary of State for Public Health of the Dominican Republic, who spoke on behalf of all the delegations, and, finally, by Mr. José Fernández de Corsío, Vice-Chairman of the State Committee on Economic Collaboration of Cuba and Chairman of the Meeting.

22. The Director of CELADE expressed satisfaction with the work that had been accomplished. He said that CELADE had felt a real need for such contact with governments so that they could guide it in the establishment of its programme of work and so that more exact information could be obtained concerning the positions of the Latin American countries on population problems and policies, in view of the proximity of the International Conference on Population. He referred to the difficult financial situation facing CELADE and said that as well as having appealed to UNFPA, the main financing body, the secretariat had deemed it necessary to have recourse to the governments so that they could help it to continue working for the benfit of the countries of the region. He thanked the delegations for their readiness to consider such aid, adding that he very well understood that the lack of a specific mandate meant that it was impossible to go beyond what had been laid down in the second resolution adopted at the meeting. At the same time, he said he hoped that at the forthcoming session of ECLA, at Lima, the delegations would be prepared to take a more definite decision concerning their support of CELADE's activities. Finally, he expressed satisfaction with the results of the meeting and thanked the participants, the officials of the host country and the representatives of other international bodies attending the meeting for their contribution to the success of the discussions.

23. Speaking on behalf of the delegations, the Under-Secretary of State for Public Health of the Dominican Republic noted that the meeting had taken place in an atmosphere of respect, fellowship and good will and said that the search for solutions to common problems had given an opportunity for restating principles, sharing ideas and experience and formulating a Latin American position concerning population problems with a view to the International Conference on Population to be held in 1984. He expressed gratitude for the cordial welcome accorded by the government and people of Cuba and satisfaction concerning the efficient organization of the meeting, and congratulated the Officers and the secretariat,

/whose work

whose work had facilitated the holding of the detailed and constructive discussions. Finally, he noted that all the participants had agreed that CELADE should be preserved and strengthened with new resources so that it could reach its objective of serving all the countries of the region.

24. The Chairman of the meeting drew attention to the high technical content of the debates, which had enriched the participants' knowledge of national population policies, and said that at the same time criteria had been laid down which was very important for the execution of the World Plan of Action and had enabled the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to form concrete positions for the conference in Mexico. The documents adopted provided the countries with an up-dated appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action and of its implementation since the Conference, as well as criteria and positions of the Latin American and Caribbean States in anticipation of the consideration of the relevant item at the forthcoming International Conference on Population. He also pointed out that the meeting had recognized the validity of the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action and of the provisions it made for orienting the activities of the world community in population policies at the international, regional and national levels. The meeting had endorsed the Regional Population Programme which ECLA, working through CELADE, would execute in the period 1984-1987. Finally, speaking on behalf of all the participants, he said he was grateful to the secretariat of ECLA and to the staff of CELADE for the contribution which their efforts and efficiency had made to the holding of a fruitful meeting.

SUMMARY

II. SUMMARY OF THE DEBATES

Latin American demographic trends and economic and social development (agenda item 3)

25. The Director of CELADE described the demographic trends in the countries of Latin America in the postwar period and drew attention to their most salient aspects, particularly in recent years.*/

26. Opening the debate on the demographic situation and trends in the region, a representative pointed out that the salient characteristics of his country included a small population for its geographical size, a low population growth rate (only about half that of the rest of Latin America), slow natural growth resulting in low birth and death rates, and a relatively old demographic structure. The measures taken by the Government in the past decade to change this situation had been aimed, primarily, at increasing the demographic growth rate, at the achievement of a more balanced distribution by settling frontier areas, at the reduction of the differences between different geographical zones and social sectors and at the encouragement of international migrations in harmony with a populationist type policy. Thus, it had been possible to increase the natural growth of the population in a satisfactory way during the period 1970-1980, albeit for reasons relating more to the economic situation at that time than to changes of a structural nature, which included a sharp decline of nearly 40% in youth mortality and the interruption of an age-old trend towards demographic concentration in the metropolitan areas. Within this period, and for the first time in the demographic history of the country, the national censuses had shown that some regions whose population had been declining in relative terms were showing positive growth.

27. Another representative said that in general his country shared the demographic dynamic which was characteristic of Latin America as a whole but that it exhibited some peculiarities which had set the tone of the demographic process in the past ten years. Basically, together with a high fertility rate, there had been a reduction in mortality, and this had increased the labour supply, which had grown also because of an increasing tendency for women to be incorporated into the production process. These changes had attained such magnitude that they had become a subject of concern because of their impact on the social security system. However, the most salient features of the process were related to internal migration and its effects on the spatial distribution. Here again the demographic history of the country showed the existence of a structural phenomenon which, when analysed district by district or even city by city, exhibited its own distinct characteristics.

28. The recent sample survey carried out in large urban concentrations in his country had shown that the growth of at least two of the big cities had been less pronounced than predicted, and when each of those urban dimensions was analysed, considerable differences were observed in the causes of the demographic growth. Those differences were closely related to the development

*/ See the statement by the Director of CELADE in annex 3.

/process which

process which both of those cities had followed and, above all, to the job opportunities available in each of them; at the same time, however, zones which had traditionally lost population continued to do so although there had been periods of boom, owing primarily to the production of coffee. In addition to this domestic phenomenon, in recent years there had been a process of return from neighbouring countries which had had a particularly marked impact on urban centres in frontier areas. What had happened in recent years made it clear that there was a need to go more deeply into the analysis of certain areas and their growth patterns, which could have the same causes as national growth patterns.

29. One participant said that up to 1978, his country had had no specific population policies of any kind, to say nothing of policies integrated into development planning. Up to that time, population had received only partial treatment, with marked emphasis on birth control. From 1979 on, it had been tackled within the context of global and integral planning, in which the population was regarded as a transversal category together with employment, income and social organization and participation. This approach had led to the conclusion that everything achieved in terms of reorienting, slowing down or stabilizing the processes of demographic change would depend basically on what could be done in the field of social development. This approach obviously had repercussions on the way in which the diagnostic and prognostic studies were oriented, in that a distinction had been made between them on the basis of the ecological context, degree of organization and social strata of the population studied; this had made it possible to ascertain the existence of different forms of reproductive behaviour, which varied notably from one another and would otherwise have been concealed in values expressed as averages. An appropriate example of this was the case of infant mortality, which in some regions and strata amounted to over 320 infant deaths for every thousand live births a year.

30. The population policies drawn up on the basis of this new approach referred primarily to territorial sovereignty, the intensive use of natural resources and the attainment of a higher standard of living. At present, after the process of "institutionalizing" the policies in the various ministries and regional corporations as well as in specialized agencies of the public or private sector, it was considered to be a matter of priority to have appropriate space for incorporating the demographic component specifically into the managerial levels of the various institutions, and an attempt was being made to increase that space, to equip the institutional channels in such a way that the various actors in the population policies which it has been possible to identify were able to participate appropriately, and to encourage them to play the role intended for them.

31. Another participant, after giving a brief description of demographic trends in his country, highlighted certain aspects which characterized those trends, although he said they were in many ways similar to the trends which gave the demographic situation of the region a common base. He drew attention to the marked disparity between rural and urban areas and to the different levels of development which existed in his country, and referred in particular to the fact that the third largest agglomeration of urban residents was located outside

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the national territory as a result of a process of emigration to the exterior which had been going on for several decades. In describing the recent demographic trends experienced in his country, he said that the average annual gross birth rate had been close to 50 per thousand in 1965 but that it had fallen to 36.5 per thousand in 1975 and to 34.5 per thousand in 1980. The available information was affected by the fact that the number of birth and deaths recorded was lower than the real number, although late registration of births had increased as a result of electoral and educational processes.

32. The development policy of this country was postulated on the principle that its inhabitants were building an economically and socially productive environment with a view to ensuring health, equality and social justice for the entire population. It seemed that the time had come to adopt an attitude of seriousness and responsibility concerning the implementation of an economic and social policy which would substantially reduce unemployment, making food, drinking water, health and education more accessible to the population, since they were essential for improving the situation of those living in critical poverty and for giving them an opportunity to benefit from a more equitable distribution of the country's wealth. In his opinion, the partial or total control of the biological aspects of the population component did not lead automatically to development. The government he represented believed that social justice, equal access to all services, a fair distribution of the country's income and a rational system for exploiting its non-renewable natural resources were the best and most reliable foundations for peace, social welfare and integral development within a democratic régime in which all human rights were respected.

33. Another representative said that in 1976 her government had approved the broad lines of a population policy in which population became an integral part of its economic development policies. In that process of institutional growth, a National Population Council had been created under the jurisdiction of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, its primary function being the co-ordination of multisectoral activities in the field of population. As for recently acquired knowledge concerning the behaviour of the demographic variable, she stressed that considerable improvement had resulted from the availability of new census data, from the registration of vital statistics and from specific demographic as well as labour surveys.

