



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
Merrill Avenue, Pasig, Metro Manila

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

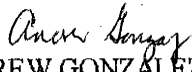
September 22, 1999

DECS MEMORANDUM
No. 409, s. 1999

1999 UNITED NATIONS WEEK OBSERVANCE

To: Bureau Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Principals, Private Elementary and Secondary Schools
The Commissioner, Commission on Higher Education (CHED)

1. The United Nations Association of the Philippines (UNAP), in cooperation with the United Nations Information Centre for the Philippines, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and this Department, will conduct the 1999 United Nations Week Observance from October 18-24 this year.
2. This year's observance will be focused on the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP). It aims to promote the 5 UN Principles for Older Persons as adopted by the UN General Assembly (Res. 46191) on 16 December 1991. These principles are: independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment and dignity. Inclosed are information on the IYOP celebration.
3. All elementary and secondary schools may implement the theme depending on the availability of the materials and other resources. Fitting plans of action may be undertaken by the schools.
4. For particulars, call the Office of the Director, United Nations Information Centre, NEDA Building, 106 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, Tel. No. 892-44-45.
5. Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.


ANDREW GONZÁLEZ, FSC
Secretary

Incl.:

As stated

Reference:

DECS Memorandum: No. 384, s. 1998

Allotment: 1—(D.O. 50-97)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

CELEBRATIONS & FESTIVALS
UNITED NATIONS



towards a society for all ages

International Year of Older Persons 1999

United Nations Principles for Older Persons

The United Nations Principles of Older Persons was adopted by the UN General Assembly (resolution 46/91) on 16 December 1991. Governments were encouraged to incorporate them into their national programmes whenever possible. Some highlights of the Principles are:

Independence

Older persons should:

- have access to adequate food, water, shelter, clothing and health care through the provision of income, family and community support and self-help
- have the opportunity to work or to have access to other income-generating opportunities,
- be able to participate in determining when and at what pace withdrawal from the labour force takes place;
- have access to appropriate educational and training programmes,
- be able to live in environments that are safe and adaptable to personal preferences and changing capacities;
- be able to reside at home for as long as possible

Participation

Older persons should

- remain integral to society, participate actively in the formulation and implementation of policies that directly affect their well-being, and share their knowledge and skills with younger generations,
- be able to seek and develop opportunities for service to the community and to serve as volunteers in positions appropriate to their interests and capabilities,
- be able to form movements or associations of older persons

Care

Older persons should:

- benefit from daily and community care and protection in accordance with each society's system of cultural values;
- have access to health care to help them to maintain or regain the optimum level of physical, mental and emotional well being and to prevent or delay the onset of illness
- have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy protection and care;
- be able to utilize appropriate levels of institutional care providing protection rehabilitation and social and mental stimulation in a humane and secure environment,
- be able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms when residing in any shelter, care or treatment facility, including full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy and for the right to make decisions about their health care and the quality of their lives

Self-fulfilment

Older persons should

- be able to pursue opportunities for the full development of their potential
- have access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society

Dignity

Older persons should

- be able to live in dignity and security and be free of exploitation and physical or mental abuse,
- be treated fairly regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability or other status, and be valued independently of their economic contribution



Creating a society for all ages International Year of Older Persons 1999

At a glance

The objective of the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP) is to promote the United Nations Principles for Older Persons

Why Another Year?

Individuals are living longer. Populations are ageing rapidly. These phenomena suggest the need for new thinking, organization, roles and relationships in families, neighbourhoods and nations.

Old age is a new frontier. In the second half of the twentieth century, twenty years have been added to the average life expectancy worldwide. As pioneers of this life-extension, today's elders are re-writing the scripts for life-life, exploring new ways of being, becoming and doing in the high age. As agents and beneficiaries of progress, older women and men require opportunities and support systems including for income generation, social security, and health care.

Successful ageing begins early. Perceptions of life-life influence early choices. Conversely, opportunities in early life lay the foundations for life-long wellbeing, allowing resources or capital to be built over time including human capital in the sense of good health, work skills and self-knowledge. Social capital in the sense of family and community networks. Economic capital in the sense of varied savings and pension schemes. A balance of all three capitals is needed, which is best achieved through programmes to reduce poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. *Agenda 2030* of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development

An inverse family pyramid. Declining fertility and mortality are combining to alter family structures. Grandparents are coming to outnumber children. This has been called the inverse family pyramid. As this transition is underway, caring networks need adjustments.

