

Population and Development

A Message from The Cairo Conference

European Studies of Population

VOLUME 3

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Population and Development

A Message from The Cairo Conference

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FOREWORD

Human norms and values vary across time and place, so do life styles and demographic trends. Once every ten years the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) invites all member states to discuss these issues together with their consequences. Broadly speaking we could say that 'human survival' is the ultimate issue.

Neither the United Nations nor any single country nor any scientist has offered so far a unanimously adopted solution for the complex interrelations between population and sustained development. Carefully manoeuvring between the 'Scylla' of socially undesirable and politically infeasible interventions into the private life sphere of citizens and the 'Charybdis' of the necessity to adapt society to demographic trends many proposals have been put on the international agenda. Although convergence of ideas and views may be observed the strategy of how to reach sustainability for quite a few topics is far from being 'digested'.

The authors of this Volume have a specific view on this complex issue. Robert Cliquet devoted part of his academic career to the understanding of the basic elements which brought about world population as it stands now. He contributed the three consecutive United Nations Population Conferences in Bucharest (1974), Mexico (1984), and Cairo (1994), as an Expert member of the Belgian delegation. It is with this experience and with his scientific background that he prepared, together with Kristiaan Thienpont, this third Volume in our Series *European Studies of Population*.

The authors are well-known and devoted scholars. Hence, a number of views and ideas may seem personal or provocative. Overall, however, we consider that this book provides a substantial contribution to the domain of population studies. It reviews a large number of materials of the Cairo Conference and highlights being of great relevance at the dawn of the 21st century.

Editorial Board
European Studies of Population

PREFACE

The Population and Family Study Centre (CBGS) is a governmental institute for social and policy-related scientific research into population and family issues. Since its creation in 1962, it has been constantly involved in inter-governmental activities concerning European and international population issues.

CBGS members were included in the Belgian governmental delegations that attended the three world population conferences organised by the United Nations, in Bucharest (1974), Mexico-City (1984) and Cairo (1994) respectively.

The CBGS's main task is to carry out population and family scientific research of relevance to policy-making and society in Flanders, but it is also required to advise its authorities on international population and family issues. The CBGS is also prepared to offer the benefits of its expertise to help promote development cooperation in population and family matters.

The CBGS has already published monographs about the first two UN world population conferences. This monograph, which concerns the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) staged in Cairo in 1994, is a slightly amended translation from the Dutch language book which was published in December 1994, in the CBGS Monograph Series (Cliquet and Thienpont, 1994).

This monograph could not have been completed without the support of the Flemish Community Minister for Finances and the Budget, Health Institutions, Welfare and the Family, Ms. W. Demeester-De Meyer, who provided the senior author with the opportunity to take an active part in the Cairo Conference, and several of the preparatory meetings, and the Federal Secretary of State for Development Cooperation, Mr. E. Derycke, who

instructed the General Administration for Development Cooperation (ABOS) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development cooperation, to arrange a part-time research post, so that Mr. K. Thienpont, assistant at the Department of Population Sciences at the University of Ghent, chaired by Professor H. Page, could take part in the work involved in producing this monograph.

The authors would like to express their sincere thanks to several members of the Belgian delegation to the Cairo Conference, in particular to Ms. I. Beyst, member of the personal staff of the Federal Secretary of State for Development Cooperation, Ms. L. Vreven, First Secretary, Belgian Embassy, Office of the United Nations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Dr. G. Hertecant, Administrator-General of the Flemish Community's Administration of the Family and Social Welfare, Department Welfare, Public Health and Culture, Dr. R. Schoenmaeckers, Head of the Section Demographic Analysis at the Population and Family Study Centre, and Dr. W. Vandenbulcke, official representative at the General Administration for Development Cooperation (ABOS) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, who were so kind to look through the manuscript with a critical eye. Also of great value to the authors were the comments and suggestions offered by the CBGS Editorial Committee and the referees of the European Studies of Population.

The authors would equally like to thank Ms. S. Stoens from the Belgian Embassy in Egypt, who carefully gathered the extensive background documentation as it became available at the Cairo Conference.

Mr. W. Vranckx, Director of Language Matters at the CBGS, contributed to the translation work and Vertaalbureau Deceuninck helped correct the English manuscript. The CBGS Secretariat, headed by Ms. A. Wouters, was responsible for finalising the camera-ready-production of the text.

Professor R.L. Cliquet,
Head of CBGS

ABSTRACT

The United Nations staged its International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Egypt, from September 5-13, 1994.

This monograph deals with the background of the ICPD, its preparation, proceedings and contents. It also evaluates its results and recommendations by comparing the ICPD Action Programme with the current scientific literature.

The ICPD dealt with the key issues concerning the interrelations between population, development and environment, and their causes, and was not at all limited to marginal issues such as abortion, promiscuity and homosexuality as was the impression given in the media as a result of the way these questions were distorted by the action of religious fundamentalists.

The ICPD Action Programme forms an impressive charter with a broad range of relevant policy recommendations. Nevertheless, compared to most of the current scientific literature, the ICPD seems to underestimate the seriousness and urgency of the issues at stake.

Although the ICPD Action Programme considers all the major subjects which had to be dealt with, some key topics, such as the stabilisation of the world population at replacement level, the interaction between population growth and environmental deterioration, and the association between overconsumption and ecological damage, should have been treated more thoroughly or in greater detail. Some issues which are largely irrelevant to the population/sustainability dynamics, such as sexual rights, and persons with disabilities, should not have been included. Some significant issues, such as the empowerment of women, should have been developed in way that was more in keeping with the central theme of the Conference, and not merely in their own right. Conferences such as the ICPD should lead to more theme-specific

documents. Nevertheless, a conference such as the ICPD must be considered to be of the greatest importance. The ICPD is mainly characterized by the considerable amount of scientific data absorbed and the scientifically based policy-making with respect to the problems dealt with, thus making policy decisions reflect the current state of knowledge rather than ideological bias, as used to be the case.

The ICPD process was time-consuming and not always as productive as it might have been. In the end a consensus was reached, but this was achieved at a high price. Under the pressure of Islamic and Roman-Catholic fundamentalists opposing the major gains of the modern world with its ideological pluralism, and its democratised, secularised and individualised range of ideas, the ICPD recommendations on issues such as the family, adolescents, sexual behaviour, fertility regulation and abortion, were unnecessarily toned down, because the opponents —some Islamic states, the Holy See, Malta, and a number of Latin American and Central African countries— expressed, nonetheless, reservations about these issues.

The ICPD will undoubtedly contribute to the awareness of the population issues in the context of sustainability, and to the related political decision-making. However, there is also a fear that the problems will not be dealt with as thoroughly as they might have been with a bolder policy.

The ICPD Action Programme includes a broad variety of policy suggestions to be implemented both by developing and developed countries. The latter will not only have to substantially increase their financial and technical assistance to the developing world, but will also have to make a contribution themselves to a more sustainable future by altering their production patterns and consumption behaviour.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 | **The International Conference on Population and Development 1994**

The United Nations (UN) third world population conference was staged in Cairo, Egypt, from September 5 to 13.

Considered by many to be one of the most important meetings at a time when humankind is reaching the threshold of the 21st century (Boutros Boutros-Ghali, 1994), reviled by others as the conference of "obscenity", "godlessness", or the "culture of death", the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) brought together some 13 thousand participants. Out of a total 186 UN member states 182 were represented at the Conference, with most of the delegations being headed by one or more ministers and composed of diplomats, civil servants, experts and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). A total of 3,500 national delegates attended the Conference. Also present were 700 officials from intergovernmental organisations, and 3,800 people from the media. An NGO Forum was organised on the sidelines of the Conference and this was attended by five thousand people.

The ICPD is the result of three years of preparatory work in all sorts of central and regional UN bodies and services. It started with resolution 1989/91 of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) which decided to convene a UN sponsored international meeting on population and development. The overall theme was: world population, sustained economic growth, and sustainable development.

Within this general framework, ECOSOC identified six groups of topics set to be of crucial importance over the next ten years:

- a) population growth, changes in demographic structure, including the ageing of population, and the regional diversity of such changes, with particular emphasis on the interaction between demographic variables and socio-economic development;
- b) population policies and programmes, with emphasis on securing resources for developing countries at international and national levels according to the capacity of each country;
- c) the interrelationships between population, development, environment and related matters;
- d) changes in the distribution of population, including key socio-economic factors of internal migration and the consequences for urban and rural development, as well as key factors and consequences for all types of international migration;
- e) links between improving the social role and the socio-economic status of women on the one hand, and population dynamics on the other, including motherhood during adolescence, maternal and child health, education and employment, with particular reference to the access of women to resources and the provision of services; and
- f) family planning programmes, health and family welfare.

1.2 | Aim of this monograph

The UN world population conferences are major political events. They can make a strong impact on the demographic, social and ecological situation in the future, pointing the way towards the most favourable solutions to the problems which result from the tensions existing between population growth, development, and the environment in the developing countries, and from the interrelations between the demographic dynamics, the way of life and the ecosystems in the developed world.

In line with the principles that guided the monographs the Population and Family Study Centre (CBGS) published on the World Population Conference in Bucharest in 1974 (Cliquet and Veys, 1974), and the International Conference on Population in Mexico City in 1984 (Cliquet and Van de Velde, 1985), the purpose of this monograph is to report, analyse, and evaluate the background to and outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994.

Attention is paid not only to the interrelationship between population, development and the environment in its own right, but also to the preparatory activities, the conduct of the Cairo Conference and its outcome.

More extensively than this was the case for the two earlier CBGS monographs on UN population conferences, an attempt is made here to provide a critical evaluation of the Cairo Conference in the light of the scientific literature. The task is easier than it was ten or twenty years ago, because so much more scientific literature is now available on population, development and environmental issues and their interrelations, and there is also more of a scientific consensus about the causes and possible solutions.

There was no consensus in the UN General Assembly and the Preparatory Committee (the so-called "Prepcom") on the question of how much prominence the talks should give to environmental issues. Many developing countries wanted to accentuate developmental issues, and more particularly economic growth. Developing countries' delegations spoke in particular about "sustained development", whereas several developed countries put more emphasis on "sustainable development", and argued the need for a more comprehensive approach, to ensure the environment was taken into account. At the first Prepcom, in 1991, the contradictory compromise formula "sustained economic growth and sustainable development" was accepted and the original title of the conference "International Meeting on Population" was also changed into "International Conference on Population and Development".

1.3 | Methodological considerations

The three starting points for this monograph are:

- a) a selection of recent scientific surveys of population, development and ecological problems in the world as well as of their mutual relations, interactions and feedback;
- b) the main UN documents concerning the preparation for the Cairo Conference and its proceeding;
- c) the participation of the chief author, as scientific advisor to the Flemish Community in the Belgian governmental delegation, in the three Prepcoms of the Cairo Conference in 1992, 1993 and 1994 in New York, in the European Population Conference in Geneva in 1993, and in the Cairo Conference itself. The chief author was also a member of the Belgian national preparatory committee and took part in several preparatory

meetings of the European Union in Brussels and New York. At Prepcom III in New York he served as one of the European Union's main spokesmen and negotiators. As a member of the Belgian delegations, he also participated in the UN population conferences in Bucharest in 1974 and in Mexico City in 1984.

1.3.1. Facts and opinions

As the relationship between population, development and the environment is extremely complex, different scientific disciplines may be used to analyse it. However, what is also required is a holistic, comprehensive approach that goes beyond disciplines. The reason this effort is seldom made is because science is so compartmentalised and scientists therefore tend to stick to their own territory.

The above-mentioned relationship primarily involves human action, hence politics, and finally ethics. So, it should come as no surprise that people have different views on these subjects. Individuals differ from each other, and groups of individuals differ from each other, within and between countries, and these differences are revealed in their welfare systems, power structures, interests, aspirations and goals.

As well as being connected to welfare and well-being, differences within a group and between groups are also related to ideology, to the way people perceive themselves, their society, their environment and the mutual relations between all these factors.

A serious difficulty which both scientists and politicians have to contend with in the context of population, development and environmental interrelationships revolves around the fact that scientific analysis, ideological positions and group interests are often, and not seldom in obscure ways, interconnected.

The territorial behaviour of science, ideological prejudice, group interests or privileges, are warp and weft in discussions about population, development and environment: many economists are oblivious to ecological issues (e.g. Simon, 1990); many feminist activists are concerned only with gender inequalities or reject even macro-approaches (e.g. Sen *et al.*, 1994b); religious fundamentalists continue to try to take values and norms that emerged during the pastoral-agrarian phase of their history, particularly as regards sexual and reproductive behaviour, and apply them in present-day industrial and post-industrial culture (e.g. Al-Azhar, 1994; Saint-Siège,

1994); some developed countries are unwilling their patterns of consumption and life styles assessed or even questioned (e.g. the US position at the UNCED, 1992); left-wing ideologues believe the root of all evil is social inequality, and more particularly the free market economy (e.g. the position of the Eastern bloc at the Bucharest Conference, 1974); right-wing ideologues, conversely, see only the good side of free enterprise, which they think will automatically resolve all demographic problems (e.g. the US position at the Mexico Conference in 1984); for many politicians the population problem is even taboo (Hardin, 1993); finally, not a few developing countries seek only one thing: to become developed (read: rich) as fast as possible, even at the expense of their (non)renewable resources, if need be. At the NGO Forum, Demeny (1994) rightly commented:

"Mao Zedong did oppose "extravagant eating and drinking", but the Dengist slogan "getting rich is beautiful" has far greater appeal in the developing world."

The task during an intergovernmental world conference such as the ICPD 1994, is to integrate all of these factors (scientific approaches, ideological positions, group interests) into a universally acceptable and honourable consensus. This is truly squaring the circle!

1.3.2. Premises

This monograph seeks to approach the population, development and environmental factors and issues from the point of view of their mutual relationships. The field of activity of the authors is social biology, the first departing from biological anthropology, the second one from sociology. Social biology is a typical interdisciplinary science in which the interrelationships between biological and social phenomena are studied (Schwidetzky, 1950; Wilson, 1975).

Scientific assessment cannot by itself make an overall evaluation of policy proposals and recommendations. However, a scientific assessment can check to see whether policy proposals or recommendations are based on relevant scientific facts, whether they take account of what science has discovered concerning the causes of the problems and their background, and whether they reflect all relevant data and aspects of the problems. What it cannot do, though, is to give decisive answers to all the questions about the desirable future development of all aspects involved.

In a number of respects, several futures are possible. The interrelated population, development, and ecological problems may be resolved in different ways: a population growth in terms of quantity may be preferred to a quality based welfare policy, or conversely, an attempt may be made to maintain the population size at a stationary level or even to reduce it in favour of development. The aim might be to maximize development at the expense of bio-diversity or, conversely, to get production and consumption under control for the benefit of a more diversified and sound environment, etc.

It has been decided here to make an assessment and an evaluation on the basis of a forward-looking model of sustainable, intergenerational development reflecting a reconciliation of anthropocentrism and eco-ethics (Kruithof, 1985; Vermeersch, 1988), i.e. a model in which human and social development is pursued in balance with the bio-diversity on this planet, and which meshes in with the existing natural ecosystems.

The term "biological diversity" refers to the total variety of genes, species and ecosystems on this planet. It includes all living organisms, from the human species, via animals and plants, to micro-organisms. This wealth of living matter provides humankind with an abundance of goods and resources without which no human life, let alone human civilization would be possible (Ehrlich *et al.*, 1993).

The bio-diversity and the natural ecosystems may be considered as values in their own right, but they are, in all probability of fundamental importance in various respects for the future survival and progress of the human species itself. Finally, bio-diversity and the natural ecosystems also represent sources of beauty and pleasure, and help satisfy the aesthetic needs of human beings to an ever-increasing extent.

1.3.3. South or North-South?

The ICPD 1994 was primarily organised on behalf of the developing countries, many of whose levels of demographic and social development are in an intermediate phase amidst the modern transition (Sadik, 1993). Many developing nations are still characterised by a rapid population increase, a mismatch between their mortality and fertility control, general social underdevelopment with poor educational and health care facilities, low productivity, low incomes, inferior social status of women, considerable inequalities between social classes, and vulnerable ecosystems.

The population, development and environmental situation in many developing countries is tied up to some extent with the situation in the developed countries and their dynamic. Not only is the population explosion and the modernisation of most developing countries the result of importing from the west of science, medicine, market economy, and modern technology, but the developed world owes a sizeable proportion of its welfare to the former colonial plundering and the present exploitation of the natural resources and cheap labour from the developing countries.

The specific demographic problems of the developed countries are not considered in this monograph, but some of their population, development and environmental problems nevertheless will be touched upon when these are related to or are of relevance to the developing world.

A word of explanation is necessary concerning the use of the concepts developing countries and developed countries. This dichotomy arose a few decades ago and was used to indicate a situation which has now completely changed (Harrison, 1992). The original aim was to make a distinction between early modernised or industrialised nations of the western type and regions of the world that were in the main characterised by pre-modern or transitional circumstances.

Many of the less developed countries have meanwhile managed to make great strides along the road to modernisation, and this resulted in a more differentiated composition of that group. In a number of respects —economic growth, per capita income, industrial production— some have even overtaken many of the early industrialised countries, and this is especially true of those currently switching from centrally planned to market economic systems. Apart from the North-South divide and the increasing level of diversity among the countries in the southern hemisphere, there are also major differences among the countries of the northern hemisphere, particularly among the western industrial countries and the countries with economies in transition (the so-called former East bloc). These countries now have specific development problems and their economic situation is often worse than that of the fast evolving and progressing developing countries in the South.

There are also considerable differences between the levels of development, income, and consumption enjoyed by the citizens of developing countries. In many respects, the elites in most developing countries are not dissimilar to those in the developed world, on the contrary, in relative, and often even in absolute terms, they enjoy more privileges than do members of the western

elites. They have adopted a western life style and consumer habits and do as much if not more harm to the environment than the rich westerners. There may be fewer wealthy people in developing countries, but on every other scale they score just as well or better than their counterparts in the West (Harrison, 1992).

As a result of this diversity within and between countries a search has to be made for a new terminology. In UN circles the North/South divide is often referred to. This value-free terminology is, however, geographically incorrect (Meadows *et al.*, 1992). Moreover, the use of the concept "Third World" no longer corresponds to reality, precisely because of the variations within countries lumped together under this name (Algemeen Bestuur Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1993).

In the literature several systems of classification are used which try to take into account the diversity of the so-called developing countries (Ravenhill, 1990; Cruickshank, 1991; Algemeen Bestuur Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1993; UNDP, 1994). In addition to the modal type of developing countries, the following three categories are often distinguished (Algemeen Bestuur Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1993).

First of all, there are the newly industrialised countries (NIC), which are characterised by an accelerated level of industrialisation and economic development and, most often, an abundant supply of cheap labour. By attracting foreign capital they succeed in exporting finished products. However, their economic model is vulnerable: whenever the world market collapses, they inevitably face an economic crisis.

The oil producing countries from the Middle East are a special group. They belong to the richest countries in the world. More than half of the oil reserves of the planet are in their hands. Nonetheless, they still retain their status of developing countries because of the considerable levels of social inequality that continue to exist within their borders.

Finally, there are the least developed countries, where there is widespread poverty. They have a per capita GNP of less than 500 dollars, an industrial activity rate of less than ten per cent. More than 20 per cent of their children are illiterate. These regions find themselves face to face with a disastrous situation and are often dependent upon international support. The least developed countries are mainly located in Sub-Saharan Africa and in Asia.

The number of such countries increased to 45 between 1981 and 1994 (UNDP, 1994).

Consequently, the variations in development levels, between as well as within countries, should be borne in mind when comparing the concepts developed and developing countries.

1.4 | Structure of the monograph

The monograph consists essentially of three parts:

- a) the first part (Chapters 2 and 3) uses the scientific literature as a basis for trying to describe the essential components of the population, development and environment issues. The most important factual data are summarised, the causes and background are analysed, and possible solutions are suggested;
- b) the second part first of all makes a survey of the background to and preparations for the Cairo Conference (Chapters 4 and 5). A description is then given of the Conference activities and results (Chapter 6);
- c) finally, the third part (Chapters 7 and 8) seeks to evaluate the Cairo Conference, mainly by comparing its results with the findings of the scientific literature, and to determine the policy implications for the developing as well as for the developed world.

2. POPULATION: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

2.1 | Introduction

Since the dawn of the modern epoch, the demographic development of the human species peaks in an exceptional way with its present-day maximal absolute growth figures. It is historically an unprecedented event which is unlikely to be repeated in the future.

2.2 | Trends

2.2.1. *Total world population*

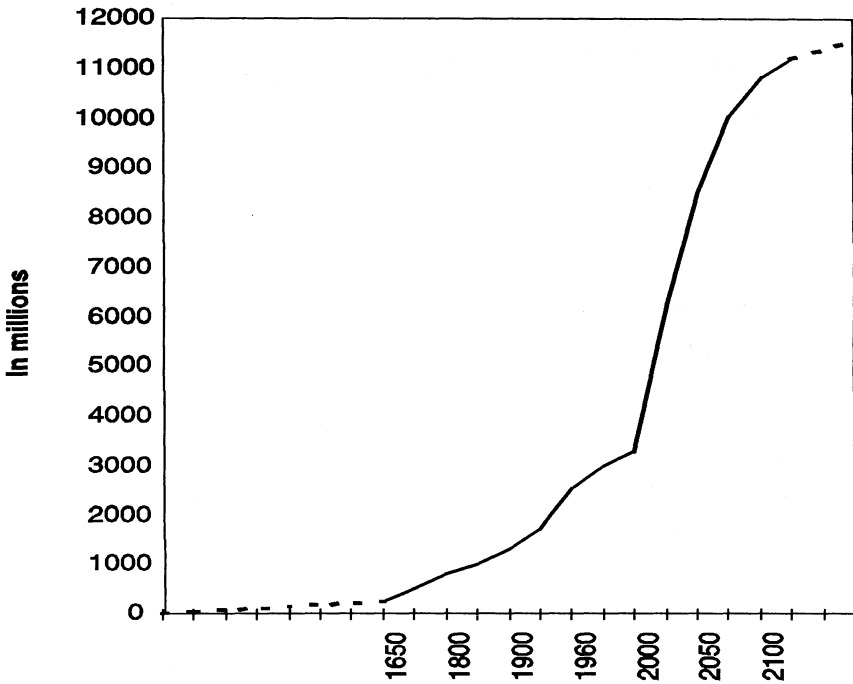
The historical changes of the world population are clearly shown in *Figure 2.1*.

The maximum population size in palaeolithic times is estimated to have been five to ten million people and this estimate is based on what is thought to have been the total land area suitable for hunting and food gathering (Desmond, 1962; Coale, 1974). The average yearly rate of increase in the population was very low (<0.001 per cent).

The speed at which the human population grew, started increasing with the advent of the agricultural revolution, 10,000 years ago. At the start of the christian era, the population stood at 250 million and it had reached more than half a billion by 1650.

With the dawn of the industrial age, some 200 years ago, the pace at which the world population was growing, began to quicken. About 1800 the world

Figure 2.1. *Absolute world population growth in human history (Coale, 1974; United Nations, 1992a)*



population consisted of one billion people. Just over a century later (1928), that number doubled and by the early 1960s there were already three billion people on the earth. In the space of 14 years (1974), that number increased to four billion. It took only 13 years (1987) to reach five billion, and it is now expected to reach six billion in 11 years (1998).

The annual level of increase or decrease in a population as a result of the number of births, deaths, and net migration, is expressed as a percentage of that population. If the population grows by three per cent per year, its size doubles in less than 25 years; with a one per cent rate of growth the population doubles in 70 years.

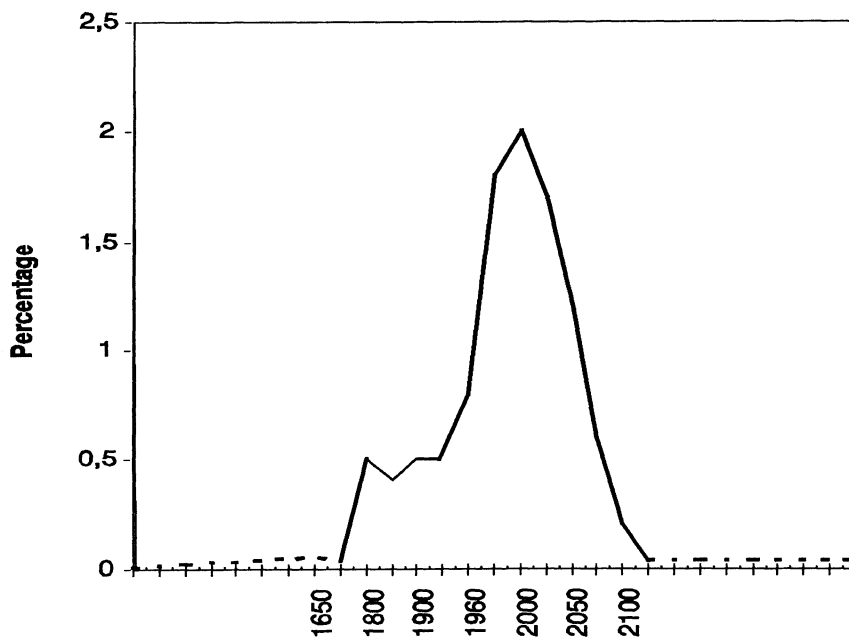
Historically, the yearly population growth in percentage terms has developed in a remarkable way. Prior to the modern era, the rate of increase in the population was well below 0.1 per cent, resulting in a very slow absolute increase in the size of the world population. It took more than one thousand years for the population to double in size. In modern times, the rate of

growth accelerated to a maximum of 2.1 per cent in the late 1960s. With that growth rate, it took just one generation (35 years) for the population to double. Since the 1970s, the annual world rate of increase has been declining, and it now stands at 1.7 per cent. The world population is still in a phase of rapid expansion (*Figure 2.2*).

At present there are 5.7 billion people in the world. Four-fifths of them live in developing countries and one-fifth in the industrialised world. The annual rate of increase in the world population is approximately 90 million people.

This is the largest absolute level of population growth ever recorded. Ninety percent of this growth is accounted for by developing countries. In the coming years, world population growth will actually increase in absolute

Figure 2.2. Annual average growth rate of the world population throughout history (Coale, 1974; United Nations, 1992a)



terms to reach nearly 100 million people per year in the period between 1995 and 2000. After 2000 this absolute growth will have passed its peak and will gradually, but slowly, decrease (*Figure 2.3*).

According to the most recent population projections of the United Nations (United Nations, 1992a), based on average fertility forecasts, the world population will double again. Should fertility rates decline less quickly than assumed in the middle variant, then the world population would total 9.1 billion in 2025 rather than 8.5 billion. If fertility rates were to decrease at a faster pace, then the world population in 2025 would be only 7.9 billion people (*Figure 2.4*).

The most recent long-term population projection by the United Nations (United Nations, 1992b) shows that, assuming fertility rates reach replacement levels around 2100, the world population should finally stabilize

Figure 2.3. Annual absolute and percentage world population growth, 1950-2025, (United Nations, 1992a)

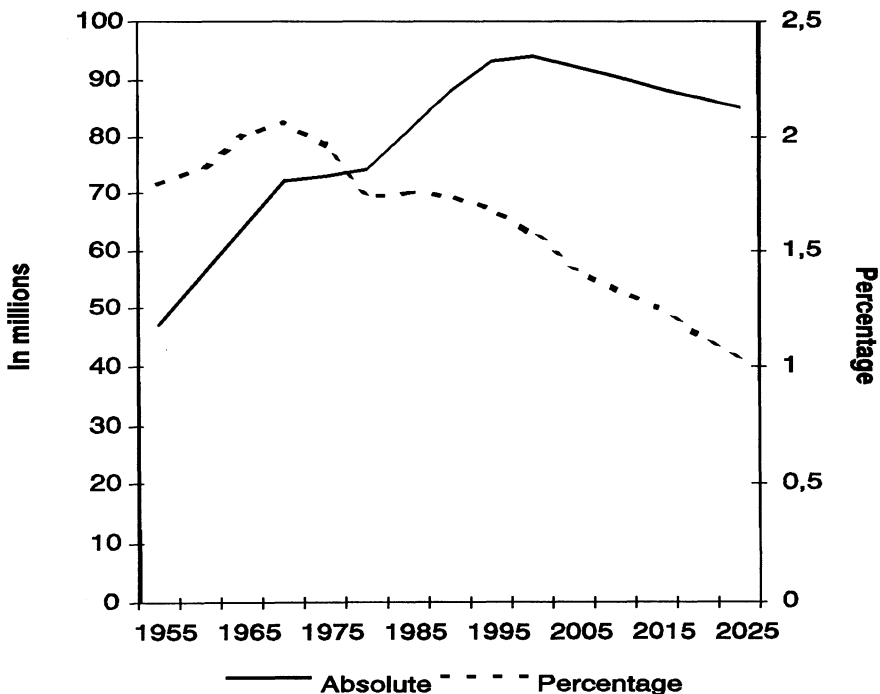
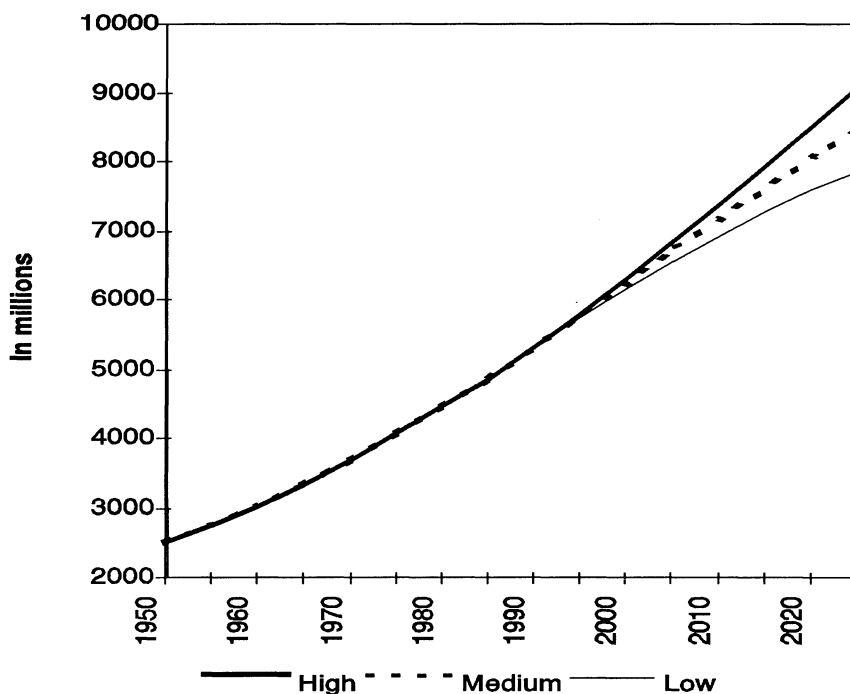


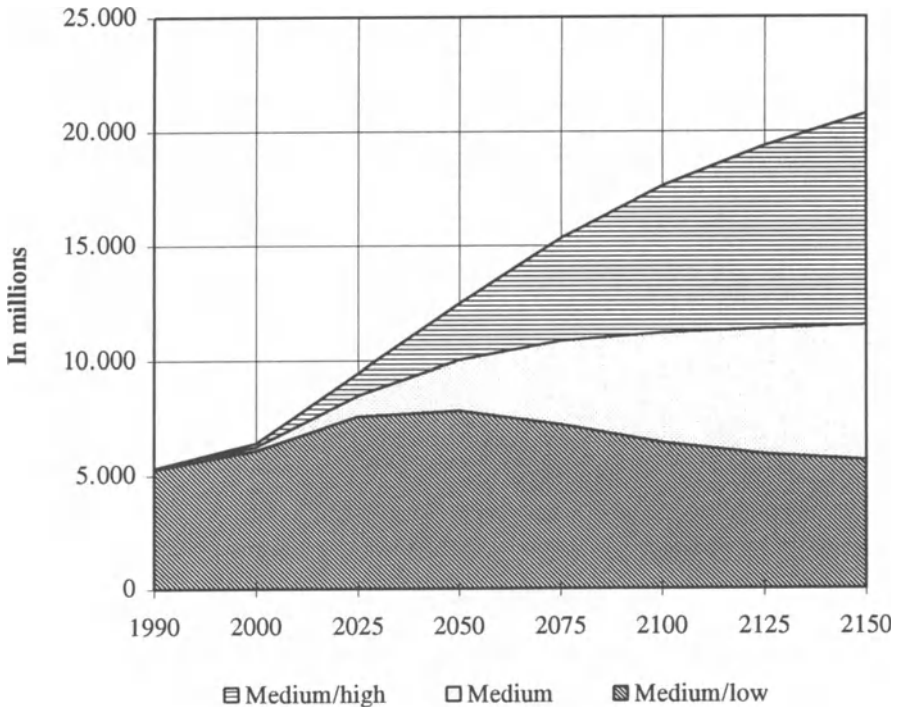
Figure 2.4. World population growth in three variants, 1950-2025
(United Nations, 1992a)



at 11.6 billion people shortly after the year 2200. Between 1990 and 2050 the world population is forecast to increase by another 89 per cent to reach ten billion people. In the following 50 years (2050-2100) it should further increase by 12 per cent to 11.2 billion, and after that by another three per cent between 2100 and 2150, to 11.5 billion people.

However, the long-term development of the world population, after the next doubling in size towards the middle of the 21st century, could go in a number of directions (*Figure 2.5*): fertility levels which are continually five per cent over replacement level (total fertility rate: 2.17) would lead to a population of 20.8 billion in 2150 and continue to grow, while fertility five per cent below replacement level (total fertility rate: 1.96) would lead to a situation where the world population would fall to 5.6 billion people in the year 2150 and further decline. Relatively small deviations in replacement fertility levels could, on a world scale and in a long-term perspective, lead to considerable differences in population numbers and growth.

Figure 2.5. Variants in long-term development of the world population (United Nations, 1992b)



2.2.2. Differences according to development levels

Recent and future population growth—in both relative and absolute figures—varies considerably from one development level to another.