34. In the light of that information, it could be concluded that the population of her country had been at its peak in the period 1961-1972, experiencing a gradual decline after that. Fertility had begun to decline in the five-year period beginning in 1965, and the global fertility rate now stood at about 5.0. According to research findings, this was closely associated with the improvement in the educational levels of women, which had made it possible to incorporate them more rapidly into the economic activity of the formal sector. This decline in fertility was also reflected in other indicators, such as the average annual birth rate, which in 1960 had been 47 live births for every thousand inhabitants, falling to about 37 in the present five-year period. As for mortality, its decline had been relatively slow, in spite of the intensive sanitation campaigns

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and the progress made in health services, and much still remained to be done. With respect to spatial distribution, she said that the Government was taking measures aimed at resettling the population in sierra and jungle areas, trying, in so far as was possible, to slow the growth rate of the metropolitan areas, most of which were located on the coast. With this end in view, efforts had been directed towards the construction of infrastructure works (primarily for the irrigation of crop lands), hydroelectric power stations, the formulation of housing plans and the expansion of educational services. Since the country had an explicit population policy which was integrated into the national development plan and the global, sectoral and departmental plans, this policy was implemented through multisectoral co-ordination.

35. The representative of another country emphasized that one of the main objectives of the meeting was to appraise the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action adopted nearly ten years previously at the World Population Conference in Bucharest. Although world conditions had changed notably, the principles, postulates and objectives contained in that document were, generally speaking, still fully valid. The crisis affecting the capitalist economy, which had had a particularly severe backlash in the underdeveloped countries set up additional obstacles to the attainment of the objectives they were pursuing. The countries of Latin America should try to see that the contents of the World Plan of Action were strengthened at the forthcoming International Conference on Population by adapting them to present world conditions while preserving some of the progressive elements which the Plan contained. In this effort, the making of structural changes and steps to ensure the equitable distribution of income could not be postponed; and since there was an intimate relationship between the preservation of peace and the attainment of development, the countries of the region should work to strengthen regional co-operation in the field of population. The exchange of experience, information and techniques would be a first step towards the collective surmounting of some of the shortcomings in the implementation of the Plan. In that connection, his country was ready to take measures to intensify such co-operation.

36. As regards population growth, he added that his country had laid stress on the consolidation of a national free health coverage scheme for the entire population, the results of which were reflected in a marked decline in mortality. At present the annual infant mortality rate was 17.3 deaths among children under the age of one year for every thousand live births, which meant that life expectancy at birth was about 73.55 years. The economic and social changes which were occurring in the country had also had an effect on the pattern of fertility, which had shown a slow but sustained decline since 1965.

37. One representative noted that in his country -one of the smallest in Latin America-, past trends and current prospects in respect of the concentration of the population in the central area constituted one of the problems of greatest concern to his government. He also said that his country had become a centre of attraction for the citizens of other Central American countries, and the government was having to pay particular attention to that phenomenon, which could cause difficulties among the various population groups. He then referred to the recent behaviour of the demographic variables and to the economic and social

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factors responsible for the decline in fertility, some of them being the more widespread education of women, their integration into the labour force, and the full-scale birth control programme implemented. He said that in spite of that decline, the population growth rate still stood at about 2.5%, although the growth pattern was considered to be satisfactory since an effort was being made to populate the peripheral areas of the country. With regard to the present population policies, he pointed out that the decline in births had not resulted from careful planning: in fact the authorities had seen that a drastic reduction in fertility was taking place and had begun to show concern. In 1979 the National Population Commission (an inter-ministerial political body) had been created to deal with population problems, and that Commision had had an important influence on the Governments' relatively negative attitude to birth control between 1979 and 1982. That policy had changed with the new government. The President of the Republic himself had rejected both the idea that birth control would be enough to ensure the country's development and the equally naive idea that a larger population meant more development, and had reaffirmed the country's sovereignty in this connection, guaranteeing respect for the people's dignity, freedom and health and for the basic moral principles held by the national society. In the light of these principles, one of the objectives of the country's present policy was that the entire population should be kept well informed and should have available to it the means to exercise the right to make a free and responsible decision concerning the size of their families and the spacing of their children.

38. In describing the demographic situation and trends in his country, another representative said that the main reason why a decline in the growth rate of the population had been initiated was a previous decline in the mortality rate. Fertility was declining in all parts of the country, even in the most backward areas, because of the more widespread use of contraceptives and recourse to induced abortion. The theory of demographic transition explained such changes, which had been brought on by State action, the development of the communications media, the availability of contraceptives and the diffusion of urban lifestyles to other segments of the population -all factors associated with a rapid economic development process. With respect to mortality, he said that both the general and the infant mortality rates has evolved positively, but were still much higher than in the developed countries; there was inequality between some regions of the country, but the rate was high even in the more advanced areas, which could be attributed to the fact that the health services were not very well developed. In the past decade substantial changes had occurred in the spatial distribution of the population. The growth of the consolidated frontier regions had stagnated or reversed, while the share of the national population living in expanding frontier areas had increased significantly, and the process of expelling people from densely populated backward areas settled a long time ago was continuing. The urbanization index was continuing to rise throughout the country, and the share of the population resident in the big cities was increasing rapidly.

39. With regard to population policy, he said he felt that document E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.4 adequately described the situation in his country in implying that there was no explicit population policy, but he made it clear that government action not only had not prevented but had actually facilitated

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the recent changes in demographic behaviour and that recently there had been a marked trend towards the formulation of more aggressive and explicit policies as regards population growth and distribution.

40. In referring to the trends in the population growth components in his country, a member of another delegation said he felt that the recent decline in fertility was due, among other things, to the changes in reproductive behaviour brought on by accelerated urbanization, the raising of the cultural level, and the extension and deepening of social communications; he also referred to the role which had been played by international migration in maintaining a high demographic growth rate in spite of the decline in fertility. The unusually rapid urbanization process was associated with the transformation of a typically agrarian economy into a petroleum economy, which had given impetus to the growth of the cities, causing serious congestion in the main urban services. The development plan now in force, whose central objective was to reduce critical poverty within a global framework of policies designed to bring about growth accompanied by redistribution, regarded the population as an integrating variable through which the structural and regional planning goals and programmes were evaluated; this view of the population as an integrator made it imperative that in setting population goals consideration should be given not only to the size and overall growth rate of the population but also to qualitative changes in its capacities and needs. Other objectives of the plan which were associated with population policies were to give priority to research into the relationship between population and development, to define the role of the planning bodies in the formulation of such policies, to establish machinery for guaranteeing the generation of information, and to train staff to formulate population policies and programmes.

41. After briefly referring to the demographic trends in his country, another representative said that it had no population problems and that its government had no explicit population policy because this concern was implicitly inserted in the economic and social development plans and in the programmes on health, education, social security and regional development, while it was indirectly covered in the programmes relating to subsidies and consumer protection, which were so important to the standard of living of the population. He went on to refer to the characteristics and trends of spatial distribution of the population in his country, drawing attention to the historic roots of that process and showing how changes in the agrarian structure had had and continued to have a very substantial impact on that distribution, although this was being changed by regional planning and agrarian reform. Later, in referring to manpower for development, he said that the Government had tried to attract back the cadres who were living abroad but that the invisible hand of imperialism had prevented the success of this policy. He also made some observations concerning population policies, which he said were determined by the economic policy followed, so that no general recommendations could be made, but only suggestions applicable in concrete cases. He pointed out that many countries were either virtually ignorant of or did not follow the World Population Plan of Action and that it could be applied only in those countries with well-structured development plans. With regard to international assistance and co-operation, he emphasized the need to strengthen regional and interregional collaboration in an atmosphere of peace

/among nations

among nations and to see that the international bodies increased the assistance they provided for the formulation of plans and for training. Finally, he expressed the view that it was necessary to make a deeper analysis of the relationship between economic growth, population growth and development.

42. According to another participant, very recent information confirmed that in his country the natural growth rate had declined significantly during the last decade, for the first time, owing to a substantial decrease in the global fertility rate. That decrease had not come as a response to a deliberate policy on the part of the State, although private groups and the Ministry of Health had engaged in family planning activities of a limited nature under a mother-child integral health programme. In all likelihood the factors which contributed to the drop in fertility included the accelerated urbanization process; the broadening of the coverage of the health, education and environmental sanitation services, and the greater participation of women in economic activities. The extension of health insurance to the entire rural population had brought about a decline in mortality and had helped to keep the rural population on the land. Other factors which probably had important demographic effects included the establishment of family planning, mother-child care and environmental sanitation programmes by the Ministry of Health; the new legislation enabling women to participate more fully in the development process; the reforms of the laws affecting the family; the regional development policies, and the programmes to improve the living conditions of the peasantry and to train human resources. The country's constitution favoured responsible parenthood and assigned to the National Development Council the task of drawing up the population policy; in that respect, a programme had been initiated which provided for a number of studies financed by UNFPA with technical assistance from CELADE.