The neighbourhood is changing. Urbanization, migration and modernization, in addition to ageing are changing the age structure of rural and urban neighbourhoods. The out migration from rural areas tends to remove the middle age groups. Small city dwellings make multi-generational co-habitation difficult. Age specific kindergartens, schools and elder residences tend to segregate the generations. Designing for a 'society for all ages' requires that we examine and re-consider current trends towards age segregation.

When every third person is over age 60! By 2030 every third individual will be over age 60 in several industrialized countries and, 120 years later every third person in the world is projected to be over 60. Unprecedented in human history, the ageing of populations is changing the shape of families, neighbourhoods and nations giving rise to new kinds of housing, transportation, services, production and consumption patterns. These changes are being explored through the theme of the International Year — towards a society for all ages.

Why is a society for all ages? The society for all ages is rooted in the idea of a society for all. A society for all is one that adjusts its structures and functioning as well as its policies and plans to the needs and capabilities of all, thereby releasing the potential of all, for the benefit of all.

Relatedly a society for all ages responds to the needs and capabilities of each age group, promotes age integration and facilitates multi-generational reciprocity. It acknowledges the varying stages or phases of individual life, and is responsive to the varying capabilities of age cohorts as these are shaped differently over time by such historical events as war or famine, for example, or by access to education, work, information and travel.



How is the Year being observed?

Local national, regional and international initiatives have been launched encompassing the four dimensions of raising awareness looking ahead reaching out and networking

□ Information campaigns, conferences radio and television debates, art and photographic exhibits Internet pages walks, concerts and fairs are some of the tools being used to highlight the issue of ageing and raise awareness of the many reasons for observing IYOP

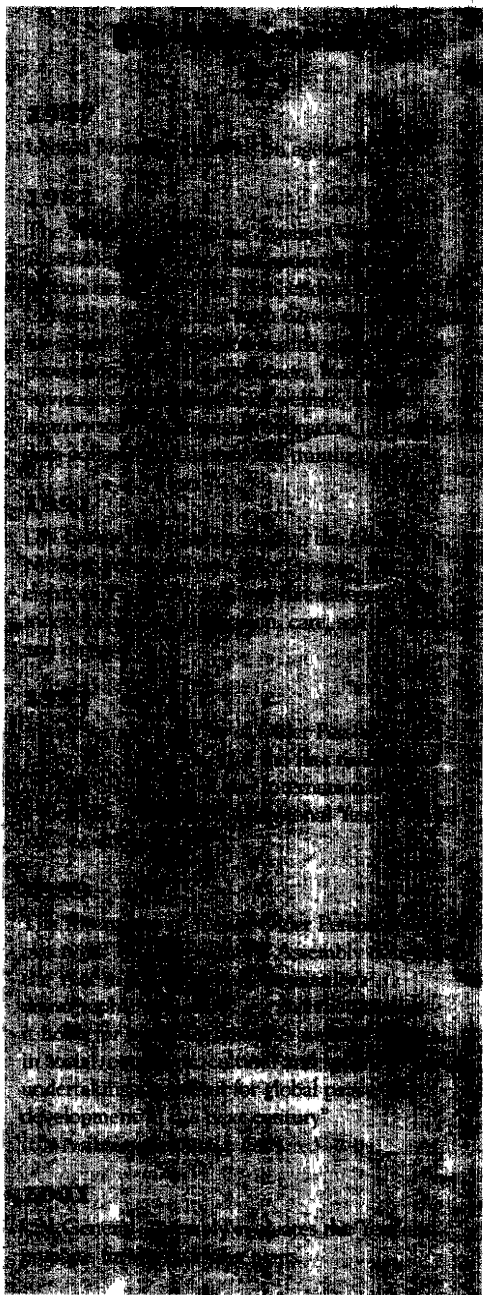
□ The long term implications of ageing are being addressed through legislation programmes demographic projections and futuristic scenarios A research agenda on ageing for the 21st century is under construction at the UN

□ Outreach to non traditional players is being made and these include youth, enterprises the media, development agencies and the arts These players not traditionally attentive to ageing issues are being challenged to look into the lifelong and society wide implications of the demographic revolution.