Growth rates in most developing countries are considerably higher than in the industrialised countries. However, this was not the case before the 20th century. It was not before the middle of this century that a gap was clear to see: in the early 70s, the rich countries recorded an annual growth rate of 1.1 per cent, whereas in poor countries the rate was more than twice that (2.4 per cent). As a result of this rate of growth the population is doubling every 29 years.

The current demographic situation in most developing countries contrasts sharply with that experienced by the early industrialised countries in the beginning of the 19th century: whereas population growth and modernisation kept pace in the early industrialising countries, the developing countries are

having to cope with a heavy demographic burden even before their industrialising process has started or been completed.

In the industrial countries the growth rate fell from 0.86 per cent to 0.54 per cent between 1970-1975 and 1990-1995. A further decline is expected in the coming decades.

In the developing countries the growth rate decreased from 2.38 per cent to 2.01 per cent in the period from 1970-1975 to 1990-1995. However, in the most under-developed areas—a group of 47 countries which includes ten per cent of the world population—the growth rate increased from 2.47 per cent to 2.94 per cent (*Figure 2.6*). In 1950 these areas contained eight per cent of the world population. With 541 million people now living there, they now account for ten per cent of the total world population. This population

Figure 2.6. Differences in population growth rate 1950-2025, by continent (United Nations, 1992a)

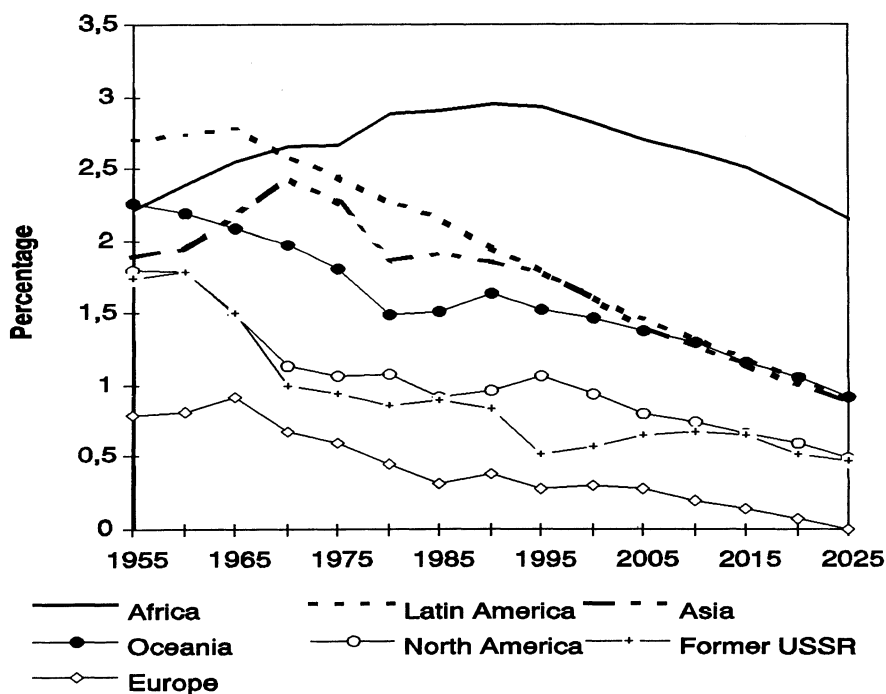


figure is expected to double to 1.2 billion or 14 per cent of the world population by 2025 (United Nations, 1992a).

Two-thirds of the world population lives in approximately half (104) of the 223 countries covered in the above-mentioned UN report. Their annual growth rates are between one and three per cent. However, approximately one-quarter of these countries (53 countries), holds 11 per cent of the world population and reports growth rates in excess of three per cent. Most of these countries are in Africa (24) and Asia (16). Their growth rates are expected to start declining soon. The remaining quarter (66 countries) hold 21 per cent of the world population and have growth rates of less than one per cent per annum. Half of these countries are on the European continent.

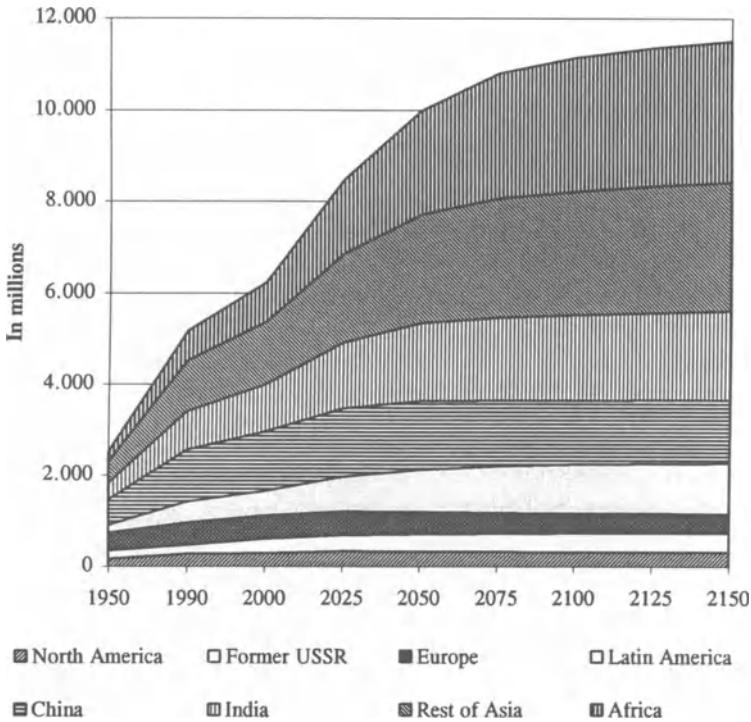
Between 1950 and 1990 86 per cent of world population growth was accounted for by developing countries and 14 per cent by industrialised countries. 94 per cent of population growth is expected to take place in the less developed countries over the next 35 years.

Whereas growth rates have recently decreased in both Latin America and in Asia, to two per cent and 1.9 per cent respectively, they have increased in Africa (three per cent). Despite the further decline in growth rates, the population in most developing countries is set to continue to grow: in 2025 it will have increased by a total of nearly three billion people compared with 200 million in the industrialised countries. The increase in Africa will be one billion, in Asia 1.8 billion, including 400 million in China and 550 million in India, and in Latin America 260 million (*Figure 2.7*).

2.2.3. The components of population growth

Population growth is determined by fertility, mortality and migration, on the one hand, and the age structure, on the other. Whereas the effects of the first group are quite evident, they are not so obvious with the age structure, which can be related to the so-called demographic inertia. After all, demographic developments are generations-linked processes, and their impact may continue to be felt by the following generations. For example, large birth cohorts will lead to high birth rates in future generations, even if fertility declines, because many young women will be reaching child-bearing age. This can lead to the paradoxical situation where a population can continue to increase in size even with declining fertility.

Figure 2.7. Long-term population projection, by continent, 1990-2150 (United Nations, 1992b)

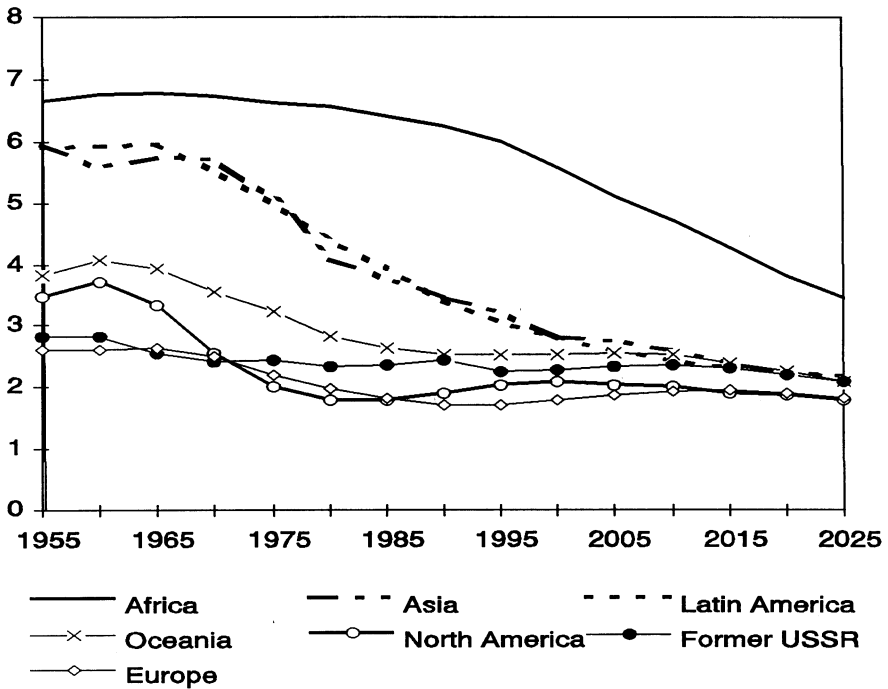


2.2.3.1. Fertility

Fertility rates have been declining worldwide since the 1970s. In the second half of the 1980s the world total fertility rate (TFR) still totalled 3.4 births per woman. In the industrialised countries the TFR dropped slightly under replacement level and is expected to oscillate around that level. In the developing countries it declined quickly in the 1970s but more slowly in the 1980s. It is expected to continue to come down slowly, but not reach replacement level before the end of the next century (Figure 2.8).

The gap between developed and developing countries has been narrowing since 1950. Nevertheless, women in less developed countries still have, on average, two more children than women in more developed regions. Changes in the TFR of the developing countries is determined to a large extent by the events in China and India, since these two countries contain almost half of the developing world's population.

Figure 2.8. Total fertility rate per continent, 1950-2025
(United Nations, 1992a)



In the group comprising the 47 most under-developed countries, the TFR amounts to more than six births per woman. This situation has persisted since the 1950s, apart from one or two slight decreases since the mid seventies. Central and West Africa are particularly affected. Around the end of the eighties women in those regions gave birth to 6.3 children on average, compared to 1.7 children among European women. Central Africa is even reporting a slight fertility increase.

2.2.3.2. Mortality

Between 1950 and 1990 the mortality rate worldwide dropped from 19.7 to 9.2 per 1000 individuals. The biggest decline occurred between 1950 and 1970. Since then the downward trend has continued, but at an ever-slower pace. For the future, the UN medium population projection variant (United Nations, 1992a) expects the fall in the death rate to ease up further to stand at 7.8 per 1000 in 2010-2015.

A consideration of the matter in terms of development shows that the developed regions experienced a decline from 10.1 to 9.2 per 1000 until 1965-1970. After then, mortality remained almost stationary at around 9.5 per 1000. In the early part of the next century the rate is expected to show a slight increase (10.0 between 2010 and 2015).

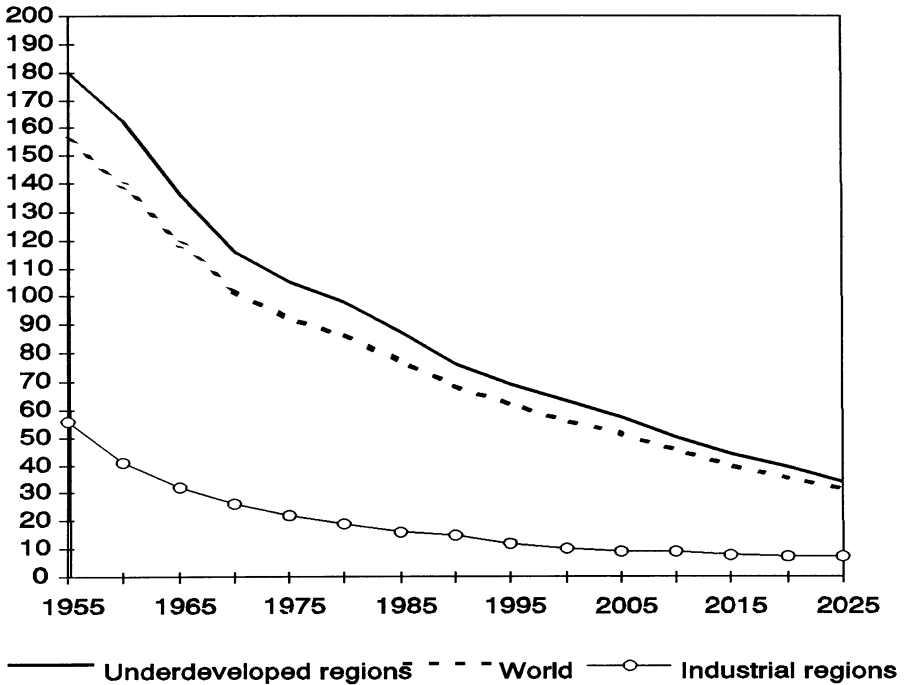
From the middle of the present century until now the developing countries have experienced a sharper decline in the rate of mortality (from 24.4 to 9.1 per 1000). This trend is expected to continue, although not at the same pace (7.3 per 1000 until 2010-2015). The gap between developed and developing countries will be virtually non-existent four decades hence. Whereas between 1950 and 1990 mortality remained almost unchanged in the developed countries, it decreased in the less developed regions by 60 per cent.

By age, the most striking mortality-related developments worldwide are observed among the young and the old. This is the result of the difference in age structures in the developed and the developing countries and of their age-specific mortality patterns. Whereas the developed countries are faced with an ageing population (in combination with a low mortality among the young age groups) the developing countries have a young population. In 1990 only five per cent of the total population in the developing countries belonged to the 65-year-old age group. The 0-5 age group represented 13 per cent of their total population.

Since 1950 there has been a marked decline in infant mortality —the number of deaths before the end of the first year of life— worldwide (*Figure 2.9*). Whereas infant mortality still stood at 155 per 1000 live births in 1950, this rate was more than halved to 62 per 1000 by the beginning of the nineties. The rate is expected to continue to decline to reach 40 per 1000 between 2010 and 2015.

The difference in infant mortality between the developed and the developing countries increased during the second half of the 20th century. Whereas in 1950 the developing countries had an infant mortality of 180 per 1000 live births, i.e. three times the figure of the developed regions, it was five times higher at the end of the eighties: a rate of 76 per 1000 live births was observed in the developing regions, compared to an infant mortality of 15 per 1000 live births in the developed countries.

Figure 2.9. *Infant mortality (< 1 year) per 1000 births, by region (1955-2025) (United Nations 1992a)*



In the developing countries maternal mortality is one of the main causes of death among women in their childbearing years, mainly because of the high frequency of pregnancies at the end of their fecund age. Pregnancies follow one another too quickly, and there is a high incidence of high-parity births. Approximately 30 per cent of maternal mortality can be blamed on non-medical terminations of pregnancy.

The WHO puts the number of women dying of causes linked to pregnancy and birth at 500 thousand per year. 99 per cent of these deaths occur in developing countries. The highest maternal mortality rates are in Africa: more than 600/100 thousand live births (compared to 400 in Asia and approximately 200 in Latin America). In the most developed countries maternal mortality is below 10/100 thousand live births.

The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS is a great source of concern, as it is now threatening the successes some developing countries have achieved in reducing mortality rates. WHO estimates the number of individuals infected

with HIV since the start of the epidemic at 14 million. By the year 2000 this total could increase to between 30 and 40 million people. The epidemic is at its height in Sub-Saharan Africa, where HIV is mainly transmitted by non-protected multiple heterosexual relationships.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is affecting not only the young adult section of the population of both sexes (United Nations, 1993b), but also new-born children receiving the virus via perinatal infection from their mothers. The WHO estimates that child mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa will increase by 50 per cent as a result of prenatal infection. The recent progress made in reducing child mortality will therefore be totally destroyed.

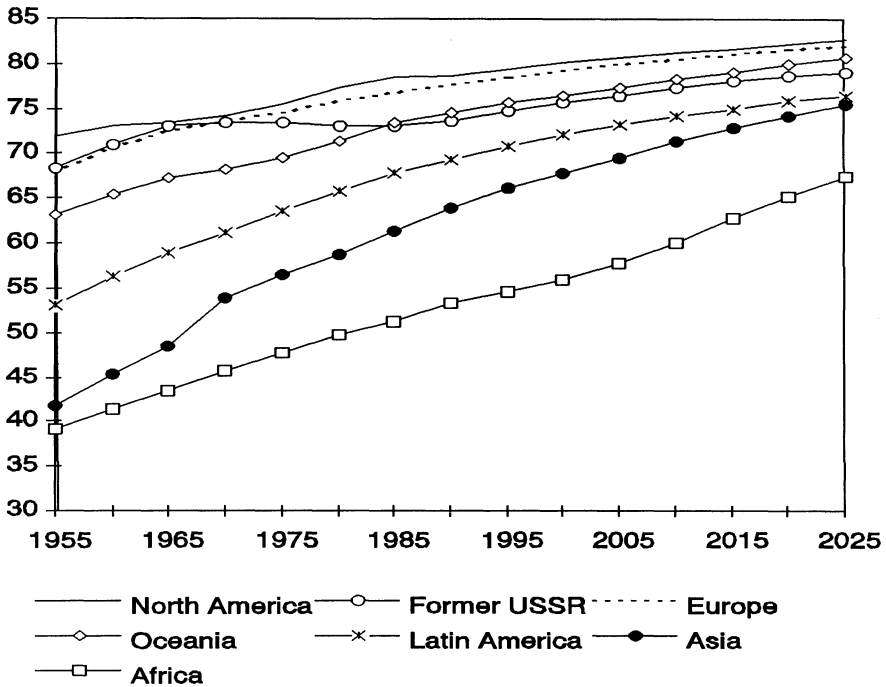
However, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is also striking out mercilessly at East, Central and West Africa and is stopping further progress in reducing mortality rates there. Nevertheless, it would have only a slight impact on the African population in general. In the 15 African countries where more than one per cent of the adult population is estimated to be sero-positive, the time required for the population to double would be delayed by an average of only one year, that is from 22.3 to 23.3. Even for the worst hit countries like Uganda and Zambia, the doubling of the population would be delayed only by c. 2.8 years (United Nations, 1992a).

As a result of the changing mortality pattern in the world, global life expectancy increased considerably between 1950-1990 (from 46 to 56 years) and this trend is expected to continue in the coming decades. At present —1994— global life expectancy at birth is on average 65 years, 63 for men and 67 for women. The increase in life expectancy has slowed down since 1970 (gain of 3.7 years between 1970 and 1980 and of 3.6 years between 1980 and 1990).

Progress in life expectancy is at its weakest in the most developed countries where a high life expectancy already exists. The most under-developed countries are also making progress, but the gap between them and the other developing countries and the developed countries is on the increase (*Figure 2.10*).

In 1950 the difference in life expectancy at birth between the more developed and the less developed countries was 25 years. It has now been reduced to 12 years. However, there is also a large variation within the developing countries themselves, ranging from 49 years in East Africa to 72 years in East Asia.

Figure 2.10. Life expectancy of women at birth (in years), by continent, 1950-2025 (United Nations, 1992a)



Developed and developing countries differ significantly in life expectancy in the different sexes. For the former group the difference is seven years (70/77), for the latter it is only two years (60/62). This situation began to change slightly recently, since gender differentiation in developing countries has started to increase.

2.2.3.3. Migration

The number of people living outside their country of birth is estimated at 125 million. Half of them come from developing countries. Migratory pressures from developing countries are on the increase and expected to increase further due to the continuous, if not growing economic and/or demographic imbalances in these regions.

Migratory patterns are extremely important for the distribution of the population, but have no direct consequences for the size of the world's population. Generally, two forms of migratory movements are distinguished: domestic migration and international migration. The most important effect

of domestic migration is increased urbanisation throughout the world. A little less than half of the increase in urban populations is due to migration, the other half is the result of natural growth.

In 1990, 43 per cent of the world population lived in urban areas; in developed countries the figure was 73 per cent and in developing countries 34 per cent. It is estimated that by 2015, 56 per cent of the world population will live in cities. With a growth of more than three per cent per year, urbanisation in developing countries will increase even quicker than in developed countries.

The main effect of this spreading urbanisation will largely manifest itself by an increase in the number and size of megalopolises. Whereas in 1950 there was only one city with more than ten million inhabitants (New York), already 13 urban agglomerations now have such a population size. Nine of them are in developing countries. By 2000 it is expected that there will be 25 megalopolises, 19 of them in developing countries (*Table 2.1*).

The rural population too continues to grow, a growth which is entirely due to the situation in the developing countries (United Nations, 1993a). In the developed countries zero growth in the size of rural populations has been the norm for four decades. The rate of increase in the developing countries is slowing down and will continue to do so in the future. By 2015 this growth will probably come to an end and the growth rate will become negative throughout the world.

International migration is a problem common to both developed and developing countries (Schoenmaeckers, 1994). Generally speaking, migration is a movement from South to North, so the consequences for these regions are of a quite different nature. The North is first of all faced with problems concerning the economic and cultural integration of immigrants. The problem for the South is primarily one of seeing qualified people leaving, and coping with a "brain drain". Finally, there is an increase in illegal international migration and also in the number of refugees and asylum-seekers.

Much international migration occurs in the South (Van de Kaa, 1993; Niehoff, 1994). Out of 125 million international migrants in the world only 13 to 15 million live in Western Europe. At least half of all migrants live in Sub-Saharan Africa, and high concentrations also exist in the Middle East.

Table 2.1. The population of the 25 largest urban agglomerations in 1985 and projections for 2000 and 2005 (population in millions)

Cities	Population number	Population projection	
	1990	2000	2005
Tokyo	25.0	28.0	28.7
Sao Paulo	18.1	22.6	24.0
Bombay	12.2	18.1	21.3
Shanghai	13.4	17.4	19.7
Lagos	7.7	13.5	17.2
Mexico City	15.1	16.2	17.1
New York	16.1	16.6	16.9
Peking	10.9	14.4	16.3
Jakarta	9.2	13.4	15.4
Dhaka	6.6	11.5	14.5
Manilla	8.9	12.6	14.4
Karachi	7.9	11.9	14.3
Tianjin	9.2	12.5	14.2
Calcutta	10.7	12.7	14.0
Los Angeles	11.5	13.2	13.6
Delhi	8.2	11.7	13.6
Seoul	11.0	12.9	13.4
Buenos Aires	11.4	12.8	13.3
Rio de Janeiro	10.9	12.2	12.8
Cairo	8.6	10.8	12.0
Bangkok	7.1	9.9	11.3
Istanbul	6.5	9.3	10.7
Osaka	10.5	10.6	10.6
Teheran	6.7	8.7	10.2
Moscow	9.0	9.8	10.1

Note: Only six of the 25 cities are in developed regions. In 1950 their total population was 42 million people. By the year 2000 this number will increase by 36 million or 86 per cent. The other 19 cities, situated in developing countries, had in 1950 a total population of 58 million. By the year 2000 this population is expected to grow by 203 million, an increase of 350 per cent (United Nations, 1993a, 137).

Much of the international migration concerns regulated migration from which the receiving countries expect advantages. The remittances sent by migrants to their countries of origin are for these countries often of economic import-

ance as a component of their national income. In 1989 remittances exceeded the receipts from development aid by value (Van de Kaa, 1993).

2.2.3.4. *Age structure*

The age structure of a population largely depends on the phase of the demographic transition that has been reached.

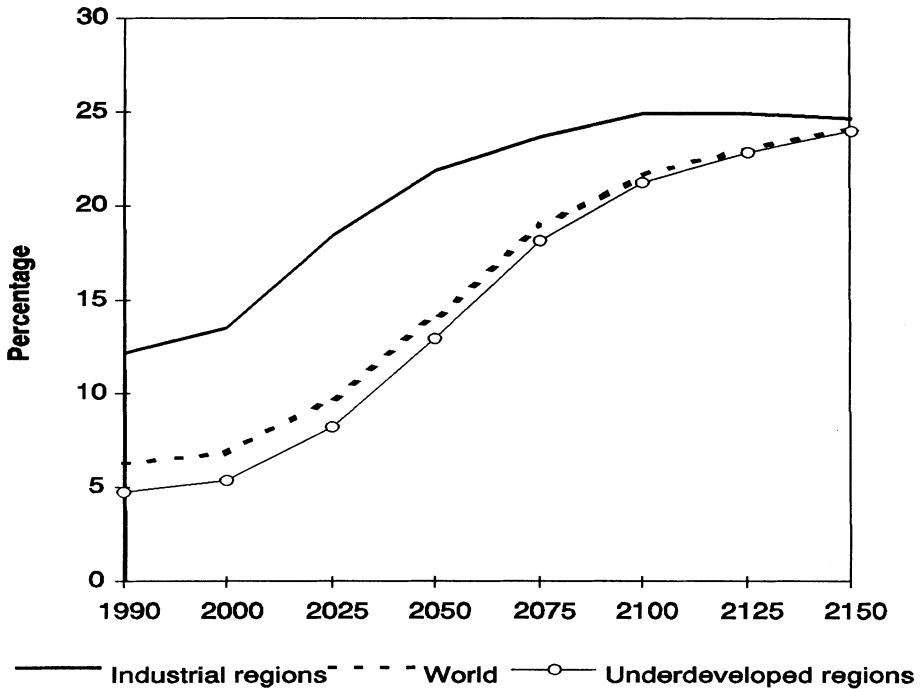
Countries which have completed the transition, are faced with more older people and a less younger population. If fertility remains low or below replacement level, and if life expectancy increases further, especially among older age groups, these trends may be expected to continue. This is the typical situation in the European countries.

Countries which are still at the start of the demographic transition, more specifically regarding fertility, have a very young population. Their under-15s age category represents more than 40 per cent of the population while people aged 65 and more account for only a few percent. This is mainly the case in most Sub-Saharan African countries and other least developed countries.

Countries which in past decades had a significant decline in fertility are in an intermediate situation with a decreasing young population (between 25 and 30 per cent) and an increasing older population (approximately seven per cent).

In the next century there will be a significant increase in the ageing of the population. The combined effect of decreasing fertility and the increasing life expectancy, also at higher age levels, will lead to a considerable absolute and relative growth in older age groups (*Figure 2.11*) and to a decline in the younger age groups (*Figure 2.12*). Population ageing will not only occur in the developed countries. The ageing process will be even more marked in many developing countries, where the decrease in mortality and fertility took place more rapidly than in the early industrialised countries at the beginning of this century. However, to describe the coming century as the century of population ageing, in contrast to the present one which is labelled the century of population growth (Mertens, 1994), is to deny the fact that the world population of the 21st century will, in all probability, double again and will, therefore, show the largest absolute increase in the history of humankind.

Figure 2.11. *Estimated percentage of older people (65+), with a convergent TFR (=2,06) towards the end of the next century, by region (United Nations, 1992b)*

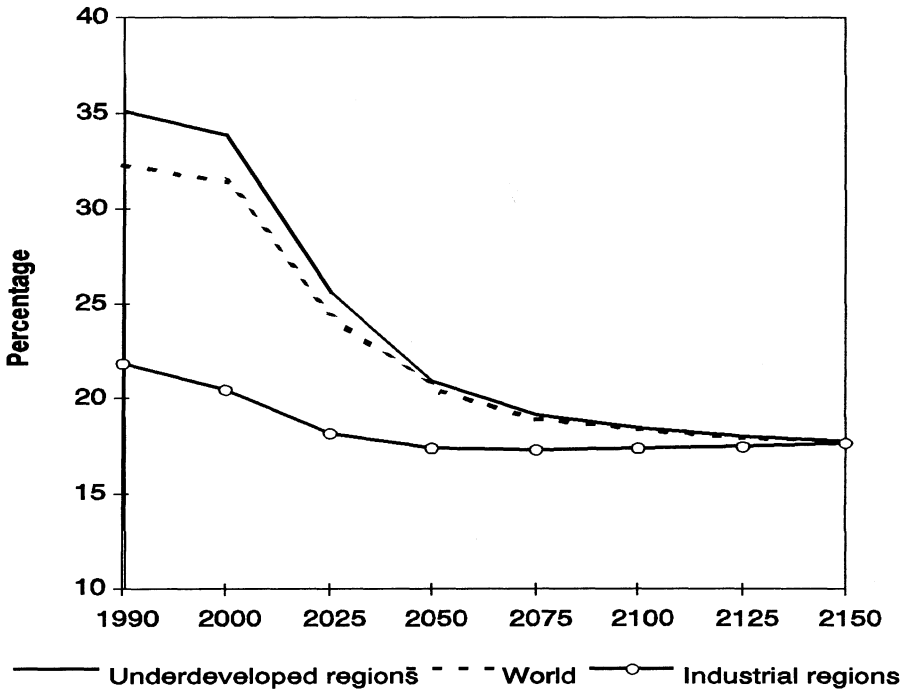


2.3 | The predictive value of population projections

Projections are based on presuppositions about future developments in fertility, mortality, and migration. These are extrapolated from the recent past. Since demographic trends are embedded in a broad socio-economic, cultural, and biological context, the identification of appropriate assumptions is a matter of substantive interdisciplinary knowledge (Lutz, 1991).

The UN projections (the basis for so many discussions on population and development) are of a high standard (Inoue and Wils, 1991). In order to compensate somewhat for the relative predictability, the UN usually publishes multiple projections consisting of three variants. The likeliest one is the "medium variant". The most probable upper and lower limit is respectively produced by the "higher" and the "lower variant".

Figure 2.12. *Estimated percentage of young people (<15), with a convergent TFR (=2,06) towards the end of the next century, by region (United Nations, 1992b)*



The different UN projection variants in fact constitute scenario simulations on the basis of particular assumptions concerning the future development of fertility and mortality. They are important items of information for policy making and deciding what options to choose and what steps to take. They show that, within certain limits, the future is manageable if the political will and the means are there.

In the past, these UN projections displayed a rather mechanical character based on extrapolated trends, demographic transition theory, and the convergence theory, i.e. the view that global population growth will stabilise at equal fertility and mortality levels and a net reproduction of one some time in the next century.

Attempts have been made recently to include more economic, social and cultural macro-variables in the models. Intermediating factors such as

marriage patterns, number of children wanted, and the use of contraceptives, are also considered. UN projections furthermore take account of regional backgrounds in economic, social, and other fields (Inoue and Wils, 1991).

2.4 | Causes of population explosions

The explanation of the occurrence of population explosions is an extremely complex task. Ecological, individual, demographic, social, technological and other cultural factors are involved, often in complicated interactions and feedbacks. When considering the sections below, the interrelationship between determinants and background factors must be borne in mind.

2.4.1. *The role of energy sources*

In the course of their evolution hominids have experienced three major population explosions. The first one—more than two million years ago—was due to the use of tools and weapons, which inaugurated the hunting and gathering era. The second one was associated with the development of the agrarian phase, ten thousand years ago. The third and probably the last one in the history of humankind on this planet is associated with the present industrial revolution.

The agrarian revolution was not only followed by increased population growth. It was also preceded by a rising population pressure. According to some scholars, this pressure largely influenced the emergence of the agrarian culture (Boserup, 1965; 1981). The disappearance of many big mammalian species, due in particular to the use of effective hunting methods, forced the increasing human population to seek other sources of food. This first major ecological disaster and energy crisis gave rise to the development of energy rich staple crops.

The development of the agrarian culture resulted in a new population explosion, but also in a second and much more extensive ecological crisis: the impoverishment and even the destruction of the soil structure in many regions by excessive deforestation and irrigation (Southwick, 1972). Deforestation—obviously in combination with the further increasing population pressure due to the improving agricultural technology—had a lot to do with the switch to fossil fuels. This new energy source was one of the major factors which finally made possible the population explosion during the industrial revolution, and the related third major ecological crisis of the present day (Harrison, 1992).

2.4.2. The role of scientific knowledge

Each one of the shifts in the use of energy sources was accompanied and interacted with increases in scientific knowledge and its application in technological innovations.

Scientific insight in and control over life events and their determinants was the major factor which formed the basis of the revolutionary changes in mortality and fertility that occurred during modernisation.

2.4.3. The role of demographic factors

Demographically the industrial population explosion was the result of a substantial decrease in mortality which was, however, not immediately followed by an equally sharp drop in fertility.

In the early industrialised countries the demographic transition is practically finished. Mortality and fertility have been brought down to a low level and in most of those countries the demographic inertia effect of the changed age structure of the population on fertility has largely worn off. The population in those countries has or will soon be stabilised at a stationary level. Meanwhile, fertility has decreased even below replacement level in many of these countries and the expectations are that, in the absence of a fertility recovery or compensatory immigration, the population will begin to decrease over the course of the next century (Cliquet, 1993).

The way in which the demographic transition takes place in the developing countries constitutes the proximal cause of the present global population explosion.

In those countries the transition was initiated by the fast and massive introduction of mortality control methods devised in the developed world. This fast decline in the rate of mortality was not always immediately followed by a sharp decrease in fertility. In some cases fertility was or is even increasing. At the time, an unequal or asynchronic decrease in mortality and fertility was, obviously, also witnessed in the developed countries. However, in the developing countries the drop in mortality occurred within a relatively much briefer span of time than the decrease in fertility or general social development.

This discrepancy between the decrease in mortality and the drop in fertility is due to the fact that the latter requires a much more fundamental social change in influencing individual values and behaviour patterns. Many

developing countries have not yet reached that stage or not sufficiently enough.

2.4.4. *The role of individual factors*

Biological organisms are programmed to maximize their reproductive fitness in relation to the carrying capacity of their environment (Alexander, 1979; Wilson, 1975; Tiger and Fox, 1971; Trivers, 1971; 1985; Van Den Berghe and Barash, 1977). In the human being this programming not only became strongly dependent upon values and norms, but also the drive to have (a large number of) descendants is co-determined by the material advantages parents themselves may enjoy from their children (Cliquet, 1987).

The transition from high to low fertility which is associated with modernisation requires a complete reorganisation of social reality (Cliquet, 1992; Davis *et al.*, 1987). The fact that adults are no longer dependent on a large number of descendants for their own survival and welfare, and for their care and security in old age, is recognised to be the fundamental cause of the decrease in fertility (Cain, 1982; Boserup, 1986). On the contrary, modern times are witnessing a reversal of the "wealth flow" between generations (Caldwell, 1982; Handwerker, 1986). The individual "survival" function of children for the benefit of adults disappears, which is principally due to the replacement of the traditional family production system by a variety of socialised production systems. In addition, other traditional family functions of care and protection are taken over by bodies outside the family.