43. The representative of another country referred first to the three population laws which had regulated State activities in this field since 1936, when the first one had been promulgated. Both it and the second law, promulgated in 1947, tended to favour population growth. However, subsequent demographic development had made it necessary to promulgate a new law in 1973 to deal with the need for regulating the growth and spatial distribution of the population. The demographic changes which had occurred in the past ten years reflected that new population policy, which had assigned the most important role to education and had made provision for the expansion of the family planning services and for the developmen of an economic and social research programme. The programmes established for the next few years reflected the active attitude of the Government in matters relating to population. Thus, the development plan for 1983-1988 made explicit reference to population policies, and one of its overall objectives was to promote balance between population growth and economic development. More specifically, it sought to reduce the population growth rate, to bring about more balanced distribution, to promote the incorporation of marginated groups into the development process and to establish national and regional goals to those ends.

/44. Some

44. Some of the outstanding features of his country's overall population programme were full respect for the decisions of couples, the development of health services, efforts to change reproduction patterns by effecting economic and social changes, and the recognition that there is a relationship between changes in spatial distribution and the geographical location of investments and public expenditure. He then informed the meeting of a series of specific programmes relating to education in population, family planning and integral development of the family; a programme of action for the integration of women in development; a national programme for the integral development of indigenous groups, and the national population distribution programme, all of which were part of a broad information and research and development programme. Finally, he referred to the creation of State population councils and to the promotion of the participation of workers and peasants in them, pointing out that all the programmes were based on the principles and recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action.

45. A representative of another country, referring to concepts voiced at the opening meeting, and in particular to the invitation to think about how to make the general interests of the national society, compatible with the basic rights of the people in it, suggested that it might be advisable to formulate standard definitions for some common terms, such as "responsible parenthood", "birth control", "family planning" and "fertility regulation", which were sometimes used to refer to different concepts and sometimes as synonyms, leading to confusion and error. In his country, there had been no explicit population policy in the past. However, in 1979 the National Planning Office had published the Indicative Development Plan for the Five-Year Period 1979-1984, which contained a chapter on population. In it the ground rules were laid for the relationship which should exist between the State and the family with regard to the way in which the latter viewed its own well-being in terms of the number and spacing of its children; the view was taken that even if it were desirable for the country's population to increase significantly because the human element was the basic resource in the development process, it was not for the State to adopt measures and take steps aimed at either decreasing or increasing the natural birth rate, which should reflect the real need for descendants of each family group. It was recognized that the State was responsible for providing its inhabitants with trustworthy, highly professional information on health, allowing family groups wishing to do so to pick an appropriate instrument of family planning with a view to responsible parenthood. Responsible parenthood and family planning (which is regarded as being linked to family well-being and mother and child health) were defined in the Indicative Plan; the idea of legalizing abortion was rejected, and sterilization was permitted only in cases of critical need and on strictly medical grounds.

46. Since the 1960s, he went on, fertility regulation had been made part of mother child care in an attempt to prevent induced abortion, whose lethal consequences constituted a serious problem at the public health level. After citing some comparative figures relating to biodemographic behaviour between 1974 (the year of the Bucharest World Population Conference) and 1982 (the year in which the most recent census had been carried out in his country), he spoke of the size and growth of the population; of the declines in the birth rate (from 26.7 to 23.9 per thousand inhabitants), in the overall mortality rate (from 7.8 to 6.1 per thousand)

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and in the infant mortality rate (from 63.3 to 23.4 per thousand live births); and of the increase in life expectancy (from 65.65 years to 67.01 years). Finally he said that his country had effected a medium-term projection of the health situation in the light of the world goal of Health for All by the Year 2000, with a view to taking adequate measures to give the population the resources and techniques needed to bring about the fulfilment of that internationally agreed target.

Application of the World Population Plan of Action in Latin America (agenda item 4)

47. In introducing this item, the representative of the Population Division of the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs described the preparatory activities for the International Conference on Population to be held in Mexico in August 1984. He explained that that Conference would meet in plenary and in one main committee. In the plenary meetings, consideration would be given to the report on the review and appraisal of the Plan, while the main committee would concentrate on recommendations for the future.

48. The preparatory committee for the Conference set up by the Population Commission would hold meetings open to all member countries from 23 to 27 January 1984 to decide on the agenda, calendar and rules of procedure of the Conference and to examine the two basic documents to be submitted at it. The report of the preparatory committee would be considered at the regular sessions of the regional commissions, between March and May 1984, when consideration would also be given to the results of the consultative meetings organized by those commissions.

49. As part of the substantive preparation for the Conference, four meetings of experts had been held: one on fertility and the family (New Delhi, 5 to 11 January 1983); another on population distribution, migration and development (Hammamet, Tunisia, 21 to 25 March 1983); the third on mortality and public health (Rome, 30 May to 3 June 1983), and the fourth on population, resources, environment and development (Geneva, 25 to 29 April 1983). The recommendations of these groups of experts would be submitted to the Preparatory Committee for its consideration. The Population Division, for its part, had arranged its regular activities to include the biennial observation of population trends and policies, as called for in the Plan. The 1983 report would be prepared in co-operation with United Nations agencies, regional commissions and other bodies of the United Nations system. The substantive inputs for the Conference would include the fifth demographic survey among governments, to which 116 replies had been received as of the middle of October 1983. In that survey an effort had been made to obtain views concerning policies and programmes relating to growth, mortality, internal and international migration and international co-operation, as well as suggestions concerning the items to be considered at the International Conference. The agenda of the latter included the review and appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action, so that an assessment could be made of what had happened in the decade following the coming into force of the Plan, the demographic trends observed and the way in which they related to the

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economic and social development process, and the reaction of governments and of the international community. After the review and appraisal of the Plan, recommendations would be prepared for its continued application. Those recommendations would emphasize the recommendations made in the Plan itself which required special attention (either because they were still important or because they had not received sufficient attention), and would also take account of new needs which had emerged since the Plan had come into force in 1974. Finally, he pointed out that, in accordance with the provision made in paragraph 108 of the Plan itself, the Economic and Social Council should, wherever necessary, make appropriate modifications to the Plan so that it could be more effectively applied, in the light of the results of the review and appraisal.

50. The Deputy Director of CELADE then introduced document E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.4. He said that that document contained two chapters which were especially relevant to the consideration of agenda item 4: one referred to the present status of population policies in Latin America and their evolution following the Bucharest Conference and, in particular, the meeting in Mexico in 1975, while the other put forward some suggestions with the sole purpose of promoting an animated and constructive dialogue on this matter, in the hope that what might be called "a Latin American consensus" on an updated version of the Plan could be submitted to the International Conference on Population in Mexico in 1984 and that that version might serve as a more effective instrument of action in the next 10 years.

51. He then referred to the difficulties which had been encountered in preparing the document. He mentioned the lack of data and the changes noted in the positions taken by governments over the years. Although a full set of replies to the fifth demographic survey among governments carried out by the United Nations Population Division had not been available, it had been possible to refer to a very considerable number of replies. A second, albeit less important problem, in his view, was the lack of a universally accepted definition of what a population policy was. Aside from the difficulties referred to, the main challenge in making the synthesis contained in the document had been the establishment of categories or groups of countries, because of the great heterogeneity of situations present in the region.

52. With regard to policies on population growth, the document took three categories of countries into consideration: those with policies explicitly directed toward reducing the population growth rate (covering 30% of the population of Latin America); those which were explicitly trying to increase population growth by taking action in respect of its various components (affecting less than 30% of the regional population), and those without explicit population growth policies (covering nearly 50% of the population of Latin America). Although nearly all the countries expressed dissatisfaction with the spatial distribution of their population and with the prevailing patterns of migration, only a few of them had formulated explicit policies in that field. With regard to the integration of population policies in development policies and strategies, Latin America seemed to have made much more progress in terms of declarations or proposals in the realm of theory than in putting such theories into practice; as for international co-operation, it had been channelled basically towards research into the conceptual and formal relationship between population and

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development, and the knowledge acquired had not been reflected in policies. He reminded the participants that by endorsing a line of thought and action which tended to replace the simplistic view that demographic variables and fertility in particular were behind all of today's big problems, the World Plan of Action had in fact affirmed that the foundation for an effective solution to demographic problems lay first and foremost in economic and social change.

53. With regard to the review of the World Population Plan of Action, he stated that Latin America's own experience in recent years constituted a tremendous and still largely unexploited source of knowledge which could be reflected in the conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting. For that reason, the Secretariat had formulated the following questions, among others: a) Is it possible, within the Plan of Action, to make progress in the adoption of population policies without promoting and further strengthening the clarification of the relationship between population and development in some of the countries of the region? b) Is it now possible to determine more precisely what is meant by the integration of demographic concerns with socioeconomic concerns in order to make this concept more operational, so that it can be reflected in concrete instruments which help those responsible for formulating or executing a particular programme or policy? In other words, how much of the present version of the Plan of Action should be salvaged and how much and in what way should it be changed to meet the needs mentioned earlier? c) Which parts of the Plan of Action should remain, be expanded or be formulated in greater detail so that the version applied over the next ten years is a more useful tool in terms of the concerns and priorities of Latin America?, and d) What is to be expected from international co-operation at the financial and technical levels, in particular that extended by United Nations bodies, for the benefit of the region as a whole?