□ Networks of and for ageing are being formed and consolidated at all levels and within many sectors Two new global networks have been formed for the Year At the time of the official launch of IYOP, half the UN Member States had established national committees or focal points for the Year

See www.un.org/esa/socdev/tyop for names and addresses of networks and actors or request a list from the IYOP Secretariat (address given on next page)

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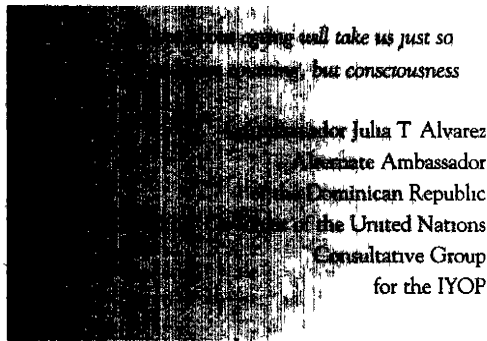
What outcomes?

IYOP should make a difference. Its impact could include

- improved livelihood security and health care for older persons
- new and improved language, images and 'scripts' for late-life
- recognition of mid-life as a transition to active ageing
- greater youth foresight and awareness of longevity
- strengthened networks of family and community caring
- more channels of communication between the generations
- more flexible lifelong work arrangements
- more formal and informal lifelong educational opportunities
- recognition of older women's achievements and rights
- more multi-generational industrial design
- policy-oriented research on ageing for the next decades
- future-oriented national and international programmes

Dates to observe

- 1 October 1999**
Official launch of IYOP
- January 1999**
Public launch of IYOP
- 1 October 2000**
Celebratory high point of IYOP
- Late 1999**
General Assembly deliberations
- 31 December 1999**
Close of IYOP



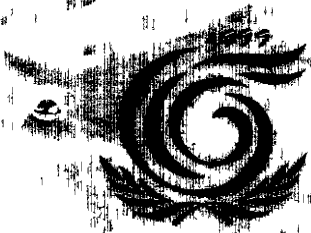
Ambassador Julia T. Alvarez
Permanent Ambassador
Dominican Republic
to the United Nations
Consultative Group
for the IYOP

IYOP materials can be downloaded from www.un.org/esa/socdev/iyop or obtained from the addresses given below. Materials include

- * International Plan of Action on Ageing
- * National Targets on Ageing for the Year 2001
- * United Nations Principles for Older Persons
- * Menu of ideas for activities at the national level
- * Local Agenda on Ageing in the 1990s
- * Compendium of Community Programmes
- * Steps towards a Society for all Ages
- * Logo
- * Calendar of Events
- * List of National Committees and Focal Points
- * Poster

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Towards a society for all ages

International Year of Older Persons 1999

Local Agenda on Ageing in the 1990s— Question of Ageing

1. The following initiatives could be taken at the local level in preparing for the International Year of Older Persons in 1999. Most are intergenerational. They lend themselves to cooperation of the formal and informal sectors, and support the view that ageing is not only a subject of specialized concern but a process affecting daily living, requiring responses by individual family and neighbourhood. Activities are thus suggested for neighbourhoods, families and individuals; the business sector; schools and colleges; and the media.

A. Neighbourhoods, families and individuals

2. Local government, even consistently working families and individuals may wish, as appropriate, for
 - a) Integrate the needs of older persons in urban and community planning, including for housing, transport, and health and social services, bearing in mind the diversity of older persons including, among others, indigenous elders, migrants and refugees;
 - b) Draft local plans of action on ageing in cooperation with representatives of older persons, and support establishment of community-based organizations on ageing including "99 committees" to spearhead preparations for the International Year;
 - c) Establish senior advisory panels or other local advisory, comprising seniors and other local government or community stakeholders, on issues concerning ageing;
 - d) Open a seniors' bureau, directory and maintain a directory of seniors' resources, expertise and expertise, and a parallel directory of voluntary unpaid opportunities in community-based activities;
 - e) Arrange for senior centres for and by seniors, for example, by family education, informal care giving in the family, an accountant on improving farming or gardening, an accountant on financial

planning a physiotherapist on physical exercise a doctor on nutrition, a pharmacist on drugs, a police officer on safety and security, and a lawyer on making wills and on recourse in case of abuse

f) Open community training cum recreational centres, in cooperation with local enterprises which would serve older and other citizens currently under employed and wishing to improve their entitlements and capabilities;

g) Commission a history of the district, by a group of seniors and, for example, girl and boy scouts or other citizens. Information could be collected from libraries, local historical societies, individuals, museums and historic sites.