Furthermore, the survival function of the traditional family structures is becoming less a "sine qua non" for women. They receive higher training and accordingly as they are integrated into gainful employment outside their own household, they acquire independence as a result of their economic autonomy. In any case, modern culture offers more opportunities for self-development and self-realisation, for social mobility, creativity, etc. Moreover, such a type of culture provides a series of occupational and leisure opportunities which are in strong competition with the pleasures and the chores of having a few children (Keyfitz, 1987). After all, in modern times children require a much higher parental investment than in former times. Much greater demands are made upon education, training, health, occupational competence, etc. Advanced research on reproductive behaviour in industrial countries shows that the only advantage parents now receive from having children takes the form of emotional reward (e.g. Deven, 1982).

Compared with the decrease in mortality all these social changes are filtering through much more slowly in the developing countries as a result of which the effect on the fertility decline is also weaker or slower.

2.4.5. The role of social factors

The individual or family stimuli on high fertility are usually reinforced by the social establishment. In the agrarian cultural phase the cultivation of energy-rich staple foods led not only to higher population densities and to urbanisation, but also to the emergence of growing inequalities between social classes, genders, and age groups, and to sharper conflicts between neighbouring populations with a view to acquiring new territories and resources. These social processes were legitimated and enshrined in transcendental ideologies, not only leading to reproductively expansive strategies, but also to ecological neglect (Harrison, 1992). In the agrarian and even in the early-industrial cultural phases, large families not only constituted an individual, but also a social and ideological tool for increasing power and territorial expansion. The individual tendency to maximise reproductive fitness was socially and ideologically reinforced. The demographic factor also became an element of acquisition or preservation of power as regard intergroup relations (Alexander, 1979).

Whereas modernisation eventually incites individuals, via the above mechanisms, to limit the size of their families, this is much less the case in communities where numerical group relations, particularly for the political and ideological establishment, are a source of political power. Consequently, it is to be expected—and this is borne out by experience—that it is extremely difficult to develop population control strategies, not to mention population reduction programmes acceptable to the political and/or ideological establishment (Ehrlich, 1968; Hardin, 1993).

3. POPULATION, DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

3.1 | Terminology

The concept of population has already been discussed in the previous chapter, so it is proposed to try to clarify the meaning of development and the environment, before considering the complex interaction between the three components.

Within the population, environment and development triad, the concept of development can be considered from both an individual and a social point of view.

The process of individual development requires the full realisation of individual capacities that is attainable in modern, pluralistic democracies as a result of well-balanced and appropriate opportunities as regards nutrition, socialisation, moral and social education, academic and vocational training, health care, employment and recreation possibilities. An equal opportunities strategy needs to be pursued to ensure all individuals in society can have these possibilities for development.

Social development provides a social, economic, political, and cultural framework that is conducive to individual development. Characteristics of social development include a well-established and smoothly operating political organisation and public administrative service, social security, employment, health care, education and social equality.

Despite the strong interdependence between the two forms of development, the extent to which individuals take part in social development varies quite

considerably. This is partly because of the biological differences between individuals within the population, but the political and social organisation of society also exerts a strong influence.

In a great many modern pluralistic democracies most individuals are offered equal opportunities for personal development, whereas in many developing countries there are still sharp divisions between the social classes. In many of these countries an elite class enjoys the advantage of a western training, is well fed and receives a high income, while large sections of the population are malnourished, are poorly educated, have an extremely low income, etc. (Harrison, 1992).

The natural environment covers all organic and non-organic elements: fauna and flora, soil, water, the atmosphere, the climate. Most of these are intertwined in complex, homeostatic and evolving ecosystems.

When considering the relationship between population, development, and the environment, it is extremely difficult to consider certain items in isolation. Nutrition for example, is indeed concerned with plant and animal life, but it also has some bearing on soil, water, climate, and on technology and social organisation. These mutual relations and interdependencies need to be borne in mind when discussing the population, development, and environment triad.

3.1.1. The environment and its carrying capacity

The term "carrying capacity" originated in theoretical population biology and is currently defined as the number of individuals that can be sustained by a particular environment without damaging this environment irreversibly so that the population can be sustained intergenerationally (Zaba and Scoones, 1994; Wilson and Bossert, 1971).

In the case of animal populations, the concept has been adequately documented both theoretically and empirically: within a geographical space a breeding population will develop along the logistic curve. The population growth is exponential until an asymptotic limit is approached and the carrying capacity of the environment is exceeded.

Determining the carrying capacity of the environment for particular human populations, and ultimately for the human species as a whole, is both theoretically and empirically much more difficult. This does not mean, however, that the concept does not apply to human populations, as has been

argued by some economists (e.g. Simon and Kahn, 1984) and politicians (e.g. Brundtland, 1989).

The main problem with quantifying the environment's carrying capacity for human populations concerns the different levels at which human and social development take place. The quality of life enjoyed by people can vary considerably. Moreover, the latter concept, when applied to a human population, includes not only the physical quality of their lives but also the social, psychological and aesthetic aspects. This is why concepts such as "cultural capacity" (Hardin, 1993, pp. 212-214) and "welfare referenced carrying capacity" (Zaba and Scoones, 1994; p. 199) have to be introduced into the debate.

Human beings are extremely adaptable and this creates another difficulty in determining the planetary carrying capacity for our species. Human beings are able to prevent the carrying capacity being exceeded by developing various strategies to ensure adaptation.

Technological innovation is the best known and most effective adapting-strategy in the history of the human species. The upper limit of the environmental carrying capacity has been increased time and time again thanks to technological progress. Not only demographic catastrophes have been avoided by technology, but higher population densities have been made possible.

Another strategy was or is migration: when the natural resources of one area are depleted, people move on and exploit other ecosystems. Large areas of land reclaimed or cultivated by human beings have been converted into deserts or semi-arid regions, through excessive deforestation, irrigation, or grazing (Southwick, 1972). That is one of the better-known negative effects of this strategy.

A third and final strategy is to lower the standard of living of large sections of the population by means of increasing inequality, or of the population as a whole. This strategy is currently applied in some developing countries, where sustainable development has been falling behind as a result of population growth. In this context, it is probably more appropriate to use specific welfare indicators instead of mortality rates to measure and evaluate the environmental carrying capacity.

3.1.2. 'Sustainability'

For a variety of reasons —problems of measurability, impossibility of empirical verification, biological ignorance and ideological over-confidence—the concept of carrying capacity is shunned by many people.

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987), the so-called Brundtland-Commission, recently introduced a new term: "sustainable development" or "sustainability". The Brundtland definition is as follows:

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (...) Sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life. (...) Sustainable development requires the promotion of values that encourage consumption standards that are within the bounds of the ecological possible and to which all can reasonably aspire" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, pp. 43-44).

Basically, this definition of sustainable development is not so very different from the carrying capacity one. It contains the magical word 'development', however, which is probably more ideologically acceptable in some quarters.

In a society that strives for sustainable development, three criteria have to be fulfilled (Lambert, 1994; Meadows *et al.*, 1992; Daly, 1991):

- a) the rate at which the renewable resources are being exploited should not exceed the rate at which the renewable resources are being replenished;
- b) the rate at which non-renewable resources are being exploited should not exceed the rate at which these non-renewable resources are being replaced by renewable resources;
- c) the degree of environmental pollution should not exceed the pollutant-neutralizing capacity of the natural environment.

As with the "sustainable development" concept, the term "sustainable growth" has become very popular of late. Conceptually, however, both concepts can be regarded as essentially different. While 'growth' refers to expansion on a scale of the physical dimensions of the economic system, development refers to qualitative change of a physically non-growing economic system

in a state of dynamic equilibrium maintained by its environment. By this definition, the earth is not growing, but developing. Any physical subsystem of a finite and non-growing planet must itself eventually become non-growing as well. "Sustainable growth" is therefore a contradiction in terms. Growth cannot have the attribute of sustainability, but development can. What is being developed is the qualitative capacity to convert the constant level of physical resources used into improved services for satisfying human wants (Daly, 1991).

However, sustainable development and economic growth are not contradictory. The former integrates the latter in the global context of the physical environment including the available human capital (Lambert, 1994; Meadows *et al.*, 1992).

Because of the long-term dimension in the concept, intergenerational equality is fundamental to sustainable development. No ecological revaluation, e.g. in government policies, will result in sustainability as long as the transfer of sufficient quantities of resources between generations is not realised (Howarth and Norgaard, 1992). Therein lies the conflict between an economical and an ecological approach to sustainability. Economic efficiency based on individual choice in a particular generation is inconsistent with the struggle for the stability of ecosystems (Common and Perrings, 1992).

3.2 | The Population/Development/Environment Interactions

Practically every aspect of individual and social life as well as every environmental component is influenced by the relationships between population, development and environment. In this chapter, we will examine the precise nature of these relationships.

3.2.1. *Underdevelopment and overconsumption*

Despite the considerable level of economic growth in developing countries during the three post-war decades, by the late 1980s it was recognised that most developing countries remained poor, subordinate and powerless. Poverty persisted and the income gap between North and South widened. In many countries, the beneficial effect of a fairly high growth rate on living standards was neutralised to a great extent by fast population growth. Post-war advances in medicine led to a drastic fall in the death rate in many developing countries well before the birth rate declined in response to higher living standards. The outcome was a population explosion in a large number of

countries, which was aggravated by their failure to take effective measures to reduce the birth rate (The South Commission, 1990).

Several indicators show the inequality in development patterns. Economic growth during the 90s exceeded the growth rates of the previous decade particularly in certain areas of Asia and Latin-America. Despite this growth and the resulting positive effects, the number of poor people is still on the increase as a result of continuing population growth. While the rise of poverty is highest in Africa, South-Asia remains the poorest continent on earth, where 62 per cent of the world's poor live. These two continents account for 54 per cent of total world population growth (UNFPA, 1994).

Table 3.1 shows a few indicators of welfare. It is important to consider the sex differences: equating a man's education with 100, the mean for a woman in developing countries amounts to 55, in the Least Developed Countries 42, and in Sub-Saharan Africa 40 (UNDP, 1994).

The different levels and ways of consumption in developed and developing countries is a crucial element in the relationship between population and development. Over a period of only 40 years, the consumer society has spread out all over the western world. This consumption explosion is now reaching the developing countries as well, as the growing middle class steadily approaches the same standard of living (Harrison, 1992).

To preserve its lifestyle, the North needs huge inputs of energy resources and other resources as well, such as raw materials for the production of luxury goods (see World Resources Institute, 1994; Flavin and Lenssen, 1991; Breedveld, 1992; Hambler, 1994; Mazur, 1994). The growth of energy demand in response to industrialisation, urbanisation, and social affluence has led to an extremely uneven global distribution of primary energy consumption. About a quarter of the world's population consumes three quarters of the world's primary energy.

During the Rio Conference, any discussion of the population issue triggered off a huge North-South row about the subject of overpopulation and overconsumption. When the North pointed out that a huge population growth in developing countries places heavy strains on the natural environment, the South countered by stressing that one individual in the developed world consumes 15 times as many resources as one in the developing world. Even if high population growth rates in the developing world were reduced, the fast

Table 3.1. *Indicators of human development*

	All developing countries*	Least developed countries	Sub-Saharan Africa
<i>Population (%) with access to</i>			
Health services (1985-91)	81	54	59
Safe water (1988-91)	70	45	45
Sanitation (1988-91)	56	32	31
<i>Adult literacy rate (%) (1992)</i>	69	46	51
<i>Mean years of schooling (1992)</i>	36	15	15
Index (North = 100**)			

From: United Nations Development Programme (1994)

* This category contains the countries in the other categories as well.

** These figures are expressed in relation to the North average, which is indexed to equal 100.

pace of resource depletion, as a result of high consumption levels in developed countries, would still more than offset any reduction in environmental pressures, as a result of lower population growth in developing nations (Rowlands, 1994). The apparent unwillingness of the North to change its consumption patterns is set to become a major issue in the coming years.

3.2.2. *Overpopulation and malnutrition*

A growing number of experts recognise that according to biological standards almost all countries on this planet are overpopulated (WCED, 1987, Hambler, 1994; Ehrlich *et al.*, 1990; 1992).

Because overpopulation is not a matter of the number of inhabitants per square kilometre, but must be defined in terms of the carrying capacity of a particular region, the concept refers to the act of exceeding the carrying capacity of the habitat within which human beings live and exploit to satisfy their primordial and other needs. In order to be meaningful, statements about overpopulation or underpopulation reflect many environmental factors besides the number of people per unit of land area (Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 1970).

According to the underlying principles of the biological argument, food supply problems, though socially and ethically undesirable, are natural consequences of a constantly growing population.

While the qualitative and quantitative improvement in the nutritional situation (see UNDP, 1994; FAO, 1982, 1990) has to be qualified by considering both the level of consumption and the population growth (Harrison, 1992; Brown, 1994), human demands are reaching the limits of oceanic fisheries to supply fish, of rangelands to support livestock, and, in many countries, of the hydrological cycle to produce fresh water (Brown, 1994; Ehrlich *et al.*, 1993). Other agricultural means of production, such as land, fertilisation, irrigation, have undergone a systematic decline as well. The loss of farmland is due to the growing world population and the diminishing opportunities to irrigate additional farmland (Ehrlich *et al.*, 1993; Pianka, 1978; Campbell, 1983).

Dealing with the problem of food supply is mainly a matter of dealing with the problem of population (Brown, 1994; Ehrlich *et al.*, 1993). The world's farmers can no longer be counted on to feed the projected increase in population. Population growth must therefore be halted as soon as humanely possible. While it is necessary to raise demand for food by reducing poverty, it is also crucial to decrease the need for food by limiting the annual increment of new mouths to feed.

3.2.3. *Population and resources*

It is sometimes stressed that the presently known reserves of iron ore, aluminium, and oil will last for one or two centuries at current depletion rates. Most basic minerals should have a long life expectancy (Harrison, 1992; World Resources Institute, 1994).

However, when thinking in terms of a sustainable future, the prospect of available resources, non-renewable and necessary for man, lasting for another 100 years is of little significance. As it took a few million years for human-kind to evolve quantitatively and qualitatively, in view of the rate at which resources are exploited and the prospect of a doubling of the world population, a hundred years of supplies is hardly sufficient. The question of replacing non-renewable resources by alternative resources is of particular interest in this context.

Shortages of renewable resources as a result of damage to ecosystems can seriously disrupt both short-term development and long-term sustainability.

It should be noted that such resource shortages and the resulting impact on the environment occur first of all in developing countries.

Water shortage constraints are becoming a major development problem (Falkenmark, 1986; 1994). By the end of the century, all five countries in North Africa and six out of seven in East Africa will experience severe water shortages. All but one, Ethiopia, have population growth rates of 2.5-3.8 per cent per annum (United Nations, 1993b)

The soil is a major and complex ecosystem the fertility of which is directly connected to the diversity of life forms it contains. Human activities affect the world's soil resources, depleting their productive capacities and their long-term ability to support the biosphere. Population growth serves to induce the farmers to over-use and exhaust the soil (UNFPA, 1991; United Nations, 1993b; Hillel, 1991; Pimentel *et al.*, 1992; Parkes, 1993).

The process of desertification—the expansion of desert-like landscapes into arid and semi-arid environments under the impact of human influences—is the most severe form of land degradation. One of the main causes of desertification is over-grazing by domestic livestock. Deforestation (particularly the cutting of fuelwood), overcultivation of marginal lands and salinisation caused by poorly managed irrigation are major causes as well (UNFPA, 1991; United Nations, 1992c; 1992d). While the importance of the forest ecosystems for life on earth is beyond any doubt (Durning, 1994; 33), tropical deforestation accounts for 25 per cent of the net warming effect of all greenhouse gas emissions.

During preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, the Expert Group Meeting on Population, Development and Environment considered research on these interrelations. In its conclusions, the Expert Group Meeting confirmed the major impact of the population factor (United Nations, 1993b). The major underlying causes of cropland expansion into tropical forests are rural poverty and population growth. These trends indicated broad patterns of demographic pressure in countries with different rates of population growth (United Nations, 1993b).

3.2.4. *Pollution*

Worldwide there has been a huge increase in the level of water pollution due to population increase (human excreta), unpurified industrial waste, and the excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides.

The significance of water pollution is reflected in the developing-world incidence of infectious diseases (UNFPA, 1991; Weber, 1994). Water-borne pathogens account for 80 per cent of all disease in developing countries, and for 90 per cent of the 13 million child deaths each year. This has a direct and horrendous effect on the attainment of a desired family size, and its indirect effect is to induce couples to have even larger numbers of children so as to compensate for the premature deaths of their children (Harrison, 1992; Meybeck *et al.*, 1990; UNEP, 1990).

Also air pollution has emerged as a problem of great regional and international importance in recent years, particularly since the 1970s, resulting in increasing health problems, damage to the strengthening of the greenhouse effect, the depletion of the ozone layer in the stratosphere, and forest destruction.

The levels of air pollution in many cities represent a major medical problem. Pathologic effects of air pollution have been clearly demonstrated (Southwick, 1972; United Nations, 1992d; OECD, 1991).

Largely as a consequence of human activities —industrial waste production, combustion of fossil fuels, deforestation— the increasing concentrations of polluting gases in the atmosphere is expected to cause a significant increase in the earth's temperature over the next few decades. The increase in temperature thus stimulates the natural greenhouse effect in an unnatural manner (Harrison, 1992; Houghton *et al.*, 1990; United Nations, 1992d). The depletion of the ozone layer —acting as a filter for ultraviolet radiation emitted by the sun— leads to increased incidence of skin cancer and eye damage and to harmful effects on important agricultural crops (United Nations, 1992d). Some of the air pollutant are expected to become an extremely serious problem in developing countries in the near future. Together with the increasing level of industrialisation, acid rain will exacerbate the damage caused by deforestation (United Nations, 1992d; OECD, 1991).

3.2.5. *Population and biodiversity*

Plants, animals and micro-organisms are organised into ecosystems, along with the physical elements of the environment with which they interact. These provide indispensable services and help to support human civilisation. Many of these services are essential to agriculture, including the maintenance of the gaseous composition of the atmosphere, the moderation of the climate, control of the hydrological cycle, recycling of nutrients, control of most

insects likely to attack crops, pollination, and maintenance of a vast "genetic library" containing many millions of organisms (Ehrlich *et al.*, 1993; McMichael, 1993). These biodiversity resources are currently being lost at an accelerating pace that may cause the disappearance by 2025 of one-quarter of all the species now existing on earth (Wilson and Peter, 1988; Wilson, 1992; Wilson, 1989; Erwin, 1988). In the final analysis, the impact of population growth in the decline in the world's biodiversity continues to be the most important factor (United Nations, 1993b).

3.2.6. *Population growth and conflict*

The impact of human activities on natural resources and ecosystems has a number of ecological, economic, political and social consequences, which eventually create obstacles to sustainable development. Within the complex totality of determinants, the combination of population growth and environmental degradation is most probably one of the key factors in the emergence of intergroup conflict.

The relationship between population growth and conflict is very likely to emerge in the context of a conflict for scarce resources (Tiger and Fox, 1971). The need to protect resources against members of the same species is determined, *inter alia*, by the size of the population. Territoriality acts as a buffer for long-term fluctuations in the environment. The quantitative size of groups co-determines the outcome of intergroup conflict (Wilson, 1978; Alexander, 1979).

The association between population growth and conflict has to be considered in the context of the complex interrelationships of scarce resources, social and political regulation, etc. If this context is taken into account, the fact still remains that pressures exerted by a rapid growing population on the potential for natural resources and on the social institutions are in some areas so severe that they are largely to blame for the emergence of conflict. These conflicts may be given tangible expression in the social dislocations and political upheavals within countries and confrontations with neighbouring countries (Myers, 1994; Choucri, 1974; 1984; 1986; Homer-Dixon *et al.*, 1993).

Human actions bring about shortages of renewable resources in three principle ways. First, people may reduce the quantity or degrade the quality of these resources faster than they are renewed. The second source is population growth. The final cause is a change in the distribution of a resource within a society. These shortage-related factors may operate singly or in combination. Population growth by itself can set in motion social stress (Homer-

Dixon *et al.*, 1993). The population growth factor can, and most probably will, in the current circumstances, precede and/or aggravate the other determinants.

3.3 | **Synthesis: the relative impact of population, consumption and technology**

Many discussions about the population/development/environment triad tend to do no more than defend a particular set of opinions about the relative importance of one determinant as opposed to the other. Being living within groups constitutes an extremely complex system, interacting with the natural system within which the group operates. This natural system is even more complex. Furthermore, the interaction between the systems varies in time and space. Any attempt to determine the relative impact of the separate factors, therefore, requires a theoretical model that is the best conceptual reflection of that living world, although a certain degree of simplification cannot be avoided.

Such a model is provided by Harrison (1992) by means of the famous Ehrlich equation. This formula was introduced in 1974 by Paul Ehrlich to determine the impact of population growth on environmental degradation:

$$I = P \times A \times T$$

where:

- I = environmental impact
- P = population
- A = affluence
- T = technology

According to the logic behind the equation, consumption and production processes are proxys for environmental degradation. The influences of ultimate causes —the number of consumers and producers and their effective demand for goods and services— are channelled through the proximate factors. Thus, developing countries with a fast growing population but limited economic production may still have a major impact on the environment. According to the same logic, developed countries can damage the environment quite considerably owing to the exceptionally large multipliers A and T.

Although the use of these sorts of physical-mathematical constructions in general and this formula in particular is often criticised (e.g. Sen, 1994), the Ehrlich-equation remains a useful concept as a general approach (Zaba and Clarke, 1994).

In an attempt to determine the relative contribution of population growth to increases in environmental damage, Harrison (1992), building on the Ehrlich formula, took into account changes over time in each of the $I = PAT$ components, thus arriving at more accurate measurements. Harrison's analysis shows that population growth bears a relatively small share in cases of rapid technological change. In developed countries, the level of environmental damage has even decreased in recent years in some areas and this was entirely due to technological changes. Population and consumption continued to grow, making the pressure on the environment worse than would have otherwise been.

Other cases where population growth has been the principle factor usually involve basic needs for energy, food and land, where the underlying technologies are changing slowly. In developed countries, where population growth is slower, the contribution the population makes to environmental pressures is often smaller, but remains significant. Population growth is by far the biggest cause of deforestation and the resultant loss of species. It outweighs all other factors in the growth of irrigation. Population growth accounts for 69 per cent of the growth in livestock numbers in developing countries.

Up to now we have considered the total level of resource consumption or of waste output. The actual environmental impact is determined a) by the degree of concentration, which often correlates with population density, and b) by the carrying capacity of the environment. This determines the amount of damage actually suffered (Harrison, 1992).

3.4 | Sustainable solutions

The task of integrating developing countries' societies into the post-industrial era has to be achieved in a sustainable manner, without damaging their often ecological vulnerable surroundings. To that end, the quality of life must be enhanced in every possible way: education, health care, cultural development, income distribution, accommodation, social infrastructure and environmental protection. As the process of modernisation influences each aspect of social

and societal life, this implies investing in individual emancipation, social development, and environmental protection.

Fast population growth as a result of an imbalance between mortality and natality —the current situation in many developing countries— leads to a big increase in percentage of young people. These target groups demand specific qualitative and quantitative investments: education, health care, employment, etc.

3.4.1. Possible future developments

There are three possible options for the future:

- a) **The '12 billion Westerners' scenario.** This vision of the future is expressed by many people in developing countries and it involves trying to reach the current Western level of development and welfare as soon as possible. Current technology and available resources are insufficient to achieve this level of development on a global scale, however.
- b) **The 'sustainability' scenario.** This option implies a complete change in values in respect of economic thinking, resource distribution, and political strategies. The economy becomes a means for an intergenerational, ecological sustainable system of satisfying of needs. Ecosystems are assessed at their true value and treated as such. This option is characterised by a redistribution of welfare, decentralisation of economic power and political decision-making processes, development of efficient energy systems based on renewable resources, and regenerative agriculture. Humankind puts its social and intellectual capabilities in the service of current welfare initiatives and the maintenance of existing ecosystems, also for the benefit of future generations.
- c) **The 'crisis' scenario.** Here, the current situation with respect to development, consumption and population growth is maintained. This implies continuing inequalities in the rate of development and demographic growth, a further depletion of resources, and continuing degradation of local and global ecosystems. Maintaining or even extending the uneven development and consumption opportunities, the scarcity of natural resources, the impossibility of providing the coming generations of young people with education, health care and employment, — all of this will inevitably lead to increasing internal and international conflict. Above all, the biggest threat from the demographic trends, differential development and consumption patterns is the

environmental degradation and this is to be considered as the third crisis in the history of mankind (Harrison, 1992).

3.4.2. Action needed on all three fronts

Since a few decades there seems to be a growing consensus among scientists on the need to apply a simultaneous demographic, economic and ecologic policy as the sole effective solution for the problems of the population/development/ environment triangle. The history of the UN World Population Conferences shows, however, that this need has not yet been universally recognised.

As a result of ideological considerations, specific group interests, or simply ignorance, partial solutions continue to be proposed. Thus, the urgent need for birth control is constantly ignored by a wide range of ideological groups (e.g. the Marxists at the Bucharest Conference, the free-marketeers at the Mexico Conference, and the Holy See disciples at all three Conferences — Bucharest, Mexico and Cairo). Developing countries suspect the western advocates of birth control of merely wishing to protect their consumption patterns. And recently, some feminists and other NGO activists relativize, and even reject, any demographic approach to a sustainable and integrated development policy in favour of a more individualised approach to female emancipation, recognition of human rights, reproductive health, etc. The re-emergence of these archaic arguments comes as a surprise though, for these disputes were supposed to have been settled at the Bucharest Conference twenty years ago.

3.4.2.1. Population control

Because of demographic inertia, any action at population level will achieve results only in the medium or long-term. However, the fact that results may not be achieved immediately, does not make the goals less important. Nevertheless, efforts to slow down population growth and stabilise it at the stationary level, should make a significant difference to the impact the population has on development and the environment in a transgenerational perspective. Investments in social infrastructure could increase, so as to ease pressure on the environment. Consequently, the UN low projection is to be preferred over the medium variant as possible objective for population policies (Harrison, 1992; Sadik, 1993). Attaining the UN low population projection variant is not only desirable, but also possible: fertility reductions as proposed in the UN low projection (UNPD, 1991) are reported in at least one country in each region, except Africa. Moreover, The World Fertility Survey (WFS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys Programme (DHS)

have shown that there exists a high level of unwanted fertility in almost all developing countries and that there is a substantial unmet need and demand for family planning (Westoff and Ochoa, 1991). Using Bongaarts' estimate of unmet need in the developing world, Sinding *et al.*, (1994) calculated the demographic impact of meeting this unmet need: there would be an overall decline in the TFR for the entire developing world of .79 points, from 3.90 to 3.11.

Besides meeting unfulfilled needs by providing family planning services, a broad variety of other measures could be applied so as to reduce population growth (Sen *et al.*, 1994; Harrison, 1992). These measures concern a qualitative improvement in infant and adolescent health and education, on the one hand, and the improvement of the social, economic and political role of women, on the other. Only a combined strategy of family planning and education can hope to achieve substantial results. A lower infant mortality reduces the birth rate. Lower infant mortality rates are achieved through an effective birth spacing policy and reducing the number of teenage pregnancies, etc. Progress in all areas at the same time has a much bigger impact, because the effect is multiplicative instead of additive.

Feminist groups in particular consider this sort of holistic approach, or the absence of it, as fundamental (Sen *et al.*, 1994; Germaine *et al.*, 1994). An adequate population policy should be founded on ethical questions. The success of family planning is dependent on bridging the gap between donor and recipient. One of the aims of population policies must be the improvement of the role of women, on the bases of elementary human rights. In this context, the population component is part of the more general development approach, and becomes, consequently, subordinate to it. Finally, any population policy based on the instrumental role of women—women as a means in the pursuit of demographic objectives—has to be rejected out of hand.

These remarks form part of a much broader dispute, namely the apparently unbridgeable gap between global-demographic, anthropological, socio-political approaches and the local-specific experiences of the grass roots workers. The grass roots approach often opposes both points of view and rejects a mathematical and abstract approach of the population, development, and environment interactions. Moreover, it challenges the empirical relevance of aggregated data concerning these relationships (Sen, 1994). It is said that several fundamental aspects of power and inequality are left out in the process of collecting and analysing data and the use of these data for policy-

making. This approach argues for a gradual improvement of living conditions on a micro scale, where science and technology are connected to stringent value systems and principles of equality.

Meeting the unmet need and demand for family planning should, however, not be considered as an alternative approach to population goals. The unmet need approach is, obviously, one of the necessary means to achieve population as well as individual goals, but as spontaneous process it might, in many cases, not suffice to reach a fast population stabilisation. In the least developed countries the desired number of children lies below the observed number indeed (Bongaarts, 1992), yet at the same time it still reaches such high levels that population stabilisation will be a long way off if no special efforts will be made. Just as high fertility has been culturally reinforced, also the attainment of lower fertility, in the interest of the individual and the collectivity, can be culturally reinforced.

3.4.2.2. Development/overconsumption

Any concept that is founded on sustainability is aimed at reducing poverty in all its manifestations (Harrison, 1992). This implies increased consumption among the poorest of the poor. As long as the remedy involves a redistribution of goods and services, a measure that will not be welcomed by the wealthier members of the world population, this can be done with minimum harm to the environment. Generally, poverty is more likely to be (partly) counterbalanced by economic growth than by redistribution. Consequently, total consumption rises, not just consumption by the poor. The result eventually is environmental damage.

Overconsumption is difficult to define, because consumer goods can increase or decrease rapidly. When the means increase, the number of unnecessary consumer goods will increase as well. Substitution of goods is prompted by fashion and innovation. It is not very likely that owners will part with their possessions out of compassion for non-owners. Only a total awakening to the seriousness of what is at stake will lead to the adoption of a completely new value system of social and ecological values and norms whereby people recognise the need to reduce consumption to modest levels. The only alternative to this scheme is continuing environmental damage which will, in the end, make it necessary to use coercion.

3.4.2.3. Environment/technology

Changing behaviour and consumption patterns can reduce the pressure on the environment considerably. Such a change in mentality can achieve fast

results, by means of education and appropriate legal protection. Technological measures are also necessary, however.

Technological innovation can meet development-related energy needs at a much lower cost. The main problem with environmentally sound technologies is getting them adopted on a large scale. These technologies must be socially acceptable and economical appealing to potential users. These criteria are the main obstacle to so-called "green technologies".

3.4.3. Development assistance

In 1970 the United Nations urged the industrialised countries to devote one per cent of their GNP to development aid. Nations eared on the side of precaution and agreed to the target figure of 0.7 per cent. For 25 years the industrialised nations seem to have spent no more than 0.35 per cent of GNP on development aid, on average. This figure corresponds to \$54 billion a year, of which \$52 billion comes from OECD-countries (Algemeen Bestuur voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1993).

Official UN-figures paint an equally depressing picture of international development aid. Industrial countries today, spend 15 per cent of their GNP on social security, and 0.3 per cent on international aid. Social security services in the rich countries serve 100 million poor people (with an average income below \$5000 per annum). The official development aid must be divided among 1300 million people with an average income below \$300 per annum (UNDP, 1994).

Colonial history, resulting in political and diplomatic relationships, often causes countries to concentrate assistance in one particular country instead of aiming at particular target groups. More than one third of development assistance goes to the ten most populated countries, containing two-thirds of the world's poor. Consequently, the richest 40 per cent of the developing countries receives twice as much aid as the poorest 40 per cent. Even more striking are the regional differences. The richer developing countries in the Middle-East receive \$21 per capita, as opposed to \$6 per capita in the poor countries of South-Asia. Egypt receives \$20 for each indigent person, Bangladesh \$19 and India only \$7. While India accounts for 27 per cent of the world's poor, the country merely receives five per cent of total official development aid (UNDP, 1994).

The social sector is given far too little attention in development aid programmes. This is reflected in the small proportion of development assistance

devoted to high priority policies. Only seven per cent of bilateral aid is allocated to basic education, primary health care, water provision in rural areas, food supply and family planning (UNDP, 1994).

The claims of industrialised countries as regards their development assistance records should be viewed with some suspicion. These figures also make the financial prospects in the context of the Cairo Action plan seem rather gloomy. The final document puts the financial resource requires at \$17 billion by the year 2000, \$18.5 billion by 2005, \$20.5 billion by 2010, and \$21.7 billion by 2015. These amounts concern programmes in developing countries and countries in transition, and are targeted on initiatives to do with reproductive health and family planning, maternal health, prevention of sexually transmissible diseases, and the collection and analysis of population data.

The United Nations Development Programme (1994) calculated that from 1995 to 2005, an additional \$30 to \$40 billion will be required in order to provide the basic social services for every human being. The latter implies several measures, including the stabilisation of population at 7.3 billion people by 2015, basic education for everyone, the halving of maternal mortality, ensuring access to family planning, and the provision of primary health care, drinking water and sanitation for every human being.

To achieve this financial objective UNDP proposes the "20/20 initiative". This initiative boils down to a reorganisation of the resources, so that no extra funds are needed. The 20/20 formula proposes that developing countries spend 20 per cent of their GNP on high priority development schemes and that donor countries spend an equal proportion of their development aid on the same problem(s). The proposition is inspired by the fact that countries can reach a considerable level of human development when they spend an average 20 per cent of their resources on high priority welfare care sectors.

3.4.4. Conclusion: coping with the third revolution

It is proposed to end this chapter by taking a closer look at the concept of extended altruism (Harrison, 1992).

Scarce wild food resources brought about the first revolution in the history of humankind, that is, the development of agriculture. Technology and consumption made a further population explosion possible. Wood shortages ushered in the second revolution, the industrial revolution. Because of the shift to fossil fuels, technology had to be adjusted. During both revolutions, population growth accelerated. Not until later on, in response to the costs

and opportunities of industrialisation and urbanisation, were attempts first made to adjust population sizes.

