



FAMILY MATTERS



Circular No. 35

Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004) December

FAMILY UNIT

Preparations for the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004) is the responsibility of the Family Unit, Division for Social Policy and Development within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Activities are in accordance with intergovernmental mandates e.g. General Assembly resolutions 50/142 of 21 December 1995, 52/81 of 12 December 1997, and 54/124 of 17 December 1999 respectively.

THE PREPARATORY PROCESS FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY (2004)

A. The Commission for Social Development

The Commission for Social Development is responsible for reviewing annually the preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004) as part of its agenda and of its multi-year programme of work. At its thirty-ninth session, on 13 to 23 February 2001, the Commission reviewed the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General [E/CN.5/2001/4], which emphasized *inter alia* that special attention needs to be directed to strengthening national capacities for policy analysis, formulating of options and evaluation.

The Commission for Social Development recommended to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, adoption without vote, of draft resolution E/CN.5/2001/L.6 entitled "Preparations for and observance of the Tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family". By that resolution, Governments are urged to view 2004 as a target year by which concrete achievements should be made to

identify and elaborate issues of direct concern to families and also to set up and strengthen, where appropriate, mechanisms to plan and coordinate activities of governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations. It invites Member States to consider organizing activities in preparation for the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004) at the national level. It would also request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session through the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council on the preparation for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004) at all levels. Moreover, during its deliberations, various representatives of Governments expressed their concurrence with the basic philosophy and strategy for the Tenth anniversary. Also stressed was the necessity of fully integrating families and family concerns into broad socio-economic development strategies.

B. The Economic and Social Council

At its regular session in 2001, the Economic and Social Council noted the deliberations of the Commission for Social Development and recommended draft resolution E/CN.5/2001/L.6 for adoption by the General Assembly. Many speakers reaffirmed their support for the Tenth anniversary and reaffirmed the pivotal role of families in society. They underlined the need to develop concrete and long-term policies and programmes for families.

C. The General Assembly

The General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session had under consideration a note by the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the International Year of the Family (A/56/57). The Third Committee adopted without a vote a draft resolution on preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004). Draft resolutions A/C.3/56/L.2 proposed for adoption of the Assembly by ECOSOC and the

amendments contained in document A/C.3/56/L.7. The text contained amendments to specific preambular and operative paragraphs of the resolution. The resolution reiterated the recommendations made by the Commission for Social Development and ECOSOC. In addition, it encouraged regional commissions to participate in the preparatory process of the tenth anniversary and to play an active role in facilitating regional cooperation in this regard. The General Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly fifty-seventh session through the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the resolution, including the description of the state of preparation for the observance of the International Year of the Family at all levels. A number of Governments participated in the general discussions on the family topic, which focused on the preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004. They advocated strong support for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004.

D. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs

As the lead entity for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has initiated various actions directed at all levels. It has promoted the message that families are economic and social engines of society and has highlighted the positive effects that families have on their respective societies through various reports, communications and meetings. Also, the Department has made concerted efforts to promote the development of common ground and common understanding in constituencies viewing family issues from different perspectives.

The Department convened a Consultative Meeting on Regional and Global Coordination in the Promotion of Social Integration, held in New York from 1-5 October 2001. A basic aim of the Meeting was to develop a focused approach to the preparations for, and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004. Discussions centred on advocacy and promotion, research and technical

cooperation activities. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, a representative from the Department of Public Information and a representative of the regional commissions New York Office. The Meeting decided that:

- (i) regional commissions will hold informal consultations at the regional level with representatives of relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, regional and non-governmental organizations to exchange information and coordinate, as necessary, for the tenth anniversary.
- (ii) regional commissions and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs agreed to undertake a joint analytical study on major regional trends affecting families. They also agreed to exchange views on key research issues, to identify priority topics and problems for in-depth analysis.
- (iii) Expert symposia/meetings should be promoted to exchange expertise and experiences within the context of the tenth anniversary.

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