h) Organize sports tournaments encompassing all age groups;

i) Support family integration and solidarity through dialogue in schools, community forums and local media on: inter generational exchanges family consultation; equitable task-sharing within the family especially caregiving; and causes and remedies of abuse of older persons in a domestic setting or family.

j) Introduce surrogate kinship programmes of families or community groups for older persons living alone, as an aid to their remaining in the community

k) Establish comprehensive community care systems spanning the formal and informal sectors,

l) Integrate residential homes and day centres in the wider community, and involve residents and their families in planning and running services,

m) Introduce or support practices that ensure dignity in death support in bereavement, and respect for the wishes of older persons in these regards

B. The business sector

3. Where not already established, the business sector and professional societies and individuals may wish to



towards a society for all ages

- a) Establish employment agencies to identify and promote suitable work opportunities and environments for seniors in consultation with seniors
- b) Expand lifelong on-the-job training and retraining opportunities for new technologies community service and income security in old age,
- c) Support senior enterprises and cooperatives in their initial stages including for example small scale print shops laundries, farms, mills, bakeries and so on. These could be established in or close to residential homes for the ageing,
- d) Examine whether expanding work opportunities for seniors in the neighbourhood implies contracting work opportunities for the young, and whether both age groups could cooperate on joint projects,
- e) Organize a seniors' trade show for seniors who are plumbers, weavers, herbalists farmers, nurses, electricians accountants, carpenters photographers and artists
- f) Issue a seniors' directory listing seniors willing to share expertise and support local national and international development efforts
- g) Prepare a manual on income generating activities by seniors to which local business clubs and organizations may provide useful advice, models and practical support
- h) Publish a handbook on fund raising for local self help or service organizations to enable them to tap financial backing from different sources
- i) Request community leaders to issue business awards to enterprises that have special rates for seniors give generously to seniors' organizations or make other significant contributions to seniors' well being,
- j) Support employees who are caregivers through introducing flexible work hours and integrated day care centres for dependants of all ages possibly in cooperation with the local government and the voluntary service sector,
- k) Introduce flexible retirement ages and practices and organize pre-retirement consultations
- l) Design and market a wider and more attractive range of health promoting goods and services for all ages which would especially benefit the ageing.

C Schools and colleges

- 4 Surveys youth assemblies on ageing and other activities appropriate for schools and colleges are listed elsewhere in this action programme. Additionally, universities, open universities Universities of the Third Age, community colleges and junior and high schools may wish, as appropriate to
 - a) Expand education for seniors by (i) opening to them a number of places in regular courses at reduced rates or free of charge and (ii) organizing special courses for seniors on themes directly relating to ageing such as health maintenance income security and changing images of older persons,
 - b) Arrange lectures and workshops for journalists advertisers architects employers, social and health caregivers, family caregivers volunteers, and members of local government on the implications of an ageing population and options in responding to it,
 - c) Conduct surveys in cooperation with seniors for use in developing local plans and programmes on ageing, including, for example, a survey of training needs of the ageing the families and socio-economic and political institutions. A parallel survey could be conducted on the preparedness of adult and other educational institutions to provide the required training,
 - d) Write and perform an oral history play where first a group of students make tape recordings of seniors talking about their lives and then write a play on the basis of the recordings, in which seniors would play themselves as they are today and youth would play the seniors as they were during the events recorded,
 - e) Launch a poster and/or essay competition offering prizes for the poster or essay that best depicts a theme related to inter generational cooperation. Prizes could be donated by local business and shops. Winning posters could be exhibited and the best essays published or broadcast by the local media.
 - f) Establish gerontology as a core subject for students of social sciences journalism and education, as well as nursing and medicine where geriatrics may also be made a core subject
 - g) Organize exchanges between retired teachers in developed and developing countries to support literacy as well as cultural understanding and enrichment.

D. The media

5. A major role in observance of the Year is envisaged for the media. They can influence attitudes, capabilities and opportunities. Local and national newspapers, radio, television stations, graphic design firms, advertisers and public relations companies could all participate. They may, for example, wish to:

- a) Explain population ageing and its impact on all generations and sectors of society;
- b) Show diversity in old age based on seniors' lifelong experiences, contributions to society, views on important events, creativity, organisational skills, self-reliance, and dignity and courage in facing poverty, disease and death;
- c) Promote inter generational dialogue in

families and neighbourhoods on such themes as environmental protection, drug abuse control and conflict resolution,

d) Interview formal and informal caregivers including family caregivers, both men and women and identify their support needs and draw attention to causes and remedies of elder abuse in the family or institutional setting;

e) Acknowledge seniors as a resource for community development, for example, by opening a seniors' column in the local paper or radio

f) Support establishment of a seniors' journal by donating paper and copying at a reduced rate and by providing initial editorial marketing and managerial training