The ultimate stimuli for the third revolution in view, is not resource shortages but the impact of waste and wastefulness. This will require responses in terms of population, technology and everything that affects them. The process of adjusting to this new situation can be shortened by the emergence of a new value system, a shift that has already began. This value system is a holistic approach to the earth, containing several ecosystems. Human beings are part of that complexity. If they damage the earth, they damage themselves.

The new philosophy, as Harrison puts it, is based on the fundamental principles of altruism. Like any other organism, man is programmed at transferring as much of his own genetic material as possible to the next generation. Towards that end, he adopts an altruistic attitude towards anyone that serves that objective, in the first place his nearest relatives (Hamilton, 1964), but others too that can assist in reaching the genetic goal (Trivers, 1971).

The great universal religions and other social ideologies such as liberalism, socialism, and humanism, put this altruism in a social reference frame. Altruism now operates, at least theoretically, at ingroup-transcending levels, ideologically based in UN and other ingroup-transcending charters, and implemented by UN and other governmental and non-governmental organisations for international cooperation.

This altruism must be extended in two directions. First of all, towards future generations. We can not prosper at the expense of our descendants. Second, towards other species. If we do not treat other species fairly, we will end up impoverishing the world our children inherit.

4. THE PREVIOUS HISTORY

4.1 | The World Population Plan of Action (WPPA)

The Cairo Conference is commonly presented as the third decennial United Nations World Population Conference, following the conferences of Bucharest (1974) and Mexico (1984). But for the sake of completeness, reference must also be made to the population conferences that took place before Bucharest: the one in Rome in 1954 and the one in Belgrade in 1964. The Rome and Belgrade conferences, however, were concerned only with the scientific study of demographic issues and did not have any political connotations. The Bucharest conference was the first conference to have an explicit political character and will, therefore, be referred to as the first United Nations World Population Conference. Moreover, it was at the Bucharest conference that the famous World Population Plan of Action (WPPA) was agreed upon.

4.1.1. Background and origin of the WPPA

The most important event organised by the UN in the context of the World Population Year 1974, the Bucharest Conference took the form of a political gathering where delegates from the UN members states could vote on policy recommendations.

During the preparations for the World Population Conference, the Secretariat of the World Population Year, working together with an experts' committee specially created for this purpose, formulated a draft version of the "World Population Plan of Action", which is the result of lengthy, wide ranging meetings at various national and international levels.

Although subjected to extensive amendments, the plan adopted at the Bucharest Conference was basically the same as the draft version.

It contains a coherent set of principles, goals, and recommendations concerning all important population issues and their relevance to economical and cultural development and the emancipation of human beings and societies. The plan is based on two fundamental principles:

- a) all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education, and means to do so;
- b) population goals and policies are integral parts of social, economic and cultural development, whose principal aim is to improve the living conditions and the quality of life of all people:

"The explicit aim of the World Population Plan of Action is to help co-ordinate population trends and the trends of economic and social development. (...) A population policy may have a certain success if it constitutes an integral part of socio-economic development" (United Nations, 1975, p. 3).

The Plan of Action comprises the following principles:

- a) the principal aim of social, economic, and cultural development, of which population goals and policies are integral parts, is to improve the living standards and the quality of life;
- b) true development cannot take place in the absence of national independence and liberation. Development also requires a recognition of individual dignity;
- c) population development and economic development are interdependent: population variables influence development variables and are also influenced by them;
- d) population policies are an integral part of socio-economic development policies, but the former may never replace the latter;
- e) independently of the realisation of economic and social objectives, respect for human life is basic to all human societies;
- f) all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and the spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so; the responsibility of couples and individuals in exercising this right takes into account the

- needs of their living and future children, and their responsibilities towards the community;
- g) the family is the basic unit of society and should be protected by appropriate legislation and policy;
 - h) women have the right to be fully integrated into the development process, particularly by means of an equal access to education and equal participation in social, economic, cultural and political life. In addition, the necessary steps should be taken to reconcile this integration with family responsibilities which should be fully shared by both partners;
 - i) the plan should consider the diversity of conditions within and among different countries; it should recognise the sovereignty of the nations in the context of defining national population policies;
 - j) in the preparation of national population goals and policies, consideration must be given to the availability and characteristics of natural resources and to the quality of the environment and particularly to all aspects of food supply including productivity in rural areas. Attention must be paid to the need to ensure resources are fairly distributed throughout the world with as little waste as possible;
 - k) international strategies will achieve their objectives only if they ensure that the world's underprivileged experience a significant improvement in their living conditions, through structural, social, and economic reforms applied as a matter of urgency;
 - l) the Plan of Action should be sufficiently flexible to take into account the consequences of rapid demographic changes, social changes as well as changes in human behaviour, attitudes and values;
 - m) the objectives of this Plan of Action should be consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with the objectives of the second United Nations Development Decade.

Guided by these principles the primary aim of the WPPA is to enhance the capacities of countries to deal effectively with population problems and to promote an appropriate international response to their needs. In pursuit of this aim, the following general objectives have been established for the Plan of Action:

- a) to advance understanding of population issues at global, regional, national and subnational levels, and recognise the diversity of the problems involved;
- b) to advance national and international understanding of the interrelationship of demographic and socio-economic factors in development;

- c) to promote socio-economic measures and programmes;
- d) to advance national and international understanding of the complex relations among the problems of population, resources, environment and development;
- e) to promote the status of women and the expansion of their roles, their full participation in the formulation and implementation of socio-economic policy, and the creation of awareness among all women of their current status and role in national life;
- f) to recommend guidelines for population policies consistent with national values and goals and with internationally recognised principles;
- g) to promote the development and implementation of population policies where necessary;
- h) to encourage the development and good management of appropriate education, training, statistical research, information and family health services as well as statistical services in support of the above principles and objectives.

The most extensive chapter of the Plan contains recommendations for action. The first part of the chapter includes population objectives and policy measures, whereas the second part deals with the promotion of knowledge and policy-making.

It is often said that the participants at the Bucharest Conference were divided into two camps, a Northern camp and a Southern one (e.g. Pronk, 1993). The rich countries were said to be in favour of a quantitative population policy that calls upon governments to provide family planning services available to those who need them, while many developing countries considered population growth to be a symptom rather than a cause of underdevelopment. In this respect, reducing population growth was seen as an objective of industrialised countries while creating a New Economic Order was given the highest priority by developing countries. Some developing countries were even happy their populations were growing.

Although it cannot be denied that developing and developed countries differ from each other as regards interests and goals, the fundamental discrepancy at the Bucharest Conference was an ideological one. A number of countries—including those from the former Soviet Bloc, a few so-called revolutionary developing countries, some ultra-right South American regimes, a few traditional African countries and the Holy See—adopted an ideological approach to the population question and thus stood in opposition to the group of experts and diplomats, particularly those from the smaller European

countries, who saw the need to adopt a scientific approach. The latter tendency eventually gained the upperhand and a fairly presentable document was drafted and approved by the participants, with the exception of the Holy See. Nevertheless, ideological considerations are in evidence in various parts of the Plan (Cliquet and Veys, 1974).

Despite its shortcomings the first World Population Conference must be considered a milestone in the national and international development of population policies. The Bucharest Conference made a huge contribution to the campaign to spread knowledge and political awareness about population matters and the action taken in this field. The Conference brought together for the first time more than 140 governments, and laid the foundations for an international policy based on cooperation.

4.1.2. First review and appraisal

The World Population Plan of Action recommended that every five years the UN authorities should make a comprehensive and thorough review and appraisal of the level of progress made on achieving the goals and recommendations of the Plan of Action. The findings were to be considered by the Economic and Social Council, to see if there is any need to amend the Plan's goals and recommendations (United Nations, 1975).

The first review and appraisal of the Plan was conducted in 1979 by the Population Division of the then Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. After considering the results of that first review and appraisal, the ECOSOC, in response to a recommendation by the Population Commission, adopted Resolution 1979/32, which contains 16 recommendations, on improving the actions in accordance with the objectives of the WPPA.

These recommendations repeat and emphasize the most important principles and recommendations of the WPPA, and accentuate the need to continue making regular assessments (United Nations, 1989).

4.1.3. The International Conference on Population and the Mexico Declaration of 1984

At the recommendation of the Population Commission, the Economic and Social Council decided (Resolution 1981/87) to convene in 1984 an International Conference on Population (ICP) so as to debate a selected list of top priority issues, giving full recognition to the relationships between population and social and economic development. The aim was to make

contribution to the review and appraisal of the Plan of Action and its further implementation. The findings of the second review and appraisal were discussed at the ICP, held at Mexico City in August 1984, and provided the basis for 88 recommendations adopted by that Conference for the further implementation of the Plan.

The WPPA needed to be adjusted to reflect the major demographic, social, economic and political changes worldwide during the decade following the Bucharest Conference. The principles and objectives set out in the WPPA ten years ago, are still valid and are continuing to be upheld.

The relationship between the various countries underwent a change between the Bucharest and Mexico Conference (Pronk, 1993). Several developing countries had experienced a spectacular fertility decline as a result of family planning. Further, the harmful effects of high fertility on the health of women and children were beginning to be recognised. It was a fact that social facilities could not keep pace with population growth. As more and more governments admitted that the level of population growth in their countries was becoming impossible to support, the conflicts that dominated the Bucharest Conference began to disappear.

Several of the ideological obstructionists were much more cooperative than they were ten years earlier. The ideological opposition in Mexico came from a totally different quarter, namely the United States. The Reagan Administration thought it could solve population problems by means of free enterprise (Cliquet and Vandeveld, 1985).

The activities of the ICP were conducted by two groups meeting simultaneously: the Plenary and the Main Committee. Discussion and evaluation of the WPPA took place in the Plenary whereas the Main Committee debated draft recommendations, and worked out a final proposal to be submitted to the Plenary.

4.1.3.1. The Mexico recommendations

The document adopted at the Mexico Conference is much more objective and all inclusive as regards the bare facts than this was the case at Bucharest. The Mexico recommendations put much more emphasis than the Bucharest document did on the integration of population policies in general development policies, and highlights the need to protect and restore ecological balances.

Despite the concern about the environment, there was still resistance to granting it priority status. Many developing countries insisted on a rational exploitation of resources, while developed countries were more concerned about environmental protection. The population-environment relationship was considered a less important issue than socio-economic development.

The Mexico Conference recommendations concerning the role and status of women reaffirm and elaborate upon the principles and recommendations of the WPPA. These recommendations are important not only for the emancipation of women, but also for population and health politics. The Mexico Conference recommendations concerning women are considered a major break-through.

The recommendations further stress the need to integrate development and population policies, and aim at getting all individuals and NGOs involved in the decision-making processes.

A few South American countries had strong objections about the introductory paragraphs in the section on population growth. These countries considered the presentation and formulation of the facts with respect to population growth as too alarming and too general. In the end, the facts were retained in the document, after being made less black and white. Since the recommendation in question was expressed in general and rather vague terms, it failed to include any quantitative objectives, although other international documents included specific target figures and time tables. This clearly has to be regretted as a missed opportunity.

The recommendations dealing with mortality and morbidity form a coherent and complex unit. As was the case at the Bucharest Conference, quantitative objectives were put forward. The proposed measures were considered of vital importance for family planning and fertility as well. As far as abortion is concerned the adopted recommendation turned out to be a diluted version of the original. Other recommendations are in keeping with the scientific knowledge about the various topics and reflect the need to prevent teenage pregnancies, promote breast-feeding and health education, etc.

The relevant and specific recommendations concerning family planning, represent a clear improvement on the Bucharest results. Governments are urged to make information on family planning available to everyone via all possible channels, including health care, and a plea was made to enhance the quality and efficiency of family planning methods.

Some recommendations contain important guidelines on fertility. In particular, governments are urged to work with target figures, and emphasis is put on the non-coercive and non-discriminatory character of family policies. Such policies have to be consistent with internationally acknowledged human rights and should be adjusted to reflect changing individual and cultural values.

As for internal migration, the recommendations stress the problems that arise in developing countries as a result of urban growth. Considerable attention is paid to international migration and the rights of migrant workers.

The recommendations on population structure mainly deal with the different dependent age groups in the population (children, adolescents, and the elderly). Attention is also paid to the changes in the family and household structures.

Some recommendations include a series of guidelines for promoting data collection, scientific research and the distribution of knowledge on population matters.

With respect to international cooperation, the recommendations call upon governments to make major efforts towards the implementation of the WPPA and even insist on the need for countries to increase their contribution to population programmes and the activities involved.

4.1.3.2. The Mexico Declaration

Mexico, as host country, cherished the hope that the Conference would give rise to a "Mexico City Declaration on Population and Development". The draft version of that Declaration turned out to be a vague, non-committal, poorly-documented and badly structured paper. A working group was created and instructed to re-write the draft version and formulate a plausible text.

Thanks to the efforts of this editing committee, a completely new and appropriate text was prepared. It provided a coherent and clear overview of the whole range of international population problems and their relationship to development and the environment.

The Mexico Declaration clearly emphasizes the urgency of the demographic problems and provides a faithful account of the most crucial demographic developments in terms of growth, life expectancy, fertility and fertility regulation, population structure, urbanisation and international migration.

Moreover, the relationship between population and environment is highlighted, as well as the connection between population and development and the resulting contrasts between developing and developed countries. The Declaration pays heed to the status of women and measures to reduce fertility. Finally, the Declaration calls on the promotion of international cooperation in the spirit of universal solidarity and enlightened self-interest. The fact that the Declaration was adopted without further discussion in the Plenary came as a surprise to many people.

The fact that this guideline document is of such a high quality is due to the composition of the editing committee. The committee consisted of a small number of broad-minded experts. The committee reduced the recommendations to the bare essentials and as a result of the informal nature of their deliberations and the avoidance of time consuming debates in the Plenary, the document was adopted by consensus during the final hour of the conference.

4.1.4. Third review and appraisal

The third review and appraisal of the Plan of Action was conducted in 1989 the results of which were discussed by the Population Commission at its twenty-fifth session on February 21 - March 2, 1989. Acting on a recommendation of the Population Commission, the Economic and Social Council adopted Resolution 1989/92, to which was annexed the conclusions and recommendations of the third review and appraisal.

The third review calls for renewed confirmation of support for the principles, objectives and provisions of the WPPA and the recommendations for its implementation.

The difficult economic situation faced by developing countries, in particular the external debt problem need to be treated as a priority concern.

The status of women has to be improved, and support for programmes on this subject has to be increased. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of young women and the importance of the active involvement of men in all areas of family responsibility, including family planning and child care.

The integration of population into development plans and programmes needs to be more clearly defined, as do the approaches to be used.

The AIDS pandemic must be constantly assessed, as well as the demographic, economic and social consequences. Special attention should be given to the spread of AIDS among the working-age population and among children, protecting human rights of persons infected with AIDS, the consequences for the families of people infected with AIDS and the possible adverse effects on resources allocated to general health and development programmes. Governments are urged to encourage the use of barrier contraceptive methods and behaviour that deters the spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

In addition to the attention that must be paid to recent biotechnologies affecting human reproduction, this review and appraisal calls on governments to create the institutional framework required to carry out the applied research needed to support the population programme policies. They are also asked to ensure the availability of specialists trained in the relevant fields.

The international community has to give high priority to lending support to the population programmes of the least developed countries with their large populations and high rates of population growth, in particular those in Sub-Saharan Africa.

4.2 | The role and function of UNFPA

"United Nations Population Fund" is the official name of the organisation commonly known as "UNFPA". The acronym stood originally for "United Nations Fund for Population Activities". In 1987 UNFPA's name was changed but the original acronym was retained.

UNFPA is an arm of the United Nations General Assembly with the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as its governing body. The Pakistan physician Dr. Nafis Sadik was appointed Executive Director in 1987.

The Population Fund became operational in 1969. Its mandate was established by the UN Economic and Social Council in 1973 and refers to the need:

- to build the knowledge and the capacity to respond to needs in population and family planning;
- to promote awareness in population problems in both developed and developing countries and possible strategies to deal with these problems;

- to assist developing countries, at their request, in dealing with their population problems, in the forms and the means best suited to the individual country's needs;
- to play a leading role in the United Nations system in promoting population programmes, and to coordinate projects supported by the Fund.

UNFPA is supported entirely by voluntary contributions, not by the United Nations regular budget. There were 101 donors in 1993, most of which were developed nations. The Fund's major donors at present are Japan, The Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Switzerland, Finland and Italy.

About half of UNFPA assistance is used for maternal and child health care and family planning. Another 18 per cent is earmarked for related population information, education and communication. The Fund also provides support for population data collection and analysis, research on demographic and socio-economic relationships and population policy information and evaluation. Specific programmes have been developed to consider youth, the elderly, AIDS and population and the environment.

UNFPA policy is based on the principle that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and the spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so. Human rights, including the survival of national, regional and minority groups and the freedom of couples and individuals to choose the number and the spacing of their children are protected by specific international instruments. UNFPA provides assistance only at the request of governments and supports only voluntary population policies.

The United Nations Population Fund is the largest internationally funded source of population assistance, directly managing one-quarter of international assistance for developing countries' population programmes. UNFPA plays a key role as a multilateral channel through which bilateral population assistance can be directed from donors to recipient countries to support specific programmes or projects.

Priority country status is given to countries that have a per capita gross national product of \$750 or less and meet any two of the following criteria:

- a) annual population increment of 100 000 or more;
- b) gross reproduction rate of two or more;

- c) infant mortality rate of 120 per thousand live births or more;
- d) female literacy rate of 40 per cent or less; and
- e) agricultural population density of two or more people per hectare of arable land.

UNFPA supports programmes promoting women's reproductive health, education and income-generating activities, and emphasizes gender awareness in all its programme activities. UNFPA believes that providing education and employment opportunities for girls and women improves their position in the home and society, increases labour productivity and leads to better family well-being, increased use of family planning and lower fertility and infant mortality.

Building on 20 years' experience, UNFPA introduced the Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) initiative, to assist countries in preparing and updating population policies and programmes. The PRSD serves as a means of analysing a country's present and future population situation. It helps to determine the goals and targets of the country's population programme, the role of national institutions in achieving those targets, the assistance requirements from UNFPA and other donors and the role to be played by NGOs as well as local associations.

All UNFPA-funded projects are monitored through annual progress reports, tripartite project reviews involving UNFPA, governments, and implementation agencies, and mid-term reviews. In addition, UNFPA uses outside experts to conduct independent in-depth evaluations. That serve two purposes: they ensure accountability to those who provide UNFPA's resources, and they help improve projects and programmes. Evaluation findings are regularly published by UNFPA and forwarded to governments, project officials and other interested parties.

4.3 | International environmental awareness

The environment has now become a key international concern. A report by the "World Commission on Environment and Development" (1987) did a great deal to promote awareness of just how serious the environmental problem is. Chaired by Norway's Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, the UN created this Commission to study world wide environmental and developmental problems and propose possible solutions. After completing

its research, the Commission published the above-mentioned report in which it put forward the concept of sustainable development.

In November 1989, two years after the publication of the Brundtland-report, the UNFPA-sponsored "International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century" was held in Amsterdam, to mark UNFPA's twentieth anniversary. Delegates were sent by 79 countries, as well as the United Nations and its relevant departments, and representatives of NGOs, academics, observers, etc., to discuss current population policy issues.

The Forum proposed two major objectives:

- a) determining the specific needs of population policy and implementing population programmes according to sustainable development;
- b) developing specific regional programme strategies, implemented by national governments supported by the United Nations, NGOs, etc.

In the resulting document, "A Better Life for Future Generations: The Amsterdam Declaration", population, resources, and the environment are inextricably bound up with sustainable development. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on actions to do with fertility, the environmental consequences of rapid population growth and the need for more political and financial assistance for population policies.

In the same year, the UN General Assembly, at its 85th plenary session, adopted Resolution 44/228 on convening a United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June, 1992 ("The Earth Summit"). This Conference mainly focused on the impact of uncontrolled economic growth on a deteriorating environment.

The main outcome of the Conference was Agenda 21, an action plan for the 1990s and well into the 21st century, outlining strategies and integrated programme measures to halt and reverse the effects of environmental deterioration and to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in all countries. This Agenda comprises some forty chapters and totals over 600 pages (UNCED, 1992).

Agenda 21 is based on the premise that sustainable development is not just an option but an imperative, in both environmental and economic terms, and that while the transition towards sustainable development will be difficult, it is entirely feasible (UNCED, 1992).

5. THE PREPARATORY PROCESS

5.1 | Introduction

United Nations Conferences are usually the outcome of thorough and time-consuming preparations. This was also the case with the Cairo Conference for which numerous preparatory meetings took place in several working groups and international gatherings. The ICPD-Secretariat was responsible for coordinating the preparation.

This Secretariat comprised staff members of diverse UN organisations in general and UNFPA in particular and the Population Division of the UN Secretariat's Department of Economic and Social Development.

The numerous responsibilities of the ICPD Secretariat also included the organisational side of the Conference, promoting regional and national preparatory initiatives, stimulating worldwide awareness of the general themes to be discussed in Cairo, cooperation with national governments, organising the evaluation of the WPPA, and preparing provisional recommendations for the Conference.

As host of the Conference, Egypt was closely involved in all the preparations.

The Executive Director of the UN Population Fund was appointed Secretary-General of the Conference and the Director of UN's Population Division, was appointed Deputy Secretary-General.

The Cairo Programme of Action was mainly prepared in three kinds of meetings. First there were the three gatherings of the Preparatory Committee

('Prepcom'), consisting of the UN Population Commission and every UN member state that is not a member of the Population Commission.

Apart from the Prepcoms, the preparations for the World Population Conference had a purely scientific dimension as well. Providing scientific founded recommendations was the task of the so-called experts' groups.

As a follow-up to the six expert groups' meetings, a number of governments and organisations have jointly chaired round-table meetings on topics relevant to the Conference. In addition, a meeting of eminent persons on population and development was held in Tokyo from 26 to 27 January 1994 in preparation for the Conference. The meeting was jointly organised by the Government of Japan and the United Nations University.

Finally, General Assembly resolution 47/176 stressed the importance of regional perspectives on population and development issues and welcomed the convening of population conferences by the United Nations regional commissions and UNFPA. The UN commissions (Asia, Africa, Arabia, Latin America and Europe) each organised a regional conference to discuss the issues specific to those regions.

Several subregional conferences have been held as a sequel to the regional conferences. In addition to these regional and subregional activities, the Secretary-General invited all countries to establish national committees, in order to prepare national reports on population issues. A synthesis of the national reports was submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its third session as document A/CONF.171/PC/4 and was forwarded to the Conference.

Apart from these preparatory activities, several informal consultations took place.

5.2 | The Preparatory Committee

The preparations concerning the conceptual structure and the content of the conference document were considered during the Preparatory Committee sessions in New York.

The first Preparatory Committee meeting was held from March 4-8, 1991, when the Conference objectives and themes were determined. Two years

later, from May 10-21, 1993, Prepcom held its second session. A preliminary conceptual structure of the Cairo Programme of Action was discussed, based on the findings of the meetings held by the expert groups.

As a result of these discussions and the results of the regional conferences and the expert group meetings, the ICPD-Secretariat draw up an initial draft version of the Cairo-document (A/CONF.171/PC/1). This draft Programme of Action was sent for consideration by the members of the third and final session of the Preparatory Committee, on April 4-22, 1994. The focus there was on debating and amending the draft version of the document.

5.3 | The UN regional conferences

Five regional conferences were held in preparation for the Conference.

5.3.1. Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference

Jointly organised by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNFPA, this conference was held in Denpasar (Indonesia) from August 19-27, 1992.

Several preparatory seminars preceded this regional conference. At the conference, the meeting of senior officials was followed by the two-day ministerial meeting, where the "Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development" was adopted. This document sets out several objectives and a series of recommendations concerning population and development in the 21st century.

In addition, target figures for the region are proposed. By the year 2010 fertility should be reduced to 2.2 children per woman, infant mortality to 40 per 1000 live births and in countries with a high maternal death rate this rate should be reduced by half. As for the financial resources, the Conference agrees that, by the year 2000, \$9 billion will be needed to start world wide population programmes. In addition, the conference proposes to spend four per cent of ODA on population programmes.

5.3.2. Third African Population Conference

This regional conference was held from December 7-12, 1992 in Dakar, Senegal. It was jointly organised by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Organisation for African Unity, UNFPA, the African Development Bank and the Union for African Population studies.

The closing document, the "Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development" puts forward a series of target figures for Africa as a whole. These objectives include a reduction in regional population growth of 2.5 per cent in 2000 and two per cent in the year 2010 and an increase in the distribution of contraceptives of 20 per cent in the year 2000 and 40 per cent in the year 2010. Life expectancy at birth should reach 55 years by the year 2000, infant mortality rates should be reduced to 50 per 1000 over the same period and the maternal death rate should be reduced by 50 per cent during the last ten years of this century.

As for the financial requirements, the Conference endorses the "Bali Declaration".

The meeting also discussed the status of women and abortion. The social, political and economic independence of women was seen as a major objective in the coming years. In spite of traditional, cultural or religious obstacles, all forms of female discrimination have to be eliminated.

Abortion was considered a major cause of maternal death rates. In particular areas in Africa, 30-50 per cent of maternal mortality is the result of abortion. Family planning programmes should therefore also be aimed at reducing the problem of unsafe abortion.

5.3.3. European Population Conference

The European Population Conference was held from March 23-26, 1993 in Geneva and was organised by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in cooperation with the Council of Europe and UNFPA.

The main themes of the conference included: international migration, fertility and the family, health and mortality, consequences of population growth and age structure and international cooperation where population matters are concerned. The conference adopted several recommendations.

These recommendations call upon societies to improve the gender equality and to help parents reconcile family responsibilities with careers. As regards reproductive health a call is made for attention to be paid to the countries in transition and target groups that do not have access to qualitative family planning methods.

In view of the specific age structure of the region, with its fast-paced ageing of the population, some recommendations point out that immigration is but

a temporary and partial solution as far as imbalances in the age structure of a population are concerned. Society has to adapt to this situation: the elderly must be given the opportunity to fulfil an active and independent role in society, intra- and intergenerational solidarity has to be promoted and home care policies must be encouraged.

International migration is another typical problem for the region. Given the fact that solutions here are effective only on a long term base, the ultimate causes of international migration have to be dealt with. Countries of destination can protect their frontiers within the limits of international agreements. The problem of refugees and integrating migrants is dwelled upon at some length. The conference calls upon society to combat racism and xenophobia by promoting education, information and tolerance. Integration remains impossible without the related opportunities.

Cooperation between the European region and countries in transition, on the one hand, and developing countries, on the other, should be connected to specific objectives such as reproductive health, empowerment of women, education, information and fundamental freedom of choice about when and how many children to have.

Finally, the countries of the European region are called upon to increase their financial assistance as well as human resource investments on a regular basis. Guidelines are proposed for collecting and analysing population data.

5.3.4. The Arab Population Conference

The Arab population Conference was held in Amman, from April 4-8, 1993 and jointly organised by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the League of Arabian States and UNFPA.

The three-day meeting of experts and senior officials was followed by a two-day ministerial meeting. Among the themes discussed were population growth and demographic structure, population distribution and internal migration, population and women, family planning, health and the family and population policy.

The results of this conference are remarkably different from these of the other regional conferences.

As far as the role and status of women is concerned, the right to full development is generally acknowledged. However, the reproductive role and

domestic function of women is constantly being stressed along with the fundamental social function of the family as a social institution. The importance of religious guidelines for population matters in general and birth spacing in particular, is also emphasised. Abortion is not considered.

5.3.5. The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development

This regional conference was organised by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) with UNFPA as co-sponsor. It was held April 29 - May 4, 1993 in Mexico City.

Apart from well-known themes, the conference also considered socio-economic development and the implications for population and development.

Abortion was defined as an important health problem and rejected as a means of regulating fertility. The conference advocated counselling and the prevention of unwanted pregnancies.

The meeting also acknowledged the increasing number of alternative family forms and argued for equality between the sexes, thereby using the mass media and education to change social attitudes.

5.3.6. Similarities and differences between the various regional conferences

A few general principles can be discerned in the findings and conclusions of the regional conferences, as well as during their preparations.

The basic principle is anthropocentrism: human capital as the most important and valuable resource. Also highlighted is the need to integrate population policies in broader based development programmes, premised on the conceptual relationships between population variables, resources and sustainable socio-economic development. Finally, human rights are considered a vital part of any population policy. This refers in particular to one of the basic principles of the World Population Plan of Action, namely the fundamental right of individuals and couples to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children.

The regional conferences inevitably reached certain conclusions specific to the regions involved. Despite the regional differences, the conferences did succeed in reaching more wide-ranging conclusions as well.

Reducing the level of fertility is considered one of the most important objectives. Although many regions have had some success in regulating fertility, several countries still have a high level of population growth. This is where the conflict arises between a rapidly growing population, on the one hand, and poor health care, employment, education, accommodation, pollution and waste disposal facilities, on the other.

The specific problems related to the differences in age structure between the developing countries, on the one hand, and between the North and South, on the other, received attention at all regional conferences. Nearly 50 per cent of the population in some developing countries is aged less than 15. These countries face the challenge of trying to meet the qualitative and quantitative social needs to this extremely young population. Four out of five regional conferences stressed the specific problems and needs of the young as regards to health, sexuality, pregnancy, parenthood and contraception. As regards the HIV/AIDS epidemic, young people are identified as an important target group.

The ageing of the population is not a typical problem of the Northern countries alone. Some developing countries have a growing proportion of elderly persons as well, as a consequence of declining fertility combined with an increase in life expectancy.

Environmental deterioration and population growth are fundamentally explained by inequality within and between states. The results are widely acknowledged: excessive consumption in the industrialised countries and among elite groups in the South, on the one hand, and wretched poverty among large sections of the population in developing countries, on the other.

The status of women was recognised as a general concern by different regional conferences. The distribution as well as the quality of reproductive health care, including family planning, must be given priority in policy-making. Abortion is rejected as means of fertility regulation. Prevention of unwanted pregnancies should have the highest priority, given the serious health problem this poses, particularly among adolescents.

The social status of women has to be improved. The European Conference stressed the need for political, economic and social equality between the sexes to be improved. The basic principle underlying this concern is female autonomy.

Despite the fact that urbanisation, another recurring theme in the regional conferences, does not constitute an immediate threat as such, the rate at which urban populations are growing and the related problem of integrating migrants into local urban economies, is giving cause for concern and this applies to the environmental implications of urban growth as well.

The regional conferences argue in favour of coherence in rural and urban programmes. The Latin American conference was in favour of rural development, since several rural areas in this region are in dire straits. The Arab and the African conferences considered rural/urban development as a major obstacle to internal migration.

All regional conferences stressed the need for international agreements and cooperation in the field of international migration and attention is paid to the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers.

The role of NGOs should be extended, in view of their huge impact at local level.

Finally, the need for a suitable system for gathering and analysing data on population movements was stressed, as well as the need for international cooperation and political commitment. In line with the Amsterdam Declaration, the regional conferences stress the need for an increase in international financial and logistical support.

5.4 | The expert group meetings

5.4.1. The background to the expert group meetings

In Resolution 1991/93 the Economic and Social Council authorised the Secretary-General of the Conference to convene six expert group meetings as part of the substantive preparations for the Conference (United Nations, 1993b).

The six expert group meetings were organised by the Population Division, in consultation with UNFPA, to discuss various population and development issues which had been identified by the ECOSOC as requiring the greatest attention during the forthcoming decade. Each expert group meeting included 15 experts, invited in their personal capacities, along with the representatives of relevant units, bodies and organisations of the United Nations system and selected intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations. Efforts were

made to have a large number of female experts, a full range of relevant scientific disciplines and geographical regions represented.

Each expert group meeting lasted five days. The standard documentation for each meeting included technical papers prepared by each of the experts, technical contributions provided by the participating regional commissions, and other organisations and a background paper prepared by the Population Division.

At the conclusion of each meeting, a set of recommendations was adopted, to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its second session. The number of recommendations in each set varied between 18 and 37, adding up to a total of 162 recommendations.

5.4.2. Summary of the conclusions of the expert group meetings

5.4.2.1. Population, environment and development

The first expert group meeting was held at United Nations Headquarters from January 20-24, 1992.

The meeting concluded that, in many contexts, detrimental effects on the environment would best be reduced by a combined strategy of slowing population growth, rationalising population distribution, alleviating poverty, reducing environmental deterioration and promoting the application of appropriate technologies and management systems.

With a view to achieving sustained economic growth as well as sustainable development, the need was stressed to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy sources and provide a more productive use of the increasingly scarce water resources.

Economic activities, stimulated by environmental objectives such as agro-forestry and reforestation, should be able to generate significant employment opportunities for poor people. Targeted social safety nets would reduce the tendency of the poor to over-exploit natural resources during periods of crisis.

The meeting emphasised the urgent need to strengthen data collection and research efforts in the field of demographic, economic and ecological processes and their interrelationship, in order to test the efficacy of proposed policies and strategies in specific settings. The meeting further underscored

the need for local involvement in development programmes and this applies in particular to the involvement of women.

5.4.2.2. Population policies and programmes

This meeting was hosted by the Government of Egypt in Cairo, from April 12-16, 1992.

The meeting observed the increasing willingness of countries to accept the need to limit population growth. The need to stabilise global population within the shortest period possible has become an internationally recognised goal. Governments should set clear population objectives and devote appropriate resources to population initiatives.

A top priority development goal defined by the meeting seeks to promote policies reflecting gender related equal opportunities. The policies should respond to the family planning and health requirements of women and men and urge governments to build upon women's established rights to ensure that women play a key role in the policy-making and implementation process.

The meeting expressed the view that an effective action plan needs a dynamic and committed leadership, local political support, interested private organisations and institutions, and recommended that governments and international organisations should develop a close partnership with the non-governmental sector.