54. In order to accelerate the consideration of agenda item 4, a subcommittee was set up, and after a full discussion in which background material provided by the secretariat, and proposals and recommendations submitted by a number of countries were taken into account, this subcommittee formulated a draft resolution containing a Latin American proposal for submission to the International Conference on Population. This draft resolution was presented in the plenary and adopted, with amendments, as resolution 3.*/

ECLA Regional Population Programme. Action by CELADE and guidelines for the period 1984-1987 (agenda item 5)

55. In the consideration of this item, a full discussion took place on the main lines of action of the Regional Programme and the financial and technical problems faced by CELADE in achieving its objectives of collaborating with and aiding the countries of the region in matters relating to population.

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*/ See part III below, "Resolutions".

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56. The delegation of one country stressed the need to intensify horizontal technical co-operation and to seek mechanisms for implementing the population policies contained in the socioeconomic plans of the countries. Co-ordination must be operational as well as formal. In the various organs in which population studies were carried out, United Nations bodies should play a more active and consistent role.

57. Referring to the ECLA Regional Population Programme, the same delegation suggested that consideration should be given to new ways of improving the financing of CELADE in view of the steady decrease in the contributions of UNFPA. It might also be advisable to re-examine the teaching programme, in particular that leading to the Master's Degree because the absence of relatively important staff from national institutions for a period of two years caused problems for governments. Attention was drawn to the beneficial effects of seminars and workshops on specific topics, and it was pointed out that their duration and cost could be greatly reduced.

58. Other delegations expressed gratitude for the work done by CELADE since its inception and regretted that financial considerations prevented it from co-operating as intensely as in the past. One delegation suggested that technical assistance in computer training might be intensified and added that concrete proposals on the international aid which should be given to CELADE should be submitted to the next ECLA session at Lima by delegations.

59. Expressing support for that view, another delegate said that CELADE had amply demonstrated its capacity for helping countries to icnrease their understanding of their demographic situation, its approach to the study of those factors which determine demographic trends and the consequences of demographic change was sound and responsible, and the results obtained were promising. The Regional Population Programme was of the utmost importance, and he recommended that member countries should unanimously support the CELADE programme of work. He went on to submit a number of recommendations, which were unanimously supported and are included in the recommendations of the meeting.

60. Other delegations supported these views and added that the national courses should be intensified and the CELADE office in San José should be strengthened. One delegation suggested that internal resources should be mobilized to strengthen international technical assistance.

61. Finally, the delegations adopted two resolutions, one on the report of activities and programme of work of the Latin American Demographic Centre and the Latin American Regional Population Programme 1984-1987 (resolution 1) and the other on support for CELADE activities (resolution 2).

/III. RESOLUTIONS

III. RESOLUTIONS

62. The meeting adopted the following resolutions:

RESOLUTION 1. REPORT OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE LATIN AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHIC CENTRE, AND LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL POPULATION PROGRAMME 1984-1987

The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on Population, held within the seventh session of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN),

Recalling that, in order to give stability and permanency to regional activities in the field of population, the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America, in its resolution 346 (AC.68), decided to incorporate the Latin American Demographic Centre into the ECLA system,

Recalling also that in ECLA resolution 357 (XVI) it was decided to instruct the Committee of High-Level Government Experts set up under ECLA resolution 310 (XIV) to take up matters related to population at its meetings,

Bearing in mind resolution 436 (XIX) in which the Committee of High-Level Government Experts was entrusted with the responsibility of appraising the progress of the Centre's activities and making proposals with regard to its programme of work,

Considering that the member States participating in the sixteenth session of the Committee of the Whole (New York, 1982) approved the programme of work of the ECLA system, including that of the Latin American Demographic Centre, for the period 1984-1985 and decided to convene another meeting of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts to deal with population,

Bearing in mind that the Committee of the Whole has participated in the work performed by the Latin American Demographic Centre and has taken note of the work accomplished in the five CELADE subprogrammes during the period 1979-1983, as described in the progress reports for the periods 1979-1981 and 1981-1983,

1. Recommends the approval of the lines of action of the Regional Population Programme for the period 1984-1987, contained in document E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.5, as amended at the present meeting;

2. Further recommends that activities relating to the study, promotion and preservation of the family be included among the basic activities of the Regional Programme.

/RESOLUTION 2.

RESOLUTION 2. SUPPORT FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LATIN AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHIC CENTRE

The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on Population, held within the seventh session of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN),

Bearing in mind the conclusions and recommendations of the World Population Conference (Bucharest, August 1974), the regional meetings on population, and in particular the World Population Plan of Action adopted at the world conference,

Conscious of the recommendations mentioned above, which draw attention to the need to tackle population problems within the context of development strategies, the planning process and general policies, and which have been reaffirmed at this meeting,

Recognizing the primary importance of associating the universities and other institutions of higher education in the study and analysis of population policy programmes and integral human development,

Taking into account the Latin American Regional Population Programme's aim of co-operating with the countries of the region in furthering their knowledge of their demographic situation and in the formulation and appraisal of development plans and programmes in the field of population,

Aware of the significance of the community as a dynamic participant in all population or socioeconomic policies,

Recalling how important it is that the Latin American Demographic Centre should establish methods and mechanisms for furthering knowledge of matters relating to population and their dissemination to the community,

Noting with gratitude the work accomplished by the Latin American Demographic Centre in the past 26 years, during which it has demonstrated its ability to respond to the needs of the countries of the region in the field of population,

Recognizing that in recent years the Latin American Demographic Centre has been curtailing its activities because of insufficient human, economic and financial resources,

Aware of the need to establish a process of decentralization which would help both to make the population activities conducted within the system more consistent and to make better use of the human and financial resources available,

1. Recommends that, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 32/197, measures be taken to speed up the process of decentralizing population activities from the central bodies of the Secretariat towards the regional commissions and in particular towards the Economic Commission for Latin America;

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2. Likewise recommends that member countries which deem it appropriate to do so should support, in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, concrete measures in line with those adopted in successive meetings by the Economic Commission for Latin America and its subsidiary organs, designed to strengthen the infrastructure of the Latin American Demographic Centre with resources from the regular budget of the United Nations;

3. Further recommends that those member countries which deem it advisable to do so should instruct their representatives on the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme to promote and support initiatives aimed at obtaining adequate and stable financing from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) for the various subprogrammes which make up the programme of work of the Latin American Demographic Centre;

4. Recommends that the Latin American Demographic Centre, in its programme of work and in consultation with the governments, should give special attention to the creation of methods and mechanisms which favour the participation of universities and other institutions of higher education, as well as the community, in the formulation of population programmes;

5. Recommends that the member countries of the Economic Commission for Latin America which are able and willing to do so, inspired by the spirit of technical co-operation among developing countries, should transfer to the Latin American Demographic Centre, on a temporary basis, qualified staff in demography, population studies and related areas for incorporation in its professional staff, at the same salaries they receive in their countries of origin and with the corresponding contributions to their social security systems. The Latin American Demographic Centre would, for its part, seek a way of supplementing the remuneration of the experts by assimilating them to the category of consultants so long as they remain in the Centre and would claim for them the immunities enjoyed by staff members of the United Nations under recent agreements;

6. Recommends that at the twentieth session of the Commission the member countries of ECLA should study the advisability of adopting ways and means of co-operating by setting up a regional fund administered by ECLA, with direct contributions in the respective national currencies, to be used primarily to finance technical assistance missions and training programmes carried out in the countries themselves.

RESOLUTION 3. LATIN AMERICAN PROPOSAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION

The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on Population, held within the Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN),

Considering the basic principles and aims of the World Population Plan of Action adopted at Bucharest in 1974 and specifically its paragraph 108, which suggests measures for the periodic review and appraisal of progress made towards achieving the goals and recommendations of the Plan and states that the Economic and Social Council should consider the findings of such evaluations with the object of making, when necessary, appropriate changes in the goals and recommendations of the Plan,

Bearing in mind the conclusions and recommendations of the Second Latin American Meeting on Population (Mexico City, 3 to 7 March 1975), which reflect the consensus of the region concerning the application in it of the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action, and also taking into account the recommendations made to governments and international bodies so that they may comply with the demographic goals and policies established by the governments,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1981/87 of 25 November 1981, in which, among other things, it was decided to convene an International Conference on Population to be held in Mexico in 1984 to consider selected issues of the highest priority with a view to contributing to the process of review and appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action, "the principles and objectives of which continue to be fully valid",*/

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 35/56, the annex to which contains the International Development Strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade and states, inter alia, that the implementation of the recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action should be strengthened in the 1980s and that the international community should support the Plan of Action by increasing assistance in the field of population,

Further recalling that the Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN), at its first meeting held at Quito in 1979, approved the general objectives of the ECLA population programme and recommended that priority should be given to the execution of activities in the fields of research, technical assistance, education and training,

Bearing in mind that the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America, at its sixteenth session held in New York on 2 and 3 December 1982, decided that the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on Population should be held within the framework of the seventh session of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN), should

*/ Paragraph 3 of the resolution.