Towards a society for all ages

International Year of Older Persons 1999

Menu of ideas for activities at the national level

Core activities

1. Appoint a 1999 lead agency or focal point (i.e. an agency or individual to act as information source and/or convene an exploratory meeting to set up the 1999 committee of all interested parties).
2. Establish a 1999 committee. (Large membership) members could include traditional actors — government ministries, organizations of older persons, gerontological institutes, etc., and non-traditional actors — the media, youth organizations, schools and universities, development agencies and environmental groups, foundations, women's and indigenous organizations, and religious, professional and business entities.
3. *Notes: Many national affiliates of international federations are already making preparations for the Year and could be valuable assets for 1999 committees.)*
3. Prepare a 1999 programme, with promotional and developmental elements (listed below), as well as outreach to local areas and international contacts.
4. Establish a secretariat and budget. Younger persons could form or augment a core secretariat.
5. Establish a fund.

Promotional measures for 1999

1. Declare, for national observance, the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons towards a society for all ages.
2. Declare, for national observance, 1 October to be the International Day of Older Persons.
3. Adopt and widely distribute the United Nations Principles for Older Persons.
4. Establish a national calendar and a series of initiatives to assist information exchange and collaboration.
5. Invite citizens (mayors, community leaders, writers, home-makers, caregivers, etc.) to give their views on a society for all ages or on old age in a new age.

6. Organize media debates on lifelong individual development or on changing multigenerational relationships in family and society.
7. Organize national fairs, with display booths for government ministries, non-governmental organizations, foundations, enterprises, etc.
8. Engage the academic community in the exploration of the principles and practices of an age-integrated society (i.e., a society for all ages).
9. Get ideas from national reports on other International Years, such as of the Family (1994) or for the Eradication of Poverty (1996).
10. Celebrate older persons and ageing on other days, for example on international days for health, women, volunteering.
11. Organize national conferences on selected priorities which might include, for example:
 - a) Multigenerational relationships in family and society: interdependence, (measures of independence and dependence)
 - b) Flexible work and retirement: part time work, second careers, worker-caregiver conflicts, etc ;
 - c) Caregiving structures, new and sustainable partnerships, home care, long term care systems, insurance, gender issues,
 - d) Rural ageing and development: community enterprises, appropriate technologies, etc ;
 - e) Cities for all ages: innovations in living arrangements, services, etc.,
 - f) Technologies for all ages: new tools for work and living, agri-tools for elders, etc ,
 - g) Towards a society for all ages: adjusting infrastructure, adjusting perceptions,
 - h) Lifelong individual development: the content and the context of lives are changing,
 - i) Old age in a new age: scenarios for 2000, 2020 and 2050



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Developmental measures for 1999 and beyond

- 1 Consult the Short Guide for Setting National Targets on Ageing
- 2 For long term issues and priorities contact the National Coordinating Mechanism on Ageing
- 3 Integrate long-term issues and priorities into 1999 preparations — late life labour flexible retirement caregiving strategies youth perspectives on longevity, multigenerational exchanges etc
- 4 Devise future scenarios for the year 2020

Reaching the local areas

Thirty eight suggestions are given in the "Local agenda on ageing for the 1990s", encompassing

neighbourhoods, families and individuals the business sector schools and colleges, and the media

Reaching out internationally

- 1 Participate in the United Nations calendar 1999 to facilitate an exchange of experiences.
- 2 Consider preparing a comprehensive national report on 1999 and beyond for international distribution
- 3 Twin with other countries (cities universities), particularly north-south and east west
- 4 Host and/or participate in international studies events or conferences



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International Year of Older Persons 1999

Global Life Expectancy Increases by Twenty Years

United Nations to Observe 1999 as International Year of Older Persons

Dramatic increases in longevity have caused global life expectancy to climb 20 years since 1950 to its current level of 66 years, according to the United Nations. Since 1950, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years old has changed from one in thirteen to one in ten. In many developing countries ageing faster than developed countries. Striking differences exist between regions with, for example, one of five Europeans being 60 years or older, as compared to one of twenty Africans.