Donor countries were called upon to try to double their 1990 contributions to population programmes by the year 2000. Developing countries were also urged to make all possible efforts to generate domestic resources through selective use of user fees and other forms of cost recovery and local resource mobilisation. Donors were also asked to strengthen their capacity to respond more effectively to requests for assistance through increased coordination and increased attention to the issue of cost effectiveness, to ensure that funds were used to maximum advantage.

5.4.2.3. Population and women

The third expert group meeting was hosted by the government of Botswana, in Gaborone from June 22-26, 1992 and financed by a contribution from the Government of the Netherlands.

The objective of the expert group meeting was to identify practical steps for promoting the empowerment of women. The meeting agreed that adopting a sensitive approach to gender issues should be treated as a priority.

A major theme of the meeting was the need for women to become more involved in policy-making. While the donors were called upon to seek culturally appropriate procedures for providing services and integrating women into population and development initiatives, the participants nevertheless also emphasised that all programmes should be based on the direct participation of women.

In view of the far-reaching implications of education for women's status, their fertility and the chances of survival for their children, the meeting urged governments and NGOs to help make it easier for women to gain access to both formal and non-formal education and to devise innovative strategies to overcome the socio-economic and familial constraints responsible for gender inequalities in school enrolment.

Women should be protected from economic discrimination and all legal and social barriers to their economic independence have to be removed.

The meeting paid considerable attention to the roles of men. Children are entitled to the material and emotional support of both fathers and mothers. Governments and private sector employers were urged to take measures to enable parents to harmonize their economic and parental responsibilities.

The meeting endorsed reproductive choice as a basic right. Women and men as individuals should be assured confidential access, within an adequate health system, to safe methods of fertility regulation. The meeting agreed that governments should promote safer sex. Having identified unsafe abortion as a major cause of maternal mortality, the meeting recommended that a woman wishing to terminate her pregnancy should have ready access to reliable information, sympathetic counselling and safe abortion services. The practice of genital mutilation must vigorously be stopped.

Particular attention was paid to the needs of adolescents. Governments were urged to enforce laws on the minimum age for marriage so as to ensure young women's rights to health and the rights of young people of both sexes to education and employment.

Finally, the meeting agreed on a research and data collection agenda focused on various critical areas, relevant to gender analysis, where information was considered to be seriously deficient.

5.4.2.4. Family planning, health and family well-being

The expert group meeting on family planning, hosted by the government of India, took place in Bangalore from October 26-29, 1992.

The meeting observed that family planning programmes could have an independent effect on fertility and that their effectiveness was greatly enhanced when socio-economic development occurred simultaneously. A crucial factor in the success of family planning programmes is the level of political commitment.

The quality of family planning services must be improved by incorporating the user's perspective, adding thorough and accurate information, systematic counselling and the guarantee that clients are given the widest possible choice of contraceptive methods. Family planning should be regarded as a cost-effective component of a broader development strategy.

Governments should take into consideration changes in family forms, size and structure as well as the need to provide women opportunities for personal development and greater autonomy. Greater involvement in and responsibility for family planning on the part of men should be encouraged.

Abortion was identified as a major public health concern as well as one of the most neglected problems affecting women's lives. In recommendation 6, the expert group calls upon governments and NGOs to cease ignoring the impact of abortion on public health (United Nations, 1993b, 97):

"Women everywhere should have access to sensitive counselling and safe abortion services."

Family planning programmes should include information on sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS education and prevention.

This expert group also recognised the special needs of adolescents.

The meeting devoted considerable attention to the role of NGOs in family planning, recognizing their comparative advantage in public advocacy and

in using innovative approaches to deal with crucial issues such as reproductive health and women's empowerment.

Finally, the meeting expressed concern about the increasing contraceptive requirements and logistic management needs of family programmes. The cost of contraceptives alone by the year 2000 was estimated at US \$ 627 million and the associated logistics, management and service-delivery costs were likely to increase this figure tenfold. While urging all donors to make a significant increase in the level of development aid they earmark for family planning, the meeting also emphasised the need to pay more attention to the question of cost-effectiveness, cost-recovery, etc.

5.4.2.5. Population growth and demographic structure

The fifth expert group was hosted by the Government of France and took place in Paris from November 16-20, 1992.

Population growth is set to continue well into the twenty first century, and in view of this the meeting stressed the urgent need to increase political commitment to human resource development and population programmes that affect population trends and characteristics.

The experts singled out widespread poverty as a critical factor exacerbating the consequences of rapid population growth and as major obstacle to fertility and mortality decline. In addition to the urgent need for governments to adopt comprehensive economic and social strategies to alleviate poverty and reduce social inequality, the meeting also urged the international community to increase assistance to development and population programmes for the least developed countries.

Noting the continuing increase in the school-age population in most developing countries, the meeting urged governments to pay close attention to educational programmes benefitting all children, irrespective of their sex.

The role and status of women was seen as critical in making the demographic transition. The meeting, therefore, recommended that priority should be given to investments and spending calculated to increase women's access to education, training, credit and opportunities to participate in the formal economy.

Health care priorities should be reassessed with a view to adapting them to changing morbidity profiles as a result of a rapid demographic and epidemiological transition.

Great emphasis should also be placed on devising appropriate responses to the AIDS pandemic and its potentially devastating demographic and socio-economic consequences.

The meeting paid considerable attention to population ageing and emphasised that the elderly were first and foremost a major human resource for development. Nevertheless, in the face of the extremely rapid pace with which the population is ageing in many areas, it was recommended that research and policy analysis be undertaken to discover the most fair and appropriate means of allocating public, private and family resources to accommodate the growing number of elderly people.

The importance of long-term planning to anticipate the changing needs over time of the young, elderly and working-age populations was emphasised, with a view to ensuring that adequate resources were available when and where they were needed, bearing in mind the changing role and status of the family in the development process.

5.4.2.6. Population distribution and migration

This expert group meeting, hosted by the government of Bolivia, took place in Santa Cruz from January 18-23, 1993.

The meeting recognised that population mobility was one approach to improving the life opportunities of a wide section of the world population and that improvements in transport and communications, growing mobility of capital and expanding social networks were all helping to increase permanent and temporary migration.

Urbanisation was viewed as an intrinsic part of development. Rural and urban development are two sides of the same coin. As the rural population was expected to keep on growing in many developing countries, rural economic opportunities and productivity had to be improved while ensuring sustainability. The need to establish credit and production co-operatives in rural areas so as to enhance people's control over resources was also endorsed. The traditional rights of rural communities over common lands and water resources had to be safeguarded.

The continuing growth of urban populations posed major challenges but opens up new opportunities as well. The emergence of complex agglomerations provides an impetus for development.

Policies aimed at reducing natural increase in population have to be considered so as to be able to get urban growth under control, particularly in countries where general population growth is high.

With regard to international migration, it was recommended that trade barriers be reduced and investment in the countries of origin be increased to reduce migratory pressures. In addition, governments were called upon to protect the rights of migrants and to ensure that national legislation and regulations did not discriminate against female migrants. Governments of host countries should allow families to be reunited, facilitate the naturalisation of non-nationals that have been residing in a country for a long time and second-generation migrants, take steps to combat xenophobia and racism and adopt effective sanctions against those who organize illegal migration and those who knowingly employ undocumented migrants.

Special attention was paid to the challenges posed by the growing number of refugees and asylum-seekers. Governments were urged to address the underlying causes and to take appropriate steps. They should lend support to international systems for protecting and assisting of refugees, continue to seek lasting solutions, and protect the right of asylum. Repatriation programmes had to be linked to long-term reconstruction and development plans. Governments should pay considerable amount of attention to the specific needs of female refugees and help long-standing refugee populations to achieve self-sufficiency.

Finally, the meeting stressed the need for an appropriate data collection and analysis system. The experts noted the need to review the current standard definitions and classifications of urban and rural populations as well as those of international migrants.

5.5 | The 48th UN General Assembly

The debate on the International Conference on Population and Development took place in the Second Committee of the General Assembly on November 4-5, 1993 (A/CONF.171/PC/2).

The General Assembly was presented with the progress report on the preparations for the Conference and the annotated outline of the final document of the Conference. Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference, addressed the meeting during the opening and closing debates. Representatives of forty two member states (several of whom spoke on behalf of regional groups), the observes from Switzerland and the Holy See and representatives of UNESCO, UNIDO and the NGO Planning Committee for the Conference also addressed the meeting.

During the discussions, delegates raised a number of key points: the population issue should continue to be central to the Cairo document; the recommendations should be action-oriented, clear and concise; the rights of the individual should be central to the document; the chapter on the empowerment of women should be strengthened; the document should give more attention to sexuality and the family planning needs of youth and adolescents; the Secretariat should provide information on the costs of various proposals; means of implementation should be given a high priority; the chapter on the follow-up to the Conference needs improving; more attention should be paid to the questions of consumption and lifestyles; the perspectives and the needs of the countries in transition should be reflected; the section on indigenous peoples needs strengthening; and the role of the NGOs should be spelled out in more detail (Earth Negotiations Bulletin, 1994). These and other comments made by the delegations were used by the Secretary-General of the Conference as a basis for preparing the draft of the final document.

The General Assembly (Resolution 48/186) also requested the Secretary-General of the Conference, when preparing the draft of the final document, to reflect the views expressed by delegations and groups of delegations on the annotated outline, including those expressed at the forty-eight session of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly also reaffirmed the importance of allowing NGOs to participate in and make a contribution to the preparation and the Conference itself and emphasised the particular importance of immediate action in widely publicizing the objectives of the Conference and issues discussed there.

5.6 | National activities

In order to encourage maximum level of national participation in the Conference and its preparations, the Secretary-General invited all countries to establish national committees to serve as focal points for national preparatory activities.

The primary task of the national committees has been to coordinate the work conducted on preparing the national reports on population. The committees have also organised conscious-raising initiatives, such as seminars and workshops on Conference-related topics. Guidelines for the preparation of national documents were provided to Governments by the Conference Secretariat.

In response to the appeal, more than 140 countries forwarded the ICPD Secretariat a national report. The recurrent themes in these national reports are as follows: a demographic profile of the country in question, the frame of reference within which national population policies are applied; the national perception of international population matters; information on health care for mothers and children, family planning and population-related education; the national view of the relation between population, development and environment; the role of women within this triangle; adolescents; AIDS; and ageing.

103 countries, including a majority of the least developed countries, requested and received a total of US \$ 853,755 in funding for national activities through the UNFPA Trust Fund for the Conference. Funds have been used primarily to assist in preparing national reports and organising consultations and seminars on population and development issues.

6. THE ICPD ACHIEVEMENTS

6.1 | The completion of the Cairo Programme of Action

The text of the ICPD Programme of Action approved in Cairo was completed in three phases:

- a) the "Draft Final Document of the Conference", drawn up by the ICPD Secretariat (United Nations, 1994a);
- b) the "Draft Programme of Action", as a result of Prepcom III (United Nations, 1994b);
- c) the "Programme of Action of the Conference", finalized and approved at the ICPD in Cairo (United Nations, 1994c).

The first version of the Cairo document was prepared by the ICPD Secretariat as a faithful reproduction of the one-page table of contents drawn up during Prepcom II. The 82 page draft of the final document was forwarded to all the member countries before Prepcom III met.

The draft of the Secretariat was thoroughly discussed and amended during the three-week meeting of Prepcom III, in April 1994. The outcome of Prepcom III was the ICPD's 113-page Draft Programme of Action of the ICPD. Participants at the meeting in New York reached a unanimous agreement on most of the draft. The few items for which no agreement was forthcoming were placed between brackets. The unresolved paragraphs and concepts were nonetheless of major importance because both politically and ethically controversial.

The bracket passages were then submitted at the Cairo Conference to be debated a second time. As a result of the negotiations these passages were

amended by additions, omissions, specifications, or compromises. The final text was finally adopted, even though some delegations could not refrain from having minuted some reservations about certain points or even whole chapters.

6.2 | The ICPD working method

The ICPD was held in the Cairo International Conference Centre in Nasr City, where the proceedings were conducted in two parallel formal meetings: the Plenary and the Main Committee. The Plenary was the forum for the opening and closing ceremonies and for speeches by delegation leaders and the delegates of UN Organizations and NGOs. The Programme of Action was approved and commented upon during the closing meeting.

During the Main Committee the draft Programme of Action of the Conference was discussed and amended. At the two-day Preconference, held before the Cairo Conference proper, it was acknowledged there would be no further discussion of texts already agreed upon in Prepcom III. This understanding was sometimes ignored during what was to follow. The Main Committee held formal and informal meetings, but the more troublesome items were generally dealt with in smaller working groups, the so-called "informal informals". The most important "informal informal" consisted of the so-called "Friends of the Chairman". This group generally tried to find solutions to the most complicated problems. Where no agreement could be reached, the Chairman with the help of the Secretariat and on the basis of the advice obtained, sought to formulate a specific compromise which he submitted to the Main Committee as the chairman's proposal.

The meetings of the Main Committee were practically always preceded or accompanied by sessions of regional or political groups, such as the G77 and the European Union.

On the sidelines of the ICPD a forum of the non-governmental organizations (NGO Forum, 1994) was held in the nearby National Covered Stadium Complex. Throughout the entire ICPD meeting the NGOs, generally in more than a dozen simultaneous sessions, discussed a wide range of topics directly or indirectly connected with the population, development and environment problems. Many NGOs also organised information stands and kept in close contact with the developments at the ICPD itself. During the conference several NGOs issued daily reports such as "Earth Negotiations Bulletin",

"The Earth Times", and "Terra Viva", to provide useful information on the ICPD negotiations and achievements.

This chapter confines itself to considering the activities and achievements of the Main Committee and is thus unable to include speeches of the Plenary and the proceedings of the NGO Forum.

6.3 | The key players

The ICPD is organized by the UN and takes place at government level. The 186 UN member states are represented by national delegations, which are often led by one or more ministers or ambassadors. The delegations comprise the ministers' personal staff, diplomats, officials, scientists and sometimes NGO representatives.

Although all the member countries are equally entitled to vote and to speak, there are different levels of political influence at work during the negotiations and the decision-making. UN meetings tend to be like Orwell's "Animal farm" (1954):

"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

Particular attention is paid to what is said by the G77 (representing more than 130 developing countries), the European Union, the US, China, Japan, Russia, India, for example.

The level of influence a delegation has on discussions and negotiations is not always in proportion to the country's population size nor does it depend solely on its political impact.

The role of the delegations during a conference like the ICPD also depends on the policies pursued by the national governments and of the stands they take in such a conference. Last but not least, there is the expertise and the enthusiasm of the members of the delegations. Expertise implies not only scientific or diplomatic skills and a thorough preparation for the conference, but also fluency in the English language, because almost all the informal discussions and negotiations take place in that language.

The Scandinavian countries, non-European Anglo-Saxon countries and the European Union exert a considerable level of influence during the talks and this high profile has a lot to do with the carefully thought out composition of their delegations, consisting of many persons who are not only experts in the subjects, but are also very motivated participants. The Vatican is a prime example. Despite its small population, the Vatican always succeeds in sending the best prepared, the most motivated, and, in a number of fields, the most specialised delegation.

Obviously, much also depends on the UN Secretariat and the chairman of the meetings, and more particularly the working groups which draw up or amend the texts. The ICPD was particularly well served in this respect, for as well as being endowed with a competent, courageous and enthusiastic Secretary-General in the person of Dr. N. Sadik, it also had the experienced and shrewd Ghanaian Dr. F. Sai, who chaired the Main Committee, and the Ambassadors N.H. Biegan of the Netherlands and L.A. Hurst of Antigua and Barbuda, who acted as vice-chairmen of the Main Committee of Prepcom III and of the Cairo Conference itself.

6.4 | The contents of the ICPD Programme of Action

There now follows a brief description of the different chapters of the ICPD Programme of Action, the main obstacles that appeared during its development, and the main amendments to the text.

The ICPD Programme of Action comprises the following chapters:

- I. Preamble
- II. Principles
- III. Interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development
- IV. Gender equality, equity and empowerment of women
- V. The family, its roles, rights, composition and structure
- VI. Population growth and structure
- VII. Reproductive rights and reproductive health
- VIII. Health, morbidity and mortality
- IX. Population distribution, urbanization and internal migration
- X. International migration
- XI. Population, development and education
- XII. Technology, research and development

- XIII. National action
- XIV. International cooperation
- XV. Partnership with the non-governmental sector
- XVI. Follow-up of the conference

6.4.1. *The Preamble*

The wording of the Preamble was carefully examined and improved, as it emerged that contrary to what was expected there was not to be a separate "Cairo Declaration" in the mould of the one adopted at Mexico. The Preamble was deemed by the working group of the "Friends of the Chairman" to be the Cairo Declaration.

The Preamble of the ICPD Programme of Action considers the conflict between the absolute increase in population, particularly in the developing countries, and the aim of promoting further economic growth in the context of sustainable development:

1.9. "The population and development objectives and actions of the present Programme of Action will collectively address the critical challenges and interrelationships between population and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development"...

A specific reference is made to the interaction between population growth and development:

1.8. ... "In this regard, sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development will enhance the ability of countries to meet the pressures of expected population growth; will facilitate the demographic transition in countries where there is an imbalance between demographic rates and social, economic and environmental goals; and will permit the balance and integration of the population dimension into other development-related policies."

1.11. ... "bearing in mind the crucial contribution that early stabilization of the world population would made towards the achievement of sustainable development" ...

The Preamble points not only to the progress made in the last decade, but also to the continuous economic problems of many developing countries and to the absolute increase in the number of people who live in extreme poverty. The G77 called for the latter subject to be emphasized in the amended text:

1.2. "The world has undergone far-reaching changes in the past two decades. Significant progress in many fields important for human welfare has been made through national and international efforts. However, the developing countries are still facing serious economic difficulties and an unfavourable international economic environment, and the number of people living in absolute poverty has increased in many countries." ...

The Preamble places the ICPD in the context of a series of interrelated international activities, particularly the UNCED and its Agenda 21. Moreover, the Preamble makes a clear link between ecological issues and population growth, on the one hand, and consumption and production patterns, on the other:

1.2. ... "Around the world many of the basic resources on which future generations will depend for their survival and well-being are being depleted and environmental degradation is intensifying, driven by unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, unprecedented growth in population, widespread and persistent poverty, and social and economic inequality. Ecological problems, such as global climate change, largely driven by unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, are adding to the threats to the well-being of future generations. There is emerging global consensus on the need for increased international cooperation in regard to population in the context of sustainable development, for which Agenda 21 provides a framework. Much has been achieved in this respect, but more needs to be done."

Finally, the Preamble introduces the Programme of Action which contains a series of population and development aims and proposals for action of both a quantitative and a qualitative nature, with a view to improving the quality of life of the world's present population and future generations.

The draft Preamble was not discussed and amended until the Cairo Conference took place. The Secretariat's draft and the approved text do not differ to any great extent, even though there are certain shifts in emphasis.

In view of shortening the text, it was decided in Cairo to delete the introductory descriptive demographic paragraphs. This is to be regretted, because it is important that basic demographic facts are brought to the notice of policy makers. However, it must be admitted that most of these demographic data

are still included in the introductory paragraphs (the so-called "Basis for Action") of all the chapters dealing with population variables.

The Preamble naturally features the main concepts which gave rise to an agreement and thus became recurring themes in the Programme of Action:

... "the comprehensive concept of reproductive health, including family planning, and sexual health" ...

... "full respect for the various religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of people" ...

The latter wording, particularly the reference to "philosophical convictions", as a result of which, in the mould of the Mexico recommendations of 1984, pluralism of opinions and value patterns was included in the text, was agreed upon after tough bargaining between the host country and other Islamic countries, on the one hand, and the European Union, on the other. Acting on a proposal from the persistent urging of the Belgian delegation (some westerners, for that matter, now seem to attach more importance to sexual rights and similar issues than to protecting freedom of thought!) the EU eventually insisted that the text should make an explicit reference to ideological pluralism. This wording also acted as a counterweight to the "chapeau" of the chapter on principles explained below, in which Egypt and other Islamic countries tried to see to it that emphasis was placed solely on religious values. Right to the very end, Iran and some other Islamic delegations continued to query the reference to "philosophical convictions". Finally, this wording and other sensitive items, were agreed upon in the form of a "package deal" with the Egyptian delegation, which in turn tried to convince the other G77 partners. The Egyptian negotiator, ambassador M. El Tallawy, must be congratulated for sticking to "the deal". The Egyptians were forced to use all their powers of persuasion to win over the Iranian delegates.

The use of the concept "philosophical convictions" has been questioned in several quarters, not the least during the Cairo Conference itself. Contrary to what some have supposed, the introduction of this concept in an UN document is not at all new. It is a formulation that was already used and accepted at the Mexico Conference in 1984 in Recommendation 13:

... "Such policies should respect human rights, the religious beliefs, philosophical convictions, cultural values and fundamental rights of each individual and couple, to determine the size of its own family."

It was on that basis, and in the same context, that it was introduced in the Cairo document. It is true that during the Cairo negotiations, in addition to the term "philosophical convictions", several other concepts were suggested to complement the term "religious beliefs" in view of covering more completely the ideological variation which exists in the world, between as well as within cultures and countries. From a conceptual point of view, the choice of the term "philosophical convictions" seems to have been an appropriate one because it is the broadest possible concept and has no negative connotations. Not only it covers atheistic or humanistic positions taken by many people in the West and in the countries of the former Eastern bloc, but it can cover all kinds of ideologies, going from Marxism, over liberalism, to existentialism and post-modernism.

6.4.2. The Principles

As was the case with the Preamble the Principles were not discussed prior to the Cairo meeting. This chapter consists of two parts and is also the result of two parallel series of diplomatic consultations within the working group "Friends of the Chairman". The first series focused on the "chapeau" of the Principles and the other on the Principles themselves.

As regards the "chapeau", the "Friends of the Chairman" were faced with an obviously Islam-inspired G77-proposal. During the negotiations on this proposal, the lead was taken by the European Union, which had been told in confidence that as the host country had come in for heavy criticism from the (fundamentalist) Islamic world because of the organisation of this "godless conference on Islamic soil", it urgently needed to gain an Islam-inspired moral victory over the Conference. The European Union used high-level bilateral discussions as a basis for concluding an agreement with the host Country by which the latter was offered a "chapeau" to the chapter on principles on condition that the other chapters in the Programme of Action were not be weakened in respect of various other sensitive items, such as plurality of opinions, plurality in the forms of the family, fertility regulation, rights of adolescents, and rights of individuals and couples with respect to sexual relations and reproductive health. This agreement was also facilitated by the fact that the Preamble was considered of major importance by the European Union, whereas the G77, especially the Islamic countries, and the Vatican attached more importance to the "chapeau" and the principles.

It goes without saying that this EU-Egyptian agreement ruffled some feathers among some "Friends of the Chairman", such as the Algerian spokesman of the G77, and the United States delegation. However, the negotiation skills

of the Norwegian vice-chairman of the "Friends of the Chairman" succeeded in ironing out the problems caused by the diametrically opposed opinions.

Under pressure from Islamic countries, the G77 insisted the "chapeau" should record the group's deep concerns about the sovereign right of countries to implement the Programme of Action in accordance with their national laws, and also on the basis of

... *"religious beliefs, ethical values, cultures and traditions"...*

The European Union would not countenance such reservations, because they fail to take account of the internal ideological pluralism of countries and because the reference to cultures and traditions is considered to be an obstacle to the further emancipation of women, especially in the ideologically monolithic countries in which, even now, women are often in a completely subordinate position.

After countless amendments were made to the EU and G77 proposals and endless consultations were held in the conference corridors, an agreement was reached by the working group "Friends of the Chairman" on the following "chapeau":

"The implementation of the recommendations contained in the Programme of Action is the sovereign right of each country, consistent with national laws and development priorities, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people, and in conformity with universally recognized international human rights."

Careful reading will reveal just how subtle the wording now is. The concepts of "traditions" and "philosophical convictions" have been removed, and "cultures" and "religious beliefs" have been toned down to say "cultural background" and "religious values" respectively. The idea of pluralism has been consolidated by inserting the word "various" and the principle of individualisation has been introduced by mentioning "its people" instead of "its peoples", — a nuance that some negotiators presumably failed to recognise. The western countries on their turn had to accept that the reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights be mentioned at the end rather than the beginning of the paragraph.

The EU-Egypt negotiations on the "chapeau" coincided with discussions of the other "Friends of the Chairman" (G77 representatives and some other OECD countries) concerning the need to recast and amend the principles included in the Secretariat's text.

Almost all of these principles are derived from or are compilations of earlier UN Charters such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Rio Declaration, the WPPA, etc. They refer to individual rights and liberties, sustainable development, gender equality and empowerment of women, reproductive health care, children and the family, the fight against poverty, migrants, asylumseekers and indigenous people.

Just one principle relates specifically to population matters:

"Principle 5: Population-related goals and policies are integral parts of cultural, economic and social development, the principal aim of which is to improve the quality of life of all people."

Other principles, especially those on sustainable development, do include population-related references, however:

"Principle 3: ... The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet the population, development and environment needs of present and future generations."

"Principle 6: Sustainable development as a means to ensure human well-being, equitably shared by all people today and in the future, requires that the interrelationships between population, resources, the environment and development should be fully recognized, properly managed and brought into a harmonious, dynamic balance." ...

Despite the opposition of various Islamic countries, such as Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Syria, and particularly Iran, on the one hand, and the Holy See and some Central American countries on the other, to the inclusion of the word "individuals", the famous Bucharest principle has been retained in its original form:

"Principle 8: All couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so."

Principle 9 is concerned with the family. Even during the Prepcoms this theme excited an ideological-scientific controversy. In particular, Islamic (Iran, Morocco), Latin American countries (Argentina, Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela) and, of course, the Holy See and Malta, wanted to see only the traditional, uniform family, founded on marriage, exclusively mentioned as the basic unit of society and rejected any reference to the different forms of the family and household now found in many countries. This was unacceptable for the European Union, the Scandinavian countries and the non-European Anglo-Saxon countries as they considered that both the principles and the chapter on the family itself had to be drawn up in qualified terms reflecting the pluralistic reality. The Belgian delegation locked horns with the Iranian delegation on this subject already at Prepcom I!

The compromise reached during Prepcom III

"While various forms of the family exist in different social, cultural, legal and political systems, the family is the basic unit of society and as such is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support."...

was strengthened in Cairo along conservative lines:

"Principle 9: The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist."...

Although it does not deal directly with population matters, Principle 15 is worth quoting for its qualified and apt reference to sustainable development and the specific responsibilities of the developed countries towards the developing countries in this matter:

"Principle 15: Sustained economic growth, in the context of sustainable development, and social progress require that growth be broadly based, offering equal opportunities to all people. All countries should recognize their common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development, and should continue to improve their efforts to promote sustained growth and to narrow imbalances in a manner that can benefit all countries, particularly the developing countries."

6.4.3. Interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development

This chapter in the Cairo Programme of Action is well worth reading, as it is one of the few in which a serious attempt is made to see the inter-relationship between population growth, economic development and environmental protection.

The whole chapter is based on the interrelationships between poverty, social inequality, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, environmental degradation and pollution, and gender inequality. These components are specifically represented as parts of a whole both when describing and analysing the current world situation and proposing short- and long-term remedies.

It points to the need for population matters to be fully integrated into developmental and environmental strategies:

3.3. ... "Explicitly integrating population into economic and development strategies will both speed up the pace of sustainable development and poverty alleviation and contribute to the achievement of population objectives and an improved quality of life of the population. "

3.29a. "Integrate demographic factors into environment impact assessment and other planning and decision-making processes aimed at achieving sustainable development. "

Chapter III explicitly states that slower population growth has a beneficial effect on economic growth and sustainable development:

3.14. "Efforts to slow down population growth, to reduce poverty, to achieve economic progress, to improve environmental protection, and to reduce unsustainable consumption and production patterns are mutually reinforcing. Slower population growth has in many countries bought more time to adjust to future population increases. This has increased those countries' ability to attack poverty, protect and repair the environment, and build the base for future sustainable development. Even the difference of a single decade in the transition to stabilization levels of fertility can have a considerable positive impact on quality of life. "

This qualified and integrated approach to population and development is also reflected in the chapter's objectives:

3.16. "The objective is to raise the quality of life for all people through appropriate population and development policies and programmes aimed at achieving poverty eradication, sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development and sustainable patterns of consumption and production, human resource development and the guarantee of all human rights, including the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights." ...

Chapter III accentuates the relationship between population and environment and acknowledges that demographic factors can cause or exacerbate economic problems in certain circumstances:

3.25. "Demographic factors, combined with poverty and lack of access to resources in some areas, and excessive consumption and wasteful production patterns in others, cause or exacerbate problems of environmental degradation and resource depletion and thus inhibit sustainable development."

The firm scientific basis of this chapter and the concern for producing a harmoniously developed text is also underscored by the constant references to the need to promote sustainable development and minimise ecological deterioration by eliminating unsustainable patterns of production and consumption:

3.9. "To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people. Governments should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies. Developed countries should take the lead in achieving sustainable consumption patterns and effective waste management."

Objective 3.28. is crystal clear in this respect:

3.28b. "To reduce both unsustainable consumption and production patterns as well as negative impacts of demographic factors on the environment in order to meet the needs of current generations without

compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

6.4.4. *Gender equality, equity and empowerment of women*

The key concept in this chapter is "the empowerment of women". The aim is to enable women to make autonomous decisions in all spheres of life. This goal is admittedly unrelated to population concerns, but it does represent one of the main factors for determining whether or not the population programmes prove to be a success.

A call is made for the value of women to society to be fully reflected in areas such as political decision-making, job opportunities, equal access to social security, and the abolition of unequal pay scales. Furthermore, any attack on the physical and moral integrity of women is condemned. The preference for sons is censured as this leads to practices such as prenatal sexual selection.

With regard to the actual gender inequalities which still exist in many regions of the world, this chapter is one of the most courageous parts of the Programme of Action. It contains valuable sections on the empowerment of women, on the girl child, and on the responsibility and the participation of men. It is couched in far stronger terms than many would have dared to expect and it would even go further than the draft texts of the Beijing Conference on Women.

Although the chapter on women does not specifically relate to population issues, population scientists are aware that enhancing the status of women is one of the most important ways of slowing down unsustainable population growth. This chapter therefore fits in perfectly with the Programme of Action on population and sustainable development.

This evaluation is certain to cause irritation and, possibly, horror and anger in some feminist circles, but it has to be realised even if Chapter IV starts with the following sentence

4.1. "The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself." ...

The Cairo Programme of Action is concerned with the interaction between population and "sustainable" development. Accordingly, Chapter IV justifiably states:

4.1. ... "In addition, improving the status of women also enhances their decision-making capacity at all levels in all spheres of life, especially in the area of sexuality and reproduction. This, in turn, is essential for the long-term success of population programmes. Experience shows that population and development programmes are most effective when steps have simultaneously been taken to improve the status of women."

Building upon the pertinent Bucharest thesis that

... "family responsibility should be fully shared by both partners"

the principle of gender equality is emphasized time and time again in this chapter in a variety of ways as well as the need for men to play a full part in all spheres of life, including family life and household tasks:

4.1. "The full participation and partnership of both women and men is required in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household."...

4.3.(a) "To achieve equality based on harmonious partnership between men and women and enable women to realize their full potential."

4.4.(d) "Adopting appropriate measures to improve women's ability to earn income beyond traditional occupations, achieve economic self-reliance, and ensure women's equal access to the labour market and social security systems."

4.4.(g) "Making it possible, through laws, regulations and other appropriate measures, for women to combine the roles of child-bearing, breast-feeding and child-rearing with participation in the workforce."

An innovation in relation to the previous conference is the decision to include a special section on the status of the girl child. This section denounces

practices such as prenatal sexual selection, abortion of female fetuses, infanticide of girls and female circumcision.

The Cairo text is unambiguous about female circumcision:

4.22. "Governments are urged to prohibit female genital mutilation wherever it exists and to give vigorous support to efforts among non-governmental and community organizations and religious institutions to eliminate such practices."

The attempts by some delegations to replace the concept of "gender equality" by "gender equity" eventually failed. As is the custom of the UN (just think of "sustained growth and sustainable development") it was finally decided to retain both terms.

For Iran —and presumably for some other Islamic countries— this wording was found to be totally unacceptable concerning the right of inheritance. As early as Prepcom III the text of the Secretariat had to be toned down to

4.6. ... "that women can exercise their legal rights to inheritance" (sic!)

In Cairo a similar qualification was introduced with regard to the rights of inheritance of girls:

4.17. ... "Special education and public information efforts are needed to promote equal treatment of girls and boys with respect to nutrition, health care, education and social, economic and political activity, as well as equitable inheritance rights."

Chapter IV underwent some other changes as well. Even though they may have been minor changes, they provide a good illustration of the sorts of sensibilities that had to be contended with. In Paragraph 4.9 the concept of "forced prostitution" was replaced by "exploitation through prostitution", because some delegations considered that the original wording might be understood as an endorsement of prostitution.

In the last sentence of Paragraph 4.21 concerning legal measures to the minimum marriage age

... "Governments and non-governmental organizations should generate social support for the enforcement of laws on minimum legal age and marriage, in particular by providing alternatives to early marriage, such as educational and employment opportunities."

The phrase "alternatives to early marriage such as" was deleted, since some people saw in it the reappearance of the spectre of homosexuality or other behaviour considered to be indecent.

6.4.5. *The family*

This chapter highlights the crucial role of the family. The emergence of alternatives to the traditional nuclear family or the extended family as a result of demographic and socio-economic processes is accepted, as well as the fact that the traditional gender-bound division of parental and household tasks no longer corresponds to social reality.

It is recommended to take measures in order to support family ties and to protect the vulnerable families and family members. The one-parent family is referred to several times. A call is made to promote ways of helping parents to reconcile family responsibilities with their careers.

As mentioned, right from the very first Prepcom the family excited a controversy between the West and some Islamic countries. At the second Prepcom no unanimous agreement on the one-page table of contents was possible because Chapter V bore the title "The Family" instead of "Families".