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include on its agenda consideration of the experience acquired in the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action, and should propose recommendations reflecting the consensus of the Latin American countries on the items to be discussed at the forthcoming International Conference on Population,

1. Reiterates that man should be regarded as the subject and the object of development and that the basic aim of development should be to improve the quality of life, to satisfy the material and non-material needs of the entire population, particularly those of the least privileged groups, and to allow the whole population to participate in the wealth generated by society;

2. Reaffirms that the family is the basic unit of society and that governments should protect it through appropriate laws and policies so that it can assume its rights and duties in society;

3. Considers it indispensable that the International Conference on Population, to be held in Mexico City in August 1984, should endorse the importance of national independence and sovereignty and of the struggle against foreign and colonial domination, foreign occupation, wars of aggression, political and economic coercion, racial discrimination and apartheid and neocolonialism in all its forms, since these continue to be among the main obstacles to the full emancipation and progress of the developing countries and of all the human beings affected by them;

4. Affirms that the growing pressures brought to bear by the world situation militate against the progress of nations and severely jeopardize world peace and security, with all the consequences which this may have for the preservation of the human race, and that the increasingly close links between peace and development should inspire the world community to work ceaselessly to preserve peace while at the same time promoting development, in conformity with the principles of sovereign equality of States, international co-operation, and other standards and principles of international law and good relations;

5. Notes that the effects of the present international economic crisis have been deeply felt in the developing countries, which have experienced as a result external indebtedness, deterioration in their terms of trade, monetary and financial imbalances, a reduction in real terms in transfer of resources to the developing countries, decapitalization and other consequences. These have not only reduced the capacity of the developing countries to execute integrated plans and programmes for rapid economic and social development, including population policies, but have also resulted in additional social pressures which have affected the population of these countries and in particular the most deprived sectors of them. In this context, the recommendations of the International Conference on Population to be held in Mexico must take account of these basic elements for the formulation of development and population policies, since the steady deterioration of the economic and social situation of the developing countries has a decisive effect on the accomplishment of the economic and social changes on which, according to the World Population Plan of Action, the effective solution of demographic problems depends;

/6. Reaffirms

6. Reaffirms that the essence of the principles, objectives and guidelines set forth in the World Population Plan of Action adopted at the Bucharest Conference in August 1974 are, in general, still valid, although they should be adapted to the new problems confronting the world as a result of the economic and social situation and of the changes which have ocurred in the countries in this domain;

7. Recommends:

a) That the final report of the International Conference on Population to be held in Mexico in 1984 should contain a core of background material, principles and objectives and a section devoted to universally valid recommendations, presented in order of priority and in summary form, on demographic and socioeconomic policies, the promotion of knowledge, and the role of governments and of international co-operation;

b) That it should be reaffirmed that the formulation and application of population policies is a sovereign right of every nation; consequently the criteria and priorities adopted as guides to economic, financial and technical co-operation in this and other fields should neither affect nor condition the exercise of that sovereign right;

c) That in order for the population policies adopted by the countries to be effective, they must form an integral part of their economic and social development policies and not be presented as alternatives to those policies or as independent of them;

d) That national population policies should not be regarded as merely another kind of sectoral policies, nor as the sum of the demographic impact produced by sectoral policies formulated in isolation but that, on the contrary, they should constitute a specific expression of the basic components of the economic and social development policy and of sectoral policies such as those relating to employment, education, health, housing, culture, etc.;

e) That in the formulation of population policies and of other measures designed to change the course of demographic variables, specific precautions be taken to see that they are effectively and correctly integrated in the development plans and strategies through economic and social planning activities and in other ways sovereignly decided upon by the States. This kind of integration can be fostered by the creation or strengthening of governmental mechanisms at the appropriate level, responsible for formulating population policies, conducting research and training qualified staff for these tasks;

f) That regional action should be initiated in the field of population, in accordance with the basic principles of the World Population Plan of Action and the interests and decisions of the countries of each region. This action should take into account the different situations prevailing in the region and should be based on the rights and duties of the States in their reciprocal relations: national sovereignty and universal solidarity;

/g) That,

g) That, in order to give effect to the basic right of couples and persons to decide freely and reponsibly on the number and spacing of their children, the States, in so far as is possible, should ensure that all social groups in the community have access to the necessary information and facilities, including facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of involuntary sterility. The exercise of this right should be shielded against all open or indirect pressures, so as to prevent a situation where people may have a different level of fertility from that which they themselves desire. If the governments deem it necessary to change the population's patterns of reproduction to bring them into line with national objectives, they should respect the social and cultural values of people in different social strata and adopt the necessary economic, social and cultural measures to ensure that people may freely decide on the number and spacing of their children. Governments should also ensure the exercise of proper supervision to prevent unethical birth control activities;

h) That within the context of the economic and social development plans and goals which are adopted, governments should lay particular stress on the solution of basic nutritional problems, the reduction and subsequent elimination of avoidable diseases, the lowering of the levels of general mortality and the minimization of differences in levels of nutrition, morbidity and mortality between different areas and social strata within the countries;

i) That the promotion and preservation of health and of the quality of life should be given the highest priority in national and international strategies and that, to that end, governments should adopt the political commitments needed to reach the national targets in this area; in addition, governments should accelerate or strengthen their efforts to reduce the differences in mortality rates as well as to bring down mortality itself -especially infant mortality- by making it easier to gain access to effective, moderately priced technology, such as that used in connection with oral rehydration, monitoring of growth, breast feeding and immunization;

j) That the International Conference on Population should reiterate and develop the main elements regarding internal migration and physical planning contained in the World Population Plan of Action; these elements should serve to guide the policies relating to population redistribution, with special emphasis on planned and equitable regional development, the search for a more equitable way of distributing wealth among all the social groups and regions, the incorporation of alternatives to the existing modes of urban and rural life by strengthening small and medium-sized towns, the socioeconomic enhancement of the rural environment through integral development, and the provision of basic social services in both urban and rural environments, so as to give the entire population access to them;

k) That in order to integrate population policies in development strategies and plans effectively and concretely, there should be increased training of specialized manpower in the study of and research into the way in which population dynamics relate to economic, social and cultural development, and also in information relating to population;

l) That an effort should be made to ensure that human, material and technological resources are put to better and more effective use through the

/exchange of

exchange of experience of professionals and experts, particularly among Latin American countries, regarding strategies relating to spatial distribution of the population, migration, nutrition, health, education, rural development, industrial development and other components of economic and social development, in accordance with the capabilities and requirements of the countries of the region. At the request of these countries the organization of the United Nations system and other international bodies will lend them their full support so that this kind of action can be put into practice;

m) That within the United Nations system, the regional bodies, and in particular those directly involved with population, should strengthen the work being done in this field, especially with regard to the inputs needed to formulate population policies -i.e. information, research and training- so as to secure the actual integration of population policies into the global framework of development policies and also to assist in the review and appraisal of population plans of action;

n) That consideration should be given to ways of strengthening research and studies aimed at putting into practice the principles which emerge from international meetings, such as the principle of incorporating demographic variables into economic and social planning.