According to the United Nations Population Division, which defines older persons as those 60 years and older:

- One of every ten persons is now 60 years or older. By the year 2030, one of five will be 60 years or older; by 2150, it will be one of three persons.
- The older population is becoming increasingly urban. By the year 2000, the majority of the world's older population, or 51 per cent, will live in urban areas.
- The older population itself is ageing. Currently persons 80 years and older constitute 1.1 per cent of the population aged 60 and above. By 2030, 2.1 per cent of the older population will be aged 80 years or older.
- The majority of older persons, 55 per cent, are women. Among those who are 80 years or older, 65 per cent are women.

The impact of the world's ageing population growth on the socio-economic policies and the culture of societies is already presenting problems to Governments. To help meet the challenge, the United Nations General Assembly decided in 1992 to observe the International Year of Older Persons in 1999. The objective of the Year is to raise awareness of the fast-changing demographic picture of older persons,

globally, to stimulate debate, promote action strategies, and encourage research and information exchange. The situation of older persons and its impact on a country's resources call for immediate study and solutions.

The Year's theme "towards a society for all ages" invites the participation of all generations, all sectors of society and organizations. It also promotes collaboration among the many actors, both traditional and non traditional. Non traditional actors — mainly the private sector, the media, youth organizations and academia — are beginning to include older persons in their programmes. Many Governments and local authorities, as well as intergovernmental and major non-governmental organizations, have already appointed focal points or committees for the Year.

Impact of changes

With fertility rates declining in some countries, other types of problems have arisen. For instance the International Longevity Centre has found that European countries, which have the lowest birth rates, are searching for ways to keep older workers in the labour force longer because fewer young people are entering the workplace.

The declining number of care givers, especially since more women — the traditional care givers — are now entering the workplace, has created problems worldwide. Income security for older populations is another major concern, especially in traditional societies where the family and the community once provided care and support. Such support systems are being eroded by urbanization, migration, instability and armed conflict.



towards a society for all ages

United Nations Action for Older Persons

The international community first debated the question of ageing at the United Nations at the initiative of Argentina in 1948. The issue was again raised by Malta in 1969. In recognizing that longevity was becoming one of the major challenges of the twentieth century, the United Nations convened the World Assembly on Ageing in Vienna, Austria, in 1982. That same year the UN General Assembly endorsed the International Plan of Action on Ageing that discusses the broad implications of ageing for individual life and for societies. It sets forth 62 recommendations for action dealing with the situation of older persons.

In 1990 the General Assembly designated 1 October as the International Day for the Elderly, later renamed the International Day of Older Persons which was celebrated for the first time the following year. The Day has become an annual event in most countries with varied activities organized in conjunction with the official commemoration.

The General Assembly adopted the United Nations Principles for Older Persons in 1991. The eighteen Principles provide a broad framework for action on ageing. They are organized into five clusters: independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity of older persons.

In 1992, the General Assembly adopted the Proclamation on Ageing, an outline for practical action to be taken at the global level in support of regional, national and local activities. The Proclamation urges partnerships among the many concerned actors in society — including Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and the private sector — to ensure that the needs of ageing populations are adequately addressed. The Proclamation also called for the observance of the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons.

Activities to mark the Year will be guided by the UN operational framework, which is designed to facilitate main-streaming older persons' concerns and encourage activities within a long-term perspective. It calls for raising awareness focusing on all ages, in order to promote active ageing, develop appropriate care-giving strategies, address the situation of older women, prepare youth for the future and promote

good early childhood development. It encourages looking ahead, beyond 1999 and identifying long-term priorities in view of projections indicating that in the year 2150 every third person will be over 60. It also reaches out to non-traditional actors such as the development community, the media, the private sector and youth, and calls for networking in research and information exchange.

The 1992 Proclamation urges the development community through aid donors and recipient countries to include older persons in their development programmes. The press and media are urged to play a central role in the creation of awareness of population ageing. The private sector is encouraged to support broad and practical partnerships with the UN system. Youth are seen as an important target group in preparing for the later stages of life and in encouraging the old and young generations to cooperate in creating a balance between tradition and innovation in economic, social and cultural development.

International Year of Older Persons 1999

Special events around the world will mark the International Day of Older Persons on 1 October. On that day the United Nations Secretary General will launch the International Year of Older Persons 1999 at an all-day event at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

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towards a society for all ages

International Year of Older Persons 1999

National Targets on Ageing

The International Year of Older Persons 1999 provides an occasion for supporting the national measures outlined in the target strategies (document A/47/339) which the United Nations adopted in 1992 for the year 2001 (resolution A/47/86).