The Secretariat's draft discussed at Prepcom III made allowance for the plurality of family forms:

5.2. "The objective is to develop policies and laws that better support the plurality of family forms, including the larger number of households headed by single parents, and to address the social and economic factors behind the increasing costs of child-rearing to women."

But the uniformists did not accept this wording. Intensive informal consultations finally resulted in a compromise whereby the European Union and other western countries accepted a reference to the family as the basic unit of society provided a reference was also made to the plurality of family forms.

Accordingly, Chapter V starts with the following compromise:

5.1. "While various forms of the family exist in different social, cultural, legal and political systems, the family is the basic unit of society and as such is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. "...

The first objective in this chapter also reflects this subtle balance, which, for the rest, had to be defended until the last moment against expurgating Islamic amendments:

5.2a. "To develop policies and laws that better support the family, contribute to its stability and take into account its plurality of forms, particularly the growing number of single-parent households. "

However, in Cairo a number of Islamic countries, including Egypt, Pakistan and Morocco, and particularly Iran, put up a considerable amount of opposition to the term "unions" in Paragraph 5.5:

5.5. "Governments should take effective action to eliminate all forms of coercion and discrimination in policies and practices related to marriage, other unions and the family. "...

The problem is that some people interpret "unions" as a reference to homosexual relationships. Furthermore, several countries pointed out that homosexuality is prohibited by their laws. Various attempts to find an alternative form of words were doomed to failure. At his wits' end, Chairman Biegman suggested deleting the whole reference to "marriages, unions and family", with the result that the recommendation was somewhat left hanging in the air.

6.4.6. Population growth and structure

This chapter pays particular attention to the demographic dimension of the population, development and environment issue. It describes the demographic situation worldwide and the different speeds at which countries are managing to reduce their birth and death rates to a similar low level. As a general objective it is proposed that countries whose population trends are out of step with their social, economic and environmental aims must endeavour to apply population programmes so as to make population changes an ally rather than a foe of general social and economic development.

As well as sections on population growth, and younger and older age categories, this chapter also features information on indigenous people and disabled people.

We do not in any way wish to deny the importance of any of the issues covered, but it has to be recognized that certain subjects considered are out of place in this chapter. Nor do they fit in with the Conference, the central theme of which is the interaction between population growth and sustainable development.

On the plus side, the "Basic for Action" in the section on population growth gives an appropriate summary of recent and future population developments in the world. But on the minus side, the Secretariat's original version of the population growth objective was contested at Prepcom III by some developing countries:

6.1.3. "The objective is to reduce disparities in national and regional population growth and achieve stabilization of the world population as soon as possible, fully respecting individual rights, aspirations and responsibilities, in order to create conditions for developmental sustainability at the community, national and global levels."

Thanks to the ingenuity and the efforts of various population experts, a scientifically justified text was adopted, even though it was less accessible to the general public. In various aspects the final version even represented an improvement on the original text:

6.3. "Recognizing that the ultimate goal is the improvement of the quality of life of present and future generations, the objective is to facilitate the demographic transition as soon as possible in countries where there is an imbalance between demographic rates and social, economic and environmental goals, while fully respecting human rights. This process will contribute to the stabilization of the world population, and, together with changes in unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, to sustainable development and economic growth."

Another welcome aspect of the wording is the fact that in response to a proposal of the European Union, the stabilization of the world population is mentioned in the same breath as changes in unsustainable patterns of production and consumption.

Although the Cairo document refers to the demographic transition and the stabilization of the world population, it does not propose any bold quantitative goals in this respect. The proposal made by Dr. Sadik (1993) at Prepcom II, that the low UN population projection should be the aim, was not accepted:

... "First we should focus on the total size of the human family. The needs and the impact of a population of 7.27 billion in 2015, the low projection, are very different from the high projection of 7.92 billion, or even 7.6 billion, the medium projection. I believe that we must strive for the low projection. I believe that it can be achieved with sufficient commitment at the local, national and international level. There is ample evidence that the currently unmet need of couples and individuals make up the difference between the medium and the low population scenario. As many as 300 million couples have no access to contraception, and there are many more who know that information and services are available but in fact have no access to them."...

At the initiative of Indonesia, a statement, signed by more than 70 heads of state or government, was issued at the ICPD. It referred to the desirable stabilization of the world population, but no international agreement is yet possible on this subject.

Some subjects in the Cairo document received a great deal of attention, but little heed is paid to the question of the ageing of the population and the elderly. It may be argued, of course, that the ageing of the population is, at present, mainly a problem of the industrialized countries, whereas the primary focus of the Cairo Conference is on the developing countries. It is nevertheless expected that, in the next century, population ageing will also lead to serious social problems in many developing countries where some demographic changes are progressing faster than general social development (Mertens, 1994).

The section "Indigenous people", not "peoples" (peoples as communities have apparently no rights as long as they have been unable to develop their own state) should probably not have been included in this chapter. It is doubtful whether the subject needed to be raised during the conference, as the question of racial and ethnic minorities has to be treated as a whole. Such a specific and difficult subject is unlikely to be given the specific and specialized treatment it deserves. Besides, the very way in which the issue of indigenous people was introduced is open to criticism, particularly when respect is

requested for their traditional gender relations and knowledge of family planning (sic!):

6.22. ... "Indigenous people call for increased respect for indigenous culture, spirituality, lifestyles and sustainable development models, including traditional systems of land tenure, gender relations, use of resources and knowledge and practice of family planning."...

The section on disabled persons in this chapter is even more curious. It deals with issues that are even less in keeping with the Conference theme than were the issues related to indigenous people. The issues concerning the disabled are of such a specific and sensitive nature that they deserve a less superficial and marginal treatment in a context in which they more properly belong. Moreover, such an unsatisfactory procedure leads to cut and dried statements such as

6.30. ... "Governments should eliminate specific forms of discrimination that persons with disabilities may face with regard to reproductive rights, household and family formation,"...

As many disabilities may have genetic origins and may, therefore, be transmitted to future generations, attention has to be paid in this context not only to reproductive rights and family formation, but also to reproductive responsibilities and the need for genetic counselling. Fortunately, in Paragraph 5.5 of the previous chapter, the recommendation on reproductive rights of disabled persons could be supplemented with "responsibilities".

6.4.7. Reproductive rights and reproductive health

This is probably the most fascinating chapter in the Cairo document. It was also the hardest to achieve and this was not at all because some of the concepts used in the chapter point to the possibility of a medical abortion.

Chapter VII deals with reproductive behaviour as a whole, and not just reproductive rights and health, including family planning, but also sexual behaviour, sexual intercourse and sexually transmittable diseases, including HIV prevention. It ends with a separate section devoted to the problems of adolescents. It thus contains a lot of food for thought, a great deal of which is potentially controversial and likely to cause conflicts.

Several aspects of the Secretariat's draft were thoroughly revised at Prepcom III, mainly in the light of EU proposals. In Cairo it was, once again, given closer examination by a special working group.

This is the chapter which contains most of the concepts placed in brackets at the New York meeting:

"sexual and reproductive rights"
"sexual and reproductive health"
"fertility regulation"
"pregnancy termination"
"unsafe abortion"

The Holy See launched already at the New York meeting an offensive. It was supported in this by a number of well orchestrated, predominantly Central American countries—in particular Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and also Ecuador and Paraguay—and of some Central African countries, such as Benin, and Ivory Coast and of course Malta. They objected to the concepts in question because they might include the acceptance of both the termination of pregnancy and sexual behaviour among adolescents or outside matrimony.

In the first place the Holy See complained that the text lacked certain definitions. In view of meeting these objections and well aware that this would lead to difficult negotiations and overloaded texts, the European Union proposed the text should include the WHO working definitions on reproductive and sexual health. But these definitions cover "fertility regulation" and as this concept could imply the termination of pregnancy it is deemed unacceptable by the Holy See and its sympathizers. The European Union then proposed to qualify the term by adding "in circumstances where these are legal", — and thus take account of the different national laws on birth regulation methods. In some countries abortion on demand or under restricted conditions —e.g. if the health of the mother or the foetus is at risk— is part of the birth control legislation; in other countries sterilization is forbidden.

The participants at Cairo finally accepted this solution, although in slightly different and more complicated form of words:

7.2. ... "safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law,"...

The definitions included in Chapter VII on reproductive and sexual health are worded as follows:

7.2. "Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. Implicit in this last condition is the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law, and the right of access to appropriate health-care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant. In line with the above definition of reproductive health, reproductive health care is defined as the constellation of methods, techniques preventing and solving reproductive health problems. It also includes sexual health, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations, and not merely counselling and care related to reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases."

"Reproductive health care" is defined in a remarkably detailed way:

7.6. "All countries should strive to make accessible through the primary health-care system, reproductive health to all individuals of appropriate ages as soon as possible and no later than the year 2015. Reproductive health care in the context of primary health care should, inter alia, include : family-planning counselling, information, education, communication and services; education and services for prenatal care, safe delivery and post-natal care, especially breast-feeding, infant and women's health care; prevention and appropriate treatment of infertility; abortion as specified in Paragraph 8.25, including prevention of abortion and the management of the consequences of abortion; treatment of reproductive tract infections; sexually transmitted diseases and other reproductive health conditions; and information, education and counselling, as appropriate, on human sexuality, reproductive health and responsible parenthood. Referral for family-planning services and further diagnosis and treatment for

complications of pregnancy, delivery and abortion, infertility, reproductive tract infections, breast cancer and cancers of the reproductive system, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS should always be available, as required. Active discouragement of harmful practices such as female genital mutilation should also be an integral component of primary health care, including reproductive health-care programmes."

The original Prepcom III texts constantly referred to "sexual and reproductive rights and health". Some western countries (especially the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands and the US) were strongly in favour of this. In the text that was finally approved the concept of "sexual health" is referred to less explicitly and less often and is considered to be part of "reproductive health".

The Belgian delegation had upheld the original wording, "sexual and reproductive health", but went along with the compromise prepared by the working group. The text is scientifically justified. At a population conference attention has to be paid to reproductive health, and, as the text states, sexual health forms part of this issue. Furthermore, the term "sexual" is retained in the text wherever appropriate. The compromise should not therefore be considered as a retreat or a defeat as some northern delegates tried to suggest. Introduced by the renowned Bucharest recommendation

7.12. "The aim of family-planning programmes must be to enable couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information and means to do so and to ensure informed choices and make available a full range of safe and effective methods."...

the Cairo document contains a bold section on family planning, together with target figures to be reached over a specific period of time:

7.16. ... "All countries should take steps to meet the family-planning needs of their populations as soon as possible and should, in all cases by the year 2015, seek to provide universal access to a full range of safe and reliable family-planning methods and to related reproductive health services which are not against the law"...

This chapter is also significant for the section on adolescents. Its objectives are formulated in Paragraph 7.44 as follows:

***"(a) To address adolescent sexual and reproductive health issues, including unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, through the promotion of responsible and healthy reproductive and sexual behaviour, including voluntary abstinence, and the provision of appropriate services and counselling specifically suitable for that age group;
(b) To substantially reduce all adolescent pregnancies."***

It should come as no surprise that the paragraphs on adolescents were vehemently attacked by the Holy See and its sympathizers, as well as by some Islamic countries. The scars are to be found in Paragraph 7.45, in which various restrictions — "duties and responsibilities of parents", "respect for cultural values and religious beliefs", "where appropriate" — were inserted:

7.45. "Recognizing the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents and other persons legally responsible for adolescents to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the adolescent, appropriate direction and guidance in sexual and reproductive matters, countries must ensure that the programmes and attitudes of health-care providers do not restrict the access of adolescents to appropriate services and the information they need, including on sexually transmitted diseases and sexual abuse. In doing so, and in order to, inter alia, address sexual abuse, these services must safeguard the rights of adolescents to privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed consent, respecting cultural values and religious beliefs. In this context, countries should, where appropriate, remove legal, regulatory and social barriers to reproductive health information and care for adolescents."

In spite of this, Chapter VII is on the whole an excellent and impressive piece of work which advocates, inter alia, the provision of reproductive health care, the promotion of sexual health and a harmonious partnership between man and woman, the provision of sex education, the guarantee of an efficient family planning, the prevention of unwanted pregnancy, the promotion of conscious parenthood, the avoidance of coercion and abuse in family planning, the guarantee of privacy and confidentiality in reproductive counselling, the prevention of abortion, the fight against sexually transmittable diseases and HIV, in particular by the promotion of condom use, and, last but not least, the support and advice for adolescents.

It was only to be expected that, at the end of the Conference, this chapter should meet with resistance from the Holy See, Malta, and Ecuador, as well as from a number of Islamic countries such as Iran, Yemen, Kuwait, Libya and Jordan.

6.4.8. *Health, morbidity and mortality*

Chapter VIII of course recommends promoting health care for all, with particular emphasis on the health and survival of children and women. It also comprises a separate section on HIV/AIDS.

With the exception of one paragraph, this chapter has given rise few controversies and disagreements. But one paragraph, the well-known Paragraph 8.25 on abortion, took up an inordinate amount of conference time and energy, and received a disproportionate amount of attention from the media.

The Secretariat draft submitted to Prepcom III was aimed at minimising the use of abortion and at preventing non-medical abortion. The text explicitly stated that the need for abortion must be eliminated through improved preventive family planning. It also argued in favour of efficient medical-social guidance instead of a discipline-based approach and thus showed respect for the ideological pluralism which is the hallmark of the general public's attitude to this subject worldwide:

8.21. "All Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to deal openly and forthrightly with unsafe abortion as a major public health concern. Governments are urged to assess the health impact of unsafe abortion, to reduce the need for abortion through expanded and improved family-planning services and to frame abortion laws and policies on the basis of a commitment to women's health and well-being rather than on criminal codes and punitive measures. Prevention of unwanted pregnancies must always be given the highest priority and all attempts should be made to eliminate the need for abortion. In case of rape and incest, women should have access to safe abortion services. Women who wish to terminate their pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information, compassionate counselling and services for the management of complications of unsafe abortions. "

As was only to be expected, the Holy See, a number of Latin American countries, particularly Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Ecuador, and

a few Central African countries such as Benin and Ivory Coast, and further also Malta and Iran, were strongly opposed to this text.

At Prepcom III an informal working group framed a new proposal on the basis of the amendments made by several delegations:

8.25. "All Governments, intergovernmental organizations and relevant non-governmental organizations are urged to deal openly and forthrightly with unsafe abortion as a major public health concern. Particular efforts should be made to obtain objective and reliable information on the policies on, incidence of and consequences of abortion in every country. Unwanted pregnancies should be prevented through sexual health education and through expanded and improved family-planning services, including proper counselling to reduce the rate of abortion. Governments are urged to assess the health and social impact of induced abortion, to address the situations that cause women to have recourse to abortion and to provide adequate medical care and counselling. Governments are urged to evaluate and review laws and policies on abortion so that they take into account the commitment to women's health and well-being in accordance with local situations, rather than relying on criminal codes or punitive measures. Although the main objective of public policy is to prevent unwanted pregnancies and reduce the rate of abortion, women should have ready access to quality health-care services that include reliable information, counselling and medical care to enable them to terminate pregnancies in those cases where it is allowed by law, if they so decide, and that provide for the management of complications and sequelae of unsafe abortion. Post-abortion counselling, education and family-planning services should be offered promptly so as to prevent repeat abortions."

The European Union also worked hard on preparing an alternative version that might be acceptable for the wide range of views in Europe, and which, more particularly, might also be supported by Ireland, where abortion is prohibited by constitutional law. The European Union hoped that its alternative might also prove to be an acceptable compromise on a world scale:

Alternative 8.25. "All Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to deal openly and forthrightly with unsafe abortion as a major public health concern. Governments are urged to assess the health impact of unsafe abortion and to reduce the need for abortion through expanded and improved family-planning

services. Prevention of unwanted pregnancies must always be given the highest priority and all attempts should be made to eliminate the need for abortion. In no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning. In circumstances where abortion is legal, women who wish to terminate their pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information and compassionate counselling and such abortion should be safe. In all cases, women should have access to services for the management of complications arising from unsafe abortions. Any measures to provide for safe and legal abortion within the health system can only be determined at the national level through policy changes and legislative processes which reflect the diversity of views on the issue of abortion."

As early as Prepcom III, several delegations suggested the European alternative was an acceptable compromise, albeit not an ideal one. In the conference corridors, the European Union was advised by several developing countries to remain patient because its proposal would eventually prove to be the only acceptable text. Nevertheless, consensus was not reached at Prepcom III, not on the new Paragraph 8.25, nor on the European alternative. Both the above-mentioned versions—the amended Secretariat draft and the European alternative—were therefore placed between brackets.

In Cairo, Chairman Biegman immediately set the abortion debate in motion on the basis of the European compromise. To everyone's surprise, not least the Europeans, the European alternative received a high level of support right from the outset. The support came from every corner of the planet—Africa, Asia, North and Latin America, and obviously Europe. Moreover, a number of delegations suggested that the last sentence of the Secretariat proposal, concerning the avoidance of repeated abortions, be added to the European alternative, a proposal which was immediately accepted by the Union. Only the Holy See, Malta, and some Latin American countries such as Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and now Argentina, continued to raise objections. A total of 85 delegations voiced their opinions on Paragraph 8.25!

On the basis of informal discussions with the above-mentioned opponents, Chairman Biegman worked out a new compromise where the main difference to the European alternative was a change in the sentence order. Biegman's initiative was severely criticized in the conference corridors, as most people felt the EU alternative was closest to producing a general agreement. However, the Chairman's proposal was immediately approved by a number

of countries, such as Iran, Nicaragua, Benin, Pakistan, that were previously opposed to it. The European Union, the Scandinavian countries and the US were prepared to accept the Chairman's compromise if it were not amended any further. The Holy See was alone in reserving its judgement and was booed by, both from the floor and the gallery, for not joining the consensus. The next day, several other delegations, mainly from Central America, and also Benin which seemed to have reconsidered its position overnight, and Malta of course, still had difficulties with the latest proposal, as a result of which Paragraph 8.25 was again referred for consideration by an informal working group.

However, the text was approved unanimously in the Main Committee a few days later, despite the repeated artful tactics employed by the Maltese delegation and others in a bid to further tone down the Chairman's proposal. The Holy See, together with Malta, Ecuador, Jordan and Libya, declared that they would define their position on this paragraph later, in the Plenary. The wording finally approved of Paragraph 8.25 specified that:

8.25. "In no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning. All Governments and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to strengthen their commitment to women's health, to deal with the health impact of unsafe abortion as a major public health concern and to reduce the recourse to abortion through expanded and improved family planning services. Prevention of unwanted pregnancies must always be given the highest priority and all attempts should be made to eliminate the need for abortion. Women who have unwanted pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information and compassionate counselling. Any measures or changes related to abortion within the health system can only be determined at the national or local level according to the national legislative process. In circumstances in which abortion is not against the law, such abortion should be safe. In all cases women should have access to quality services for the management of complications arising from abortion. Post-abortion counselling, education and family planning services should be offered promptly, which will also help to avoid repeat abortions."

Chapter VIII included two other themes, namely "safe motherhood" and "condoms", which gave rise to a debate during Prepcom III.

"Safe motherhood", an action initiated in a great number of developing countries in order to achieve optimal health care for mothers and newborn children, may obviously involve abortion, but it does not promote it. The brackets round this concept were removed in Cairo after the definition of safe motherhood was included in a footnote.

That policy positions can sometimes lead to personal and professional problems for some delegation members is underscored by the experience of the Bolivian representative who, at Prepcom III, defended brilliantly and passionately "safe motherhood" and other progressive initiatives mainly seeking the emancipation of women. The Bolivian nuncio unjustly reported her to the Bolivian President for having defended at the meeting abortion, homosexuality and other improper practices. It is to Chairman Biegan's credit that he made an official protest to the Bolivian President about the allegation against these imputations. The Bolivian representative was not recalled from the New York meeting, yet appeared to be untraceable at the subsequent Cairo Conference.

Attempts by the Holy See and some other delegations to delete from the section on HIV/AIDS the word "condom" and to replace it by "voluntary abstinence" failed, mainly because the European Union and a few other delegations proposed mentioning both terms. Paragraph 8.31 thus specifies:

... "Health providers, including family-planning providers need in counselling on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection, including the assessment and identification of high-risk behaviours needing special attention and services; training in the promotion of safe an responsible sexual behaviour, including voluntary abstinence, and condom use; training in the avoidance of contaminated equipment and blood products; and in the avoidance of sharing needles among injecting drug users."...

6.4.9. *Population distribution, urbanisation and internal migration*

As for present and expected trends in the further urbanisation of the population, Chapter IX recommends seeking to achieve a more balanced spatial distribution of the population, to combat internal migration pressures, and to improve the quality of life in both urban and rural areas, while taking account of their ecological sustainability.

Further, it is recommended lending support to people displaced within a country and trying to stop forced migration and ethnic cleansing.

Few objections were raised about this chapter, during Prepcom III or the Cairo Conference. So a consensus was quickly achieved.

6.4.10. *International migration*

This chapter deals with the relations between international migration and the development issue. It considers in great detail the different categories of migrants: legal and illegal migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons.

The emphasis changed quite considerably between the Secretariat's original text and the version approved at Prepcom III. The most important amendments were introduced on the basis of proposals from the European Union, which was able to put its detailed recommendations of the European Population Conference to worthwhile use.

The Secretariat's original draft was couched in rather exuberant terms concerning the supposed advantages of international migration:

10.1. ... "Most international migration have positive impacts on both the communities of origin and the communities of destination, providing the former with remittances and the latter with needed human resources. International migration also has the potential of facilitating the transfer of technology. "...

This text was changed into the following, somewhat more restrained form of wording, and more was said about the "brain drain" issue:

10.1. ... "Orderly international migration can have positive impacts on both the communities of origin and the communities of destination, providing the former with remittances and the latter with needed human resources. International migration also has the potential of facilitating the transfer of skills and contributing to cultural enrichment. However, international migration entails the loss of human resources for many countries of origin and may give rise to political, economic or social tensions in countries of destination. "...

The original text on the objectives, which went as follows,

10.2. "The objective is to maximize the benefits of migration to those concerned and increase the likelihood that migration has positive consequences for the development of both sending and receiving countries."

was completely recast and amplified as follows:

10.2. "(a) To address the root causes of migration, especially those related to poverty;

(b) To encourage more cooperation and dialogue between countries of origin and countries of destination in order to maximize the benefits of migration to those concerned and increase the likelihood that migration has positive consequences for the development of both sending and receiving countries;

(c) To facilitate the reintegration process of returning migrants."

As far as the legal immigrants are concerned this chapter not only advocates their social and economic integration and their protection from discrimination, racism, ethnocentrism and xenophobia, but also the need to take account of their religious beliefs and cultural values:

10.9. ... "It is also important to protect documented migrants and their families from racism, ethnocentrism and xenophobia, and to respect their physical integrity, dignity, religious beliefs and cultural values."

...

The change from draft to approved text basically resulted in a more qualified text, in which the emphasis was shifted to a policy designed to eliminate the causes of international migration and particularly of illegal migration and thus enable people to achieve full development in their own countries and cultures:

10.3. "Governments of countries of origin and of countries of destination should seek to make the option of remaining in one's country viable for all people. To that end, efforts to achieve sustainable economic and social development, ensuring a better economic balance between developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition, should be strengthened."...

Mention is made in this chapter too of the fact that every country is entitled to decide who may enter its territory and under what conditions:

10.15. ... "It is the right of every nation State to decide who can enter and stay in its territory and under what conditions. Such right, however, should be exercised taking care to avoid racist or xenophobic actions and policies. "...

The draft sent to Cairo had only two "brackets".

In Paragraph 10.3 some Islamic delegations objected to the wording

10.3. ... "to ensure that the human rights of individuals belonging to minorities, and indigenous people are respected. "...

because they feared that "individuals belonging to" might also include homosexuals. The text was changed to

10.3. ... "to ensure that the rights of persons belonging to ethnic, religious en linguistic minorities, and indigenous people are respected. "...

A more difficult case was Paragraph 10.12 in which the passage

... "and recognize the rights to family reunification"...

seemed to be unacceptable to several western countries, particularly Canada, Australia, Switzerland and the United States. They objected in particular to the introduction of the concept of "right", because they believed the ICPD was not the appropriate forum for creating new rights. A heated debate ensued on this subject, in which many developing countries, particularly the fundamentalist defenders of the family, expressed their annoyance, if not their indignation about the attitude of the western countries. One of the NGO conference newspapers (McKenzy and Dayal, 1994) ran the headline

"North using migration issue as "contraceptive"..."

Some sections of the media blamed the EU in particular, though it adopted a moderate position on this matter and tried hard to find a compromise acceptable for all. Through the Osservatore Romano of September 12, the Vatican even spoke of the "neocolonialist" attitude of the West towards the Third World, because of its refusal to admit the absolute right to family reunification and this allegation was recently repeated by the Pope himself.

However, what is involved is mainly a discussion of principles because most western countries in fact apply policies aimed at reuniting families.

Finally, on the basis of a proposal by a working group, chaired by the Egyptian representative, Soliman Awaad, consensus was reached on a form of words in which any explicit mention of the right to family reunification was avoided, but which recommended inserting this provision into the national legislation of the countries receiving immigrants:

10.12. ... "Consistent with Article 10 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and all other relevant universally recognized human rights instruments, all Governments, particularly those of receiving countries, must recognize the vital importance of family reunification and promote its integration into their national legislation in order to ensure the protection of the unity of the families of documented migrants." ...

More than 35 delegations regretted that the accepted text no longer explicitly recognizes the right to family reunification. The proposal of the working group to organize a world conference on international migration, during which the question of family reunification would be re-examined, was approved of by many developing countries.

6.4.11. Population, development and education

This chapter focuses on the importance of education in the general development of a region and on the complex connections between education and demographic variables. The main aims here are to promote a high standard of education and fight against illiteracy.

Emphasis is also placed on the importance of information and of a change in attitude towards population and development issues.

The Secretariat draft of Chapter XI was extended quite considerably at Prepcom III. The text was initially confined to population matters. On the proposal of France, the chapter's approach was broadened and much more attention was paid to education itself. The general objectives were expressed as follows:

11.5. "(a) To achieve universal access to quality education, with particular priority being given to primary and technical education and

job training, to combat illiteracy and to eliminate gender disparities in access to retention in, and support for, education;

(b) To promote non-formal education for young people, guaranteeing equal access for women and men to literacy centres;

(c) To introduce and improve the content of the curriculum so as to promote greater responsibility and awareness on the interrelationships between population and sustainable development; health issues, including reproductive and sexual health, and gender equity."

But the original text, which was much more focused on population matters, was also retained. Its targets were expressed as follows:

11.15. "(a) To increase awareness, knowledge, understanding and commitment at all levels of society so that families, couples, individuals, opinion and community leaders, non-governmental organizations, policy makers, Governments and the international community appreciate the significance and relevance of population-related issues and will take the responsible actions necessary to address such issues within sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development.

(b) To encourage attitudes in favour of responsible behaviour in population and development, especially in areas such as environment, family, sexuality, reproduction, gender and racial sensitivity;

(c) To ensure political commitment to population and development issues by national Governments in order to promote participation at all levels from both public and private sectors in the design, implementation and monitoring of population and development policies and programmes;

(d) To enhance the ability of couples and individuals to exercise their basic right to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children, and to have the information, education and means to do so."

6.4.12. *The other chapters (XII to XVI) of the Cairo Action Programme*

Although Chapters I to XI concentrate on the substance of population and development issues, the Chapters XII to XVI deal with the organisation and application side of things. Apart from the issue of financing the development aid, these chapters excited less discussion and controversy than the previous ones.

At Prepcom III these chapters too, were worked out in a more detailed and qualified way and the conceptual terminology was adjusted to reflect the consensus on the previous chapters.

Chapter XII is concerned with technology, research and development. It recommends making greater efforts in all areas relating to population and development, including the study of demographic and socio-economic behaviour and the development of new fertility regulation methods.

Chapter XIII deals with national action. It includes an important section on securing financial resources and putting them to worth. Paragraph 13.15 tells us that the estimated cost of implementing the Action Programme on reproductive health (including family planning, maternal health, and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases) and the collection and analysis of population data in developing countries and those with economies in transition is \$17 billion in the year 2000 and \$21.7 billion in the year 2015. Approximately half of this sum is necessary for family planning.

These figures were the subject of much discussion both in the "Main Committee" and in one of the informal working groups. The doubts of many people expressed about the basis used to calculate this figure and about the financial implications of extending the Action Programme from family planning to reproductive health, was finally reflected in the following addition to Paragraph 13.15:

... "these are cost estimates prepared by experts, based on experience to date, of the four components referred to above. These estimates should be reviewed and updated on the basis of the comprehensive approach reflected in Paragraph 13.14 of this Programme of Action, particularly with respect to the costs of implementing reproductive health service delivery;"...

There was also quite a lot of discussion about Paragraph 13.16, which states that two thirds of the costs will continue to be borne by the countries themselves, and one third by outside donors. Consensus was finally reached about a European amendment intended to qualify the text in the following way:

"It is tentatively estimated that up to two thirds of the costs will continue to be met by the countries themselves and in the order of one third from external sources."...

Chapter XIV considers international cooperation. As well as making recommendations well worth considering in this area, the chapter also features a section calling for a large increase in the level of international financial assistance for population and development, so as to be able to achieve the Action Programme goals in the developing countries and the countries with economies in transition:

14.10. "(a) To increase substantially the availability of international financial assistance in the field of population and development in order to enable developing countries and countries with economies in transition to achieve the goals of the present Programme of Action as they pursue their self-reliant and capacity-building efforts;" ...

Paragraph 14.11, dealing with the contribution made by the donor countries, was also amended to include one or two qualifications. The 20/20 initiative was referred to the forthcoming "World Summit for Social Development". The approved paragraph now runs as follows:

"The international community should strive for the fulfillment of the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for overall ODA and endeavour to increase the share of funding for population and development programmes commensurate with the scope and scale of activities required to achieve the objectives and goals of the present Programme of Action. A crucially urgent challenge to the international donor community is therefore the translation of their commitment to the objectives and quantitative goals of the present Programme of Action into commensurate financial contributions to population programmes in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Given the magnitude of the financial resource needs for national population and development programmes as identified in chapter XIII, and assuming that recipient countries will be able to generate sufficient increases in domestically generated resources, the need for complementary resource flows from donor countries would be in the order of (in 1993 US dollars) : 5,7 billion in 2000; 6,1 billion in 2005; 6,8 billion in 2010; 7,2 billion in 2015. The international community takes note of the initiative to mobilize resources to give all people access to basic social services, known as the 20/20 initiative, which will be studied further in the context of the World Summit for Social Development."

Chapter XV is concerned with developing a partnership with the non-governmental sector. It naturally recommends promoting an effective partnership between all levels of government and the entire range of non-governmental organisations and local community groups for the design, the implementation and the evaluation of programmes relating to population, development, and environment. At Prepcom III it was decided, however, that this objective should be subordinated to governmental policy:

15.7. "The objective is to promote an effective partnership between all levels of Government and the full range of non-governmental organizations and local community groups, in the discussion and decisions on the design, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of programmes relating to population, development and environment in accordance with the general policy framework of Governments, taking duly into account the responsibilities and roles of the respective partners."

Chapter XV also includes a section on developing partnership with the private sector. Its targets were defined as follows:

1.5.15. (a) "To strengthen the partnership between Governments, international organizations and the private sector in identifying new areas of cooperation;
(b) To promote the role of the private sector in service delivery and in the production and distribution, within each region of the world, of high-quality reproductive health and family-planning commodities and contraceptives, which are accessible and affordable to low-income sectors of the population."

The last chapter of the Cairo Action Programme contains, as always the case with major UN action programmes, a detailed presentation of the follow up to the Conference at national, regional and international levels. Follow-up at international level obviously relates to the periodical assessment by the UN General Assembly and the UN ECOSOC of how the Action Programme is being implemented, particularly by the different UN bodies, including the UNFPA.

7. EVALUATION

7.1 | Evaluation of the process

7.1.1. *From the Prepcoms to the ICPD*

Chapter 5 showed what a major undertaking it is to organise a UN conference of the ICPD type. High level decisions have to be taken, i.e. in the UN General Assembly and in ECOSOC, and there are years of preparation in the Population Division and the UNFPA, in subsequent Prepcoms, in various expert groups and regional conferences, in national committees and conferences, in parallel NGO activities and scientific preparatory conferences, and finally there is the ICPD itself.

The gestation process is long and complex and the participant who experiences the whole exercise, is likely to get irritated because such little progress is made to start with. One has only to think about the one page of contents which resulted from Prepcom II, after two weeks of meetings. The initial slow progress seems to have been planned deliberately by the ICPD Secretariat, with a view to giving the developing countries the opportunity to express themselves and using the feedback as basis for preparing proposals.

It was apparently considered more important to get the various sides to participate than to heed the feedback, because all the ideas that were incorporated into the Draft Final Document the ICPD Secretariat prepared for Prepcom III, were already featured in Dr. Sadik's (1993) statement to Prepcom II, one year earlier.

7.1.2. *The organisation of the Conference*

UN conferences function on the basis of cumbersome rules of procedure and subtle political balances.

As mentioned, the ICPD was fortunate to have an excellent presidency and secretariat and to have been able to rely on the services of the Population Division's eminent experts for the preparation of the draft documents of the Conference.

The Conference was also able to take advantage of the fact that numerous population and other experts attended the meetings and in many, though unfortunately not all, delegations, there was an excellent symbiosis between politicians, diplomats and experts. It is, indeed, to be regretted that population experts could not play a prominent role in all delegations. Some countries which nevertheless dispose of numerous population scientists, didn't even include in their delegation any of their outstanding population scholars, but were represented by human rights experts, women's rights activists, or diplomats. Although it is true that many of these people are nowadays better informed about population issues than ever before, a larger participation of policy minded population scientists might have given greater weight to the population factor and made some discussions more easy. But the political backbenching or even silencing of population scholars is precisely what some governments are up to. This was already the case in Bucharest and, although the political awareness of the population issue has clearly gained in importance, it was nevertheless still felt in Cairo.