Annex 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Member States of the Commission

ARGENTINA

Representative: Jorge Santiago Casal, Acting Chargé d'Affairs, Embassy of Argentina in Cuba

Alternate Representative: Silvia Olego de Campos, Technical Advisor, Department of Planning of the Office of the President of Argentina

BOLIVIA

Representative: Carlos Carafa Rada, Under Secretary for Ministerial Co-ordination, Ministry of Planning and Coordination

BRAZIL

Representative: Luiz Filipe do Macedo-Soares, Embassy Counselor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Members of the Delegation: José Orlando Amado Neco, Newton Montenegro, José Viegs-Filho

COLOMBIA

Representative: Héctor Maldonado Gómez, Director-General of Socioeconomic Analysis, National Department of Statistics

COSTA RICA

Representative: Carlos Luis Pacheco Ramírez, Economic Advisor in the Ministry of Planning

CUBA

Representative: José Fernández de Cossío, Vice-Chairman of the State Committee on Economic Collaboration

Alternate Representative: Jorge Aldereguía Valdés Brito, Director-General of the Institute of Health Development
Celestino Alvarez-Lajonchere, National Working Group on Sexual Education, Ministry of Public Health
Maximino Gancedo Cabrera, Director, State Statistical Committee
Luis C. García Gutiérrez, Chief, Population Registry Office

Members of the Delegation: Juan Carlos Alfonso Fraga, Luisa Alvarez Vásquez, Esperanza Ballester, Mirtha Barquet, Eramis Bueno Sánchez, Dora Carcaño Araújo, Ernesto Díaz Bustabad, Georgina Fajardo, Alfonso Farnós Morejón, Norma Goicochea Estenenoz, Fernando R. González Quiñones, Rosario Grove Villar, Estela Lemagne Pelayo, Ramiro León Torres, Olga Lezcano Maristany, Zoila Macías Menéndez, Julio Martínez Cabrera, Blanca Morejón Seijas, Abelardo Moreno Fernández, Francisco Gabriel Pedrá Grass, Oscar Ramos Piñol, Norma E. Ríos Massabot, Francisco Rojas Ochoa, Jo-Ann Salas Merino, Arnaldo Tejeiro Fernández, Esther Veliz de Villalvilla

CHILE

Representative: Guillermo Delgado Iparraguirre, Advisor, Ministry of Health

ECUADOR

Representative: Luis King Vanoni, Technical Director, Department of Planning, CONADE

Member of the Delegation: Gladys Pozo de Ruiz

GUYANA

Representative: Robert Mackenzie, Embassy of Guyana in Cuba

Member of the Delegation:- Rajendra Mungol

HAITI

Representative: Jean-Marie Bazile, Deputy Director of Statistics

MEXICO

Representative: Gerónimo Martínez, Secretary-General, National Population Council

Alternate Representative: Jorge Alfonso Fuentes, Minister, Embassy of Mexico in Cuba

Member of the Delegation: Ernesto Acevedo

NICARAGUA

Representative: Jaime Ocón Abaunza, President, National Institute of Statistics and Censuses

Member of the Delegation: Rosa de los A. Barberena Mayorga, Leonardo Sandino Rueda

PANAMA

Representative: Rolando E. Barrow, Acting Chargé d'Affairs of the Embassy of Panama in Cuba

Members of the Delegation: Edith Palacios de Gómez, Jorge E. Ruíz

PERU

Representative: Graciela Valdez, Chief, National Institute of Statistics

Members of the Delegation: Jaime U. Johnson, Julio A. Ocampo Mascaró

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Representative: José García Ramírez, Under-Secretary of State for Public Health

VENEZUELA

Representative: Carmen Medina de Quintero, Director General of Statistics, Central Bureau of Statistics

Member of the Delegation: Mireya M. de Grisanti

B. United Nations Secretariat

Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA)

Population Division

Germán A. Bravo-Casas, Co-ordinator, Implementation of World Population Conference Recommendations.

C. United Nations Bodies

United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)

Luis Olivos, Deputy Chief, Programme Division and Chief, Latin American and Caribbean Branch
William Visser, Programme Officer

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Paul S. Altesman, Special Assistant to the Executive Director and Co-ordinator for United Nations Affairs

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Frederick Lyons, Acting Representative
Marco Borsotti, Programme Officer
Mirtha Sánchez Martínez, Programme Asstant/UNFPA

D. Specialized agencies of the United Nations system

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Rafael Murillo-Selva Rendón, Deputy Director, UNESCO Regional Cultural Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
Jairo Palacio, Regional Advisor, Education in Population Affairs
Mario Héctor Parisí, Advisor

World Health Organization (WHO)

Pan-American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO)

José Antonio Solís, Advisor in Family Health
Hans A. Bruch, Chief, Health Statistics Office

E. Other intergovernmental organizations

Intergovernmental Committee for Migrations (ICM)

Gino Daniel Romagnoli, Head of ICM Mission in Argentina

Latin American Economic System (SELA)

Henry Gill, Co-ordinator for Caribbean Affairs

F. Secretariat

Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)

Enrique V. Iglesias, Executive Secretary
Daniel S. Blanchard, Acting Secretary of the Commission

Latin American Demographic Center (CELADE)

Oscar Julián Bardeci, Director
Guillermo Macció, Deputy Director
Cesár Peláez Rodríguez, Chief, Population and Velopment Section
Carmen Arretx, Chief, Demography Section

Annex 2

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Working Papers

1. Provisional agenda (E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.1)

2. The demographic situation of Latin America as evaluated in 1983: Estimates for 1960-1980 and projections for 1980-2025 (E/CEPAL/GEGAN/POB.2/L.2)

3. Some population estimates and projections for the English-speaking Caribbean (E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.2/Add.1)

4. Population and development in Latin America (E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.3)

5. Population policies in Latin America: Ten years' experience (E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.4)

6. Regional population programme, 1984-1987: Main lines of action (E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.5)

Reference documents

1. Report of the First Meeting on Population of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts. Quito, Ecuador, 12-14 March 1979 (E/CEPAL/1072)

2. Development, lifestyles, population and environment in Latin America (E/CEPAL/CELADE/L.2 and IESA/P/ICP.1984/EG.III/9)

3. Mortality and health policy (E/CEPAL/CELADE/L.3)

4. Family and fertility (E/CEPAL/CELADE/L.4)

5. Population redistribution policies in Latin America (E/CEPAL/CELADE/L.5)

6. Draft Programme of Work of the ECLA System, 1984-1985 (E/CEPAL/SES.20/G.7)

7. Regional Population Programme, 1984-1978: Main lines of action (E/CEPAL/CEGAN/POB.2/L.5)

8. Report on the avtivities of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), 1981-1983 (E/CEPAL/CELADE/G.14)

9. CELADE in the countries: Synopsis of 25 years of co-operation. Santiago, 1982 (unnumbered document)

10. Apoyo a las actividades del Centro Latinoamericano de Demografía (CELADE): Nuevas modalidades de cooperación. Nota de la Secretaría Ejecutiva. November 1983

In addition, some Fascículos de Población jointly prepared by CELADE and certain countries (Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru) were distributed.

/Annex 3

Annex 3

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE LATIN AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHIC CENTRE (CELADE)

When representatives from the countries of the various world regions met at Bucharest in 1974 to analyse the trends in population growth and distribution and to make recommendations aimed at influencing population dynamics, their positions differed substantially, not only in regard to the types of action which should be recommended, but also with respect to their very perception of population dynamics as a problem.

One of these positions, which was perhaps the most widely-held and predominant one in international forums up until 1974, was characterized by alarm at population problems and by the feeling that a high population growth rate was one of the worst possible omens for the economic development and well-being of those countries which did not stringently control their birth rates. Other positions diverged from this viewpoint in varying degrees and emphasized a greater integration of the population into the countries' economic and social development, which was not regarded as being so entirely contingent upon a strict control of fertility.

The 1974 World Population Plan of Action wisely avoids taking extreme positions which reflect ideological stances on the socioeconomic organization of national societies rather than objective assertions regarding the relationship between population and socioeconomic dynamics. Although it does make some general recommendations, which remain subject to the sovereign decision of the countries, the Plan stresses the integration of population analyses and activities as a component of the characteristics and objectives of economic and social development.

Nearly 10 years after the approval of that World Plan of Action, a concise review of what is occurring with respect to demographic trends in Latin America, together with a brief outline of events in recent years related to economic growth will be useful in demonstrating the complexity of the relationships between these two types of dynamics and, thus, in avoiding extreme positions in either direction.

After the Second World War, the Latin American population increased at an extraordinary rate, outpacing all the other regions of the world. The population rose from approximately 159 million in 1950 to 209 million in 1960, 275 million in 1970 and nearly 352 million in 1980. This exceptional growth, which was dubbed the "population explosion" by those who were most alarmed, is fuelled by high fertility and declining mortality.

The pace of population growth, which continued accelerating until it reached a peak of over 2.8% in the first half of the 1960s, began to decrease steadily thereafter, and now stands at around 2.3% annually. Nevertheless, it took only 26 years for the 1954 population to double.

This regional growth was the result of very different trends from country to country. In Argentina, Cuba and Uruguay, growth rates were already under 2% by the beginning of the 1950s; in Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica, the rates began to decline in 1960-1965, and the same thing has occurred more recently in the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Venezuela; in the remaining countries, however, the growth rate has remained high or has even risen, as is the case in Bolivia and Haiti.

An analysis of the behaviour of natality in the years from 1975 to 1980 indicates that both the region as a whole, and each and every one of the countries, reduced their rate of reproduction. In countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua an incipient decline was noted but all those countries will still have birth rates of over 40 per 1 000 for 1980-1985.

The countries with rates under 40 per 1 000 in the 1975-1980 period which seem to be reducing their birth rates significantly are -in order of the magnitude of the decrease- Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

A comparison between these figures and the recommendations of the World Plan of Action reveals that the Latin American region may not be too far away from achieving the birth rate proposed by the United Nations of approximately 30 per 1 000. Individually, however, most of the countries will not reach this target. It should be borne in mind that the countries with rates below this figure reached that level before the approval of the Plan in 1974. In general, fertility in Latin America has evolved somewhat independently of the Plan.

