



Family Matters



Circular No. 7

Follow-up to the International Year of the Family

1997

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The United Nations Subprogramme on the Family

The Follow up to the International Year of the Family is the responsibility of the Division for Social Policy and Development within the Department for Economic and Social Affairs. The follow-up activities to the International Year of the Family are in accordance with intergovernmental mandates e.g. General Assembly resolutions 47/237 of 20 September 1993 and 50/142 of 21 December 1995 respectively.

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The Family and the Commission for Social Development at its 35th Session

The 35th session of the Commission for Social Development met at United Nations Headquarters from 25 February - 6 March 1997. This was the Commission's first meeting since the decision by ECOSOC to expand its membership from 32 to 46 and to schedule annual sessions.

The agenda of the 35th session included *inter alia* discussions on productive employment; a dialogue with the Chairpersons of the Inter-Agency Task Forces on follow up to the global conferences of the 1990's; and a review of reports of the Secretary-General on ageing, disability, youth and the family.

A report of the Secretary-General entitled *A International Year of the Family* @

[A/52/57] was received with appreciation by the Commission. The report provides an analysis of the family-related provisions from the outcome of international conferences of the 1990's. It also describes follow up activities to the International Year of the Family at all levels and contains specific proposals for follow-up action by the Secretariat.

The Commission for Social Development recommended the following draft resolution to the Economic and Social Council:

Follow-up to the International Year of the Family

The Economic and Social Council

Recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/82 of 8 December 1989, 46/92 of 16 December 1991, 47/237 of 20 December 1993 and 50/142 of 21 December 1995, concerning the proclamation, preparations for and observance of the International Year of the Family,

Recognizing that the basic objective of the follow-up to the International Year of the Family should be to strengthen and support families in performing their societal and developmental functions and to build upon their strengths, particularly at the national and local levels,

Noting that the family-related provisions from the outcomes of the recent global conferences of the 1990's provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centered components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Emphasizing that equality between women and men and respect for the rights of all family members is essential to family well-being and of society at large.

- 1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of the Family and welcomes the proposals contained therein,*
- 2. Invites Governments to continue their actions to build family-friendly societies, inter alia by promoting the rights of individual family members, in particular gender equality and the rights of the child,*
- 3. Emphasizes the need for a more focussed and coordinated approach towards family issues within the United Nations system,*
- 4. Calls upon Governments, nongovernmental organizations, other organizations of civil society, the private sector and individuals to contribute generously to the United Nations Trust Fund for Family Activities,*
- 5. Urges Governments to undertake sustained action at all levels concerning families, including studies and applied research on families and encourage their role in development, and invites governments to develop concrete measures and approaches to address national priorities to deal with family issues,*
- 6. Recommends that all relevant actors in civil society including research and academic institutions contribute and participate in actions on family issues,*
- 7. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to play an active role in*

facilitating international cooperation within the framework of the follow-up of the International Year of the Family and to facilitate exchange of experiences and information among Governments on effective policies and strategies; technical assistance, with focus on least-developed and developing countries; to encourage the organization of subregional and interregional meetings and relevant research,

8. Also Calls Upon Governments to encourage the active follow-up of the International Year of the Family at national and local levels,

9. Reaffirms the ECOSOC decision 1996/7 that the follow-up to the International Year of the Family should be an integral part of the multi-year work programme of the Commission for Social Development.

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JOHN LANGMORE: New Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development

Mr. John Langmore is the new head of the Division for Social Policy and Development. Mr. Langmore is an Australian national. For the last twelve years, he has been a member of the Australian Parliament where he was actively involved in such areas as employment, the World Bank and the IMF, Third World debt, international aid and retaining biodiversity. He is coauthor of a recent book on employment entitled *Work for All*, published by Melbourne University Press.

Mr. Langmore is a past President of Parliamentarians for Global Action and is currently a member of the International Council of the Society for International Development. Furthermore, he chaired the Australian National Committee for the World Summit for Social Development, was deputy leader of the Australian delegation to each of the preparatory committee meetings and attended the Copenhagen Summit.

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The Australian Institute for Family Studies

Dr. Harry McGurk, Director of the Australian Institute for Family Studies (AIFS) visited the Family Unit on 2 April 1997. The fruitful meeting explored joint collaboration between AIFS and the Family Unit in (a) launching an up-to-date data base and network of family research; and (b) the possibility of convening of an expert Group Meeting on the topic of Social Integration and the Family in Australia in November 1997.

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