Some are of the view that demographers have played a less prominent role at the Cairo Conference than at the previous UN population conferences and that even the number of people with a background in population sciences would have been lower than before (Van de Kaa, 1995). This is difficult to evaluate. The number of population experts might, actually, have been higher, given the fact that many more developing countries now also included demographers in their delegation. In order to evaluate the impact of population experts at the Conference, one would need insight in their role within each of the national delegations, not only at the Conference itself but also in the important preparatory activities, at the national as well as at the international level. Our experience is limited to the activities of the European Union, and here there can be no doubt that population experts from several member states did play an important role. In many cases —Germany, Greece, Italy, the Low Countries, Spain, U.K.— population experts formed the driving force and sometimes even served as spokespersons of their delegation. Last but not least, one should not forget the important impact experts had via the preparatory expert groups the recommendations of which are largely included in the Cairo Programme of Action, and the role of the

experts of the UN Population Division, who were in charge of the draft of the Final Document.

Irksome was the fact that during Prepcom III and the ICPD itself, the Main Committee was required to draft and amend texts in plenary sessions — a virtually impossible assignment with more than 180 delegations. That this operating procedure nevertheless proved to be successful is the result of the decision for the most difficult questions to be dealt with in "informal informals" and other small working groups, and the talent and humour of vice-chairman N. Biegman who, as the Secretary-General said during the closing Plenary, guided the Main Committee through the most difficult chapters "with the patience of a saint and the tenacity of a bulldog".

7.1.3. The host country Egypt

This Islamic developing country which, notwithstanding the criticisms, threats, and attacks from national and non-national Islamic fundamentalists, deserves the highest praise for the outstanding efforts it made to succeed in organising one of the largest international and intergovernmental conferences ever held.

The Egyptian government achieved success with all the precautions it took to guarantee the physical security and peace of mind of the 13,000 or so participants. A security force of 16,000 policemen was especially deployed for the Conference and exceptionally tough security measures were enforced in and around the airport, on roads leading to the Conference buildings, hotels and touristic attractions and anywhere ICPD participants might appear. The ICPD apparently was to be held under a possible siege.

For Egypt this Conference was obviously a welcome opportunity to express the prominent international role it seeks to play in the Arabic, Islamic and African regions.

Outside the Islamic world people are insufficiently aware of just how much pressure the Egyptian Government was under as a result of the ideological criticisms of the Islamists, the attacks on foreigners before the Conference, and the threat of attacks during the Conference. Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt and abroad, as well as envious neighbouring countries did not refrain from blaming the Egyptian government for organising this 'godless', 'obscene', 'atheistic', etc. conference on Islamic soil.

The Egyptians therefore took every opportunity to express their Islamic identity and Arabic pioneer role.

In his opening speech President Mubarak was at pains to demonstrate how Egyptian population policy is perfectly in keeping with established religious values and laws:

... "All these phenomena call for intensifying the efforts exerted to deal with the population issue and control overpopulation in conformity with divine laws and religious values, hoping to reach reasonable growth rates that are in keeping with resources in a bid to attain a better future for the coming generations."...

... "We have been quite keen to make our population programme conforming to the established religious values, because we believe that the values of true religion is a strong impetus towards reform as long as intentions are good, tolerance is prevalent, and all of us are keen on content and significance rather than on form and appearance."...

As the main articles in the Egyptian newspapers showed not one day during the Conference passed without Egyptian leaders trying to stress their Islamic credentials in one way or another.

Thus, President Mubarak (The Egyptian Gazette, 7/9/94) stated on the 6th of September:

"Egypt is defending its Islamic values through its presence at the Conference."

On the 7th of September, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Amr Moussa (The Egyptian Gazette, 8/9/94), stated:

... "The ultimate aim of the (Egyptian) proposals is to remove any contradiction between the articles of the final document and Islamic Sharia."...

On the 9th of September Moussa (The Egyptian Gazette, 10/9/94) stated:

... "Islamic countries support Egypt at ICPD."...

And on the 12th of September Moussa (The Egyptian Gazette, 13/9/94) even announced:

... "Egypt leads a tough battle on behalf of the Muslim world."...

Comments in the Egyptian press seem to suggest that the Egyptian leaders mainly aimed at —and apparently also succeeded in— pulling the Islamic rug from under Iran's fundamentalistic feet. Faced with all that Islamic might, the Iranian delegation was in the end compelled to praise the host country for its efforts to bring the Conference to a successful conclusion. The head of the Iranian delegation, Mohamed Ali Taskhiri, even expressed the hope that the unanimous action of Egypt and Iran at the ICPD would help to improve the diplomatic ties between Cairo en Teheran (Aziz, 1994b). The board chairman of The Egyptian Gazette therefore concluded at the end of the ICPD (Ragab, 1994b):

"DETENTE AFTER TENSION:

One of the most salient outcomes of the ICPD's meetings has undoubtedly been the apparent Egyptian-Iranian rapprochement that came after long years of tension and disparity."...

From this point of view, Egypt's need to obtain an "Islamic victory" in the conference discussions is very understandable. However, as host country of a global, intergovernmental conference, Egypt sometimes took a premature stand. Before things were settled, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Amr Moussa, confided to "The Egyptian Gazette" of 9th September that the final document

... "will stress respect for religions, ethics, cultures an laws."

In the same issue of "The Egyptian Gazette" the leading article stated:

"Egyptian amendments save ICPD"

Those amendments concerned, in particular, the proposal to include in the text the concept "normal sex", to drop the sexual and reproductive rights of adolescents and individuals, to remove the term "unions", to drop the equality of the sexes with respect to inheritance rights and to include, in six different places moreover, the qualification "religions, ethics, cultures and traditions".

In order to preserve key components of the Action Programme and perhaps even to save the negotiations, if not to prevent the Conference turning into a complete failure, Western countries, and in particular the European Union, went along with the Egyptian demands. After all, it is impossible to avoid concluding that the Islamic emphasis in the conference speeches and at the press conferences of the Egyptian President Mubarak, the Egyptian Conference chairman, Minister Mahran, and the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Moussa, was intended more for home and regional consumption than for the ears of the international community. Indeed, Egypt, together with the European Union, played a key intermediary role and was not able to substantiate all of its Islamic amendments. Egypt could not, however, allow the Conference to suffer a defeat.

At this juncture, we would like to pay tribute to the Egyptian delegation for the restrained and shrewd approach it adopted during the Conference, despite coming under heavy pressure: it had to take account of its own line of command, contend with threats from Islamic fundamentalists, and pay heed to the positions of other Islamic delegations, reports in the local media, and the persistent arguments of western delegations.

7.1.4. The other key participants

7.1.4.1. The G77

The G77 and China (made up of more than 130 developing countries) represented one of the most important group of participants at the Conference — after all, the ICPD was designed mainly with this group in mind.

Chaired by the delegation of an Islamic country (Algeria), and composed of a wide range of countries covering a broad variety of views, the G77 was often in the front line expressing conflicting messages: development, development, and more development, but also tradition, religion, family!

As a result of its diversity, the G77 does not appear to operate in as united manner as the European Union, which is supposed to be one of the G77's main adversaries. Away from the Conference hall, the Algerian chairman was heard to complain that developing countries too often took different positions without consulting with the G77-presidency.

The G77 expressed conservative or more traditional opinions with strong emphasis on the importance of religion and cultural traditions, during the informal negotiations but not in the official declaration. Perhaps this was be-

cause the G77 was chaired by Algeria, that felt the hot breath of the FIS in its back, or because the conference took place in Cairo, or alternatively (a factor that should not be underestimated) because several countries belonging to the Islamic region (Egypt as host country, Iran as fundamentalistic heaven, Pakistan with its female Prime Minister) were very active in the informal working groups. Or are religion, culture and tradition simply used as psychological counterweight to the accursed, materialistic West, that is still miles ahead, in terms of development (that magical word again).

7.1.4.2. The developed countries

The European Union presumably served as a model for the G77 at the ICPD. The Union, indeed, speaks with one voice and sticks firmly to that cape of conduct (sometimes to the great annoyance of some delegations or experts who would have liked to see the EU-spokesperson adopt a more dynamic or energetic position). The frustration of individual European delegations or delegation members, however, makes no difference to the miraculous effect of Europe's united approach. As mentioned, the European Union is generally listened to attentively, not only because of its economic or political strength, but mainly because it is known from experience that the European Union is full of experts who have already discussed and fought the various issues among themselves. Moreover, their code of conduct in the political arena is aimed at achieving scientific objectivity and a general consensus. The EU positions are, furthermore, often the result of a preliminary compromise between conflicting views.

In this way, the European Union has played, at the Prepcoms as well as at the ICPD itself, an important mediating role and has contributed considerably to the preservation or improvement of scientifically justifiable texts or to the emergence of a general consensus. At the ICPD, Belgium, together with the Netherlands, Denmark, and above all the UK formed the dynamic core of the EU, and were always and everywhere present. Often they offered advice to the sometimes uninspired and reluctant EU spokespersons and spurring them on to greater efforts and more daring positions, or reminding them to keep to the EU agreements.

At the ICPD, European voices were also heard from the even more progressive and active group of Scandinavian countries. Their contribution to the international forum will be missed when they join the European Union, but this will be to the advantage of the Union itself of which they are already now informal members.

The only European countries no longer voicing their opinions are the so-called economic transition countries. The former Yugoslavia that played such an important role at the previous world population conferences, has been excluded and the other former centrally planned economies veiled themselves in a hideous silence. They are traumatised by their economic regression and social malaise and are concentrating on developing an effective form of cooperation with the EU and the US.

There is more to the WEOG (Western European and Others Group) than just the European Union and the Scandinavians. Non-European Anglo-saxon countries, especially the United States, Canada and Australia, whose hallmarks are expertise and active participation, also have to be taken into account.

As far as the United States is concerned, the ICPD has witnessed a miraculous turn-around. Whereas the Mexico Conference experienced the debacle of the regressive Reagan policy —people overthere were talking about the "voodoo-demography" of the American delegation— leading to the withdrawal of the substantial level of US support and aid for the UNFPA and the IPPF, the ICPD saw the United States return in style to the conference table. Under President Clinton US support for the UNFPA etc. was not only re-established, but considerably increased (+50 per cent), notwithstanding strong political opposition and pressure from the conservatives.

7.1.4.3. *The Holy See*

Among the most active participants, the Holy See forms a special case. Although the Vatican has no more than a permanent observer status in the UN, it considers itself as the moral representative of the world's Catholics and acts accordingly.

The veterans of the Bucharest and Mexico Conferences, as well as the readers of papal encyclical letters and other Roman Catholic writings had already predicted it at Prepcom I, in 1992. There, the representative of the Holy See had contested the renowned Bucharest principle

... "All couples and individuals have the basic human right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so"...

in the sense that the above-mentioned right ought to be limited to married couples. A Bucharest veteran promptly reminded the assembly that this

principle was already agreed upon, twenty years ago, after long and difficult negotiations, and resisted reopening the discussion as this would prevent the meeting from making any substantial progress.

When the ICPD Secretariat draft for Prepcom III became available in February 1994, the sparks really started flying. On March 18th Pope John Paul II (1994) delivered a letter to Dr. N. Sadik, Secretary-General of ICPD, which not only included the notorious sentence

"In the face of the so called culture of death, the family is the heart of the culture of life."

but also formed the start of one of the most heated campaigns of his sixteen year old pontificate (Tincq, 1994). Three times, among others during Prepcom III and the ICPD itself, he addressed himself directly to all heads of state. On March 25th, 1994 the diplomatic corps was convened to the Vatican and was handed several documents in which the viewpoint of the Holy See about the ICPD Draft Final Document was presented (Etchegaray, 1994; Joannes Paulus, 1994; Saint-Siège, 1994; Tauran, 1994; Trujillo, 1994). In these documents the Holy See not only stubbornly resisted the Secretariat's draft texts on abortion, "safe" and "unsafe" abortion, but also those concerning the sexual and reproductive rights of individuals, sterilisation, the use of condoms in the fight against AIDS, other forms of partnership than marriage, such as unmarried cohabitation and homosexual relations. The Holy See, moreover, expressed the view that the Secretariat's draft paid too much attention to fertility regulation, that it approved of promiscuity and premature sexual relations, that it focused too much on population policy in the strict sense of the term, and that religion, ethical values, culture and tradition were not respected enough. Finally, it was also stated that the Secretariat's draft used statistical data in an inaccurate and selective way.

The Holy See declared at Prepcom III and also at the ICPD itself—probably with a view to calming the opposition to the Vatican's action and proposals—that it wanted adopt a cooperative stance and contribute to the work involved in securing a consensus. But it introduced amendments intended to weaken or deprive all the above mentioned issues of their force. Moreover, it systematically instructed the small group of countries, mainly from Central-America and Central-Africa, and the inevitable Malta, which still support the Vatican through thick and thin, about the strategy to be adopted and the necessary amendments.

At the ICPD the same scenario was repeated, culminating in the booing on the gallery of the NGO-observers and in the Main Committee when the Holy See, as only delegation, could not (yet) join, that fateful Friday evening, the consensus about Paragraph 8.25.

Convinced that there was absolutely nothing to be done with the Holy See, the European Union and many other countries tried to reach an agreement with the Islamic and conservative Latin-American and African countries on Paragraph 8.25 and other controversial subjects — a strategy which, in the end, proved to be successful.

The unyielding and conservative attitude of the Holy See not only caused dissatisfaction and irritation among many ICPD delegations, but also outside the ICPD where progressive Catholics (Catholics speak out, 1994), women's movements and other NGO's (Bryant and Stanley, 1994; Fraser, 1994; Rogers, 1994), expressed their displeasure about the obstruction of the Conference as a result of which more major subjects got less consideration than minor ones such as abortion, individual sexual rights, adolescent guardianship, sex in or out of marriage, etc. Some NGO's (Deen, 1994) stated that the privileged position of the Vatican in the UN should be reconsidered, since it does not behave in such conferences as a state, but as religion, a prerogative of which other ideologies that do not have a city-state, do not enjoy.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Holy See is largely responsible for the fact that the focus of public opinion as well as the Conference activities themselves were diverted from the real aims and the central themes of the gathering. In the first place there is the Vatican's influence on the media. The media is always on the lookout for news about conflicts so as to be able to satisfy the general public's voracious appetite for such news items. Owing to its vigorous and aggressive campaign, the Holy See is largely responsible for the fact that the media have shown the ICPD in a light that clearly differs from the major thrust of its basic document. The ideological clash over abortion and some other sexual and reproductive themes was expressed well, whereas the real problems of the excessive population growth in the developing countries and their underdevelopment, the environmental threats, the overconsumption in the developed countries, and the question of the necessary financial resources were pushed into the background.

The Conference has had to spend an amount of time on marginal issues which is out of all proportion as regards the essential conference theme — popula-

tion and sustainable development. As for the Conference itself the Holy See has consequently helped to give a distorted view of the Conference aims and activities. In line with the Norwegian Prime Minister G.H. Brundtland (1994) who started her keynote address on the opening session of the Conference with the words

"Let us turn from the dramatizing of this Conference which has been going on in the media, and focus on the main issues. We are gathered here to answer a moral call to action. Solidarity with present and future generations has its price. But if we do not pay it in full, we will be faced with global bankruptcy."...

many delegations have emphasized during the course of the Conference that the ICPD is not a meeting focused on abortion issues, but on population and development. For that reason, the Presidency of the Conference has, in mutual consultation, tried to place Paragraph 8.25 at the beginning of the discussions so as to be rid of the ideological question as soon as possible and to pave the way for unbracketing many other paragraphs, especially in Chapter VII, and to be able to focus all attention on the basic themes of the Conference.

However, the abortion controversy at the ICPD can also be seen in a different light. It can, indeed be questioned whether the Cairo Conference would have attracted the considerable attention it received in the mass media and even among governments and international organisations if ideologically disputed issues such as abortion, sexual rights, and plurality of the family would not have been brought to the fore. In the end, it might well be that the abortion controversy has served, instead of harmed the population issue.

It is probably not correct to claim that a "Holy Alliance" was formed between the Vatican and the Islam — the Vatican has for that matter categorically denied this. However, there can be no doubt that the vigorous campaigning of the Holy See succeeded in stirring up fundamentalist sentiment in the Islamic world against the ICPD. The best but not only proof can therefore be found in the viewpoints proclaimed by the "Islamic Research Academy", the "Fatwa Consultation Committee" and "the International Islamic Centre for Population Studies and Research" of the Al-Azhar University in Cairo (Al-Azhar, 1994), in which the Roman Catholic criticisms on the ICPD draft appear almost verbatim. Even the methodological criticisms of definitions and statistics are included.

At the Prepcoms and during the ICPD itself, the Holy See c.s. and a number of Islamic delegations, and obviously especially Iran, were seen to be on the same wavelength. The Holy See therefore seems to be making a habit of finding, if not seeking, allies among conservative and backward looking regimes. In Bucharest it formed a monstrous alliance with the then fascist regimes from South America (Argentina and Brazil) and with the Soviet Bloc (Cliquet en Veys, 1974), in Mexico 1984 it stood side by side with the Reagan delegation (Cliquet en Vandeveld, 1985), and in Cairo it was in tune with the Islamic fundamentalists, and especially with Iran, and it was above all supported by the right-wing governments of small Central American states.

7.1.4.4. *The Islam countries*

Finally, emphasis needs to be placed on the important role of the Islamic countries. First of all, note should be taken of the major differences of opinions and attitudes within as well as among the Islamic countries, ranging from conservative fundamentalists who considered the ICPD as a Conference of obscenity and godlessness seeking to impose baneful western behaviour patterns on the world of Islam, such as abortion, promiscuity and homosexuality, to the Egyptian organisers of the Conference. This Islamic diversity appears on all sides: in the editorials of the Egyptian newspapers, in the viewpoints of the different Islamic countries at the Conference, in the divergent attitudes of the "Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC)" which recommended the Islam countries to participate in the Conference and of the "Islamic World League" which condemned the Conference even before it was held and rejected the recommendations before they were disseminated (Ragab, 1994a). This diversity, if not even division, appeared most clearly in the carefully considered and balanced statement made at the opening session of the Conference by the courageous Pakistan Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, who came under fire from extremists in her own country because of her presence and participation. In her statement Premier Bhutto (1994) said in this respect:

"... A narrow-minded minority should not be allowed to dictate an agenda of backwardness. The world needs consensus. It does not need a clash of cultures. Where there is no consensus, there will have to be a willing whole-hearted recognition and acceptance of diversity."

As far as the essential themes of the Conference are concerned, Bhutto's line of reasoning was perfectly in keeping with the proposed Action Programme. Referring to Pakistan's recent and expected population increase, she stated

... "Pakistan cannot progress, if it cannot check its rapid population growth. Check it we must, for it is not the destiny of the people of Pakistan to live in squalor and poverty condemned to a future of hunger and horror."...

With respect to the role of the Islam in matters of population control she affirmed categorically:

... "The followers of Islam have no conceptual difficulty in addressing questions of regulating population in the light of available resources."...

But at the same time she stressed, probably for home consumption, the value of the traditional family, as basis of society, and founded on marriage, and criticised some passages in the draft Action Programme:

... "Regrettably, the conference's document contains serious flaws in striking at the heart of a great many cultural values, in the north and in the south, in the mosque and in the church. In Pakistan our response will doubtless be shaped by our belief in the eternal teachings of Islam."...

All this does not alter the fact that the Islamic world gave much sharper and more negative reactions to this Conference than the Bucharest and Mexico one. The Islamic fundamentalists have tried to boycott this Conference and have been largely responsible for distorting its image. The only four countries that refused to participate in the Conference —Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Sudan— all belong to the Islamic world. Yet, the ICPD was not a conspiracy seeking to promote abortion, promiscuity and homosexuality, let alone impose them on anyone. The American Vice-President Al Gore made that very clear in his statement at the opening session of the ICPD:

... "I want to be clear about the US position on abortion so that there is no misunderstanding. We believe that making available the highest quality family planning and health care services will simultaneously respect woman's own desires to prevent unintended pregnancies, reduce population growth, and the rate of abortion. The US Constitution guaranties very woman within our borders a right to choose an abortion, subject to limited and specific exceptions. We are committed to that principle. But let us take a false issue off the table: The United States does not seek to establish a new international right to abortion,

and we do not believe that abortion should be encouraged as a method of family planning.... We believe that where abortion is permitted, it should be medically safe and that unsafe abortion is a matter of woman's health that must be addressed"...

Also T.E. Wirth, Counselor to the U.S. State Department, declared in this respect (Stanley, 1994):

... "The issue of homosexuality has been blown way out of proportion. There is no conspiracy by the U.S. to promote homosexual unions. The language (in the program) came from the U.S, Latin American and African countries because of their desire to protect different kinds of families."...

There are, however, not only the Islamic fundamentalists to contend with. In most Islamic countries religion and state are still not separated and political and societal matters are tested against the Shari'ah, the Islamic law. The philosophical pluralism that characterizes western democracies, is still non-existent in most Islamic countries.

Another factor is that the ICPD was held in Cairo, the largest Islamic metropolis, the city of the Al-Azhar University. If this conference would have been held in New York or Geneva, the Islamic reaction would probably have been quite different.

However, those three factors —Islamic fundamentalism, the Islamic regime, and the Islamic location of the Conference— are not enough to explain the changed attitude of the Islamic countries towards the three world population conferences. Possibly there are another three explanatory factors.

Reference was already made to the vigorous campaign of the Holy See which also tried, apparently not without success, to mobilize the Islam world, as could be deduced from the views expressed by the Al-Azhar (1994). The Islamic writer and philosopher Fahmy Howeidy (1994) explicitly referred to the papal viewpoint in order to mobilize the Islamic leaders against the Conference:

"I have every reason to appeal to the conscience of people in the Arab and Islamic worlds to announce a rejection of the programmes and goals of the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo next September under the auspices of the

United Nations. Now that the Catholic Church and Pope John Paul II have focused the world's attention on the dangers that could result from the conference, I believe that it has become necessary for all Muslim leaders to proclaim their views and opinions on what is being planned for humanity — which I believe is going against human dignity. But above all else, it is a defiance of God's almighty will"...

But there was, obviously, the ICPD draft itself. This draft clearly went further than any previous UN document with respect to sexual equality, reproductive and sexual health care, and to adolescents, although it cannot be said that the ICPD draft intended to promote, let alone prescribe abortion, homosexuality and promiscuity.

When the matter is considered objectively, however, it has to be recognised that, quite apart from the unwarranted distortions, the ICPD draft did indeed include many recommendations that were out of step with a strict application of the Islamic Shari'ah.

The Al-Azhar comments on the ICPD draft illustrate that eloquently. With respect to the family Al-Azhar (1994) states:

... "The International Islamic Center maintains that there should be adherence to the definition of the family in Islam and other revealed religions which guarantee the establishment of the family on solid and unshakable foundations through certain initial behavioural attitudes on the part of any male or female stepping towards wedlock. The Center also maintains that marriage between man and woman with all its requirements and norms constitutes the only means of making a family"...

With respect to sexual relations "The Islamic Research Academy" argues:

"Islam does not acknowledge any sexual relations outside legal marriage between man and woman which is governed by certain conditions without which it becomes null and void. Moreover, it prescribes most severe punishments for the crimes of adultery and sodomy even in the case of mutual consent between adults. It also prohibits any advances leading to them such as outrageous association or secluded company between a man and a woman"...

... "Accordingly, it is against Islam to permit any modes of cohabitation other than marriage, as indicated in Paragraph 5 of Article

5 of the Draft, or to permit unmarried people to enjoy a full sexual life, as indicated by Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 7, or finally to permit making the services of sexual and venereal care, including family planning, available to everybody regardless of marriage as a requirement for extending such services, as is understood from Paragraphs 3, 4, 6 and 8 of Article 7."

Finally, on the question of abortion, it is stated that:

The Islamic Research Academy of Al-Azhar has ruled definitively that abortion is absolutely illicit (even if it is the result of adultery or rape), except in cases where it is medically established that, otherwise, the mother's life is in danger, because she is the origin, and that her existence is established and her right to live is an independent one"...

We believe that there is another, even more fundamental explanation for the Islamic reactions during the ICPD. In recent decades modernisation in the Islamic countries has been occurring at a fast pace, even faster than in the West at the time. The fundamentalist revolution is probably a reaction against the modern changes which the conservatives feel are having a harmful effect on their traditional visions and power. However, the socially uneven way in which modernisation occurs in many developing countries, a problem that is compounded by the population explosion, provides the traditional establishment with an extremely fertile soil for promoting its viewpoint.

It is typical that it was mainly developing countries, and more particularly Islamic countries which, naturally together with the Holy See, insisted on including a uniform concept of the family, and wanted to take account, at various points of the document, of religious beliefs, ethical values and cultural traditions.

It was never stated explicitly, but one is left with the impression that the emphasis on the traditional family and references to religious beliefs, ethical values and cultural traditions are primarily aimed at maintaining the traditional relations between the sexes and, consequently, perpetuate women's inferior position in society.

7.1.5. Similarities and dissimilarities

It is often claimed that the major UN conferences and more particularly those dealing with population issues, are characterised by North-South divisions. Without seeking to deny that there are, indeed, major conflicts of interest

between the developing and developed countries, we do not believe that these conflicts were at the root of the polarisation during the ICPD. On the contrary, many countries from both hemispheres proposed identical amendments or made similar comments on numerous issues. At Prepcom III, where the largest part of the text of the Action Programme was discussed and approved, the spokespersons for the European Union, the Scandinavian countries, the US, Canada, Nigeria, Botswana, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Peru and Bolivia often adopted similar positions, in opposition to those of countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Benin, Ivory Coast, Malta and, of course, the Vatican. Furthermore, as stated in Chapter One, the classical North-South divide is on the wave because of the increasing diversity of the southern countries and the worsening position of the economic transition countries.

Although it is true that developed countries raised environmental issues more often than the developing countries, which focused more on the debt question, this did not prevent both developed and developing countries joining forces to call for the stabilisation of the world population in combination with a change in consumption and production patterns in developed countries.

The real conflicts at the ICPD were located at another level and crossed the North-South divide. The most important conflict was focused on scientific-ideological tensions with the more scientifically and pragmatically-oriented delegations confronting the more ideologically motivated ones.

The controversies during the Bucharest Conference mainly revolved around an East-West division, but during the ICPD another ideological controversy was seen to be disturbing the international relations: the division between countries where there is a clear separation between religion and state and ones where there is not. In most Islam countries such a separation does not yet exist and the internal tensions between secularists and fundamentalists are set to increase. It is to be feared that this development will not remain without international repercussions. At the ICPD plenary closing session, Iran, for one, stated that, in the future, the United Nations will have to take religious values into account when considering development issues. That bodes well for the forthcoming women's conference in Beijing in 1995!

The cultural conflict —the controversy between traditionalism and modernisation— which appeared at the Cairo Conference raises the question whether the world community should continue to strive, via its UN global charters, towards the dissemination of a single, universal value and norm system,

promoting the modernisation process with its specific body of ideas on secularisation, individual emancipation and democratisation or whether it should accept and live with a diversity of value and norm systems which seems to emerge nowadays (Van de Kaa, 1995). In our view, this is not the essence of the conflict that disturbed the Cairo Conference. The controversy was not so much about different sets of values and norms between cultures and countries, as the advocates of cultural traditions and religious values want us to believe. The real issue at stake concerned differences in values and norms within cultures and countries, whereby pluralism clashed with uniformism. The first approach wants to guarantee not only between but also within country freedom of individual choice of values, norms, and lifestyles. The second is opposed to within country variation and wants to impose its moral views on all members of society and does not leave room for individual differences in opinion and choice. It does not come as a surprise that the latter view is usually fostered by traditional establishments who want to protect their interests and retain their advantages, displayed in their class, age, sex, ethnic, religious or other prerogatives. The international community must, more than ever before, exercise vigilance to preserve and spread the moral acquisitions of modern culture as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other UN charters. The contradiction between the general principles and national sovereignty and the strong emphasis on cultural traditions and religious values as featured in the Cairo Programme of Action is often a travesty of the principles adopted in the Universal Declaration.

7.1.6. Consensus and reservations

In UN meetings, with such large range in opinions and viewpoints, an attempt is made to reach conclusions on the basis of consensus, i.e. a general agreement which does not necessarily mean that the conclusions represent exactly everybody's ideas. In order to promote a general consensus the rules of procedure stipulate that delegations may express reservations or make comments about specific items in the conclusions or the agreements reached.

During the ICPD the amended texts were agreed upon by consensus, first in the Main Committee and subsequently in the Plenary. In the Main Committee meeting the Holy See and some other delegations announced that they would clarify their positions or express their reservations on particular issues in the Plenary.

As was to be expected the Holy See did not join the consensus on Chapters VII and VIII and all other paragraphs in the document dealing with abortion,

contraceptives, condoms, and sterilisation. In contrast to what happened during the Bucharest and Mexico Conferences, the Holy See agreed to sign the present document, but what is the point of signing when rejecting one of the key components of the Action Programme, i.e. everything concerning birth control?

A number of Central and South American countries, namely Argentina, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru, declared that they consider life to begin from the moment of conception and that fertility regulation and reproductive health must be interpreted in that restrictive sense. Malta was the only European country to share this view.

A number of predominantly Latin American countries, namely Argentina, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru as well as Ivory Coast, Malta, the United Arab Emirates, and naturally the Holy See, expressed explicit reservations about the recommendations on abortion.

Several, once again, predominantly Latin American countries, namely Argentina, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Ivory Coast, declared that the family or marriage should only include heterosexual relationships.

A number of Islamic countries, namely Afghanistan, Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Libya, Malaysia and Pakistan, and a few Latin-American countries, namely Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Guatemala as well as the Holy See, expressed reservations about the word "individuals" in relation to sexual and reproductive behaviour. For those delegations sex can occur only within marriage.

The Philippines regretted that the right to family reunification had been toned down and insisted that an international conference on migration would soon be convened.

Some countries —Djibouti, Ecuador, Honduras, Jordan, Kuwait, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates— also stated that they would apply the Cairo Programme of Action within the boundaries of their national legislation and/or with respect for their ethical, cultural, and religious convictions. Afghanistan, Brunei Darussalam, Djibouti, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya and Yemen stated, moreover, that they would interpret the ICPD in the light of

the Islamic Shari'ah. The United Arab Emirates mentioned in particular that they would stick to the principles of Islamic law in matters related to heritage.

A group of countries, from all continents, —the representatives of the G77, the European Union, the United States, the Scandinavian countries, the Caribbean region, Belize, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Venezuela, Australia and Indonesia— expressed only positive views.

The ICPD experience once again shows that UN conferences should not water down their texts too much in order to reach a general consensus, since those who object to particular ideas usually express or maintain their reservations, even when the recommendations are toned down. The Holy See is an outstanding example in this respect: it fights hard to ensure the recommendations reflect its own position as closely as possible and then refuses to endorse the compromise. That was the strategy in Bucharest, in Mexico and it was also used in Cairo. This is an unacceptable code of behaviour.

Either one disagrees with a proposed document and votes against it, abstains or expresses reservations, or one proposes and succeeds in having accepted qualifying amendments, but in that case subscribes to the consensus reached.

7.2 | Evaluation of the ICPD contents

7.2.1. The subject of the Conference

When the approved ICPD Action Programme is considered in its entirety, there can be no doubt that the Conference focused on population and (sustainable) development issues, and not on marginal topics such as abortion, sexual promiscuity and homosexuality, even though some of these themes were given some exposure thanks to the activities of Roman Catholic and Islamic ideologists and the media's eagerness to exploit confrontational situations. Of the 100 or so pages in the Cairo document, not more than half a page dwells on the abortion issue, and then only in the context of health care.

In the ICPD final document the subject "Population and Development" is defined more accurately by the wording:

"Population and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development"...

In the first part of this monograph, an attempt is made to show that there is an inherent contradiction between the concepts "sustained growth" and "sustainable development". The title of the Conference, consequently, had to read as follows:

"Population and sustainable development"

but many developing countries resisted this idea. Fortunately, the concept of sustainable development has been almost systematically included in the document, especially where it deals with development problems.

The introduction of the concept "sustainability" in the Cairo document has been questioned on the basis of its alleged weak knowledge base. Although in population biology and ecology, concepts such as sustainability and environmental carrying capacity do have a quite solid theoretical basis, there can be no doubt that their application in concrete circumstances requires considerable more work. But the same can be said for many other basic concepts—quality of life, equality and equity, reproductive rights, cultural values, even development—which belong to the core framework of documents such as the Cairo Programme of Action. After all, one should not forget that the critical ICPD dispute concerned sustained growth versus sustainable development. The mere fact that the sustainability concept has been retained in the document, that population growth and consumption patterns should be brought into balance with the carrying capacity of the environment and should take into account the quality of life of future generations, is a major achievement.

The interrelationship between population, economic growth and sustainable development is duly dealt with in Chapter III of the Action Programme, although more space could have been devoted to this question, as it does after all represent the central theme of the Conference. However, it is well-known, the interrelationship between population, development and environment constitutes one of the major bones of contention between the developing and developed countries, with the former putting more emphasis on sustained growth and the latter stressing sustainable development.

The innovative character of the Cairo Conference has been repeatedly emphasised. Conference organisers are obviously going to extol the virtues of a project they have lavished so much attention on and stress its historical importance, etc. The Cairo Conference was undoubtedly an extremely important event, where considerable progress was made, and new issues were

raised. However, what is most striking to someone who has participated in the three UN population conferences, is not so much the innovative character, but the continuity. All the main ideas of the Cairo Conference are to be found in a rudimentary form in the Bucharest and Mexico Conferences. Even the relationship between population and development —the so called innovative title of the Cairo Conference— constituted the core theme of the Bucharest meeting.