The current fertility level is the result of the different courses which the process of demographic transition has followed in these countries. In the years preceding 1960, Uruguay, Argentina and Cuba experienced a slow but steady decline in fertility which bears some resemblance to the demographic transition in Europe.

In other countries -Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia and Venezuela- there was a novel aspect in the decrease of fertility during the 1960s, in that the rate of decline was very rapid and was widespread among women of all ages and all social groups.

A third group of countries, composed of Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago, has recently begun to experience the process of demographic transition. Some of them -Mexico, Panama and Paraguay- have achieved an even more rapid rate of decline than that of Chile and the other countries mentioned above.

Lastly, Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Suriname have not yet reached a stage where their reproduction is definitely declining. Although there has been a slight but steady decrease in the general fertility rates in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua in recent years, this phenomenon is still not clearly in evidence in the rest of the countries.

One of the goals proposed by the Plan of Action is to reduce mortality as much as possible, especially infant and maternal mortality. Another goal is to narrow the gaps between the national and sub-national death rates in each country. According to the Plan of Action, in order to achieve a mean life expectancy of 62 years for 1985 and of 74 for the year 2000 worldwide, increases of 11 years for Latin America, 17 years for Asia and 28 years for Africa would have to be achieved by the end of this century.

Death rates have decreased significantly during recent decades in Latin America, and this decline is expected to continue, although more slowly. Despite the fact that there have been considerable decreases in some of the countries in the region, such as Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru, they still exhibit particularly high mortality.

These trends towards achieving fertility and mortality targets -which vary greatly from country to country and which have not yet resulted in the complete achievement of those goals- provide the framework for our deliberations and will serve as a basis for discussing the desirability of formulating regional plans of action on population, which should be based on the new demographic conditions in the region and give due consideration to the individual features of each country.

We should now like to refer briefly to the way in which economic dynamics has evolved over the same period as that marked by these demographic trends.

Between the Second World War and the mid-1970s, the trend of the region's economy was one of increasingly rapid growth in the gross domestic product, reaching a rate of over 7% for the 1970-1975 period. Although there were great differences from country to country, the evolution at the regional level did reflect growth in most of the countries.

The high rates of economic growth which prevailed until the mid-1970s were concomitant with sweeping changes in the structure of production. Manufacturing industry grew even more rapidly than the gross domestic product, and its share in that product accordingly rose from 18% to 24% between 1950 and 1975. Its share increased in all of the countries, but was most marked in those with large economies and populations, which had already reached a higher level of industrialization by 1950. Meanwhile, the trend in the agricultural sector was the reverse, and its share in the product dropped from 20% to 13%.

The industrial labour force also grew in relative terms in nearly all the countries, in parallel with the urbanization process, the reduction of the agricultural labour force and the increase of the services sector. The extent of the relative growth of the industrial labour force seems to have been inversely related to the previous level of industrialization. In those countries where there was a relatively smaller proportion of the economically active population

in the industrial sector, the proportional growth in that labour force was greater; the most striking case is the Dominican Republic, where there was an increase from 8.6% in 1960 to 20.3% in 1980; the second-largest increase occurred in Honduras, where the figure rose from 8.2% in 1960 to 14.7% in 1980. In Panama, where the percentage of the economically active population in the industrial sector is also small, there was an increase from 7.6% in 1960 to 10.8% in 1980.

The rapid growth of the economy was accompanied by a similar trend in investment, which grew at annual rates of over 8% between 1965 and 1973. Beginning in the mid-1960s, the investment-product coefficient for the region as a whole remained above 20%, reaching nearly 23% in 1970-1974 and more than 24% in the following five-year period. Investment varied widely from country to country, however, generally being higher and more stable in the large and medium-sized countries.

The rapid growth of investment in the region was supported by high levels of domestic savings, which have exceeded 18% of the gross domestic product since 1950, reaching over 21% in 1974-1975 and then dropping to slightly more than 18% in 1982. For the region as a whole, this meant that the proportion of investment financed by national savings was over 90% for all the periods from 1950 until 1975-1979; since then it has remained below that figure, dropping to slightly over 87% in 1982.

These major economic advances were possible during the postwar period and lasted until the mid-1970s despite the fact that, during the same period, the rate of population growth was very high. Interestingly enough, by the time fertility had begun to decline in all of the countries of the region, economic growth also began to slow down, to the point where it was negative during 1981 and 1982.

The decline and reversal in economic growth rates were accompanied by changes in the share of the gross domestic product represented by industry, as well as in investment and domestic savings trends. In the second half of the 1970s, and particularly from 1980 onwards, the share represented by the agricultural sector began to grow slightly again in the region as a whole and in over half of the individual countries, at the same time that industry's share declined significantly both in the region and in nearly all the countries. After 1980 the investment-product ratio dropped to 21% for the region as a whole; the proportion of investment financed by national savings decreased as well.

We might ask ourselves whether these overall trends in Latin America -economic growth accompanied by rapid population growth, followed by a stagnation of production running parallel to a decline in fertility -warrant the conclusion that population growth has no repercussions on economic development. The answer is obviously no. Drawing such a conclusion merely on that basis would represent a superficial attitude unbefitting a scientific approach to so complex a subject.

If economic growth in these countries is in fact possible despite a concomitant rapid growth of the population, then this should be the starting point for an analysis in greater depth of the consequences of such growth for economic development. For example, the matter of how this relationship is specifically observed in the individual countries, above and beyond the regional averages, should be investigated, as should the question of how great an influence is exercised by the fact that a given level of industrialization has previously been reached; it would also be well to formulate some questions with respect to the asynchronism of certain repercussions (for example, what influence a given level of population growth, concurrent with a given level of economic development, may have at a time subsequent to both phenomena).

We believe there is a pressing need to look into what occurs with respect to the well-being of the population of those countries in which economic growth has increased. Specifically, this involves the possibility that different conclusions might be reached according to whether they are based on macro-economic indicators referring to the country or socioeconomic indicators referring to the population of the country. In point of fact, a number of ECLA studies have shown that a part of the population is not incorporated into the economic and social development process, as regards both access to the fruits of development and job opportunities.

With respect to the latter, the combined effect of population growth and changes in its age distribution produces a considerable increase in the population in the active age groups. A very significant change began to occur as from 1970 in the trends relating to the proportion of young people and people of working age in the Latin American population. Whereas the percentage of the population under 15 years of age rose from 40.7% to 42.4% between 1950 and 1970, this proportion had fallen to 39.4% by 1980; on the other hand, the population between 15 and 64 years of age which declined from 56% to 54% during the former period, amounted to 56.4% in 1980.

The foregoing situation was bound to be reflected in a sharp increase in the number of additional jobs required to employ this new labour force. Even if the prevailing levels of participation by sex and by age in each country during the 1950-1980 period were to remain constant, estimates prepared by CELADE indicate that the economically active population of the region increased from 55 million to 122 million people -i.e., the labour force grew by 67 million during that period. This increase was an inherited phenomenon, in that it was caused by the fact that children born during periods of high fertility were reaching working age.

Given the increasing lack of adequately-paid productive jobs, this sharp increase can only exacerbate the gap between the supply and demand for labour in the countries of the region. Hence the formation of larger and larger "informal" labour markets, about which ample information is available in the studies conducted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and, in particular, the Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC).

This informal market pools the redundant labour force, which is unable to find an appropriate place in the productive process and which has to content itself with forms of hidden unemployment, own-account activities related to unproductive services or positions in traditional enterprises with extremely low levels of productivity.

This situation is necessarily reflected in the well-being of the population, significant portions of which (the proportion varying from country to country) are deprived of the benefits of economic development. Estimates made around 1970 indicate that there were nearly 110 million poor in the region, "poor" being defined as people who are unable to satisfy their most basic needs; of this number, 54 million were indigent, i.e., those people who cannot even satisfy their food needs adequately. The former figure represents 40% of the total population of the 10 countries covered by the study.

Moreover, the growth of the population, combined with the increase in life expectancy and the growing proportion of older people in comparison to the active population, places heavier demands on the country with respect to providing retirement benefits to that population. This is in addition to the greater demands which are made in connection with health, education, transport, recreation and housing. There is a serious problem in this last regard, which tends to be met with makeshift solutions involving the creation of marginal areas within the large cities in which health conditions and the level of comfort could not be more deplorable. The fact should be borne in mind that, in addition to population growth, another element contributing to the emergence of this phenomenon is a trend in the spatial distribution of the population which is characterized by intense migratory flows of people wishing to settle in the large cities.

