

Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development. It also reflected the resolutions and decisions adopted at the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the thirty-fourth session of the Commission for Social Development, and the third session of the Commission on Sustainable Development as well as the results of informal consultations within the United Nations system and with concerned non-governmental organizations.

3. The present report elaborates on the proposals contained in the above-mentioned note, taking into account the observations and suggestions made subsequently in response to the note verbale of the Secretary-General of June 1995 addressed to Member States, as well as additional information provided by entities of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

II. OVERALL ORIENTATION

4. Subsequent to the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 48/183 and 49/110, the heads of State and Government at the World Summit for Social Development launched a global drive for social progress and development embodied in 10 commitments. 3/ Commitment 2 reads in part as follows: "We commit ourselves to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind". 4/ To this end, heads of State and Government undertook to formulate or strengthen, as a matter of urgency, and preferably by the year 1996, the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, national policies and strategies geared to substantially reducing overall poverty in the shortest possible time, reducing inequalities and eradicating absolute poverty by a target date to be specified by each country in its national context. 5/

5. In chapter II of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, a strategy for the eradication of poverty is outlined, containing suggestions for priority action at the national level as well as supporting activities at the international level. The Programme of Action calls on Governments to increase public efforts to eradicate absolute poverty and to reduce overall poverty substantially, *inter alia*, by formulating or strengthening, preferably by 1996, and implementing national poverty eradication plans to address the structural causes of poverty, encompassing action on the local, national, subregional, regional and international levels. These plans should establish, within each national context, strategies and affordable time-bound goals and targets for the substantial reduction of overall poverty and the eradication of absolute poverty. In the context of national plans, particular attention should be given to employment creation as a means of eradicating poverty, giving appropriate consideration to health and education, assigning a higher priority to basic social services, generating household income and promoting access to productive assets and economic opportunities. 6/ Public efforts to eradicate poverty should also be increased by elaborating, at the national level, the measurements, criteria and indicators for determining the extent and distribution of absolute poverty. Each country should develop a precise definition and assessment of absolute poverty, preferably by 1996.