As several observers (e.g. Van de Kaa, 1995) have rightly pointed out, one of the most important achievements of the Cairo Conference is the broadening of the concept of development from its narrow economic perspective in terms of income per capita, to the more comprehensive notion of "quality of life of present and future generations". This shift is not only reflected in the chapter on principles, but is reiterated in virtually all of the chapters which deal with the substantial issues of the Conference.

7.2.2. *Science and ideology*

In a world switching from a cultural phase, where societal problems were to a large extent approached or at least justified on the basis of ideological opinions, towards a cultural phase, where scientific knowledge and its application have become of overriding importance for the solution of human, social and environmental problems, is it obvious that these different approaches must conflict with one another.

The ICPD Action Programme is largely built upon a scientific analysis of reality and tries to recommend rational solutions.

The cultural conflict that emerged at the Cairo Conference was sharper than during the previous conferences, for reasons which have been explained above, and this resulted in a regrettable toning down of the original texts. Many essential recommendations have been made dependent upon legal, religious, ethical and cultural interpretations — or limitations. The whole document, in fact, is made conditional upon the notorious "chapeau" of the chapter on principles.

It would, however, be a sign of oversimplification to state that the scientific-ideological controversy centred on the draft versus the amended version of the Action Programme. Moreover, the Secretariat's original draft is more than just a scientific text, and is also based on specific ideological starting points, — the outcome of a complex selective process of present-day opinions highlighting individual liberation and emancipation.

The emphasis on individual rights in the field of birth control is not a new departure, however, as this principle was already accepted in Bucharest. The Holy See and some Islamic countries now want to go back on that principle, accepting sexual behaviour only within the framework of marital life. Fortunately, the famous Bucharest principle about individuals and couples could be retained. The linking of 'individuals' and 'couples' may conceptually be not such a nice solution, but that is the result of the painstaking negotiations in Bucharest, 20 years ago. Given the fact that this twenty year old acquisition got under pressure again, there was only one possibility to safeguard it, namely to hold on to the original formulation.

The maintenance of the rights of individuals in the field of reproductive behaviour does not, however, explain why the draft of a conference on population and (sustainable) development sought to pay so much attention to sexual rights, why the condom but not abstention or avoiding the practice of changing partners was recommended in the fight against AIDS, why sexual and reproductive rights but not the responsibilities of disabled persons were stressed, why —as the Holy See correctly argued in one of its documents criticising the ICPD draft— the interpersonal dimension of human sexuality was given so little consideration in the chapter on reproductive and sexual health care? After all, is it not bordering on arrogant anthropocentrism, to assert in Principle 2:

... "People are the most important and valuable resource of any nation"...

During Prepcom III and the ICPD itself, the Secretariat's draft was not only weakened or deprived of force in some areas, but it was also strengthened, nuanced or developed in a more balanced way in many other areas, even though this led, here and there, to the UN's well-known practice of repeating itself.

The Cairo document justifiably departs from a number of ethical principles. A policy, indeed, cannot be defined solely on the basis of scientific findings. Human beings require forward-looking models to set their sights on.

The ICPD Action Programme relies a great deal on the principle of equality, — equality between people, equality between the sexes, equal opportunities for autochthones and allochthones, etc. This principle is given expression at several points in the document, especially in the chapter on principles.

Equality and equal opportunities between the sexes are given particular emphasis throughout the document.

In contrast to this justifiable emphasis, the principle of social equality, more particularly within populations, is paid less attention on the whole. Nevertheless, research has shown that policies stressing equal opportunities, rather than lopsided economic expansion, has a stabilising effect on population growth.

The Cairo Action Programme reacts at several places against the use of coercion in family planning matters. This type of recommendation is obviously targeted on the rather drastic one-child family policy in China. Although the principle can be endorsed, the constant emphasis on this principle is not entirely free from a certain level of inconsistency. Why are coercive measures in the field of fertility regulation supposed to be completely rejected, whereas measures to restrict the choice of partner, migration and abortion are accepted without any hesitation? If a number of countries facing strong demographic-economic or demographic-ecological imbalances, had developed tougher birth control policies in past decades, they might not be faced with their present dramatic problems.

7.2.3. Population growth and structure

The ICPD Action Programme provides relevant information on recent, present and predicted world population developments. The demographic-transition jargon used to describe the population changes is perhaps not easily understood by everyone, but what it says is that the world population has to be kept at a stationary level as soon as possible. It is, however, frankly regrettable that no target figures have been set with a view, for example, to attaining the UN's low population projection variant, which would undoubtedly help reduce the developmental and environmental problems in a number of regions.

This judgment may seem obsolete, given the increasing attention that is given, also in the Cairo document, to the quality of life approach and, as far as family planning is concerned, to the unmet-need approach. However, if the introduction of target figures for population growth is considered inappropriate, why have they —justifiably!— been retained or introduced for other issues such as life expectancy and mortality, family planning and education? Moreover, target figures do not have to be seen in contradiction with qualitative goals or unmet-need concerns. Target figures may be one of the effective means for measuring the impact of policy measures. Target

figures can form a stimulus to accelerate efforts, since they give an indication of the size of the problems to be dealt with.

Although a large majority of countries realised after Bucharest that the world population growth has to be slowed down or checked, the goal still does not seem to be generally accepted or to be actively pursued.

In human history, demographic growth has for such a long time been considered as a means of acquiring territories and extending economic and political power, between as well as within populations, that many, and in particular those who want to acquire more power, or want to propagate their ideology, or feel themselves threatened by the demographic power of neighbours or rivals, are unable to think in terms of stationary population levels. During the Cairo Conference a few more fine examples of demographic "Balance of Power" arguments were once again put forward. Thus, the Iman of the Aqsa-mosque of Jerusalem, Sheikh Ekrimne Said Sabri, stated that the Palestinians (who N.B. still have a total period fertility rate of more than ten children!) have to maintain a high level of fertility to compensate for the immigration of Jews to Israel (Aziz, 1994a):

... "No doubt the Palestinian people are in need promoting fertility and increasing the population to meet the increasing number of migrant Jews to Palestine."...

In the ICPD Plenary the head of delegation of Benin (Tagnon, 1994) declared that Africa is a continent that is tragically underpopulated:

... "Beaucoup de gens ignorent, ou font semblant d'ignorer, que l'Afrique est un Continent tragiquement sous-peuplé et qu'une part non négligeable de sa léthargie actuelle est due à cette donnée. En prenant chaque pays africain, avec ses limites et ses richesses potentielles, il apparaît de toute évidence que la plupart des Etats en Afrique souffrent d'un réel sous-peuplement."...

In the notorious Al-Azhar viewpoint on the ICPD the Fatwa of Al-Azhar (1994) states that:

... "Islam maintains that the resources created by God in this universe are not depletable. God, the Almighty, the Omniscient and Most Merciful, guarantees livelihood for every creature before creating it, and facilitated the way to be pursued towards this livelihood. He

enjoins man to seek livelihood where it is sought to exist whether in the sea, in land or anywhere else. "...

But the West too, especially in economic circles, has its demographic "flat-earthers" who think that the earth is infinite and that their political or economic systems can cope with anything (Simon and Kahn, 1984). Obviously, this line of thought is reflected in Vatican circles, where even recently the Council for the Family (1994) was arguing in its report on the "Ethical and Pastoral Dimensions of Population Trends" that there is no population explosion and that there is no danger of a world population crisis.

In conclusion, it must be regretted that, for a variety of ideological, political, and economic reasons, the importance of the population growth factor in development and environmental questions has been undervalued in the ICPD document. This appears from features such as the general structure of the document, the vague formulation of the population growth aims, the absence of target figures, the space allotted to population growth and its relation to development and environmental issues.

7.2.4. Gender relations and empowerment of women

The chapter on gender equality, equity and empowerment of women is, as mentioned, a fine piece of work, the implementation of which will undoubtedly make a large contribution towards population stabilisation. According to reports, this is also the most significant text on female emancipation ever produced in UN documents.

The major criticism which can be levelled at this chapter —and this also applies to many other chapters— is that when defining and fleshing out the problem, the link with demographic issues is too tenuous. In this UN charter on population and development, the chapter on gender stands too much on its own.

A minor point —at first sight— is the fact that the original Secretariat draft about the assignment of equal inheritance rights to women and girls, has been toned down and made dependent upon national legislations. In fact, this is a much more fundamental shortcoming than appears at a cursory reading. Not only the basic principle of gender equality has been renounced, but an international charter which should be problem-solving and forward-looking, has been subordinated to outdated national legislations.

The chapter forms a further, more detailed expression of ideas which were already present in the WPPA, but mainly in the Mexico recommendations. The call for attention to be focused as a matter of priority on the social status of women is not only in keeping with democratic principles and feminist aspirations, but also in line with the scientific analysis of the causes of and background to the present population explosion.

We also have the impression that the strong, mainly Islamic opposition to the ICPD document was, in fact, less directed against the alleged promotion of homosexuality and promiscuity than against Chapter IV, the aim of which is to change the unequal gender relations and to increase the empowerment of women. This is probably the unspoken stumbling block, against which the "chapeau" of the chapter on principles is aimed at, whereby the implementation of the Cairo Action Programme is made dependent upon a number of (slightly weakened and partially contradictory) conditions, — national legislations, different religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and human rights.

7.2.5. *Family issues*

The statement

... "the family is the basic unit of society" ...

is included in the Prepcom III draft not only because of the strong ideological pressure of the developing countries, and more particularly of Islamic countries and of the Holy See c.s., but also because it is a simple truth. Nobody can seriously contest this obvious fact.

At the same time the chapter on the family refers, in its various sections —principles, basis for action, aims and action itself—, to the plurality of the family structure, which is also a scientifically established fact. The result is a well balanced text which was nonetheless prepared in the face of opposition from both the extreme individualistic emancipators and the traditionalists.

Notwithstanding the decision that the document should retain references to the pluriformity of the family and the avoidance of discrimination and coercion in family matters, it is regrettable that the reference in Paragraph 5.5. to the specific target groups —... "families, marriages and other unions"... — has been removed. Although "other unions", after all, mainly refers to unmarried cohabitation in regions such as the Caribbean and some

Scandinavian countries where this living arrangement is a quite common practice (and in recent years it also strongly increased in many other Western countries (Corijn, 1994)) some Islamic, African and Central American countries were under the illusion that the advocates of "other unions" had the secret intention of smuggling the homosexual partnership into the Cairo document.

As far as we know, not one proposal or allusion in this respect emerged during the Prepcoms, preparatory meetings, or the ICPD itself. The strong opposition to homosexuality which was aired, mainly by several Central American and Islamic countries, during the Cairo meeting, not only came as a complete surprise to those who had been involved in the drafting and negotiation process during the Prepcoms as well as during the ICPD itself, but appeared definitely open to suspicion. The anti-homosexual wave which overran the Main Committee could not have appeared out of the blue. Apparently, some vicious gossip must have been retailed. However, it must be admitted that some western delegations have, probably unintentionally, nourished those rumors and feelings by insisting so strongly on the inclusion of sexual rights in a conference whose essential theme was of a total different nature.

The discussion about reproductive and sexual behaviour of adolescents in Chapter VII referred to a great extent to family relations, and more particularly parent-child relations. The original text sought to provide adolescents with sexual education, reproductive care, and counselling while respecting their privacy and ensuring the required level of discretion. The traditionalists, however, wanted to include parental rights and responsibilities. As is always the case when basic differences of opinion emerge in the UN, both views were incorporated into the document, so that it can serve all kinds of purposes. The Cairo document has undoubtedly been deprived of force in the case of this issue, but the ICPD Action Programme is the first UN document in which sexual education and reproductive care and counselling for adolescents are dealt with so explicitly and extensively.

The family issue also has a bearing on the question dealt with in Chapter X, of reuniting migrant families. The approved text is again a compromise between opposing views. The right for families to be reunited has disappeared, but the document recommends the promotion of legal measures which would make it easier for families to reunite, — and this is clearly a step forward!

7.2.6. *Reproduction issues*

The decision in the Cairo document to extend family planning to cover reproductive health care is a noteworthy improvement from all points of view, — demography, female emancipation, quality of life.

When the demographic implications of this strategic change are measured against the research literature in this field, the development has to be applauded. Promoting a comprehensive reproduction health care can only have advantageous effects on slowing down population growth, stabilising the population, and restricting births in a situation of high fertility. Such a strategy offers more opportunities for integrating family planning initiatives, for eradicating maternal and infant mortality, and increasing the acceptability of fertility restriction. Of course, the danger is not inconceivable that the opponents of family planning and population stabilisation at the stationary level might take advantage of this integration to water it down and to consider it merely as a matter of health of lesser priority and not as an important issue in its own right. Here too, the international community will have to remain extremely vigilant that a positive idea —integration of family planning in the broader context of reproductive health care— be not turned down.

When evaluating the ICPD abortion recommendations, it is taken as read that abortion must not be promoted as a contraceptive device, the level of abortions must be reduced as fast as possible, a pragmatic policy must be developed leading to effective results, and that in the context of such an approach the final decision depends on the woman. The last principle is based on the fact that there are fundamental differences between ethical views on the acceptability of abortion and the way it is applied. In a democratic context, this ethical pluralism has to be taken into account (Cliquet and Thiery, 1972).

On this basis, the ICPD recommendations on abortion (Paragraph 8.25) have to be considered as a retreat from the original Prepcom III text. The approved text is an improvement on that agreed upon at Mexico, but it will not resolve the dramatic problem of unsafe abortions in countries where medical abortion is forbidden.

Here is a clear example of a problem that everybody wants to avoid, but that, due to an approach from two different, though closely related objectives, i.e.

- a) the fundamental, absolute rejection of abortion and
- b) the reduction of abortion to a necessary or unavoidable minimum,

results in a total different policy and outcome. In the first case rules of moral conduct and the threat of criminal prosecution are used to try to prevent abortion; in the second case an attempt is made to reduce the number of abortions by offering education and counselling, appropriate health care and above all an active contraceptive policy. Abortion still occurs under both regimes: in the first case safe abortion is only available for the privileged, either via clandestine channels at home, or via abortion tourism abroad. The rate of unsafe abortion remains high, especially among the socio-economically less well-off and the less well educated members of the population. In the second case unsafe abortion disappears almost completely; medically safe abortion occurs, but infrequently. The total level of abortion is much higher under the first regime than under the second one (Ketting and Van Praag, 1983).

In the Cairo document much attention is paid to the quality of reproductive health care, and particularly to the quality of family planning, which, moreover, has to be provided in a personalised way, without coercion and with respect for human rights, ethical principles and codes of conduct. The influence of the "Women Health Movement" and other similar organisations can be seen at work here, for they have quite rightly criticised the not always perfect family planning campaigns. But instead of the contradiction which some women's movements perceive between the demographic objectives of family planning —the macro and quantitative level— and the personalised objectives —the micro and qualitative level— the Cairo Action Programme recognises both objectives —quantitative and qualitative, micro and macro levels— and integrates them harmoniously into a comprehensive approach.

7.2.7. Migration

The recommendations concerning internal migration have to be welcomed. As far as international migration is concerned, matters are much more complicated. Indeed, several evaluation criteria can be applied here. International migration is also an extremely sensitive political issue, because it can result in territorial expansion or reduction, acculturation or assimilation, and economic enrichment or impoverishment.

Although, at first sight, there seems to be a conflict of interests between more and less developed countries, on closer inspection, a more complex collection of interests turns out to be involved. Immigration and emigration not only

have advantages or disadvantages, for the countries emigrants leave as well as for the host countries. The Cairo Action Programme reflects this diversity of interests and concerns.

As already mentioned, the approved document exhibits a sense of realism and respect for people and their culture by giving priority to policies favouring the development of people in their own country and culture, on the one hand, and requiring equal opportunities for those who are admitted to other countries, on the other.

The explicit reference to national sovereignty in immigration policy matters is an expression of the deeply ingrained and ancient instinct for human beings to seek to protect their territory (Dyson-Hudson and Smith, 1980), and mainly shows that there still exist strong differences in demographic, social and spatial developmental opportunities between countries and regions.

7.2.8. Targets figures

At Prepcom II the ICPD Secretary-General, Dr. N. Sadik, strongly urged that targets figures be included in the conference document, this time around. As mentioned, this policy was unfortunately not to population growth, but, after long discussions, it was decided to apply it in a number of other domains: access to effective and safe contraceptives, life expectancy, infant mortality, maternal mortality, education, and the necessary financial resources for the programmes concerning reproductive health care, including family planning, maternal health care, and the fight against sexually transmitted diseases.

The decision to include target figures has to be warmly welcomed. If they are realistically designed, such target figures can help to speed up the achievement of the objectives in view.

Target figures need not to be an obstacle to the attainment of quality based objectives. The Cairo document, for that matter, pays a great deal of attention to the latter.

7.2.9. 'Le nerf de la guerre'

Huge resources are required to implement the Cairo Action Programme and the money needed will probably be more than estimated in the Cairo document, which, for that matter, includes a recommendation to review the resource estimates in the light of the recommendations that were finally approved. Moreover, only very specific costs related to reproductive health

care have been considered. The resources needed to create social changes, e.g. in the field of employment, that have a favourable impact on fertility, mortality and migration, are much greater than the specific costs estimated in the Cairo document.

As far as the so-called 20/20 initiative is concerned, it can only be regretted that the Cairo document merely includes a weak reference to it, stating that it will be studied further in the context of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development.

7.2.10. Non-governmental organisations

As well as including a special chapter on the role of and the partnership with the non-governmental organisations, the ICPD Action Programme makes a reference, in virtually every chapter, to the role that non-governmental organisations and the private sector can play. This has to be welcomed, given the magnitude of the problems, on the one hand, and the human resource potential and the humanitarian motivation of the NGO's, on the other.

An NGO-Forum (1994) was staged on the sidelines of the ICPD in Cairo. The NGO complaints concerning the poor interaction between both conferences, are partly justified. Once the ICPD started its activities, negotiations, and (re)drafting, suggestions from the NGO-Forum often came too late to be included or renegotiated in the Conference drafting process. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that many delegations included NGO representatives who could have had direct access, via these channels, to the negotiations in the ICPD. Moreover, NGO lobbying had a major impact on the preparation of the ICPD draft. So much so that some issues are out of place or integrated in a way that strays too far from the population issue.

7.2.11. Integration

A positive factor in the Cairo Programme of Action is that there is not only a special chapter on the interrelationship between population and sustainable development in which the integration between population and developmental strategies is advocated, but that the integrative approach appears to be the basic philosophy of the entire document.

Already in the Preamble it is presented as the fundamental objective of the Programme of Action:

"The population and development objectives and actions of the present Programme of Action will collectively address the cortical

challenges and interrelationships between population and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development."

In Chapter II it is phrased as one of the basic principles:

"Population-related goals and policies are integral parts of cultural, economic and social development, the principal aim of which is to improve the quality of life of all people."

Obviously, the integration approach is the central focus of Chapter III, where not only the relationship between population and development is stressed, but where also the linkage of population and environmental policies is highlighted.

Even in the chapter on gender relations, which stands relatively on its own, attention is drawn on the relationship between population programmes and policies and the improvement of the status of women.

The integrative approach is the central idea of Chapter VII in which it is advocated to include family planning in the broader context of reproductive health. In Chapter XI on population, development and education, the interdependence between education and demographic change is stressed and the introduction and improvement of educational programmes concerning the relationship between population and sustainable development is recommended. The same approach can be found in the chapters on research, national action, international cooperation and partnership with the non-governmental sector.

The only chapter in which the integration with population issues is less well developed is, oddly enough, the one on the family. Obviously this chapter has largely been conceived on the basis of ideological considerations and, hence, fails to highlight the linkage with population. Significant in this respect is that even family planning is not dealt with, or even mentioned, in this chapter, but that it is included in the chapter on reproductive health.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 | The significance of the ICPD

A scientific analysis of the present and anticipated relations and interactions between demographic, economic, and ecological developments makes it quite clear that the human species has reached a crucial, yet extremely vulnerable stage in its evolution and history.

The fast increase in the size of the population in many developing countries and, in particular in the least developed regions, is a serious obstacle to their attempts to overcome their backwardness, make a substantial improvement to their quality of life, and achieve a sustainable way of exploiting their renewable and non-renewable resources. At the same time, non-sustainable consumption and production patterns in the industrial countries and among wealthy citizens in developing countries succeeds in placing an additional burden on the planet's natural resources and ecosystems.

Present population growth trends in many less developed countries and the non-sustainable exploitation of renewable and non-renewable resources in the more as well as the less developed countries must inevitably lead to the continuation, and even the widening of the economic and other developmental gaps between more and less developed regions, and to the continuation, or even accentuation, of the social inequalities within countries. The outcome will also be a continuation of or an increase in the risks of national and international conflicts over the preservation or acquisition of renewable or non-renewable resources.

Sometimes the significance and especially the usefulness of a huge and expensive undertaking such as the ICPD, with all of its preliminary research work, expert meetings, regional consultations, and, finally, the conference itself are called into question.

Scientific knowledge of the crucial issues involved in the mutual relations between population growth, economic development and pressures on the environment can only help solve the problems if it serves as a basis for policy making. In this sense, the significance and usefulness of an event such as the ICPD cannot be emphasised enough. The hallmark of the ICPD is the extensive use of scientific data and insights for the developing and refocusing of social policies which, in the past, were too often and understandably based on visions instead of on knowledge of human beings and their environment. This results not only in the creation of more rational policy options and actions, but also in the increased awareness among policy makers and the general public about the issues at stake and their possible solutions. The previous UN inter-governmental population conferences in Bucharest and Mexico City showed that such initiatives can help to stimulate policy-making and change, and improve the success of schemes for securing financial resources.

8.2 | Evaluation of the ICPD results

A comparison of what present-day scientific literature has to say about mutual relations and interactions between population, development and the environment with the thrust of the ICPD Action Programme, shows that the ICPD generally includes all the relevant issues that need to be examined. The ICPD deals with the interrelationships between population growth, development and environment. It points to the causes of the demographic, economic, and ecological imbalances, and puts forward many appropriate recommendations for eradicating these imbalances.

An unbiased reading of the complete ICPD Action Programme clearly indicates that the ICPD genuinely covered all essential aspects of the inter-relationship between population and sustainable development, and definitely refrained from concentrating unduly on a few marginal issues such as abortion, promiscuity and homosexuality which did not fail to attract the attention of the media because of the ideological prejudices of some of the participants and the confrontational nature of those issues.

On the whole, the ICPD Action Programme is a particularly robust charter, ethically well founded, with a firm scientific basis, and on many points it is worked out in great detail. All relevant players —international organisations, governments, administrative bodies, NGOs, teachers and

researchers— have at their command an instrument for guiding their future activities.

Nonetheless, by systematically comparing most of the scientific literature with the analysis and the recommendations of the ICPD Programme of Action, one is inevitably left with the feeling that the UN document underestimates the seriousness of the problems, more particularly with respect to the effects of rapid population growth in under-developed regions. In the light of the scientific literature we get the impression that the situation and outlook are more alarming than the UN document seems to suggest.

There are several possible reasons for this:

- a) some developing countries, mainly belonging to the Islamic region, have not yet been able to free themselves mentally from the demographic-growth ideology as factor for promoting power and expansion;
- b) some developing countries have a tendency to minimise the demographic dimension because their sights are firmly set on fast economic growth and they fear that development aid and assistance might be switched from economic targets to demographic ones. Environmental concerns are, in their mind, completely overshadowed by the need for economic progress;
- c) some, strongly ideologically driven countries, still labour under the delusion that their ideological world models or even cosmic models are fit to cope with all worldly problems; population growth is not, therefore, an insurmountable problem;
- d) major ideological, and, more particularly, powerful religious-political power centres —Vatican, Islamic fundamentalism— still have to grasp completely the policy implications of modernisation.

In order to reach a consensus, all of these elements had to be taken into account, and in many cases this resulted in weakened or milder recommendations that, taken all together, give the impression that the situation is not as black as some are trying to paint it.

The ICPD document has also been weakened because the charter includes issues, ranging from sexual rights to disabled persons, which are really of marginal importance in the context of the central theme of the Conference —population and sustainable development— or even have nothing to do with the theme.

Finally, several issues might be highly relevant to the conference theme, but they were concentrated on too much as isolated topics, and too little in view of the finality of the interrelationship between population and development. An outstanding example in this respect is the chapter on gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women.

This is not a criticism of the Conference itself, but the attention of the outside world has been diverted from the essential issues, mainly because of the fuss which was made, initially by the Vatican, and later by some Islamic countries as well, about a number of completely marginal subjects such as abortion, (homo)sexual behaviour, and sex outside marriage.

None of this alters the fact that the Cairo Programme of Action, notwithstanding its weak points, forms in its entirety an impressive charter, in which all major components of the demographic question —(regulation of) fertility, (reduction of) mortality, partnership and family composition, internal and international migration, age structure— are related to the questions of sustainable development. Some issues, such as the empowerment of women, reproductive health care, including family planning, are well worked out and constitute coherent chapters with numerous sensible recommendations that relate to each other extremely well. Other subjects are justifiably included in the document but are not worked out in enough detail, e.g. the relationship between population growth and the environment, the need to reduce overconsumption and to change environmentally unsound production processes in the industrial countries.

Regrettable is the fact that no target figures have been set for population growth, e.g. the attainment of the UN's projected low rate of population increase.

8.3 | Evaluation of the ICPD process

A gruelling and time-consuming procedure is the inevitable result of promoting the democratic process when drafting major UN charters by allowing all partners involved —countries and their politicians, diplomats, ideologues, NGOs and experts— the opportunity to contribute. There is some justification for wonder whether the process cannot be simplified and organised in a more efficient and less expensive way.

In the future, more action should be taken to produce more theme-specific documents, and avoid dragging in every international issue when discussing specific issues. The ICPD Programme of Action is a prime example of such a ritual. Too many topics are dealt with in their own right, and not or insufficiently in the context of the essential theme, population and sustainable development. Some issues do not even belong to the Cairo Programme of Action. We realise that everything, in the final analysis, is interconnected, but a prestigious body such as the UN should be able to produce more theme-specific documents, in which the issues dealt with are not only relevant, but also properly related to each other. Or is one supposed to conclude that not enough is known yet about certain interrelationships, with the result that, in such a vacuum, a number of issues are simply set side by side?

The UN constantly strives to get its conference conclusions adopted on the basis of a consensus. This was also the case at the ICPD, and the strategy turned out to be successful. However, the ICPD consensus was achieved only after a great deal of effort had been made and the text was finally less good than it should have been in terms of quality, efficiency, and vigour.

There are clearly limits to the pursuit of a consensus, because a text being watered down more and more in the end loses its very significance, more especially because the ICPD showed that the conservative delegations first try to dilute the recommendations as much as they can, and nevertheless express reservations later on about the texts agreed upon, after being toned down thanks to their efforts. It would be better in the future to formulate sound and appropriate recommendations, and afterwards note the reservations of those with conflicting views.

The conduct of a conference such as the ICPD is determined to a large degree by a relatively small group of militant delegations. At the ICPD the key players were the G77, the European Union, the Scandinavian group, the Anglo-Saxon countries outside Europe, the host country, and a number of other Islamic countries, and last but not least, the Holy See c.s.

The European Union, whose member states participate in the UN via the EU's Presidency, played a very important role at the ICPD. Having at its disposal a large number of experts, aiming at reaching a consensus and promoting scientific objectivity, and keeping in touch with a broad range of other delegations, the European Union acted as a mini UN within which ideas were tested in advance and consensual texts were prepared. For the EU to make an effective contribution, the Presidency needs to make a considerable

effort and display a lot of drive. The EU Presidency must therefore be sufficiently prepared, provided with a diversified team of staff, and to dispose of fluently English speaking spokesmen with enough listening skills to be able to speak on behalf of all Member States. In the course of the ICPD process those requirements were not always sufficiently fulfilled.

At the ICPD the world community was faced (for the first time?) with the regressive Islamic fundamentalism, not only via a driven Iran, but also via other Islam countries where religion and state are still inseparable. In the coming years the international community will have to wary of and brace itself against the onslaught of Islam that together with a backward-looking Vatican, tries to stem the tide of modernisation, with its ideological pluralism and its democratised, secularised and individualised body of ideas. In the future each reference to religious beliefs and traditions should be completed and brought into a state of balance with a reference to secular opinions, philosophical convictions and other views.

Although it often shows great expertise and dedication, the Holy See has flagrantly abused its permanent observer status in the UN. The Holy See does not act as a state, but as religion, thus creating a fundamental inequality in respect of other religions and philosophical or social ideologies which do not have the advantage of having a city state at their command. In the future, the UN should either keep the Holy See out of the negotiations, or create a special, pluralistically composed philosophical-ethical committee which would meet on the sidelines of the regular working groups and in which the major ideologies would be represented.

The NGOs complained about having had insufficient opportunities to interact with the ICPD. The simultaneous organisation of a separate NGO Forum is, apparently, insufficient for making a significant impact on the negotiations during a UN conference. In a number of cases, however, NGOs have a considerable impact via their national delegations. Moreover, thanks to their advance lobbying activities, the NGOs succeeded quite well—for some issues even too well—in having their concerns reflected in the Secretariat's draft.

8.4 | Anticipated results of the ICPD

In the light of the experience gained at the Bucharest and Mexico conferences, it may be expected that the ICPD will make a big contribution to

further arouse political awareness of the population question in the world and its complex relationship with development and environmental issues.

The ICPD could contribute to the further acceleration of population policy and of its integration into the general development policy of many developing countries. In particular, it should also induce the developed countries to boost the aid they provide developing countries in the context of population issues and related matters. Many developed countries, for that matter, have already expressed their intention of increasing their level of financial support for population and related programmes.

The ICPD can therefore be expected to exert a powerful influence on policy-making in both the developing and the developed countries. It must be feared, nonetheless, that the problems will be resolved at a slower pace and less efficiently than possible or desirable. Several factors compel us to adopt a sceptical attitude:

- a) the constraints built into the Cairo document —"various religious beliefs, ethical values, cultural backgrounds, ..."— and the reservations which were expressed by a number of countries;
- b) the opposition of a number of developing countries to the idea that the Cairo document should include targets figures with respect to the slowing down of population growth and the relatively weak recommendation to keep the world population at a stationary level;
- c) the systematic attempts of various developing countries to play down the importance of the environment in the ICPD document;
- d) the way in which development progresses in developing countries, namely in a non-sustainable direction, and with increasing instead of decreasing social inequalities;
- e) the increase, not decrease in the amount of resources that developing countries spend on the military sector;
- f) the weak elaboration of the sections in the ICPD document on the reduction of overconsumption and the change of environmentally unsound production processes, particularly in developed countries;
- g) the uncertainty about the estimate of costs of the proposed population policy in the ICPD Programme of Action and the absence of any estimate of the costs of the other population-related development strategies, e.g. as regards empowering of women, education, employment and general health care.

All this leads to the assumption that population growth in the world will slow down less rapidly, the quality of life will increase less quickly, the environment will suffer more, the social inequalities within developing countries will be reduced at a slower pace and the differences in living standard between developing and developed countries will be maintained during a longer time than is necessary on the basis of the knowledge we have. It would not take such a long time if a bold policy were to be developed and put into action.

8.5 | Implications of the ICPD for development cooperation

The Cairo Programme of Action rightly proposes that the developing countries themselves bear the largest responsibility (financially as well) for their development, and, by the same token, for their population policy. The ICPD provides extensive advice on this subject and measures that need to be taken.

Nonetheless, most developing countries, and more particularly the least developed ones, do not have the human, material, and financial resources to perform this immense task. They will have to rely on generous and extensive assistance in various forms from the international community, and more especially the rich, industrial countries.

No-one should expect this assistance to be provided only by a few large countries. Development cooperation policies of some of the smaller West- and North-European countries, particularly in the context of population issues, show that smaller communities can also fulfil a role which greatly exceeds their numerical strength. Smaller countries are obviously more restricted than larger ones in their capacity to provide development assistance. Such countries could, however, develop cooperation strategies through which their limited contribution in absolute figures has a multiplier effect. Many developed or rich countries could substantially expand their development cooperation efforts, especially in population matters. First of all, they could boost their total development aid up to the reach of the UN standard (one per cent of the BNP), in line with a number of Scandinavian countries. This increase could apply to their contribution to UNFPA as well as their own bilateral cooperation with specific countries. This is one of the most important recommendations of the Cairo Conference and it has been endorsed by all participating countries, most of which were represented by members of their government. Now, this recommendation has to be put into practice.

8.6 | Implications of the ICPD for the population policy of developed countries

Although essentially designed to deal with the population problems in developing countries, the ICPD is also in many respects relevant for the population policy of developed countries.

As the aim of this monograph was to focus on the problems resulting from rapid population growth, the specific demographic problems of the industrial countries, which are related to their post-transitional situation, have not been dealt with. That could form the subject of a separate study, in which more specific documents such as the report on the Third European Population Conference, could also be considered.

There is, however, one theme that repeatedly turned up at the ICPD, and that is particularly, though not exclusively, important for the developed countries.

All research data point to the fact that the demographic-economic and demographic-ecological tensions in the world are not exclusively caused by the present population explosion in the developing countries, but also, and quantitatively even to a stronger degree, by the overconsumption of renewable and non-renewable resources and the ecologically harmful production procedures in the industrial countries.

The ICPD includes appropriate recommendations in this respect, but they are not fleshed out as much or as specific as the recommendations on the empowerment of women, reproductive health care, and migration, for example.

This is a matter which urgently requires, in the spirit of Agenda 21, closer examination. The world's current consumption and production patterns, particularly in the industrial countries, are not sustainable. Any change in these patterns is not just a question of technology, but also (if not mainly) of attitudes and behaviour, of values and norms. Finally, there is the question of how a fundamental change in our consumption and production patterns could lead to a more permanent sustainability without causing an economic catastrophe, in the industrial as well as in the developing countries.

In any case, at the ICPD it became clear that by changing their consumption patterns the industrial countries can contribute to the quest for sustainability just as much, if not more, than the developing countries can by keeping their population growth at a stationary level.

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