We might ask ourselves whether these brief comments regarding social situations which reveal the shortcomings of the productive process -in that it does not permit vast sectors of the population to enjoy the benefits of economic development- lead to the conclusion that rapid population growth has adverse repercussions on economic development or on the well-being of the population. The answer is, once again, no. Indeed, one of the situations outlined above, for which population growth is usually blamed, could already have been resolved by the countries of the region, even under current economic conditions and with the real rate of population growth they have experienced. The situation referred to is that of critical poverty. ECLA studies indicate that the elimination of poverty is a real possibility, and that the obstacles standing in the way of its accomplishment do not relate to the material requirements of doing so, nor to the size of the population, bur rather to the lack of policies aimed at attaining that objective.

The foregoing casts doubt upon certain conclusions reached in some preparatory studies for the International Conference on Population, to be held in Mexico in August 1984. We are not convinced that there is an objective basis for the statement that "during a time of slower economic growth, improvements in living standards may depend more upon the expertise of family planners than on that of economic planners". Assertions such as this, which appear to paraphrase other

statements made some time ago, too readily fix upon a scapegoat while ignoring the fundamental role of economic planners, who could speed up productive growth and distribute its benefits more equitably. At all events, studies which draw such conclusions will help to bring conflicting opinions to the fore and will give rise to imaginative efforts to reveal possible errors and to offer alternatives to those conclusions.

The relationships between economic and social development and population dynamics do not only manifest themselves in the direction discussed up until this point. Understanding the ways in which development influences population dynamics is of just as much interest as is the inverse relationship because, inter alia, if population dynamics that appear unsuitable for the objectives set by economic planners are to be influenced, it will be necessary to use our knowledge about the socioeconomic factors which determine changes in demographic trends.

Unlike what occurs in the analysis of the repercussions of population dynamics on economic development -where the ideological debate takes priority, and there have been few scientific advances which shed light on the actual repercussions- in the case of socioeconomic factors which determine population changes, there has been much less controversy and much greater success in making scientific progress. Although many causal relationships still need to be studied in greater depth, and despite the fact that there are still some research results which are disputed by other studies, a great deal of ground has been covered, and scientific know-how has been accumulated which can be useful as inputs for the design of plans, activities and policies relating to population.

Until now we have referred to the trends in population growth observed during recent years in Latin America. At this point some comments are called for with respect to what has occurred as regards the spatial distribution of the population in the countries of the region. This subject has not aroused such intense controversy as population growth, even though ideological assumptions and value judgements concerning the consequences of concentration have not been absent from studies on the topic. These controversial aspects aside, there is strong agreement among the countries of the region as to the great importance of analysing these trends in the spatial distribution of the population and of gathering knowledge which can be used as inputs for redistributive policies.

The combined economic, social and political changes in the region during the 1960s and 1970s, together with the concomitant alterations in demographic variables, have had far-reaching repercussions on the modalities of land occupation. Despite considerable variations from country to country, the distributive and redistributive trends with respect to the population in the Latin America space can be described on the basis of three main aspects, which might be regarded as common denominators on the various nations.

The first aspect which should be mentioned is the continuation of the fundamental role played by urbanization with respect to the progressive shift in the population centre of the Latin American economies from the agricultural and extractive sectors towards the industrial and services sectors, as well as the formation of a range of settlements which contain the majority of the region's inhabitants. This trend has also involved a series of societal movements which are manifested in an increase in the level of school enrolment, the emergence and expansion of the middle strata and, generally, in the definition of norms and guidelines for interaction which have a direct impact on population dynamics.

It must be pointed out, however, that there have been clear signs in recent years of a decline in the growth rates of major cities. It must also be noted that the relative importance of smaller and medium-sized cities has increased, indicating that the national urban networks have expanded significantly.

A second trend in the spatial distribution of the regional population is the gradual reduction of the "empty spaces" which have traditionally been so extensive in the region. The information provided by the population censuses of the early 1980s indicates that, along with the metropolitan centres, the highest population growth rates were recorded in the peripheral areas of some of the countries' territory. The recent demographic history of Latin America thus bears witness to a definite expansion of occuped space; this is due to an extension of the land area devoted to agriculture and to the exploitation of new mining deposits. This trend, then, is part of a process of pushing back resource frontiers. Although this process still affects a relatively small proportion of the region's total population, its pace has gradually been quickening.

The two trends discussed above -urbanization and the pushing back of resource frontiers- have developed in such a way as to create areas to which the population is attracted; i.e., they have contributed to the emergence of places of destination for a large part of the internal migratory flows. Counterpart places of origin have been necessary for the continuance of these flows; in such areas, factors predominate which contribute to the expulsion of population. Such conditions, therefore, give shape to a third major trend in the spatial distribution of the Latin American population. This trend has been particularly evident in long-standing areas of settlement, which are generally situated in central locations within the countries and are of major importance in the rural environment. Traditional forms of organizing agricultural production based on the latifundium and a peasant economy often persist in such areas.

The trends outlined above are, of course, much more complex, and their manifestations vary in form and intensity among the different countries and within them. Because of this, the economic and social implications of these trends also vary greatly. Although some aspects of these implications have been studied in detail, others have not, and little is yet known about them; these latter aspects have been the object of assessments which have sparked controversial debates. This has particularly been the case with respect to urban-metropolitan concentration and the still unclearly-defined subject of rural scatter.

Interpretative diagnostic studies of urban concentration show this phenomenon to be a basic component of the predominant form of development in the region and indicate that, because of this very fact, any major signs of reversal in this trend are unlikely so long as current conditions prevail. Furthermore, there are no clear indications of the emergence of diseconomies associated with conglomeration which might offset the economies derived from it; there is a possibility, however, that the existing diseconomies are external to the businesses located there and that their costs are being borne by society as a whole.

If spatial concentration continues to be a functional element in the process of accumulation, it may be expected that the large cities will continue to have a strong impact on population distribution. Such concentration undoubtedly reflects inequalities as regards the distribution and development of the forces of production which, likewise, involve inequalities with respect to the material living conditions of the population. Such conditions in turn affect population dynamics, acting as determinants of the territorial mobility of the population.

We could continue our discussion of these two aspects of population dynamics; however, in view of the existence of documents especially prepared for the analysis of population growth and distribution trends, as well as other specific documents concerning the relationship between population and development and about the ten years of experience with population policies in Latin America, it does not seem necessary to expand upon these considerations prior to the beginning of this important conference.

Instead, I should like to conclude with a thought that might be taken into consideration in our working meetings, which relates to the importance of making the overall interests of a national society compatible with the basic rights of the people who are members of that society. The World Population Plan of Action which was adopted in 1974 suggests some national goals as regards fertility rates and a decline in mortality, and makes some recommendations to the effect that each country acting as a sovereign entity, should establish some more precise goals with respect to these demographic phenomena. On the other hand, the Plan of Action also stresses the right of the people to decide freely the number of children they wish to have. In view of the possibility that national needs and personal wishes may diverge somewhat, an examination of the attitude that should be taken by public authorities in this respect appears to be in order.

There have been numerous reports of offences against the freedom of individuals with respect to human reproduction that have been caused by the application of controls with which the people affected were not in agreement. These measures have clearly been aimed at decreasing fertility and, undoubtedly, the countries which employ them do so in the belief that they are interpreting national needs.

On the other hand, there is strong opposition by some groups or schools of thought to the organization of expansion of coverage of family planning programmes designed to provide couples with adequate information and to give them access to effective contraceptives so that they may freely make a conscious decision as to the number of children they will have. These types of positions will tend to increase fertility, but are no less harmful to individual freedom than the measures of control discussed earlier.

In our judgement, these national interests can be made compatible with individual freedoms only through an insistence upon the inalienable right of couples to make a free, informed and conscious decision about the size of their families. This cannot be achieved without programmes designed to facilitate family planning by providing objective and accurate information about human reproduction and by furnishing methods of contraception that allow couples to adjust the number of children to the ideal family size which is freely chosen by them.

Taking the above as a starting point and working only on the basis of the free and conscious choice of couples, the national society should take responsibility for motivating couples to decide upon a family size which is in keeping with national planning objectives, whether these involve a lower or higher fertility rate. In order for there to be real motivation, the society must create material and spiritual incentives which reinforce people's desires in the direction sought by the national society.

The same attitude should be taken with regard to the problem of the spatial distribution of the population. Although in this regard there have not been so many reports of compulsory measures, nor programmes of action which arouse the same type of resistence as do those concerning fertility, it is no less true that the governments of the region are greatly concerned by the heavy concentration of the population in a few large cities. Here too, the principle of offering material, cultural and recreational incentives to motivate people not to leave their place of origin or to go to destinations suggested by the government should take precedence over measures which hinder the right of citizens to move freely within the national territory.

In conclusion, I would hope that these considerations, as well as the documents submitted to the distinguished delegates for their consideration will contribute to the achievement of this meeting's objectives of receiving guidelines for the work of CELADE in coming years and of reaching a consensus on the position to be taken by Latin America at the International Conference on Population, with a view to making the World Population Plan of Action a more effective tocl for the development of the region.