The national measures, outlined below, are based on the International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted by the World Assembly on Ageing in 1982. They are organized according to six priority areas as infrastructure, health, housing, family, education, social welfare and income security. Under each heading relevant quotations from the Plan of Action have been included.

The Plan of Action, whose broad goals have yet to be reached, states that national strategies should be "conceived and phrased in terms of the traditions, cultural values and practices of each country or ethnic community and ... attuned to the priorities and material capacities of each country or community".

Basic national infrastructure targets

"The success of the Plan of Action will depend largely on action undertaken by Governments to create conditions and legal arrangements that will respect the rights of citizens, particularly the elderly."

Governments and other public and private governmental organizations, including the private sector, are invited to consider the following action in setting targets for national infrastructure.

- Strengthen or establish a national coordinating mechanism on ageing. A national coordinating mechanism is a government appointed body for developing and promoting implementation of the national strategy on ageing.

- Promote the establishment and effective functioning of organizations of older persons
- Promote the expansion or establishment of inter generational policies and programming
- Improve or establish standards with enforcement protocols for elderly-care providers, including in home, community-based and residential settings
- Integrate the issues of ageing into national development plans
- Strengthen or establish national education training and research activities on ageing
- Ensure that national data collections include information which is gender and age-specific
- Produce, disseminate and periodically update a national directory of public and private organizations concerned with ageing and of services and opportunities for and by older persons.
- Produce and widely disseminate regular reports on the national ageing situation.
- Establish mechanisms to examine and adjust existing legislation and practices for major omissions, contradictions and discriminations with respect to older persons

Health and nutrition targets

"While the rapidly increasing number of old people throughout the world represents a biological success for humanity, the living conditions of the elderly in most countries have by and large lagged behind those enjoyed by the economically active population."

"A fundamental principle in the care of the elderly should be to enable them to lead independent lives in the community for as long as possible."



towards a society for all ages

Taking into account the Health for All targets of the World Health Organization Governments and other entities are invited to take the following action for setting targets on health and nutrition

- ⌈ Launch a campaign on Healthy Ageing for all *This campaign should stress a holistic approach to health, with a balance between physical intellectual social emotional mental and spiritual well being It could be addressed to schoolchildren as well as the public at large and will aim at decreasing the risk of dependency in old age through an emphasis on avoidance of health-damaging habits and practices*
- ⌈ Establish national indices of health and disability among the aged
- ⌈ Ensure that primary health care is available and accessible to the elderly *This would include the development and expansion of community based and in home long-term care programmes It would also embrace the evaluation and where appropriate revitalization and expansion of the use of traditional healing and disease prevention methods*
- ⌈ Encourage the establishment of a technical aids supply system *This would encompass funding and distribution of health accessories and equipment with special attention to eyeglasses hearing aids and teeth prostheses needed for prevention and treatment of age related disorders*
- ⌈ Provide adequate nutrition especially for the elderly at risk including such groups as refugees victims of disasters and those in isolation
- ⌈ Strengthen or establish a public health programme ensuring accessibility to clean water and adequate sanitation for the elderly

Housing and living environment targets

'Adequate living accommodations and agreeable physical surroundings are necessary for the well being of all people, and it is generally accepted that housing has a great influence on the quality of life of any age group in any country Suitable housing is even more important to the elderly whose abodes are the centre of virtually all of their activities

Governments and NGOs, taking into account the principles and recommendations of Habitat: UN Conference on Human Settlements focusing on older persons are invited to consider the following action in setting targets on housing and the living environment

- Provide support for the elderly so they may continue living in their own homes as long as possible or choose alternative accommodation if their home is no longer suitable or desired *These supports may include in home health and social services home maintenance and rental assistance*
- Provide barrier free and community integrated accommodation and public facilities for the elderly in cities towns and villages
- Promote community education on personal security in the home and community *This should address accident prevention and security against crime and abuse*
- Provide and enhance accessibility and mobility for the elderly to work, social and health services and leisure facilities

Family targets

The family, regardless of its form or organization, is recognized as a fundamental unit of society. With increasing longevity four and five generation families are becoming common throughout the world. The changes in the status of women however, have reduced their traditional role as caretakers of older family members, it is necessary to enable the family as a whole including its male members, to take over and share the burden of help in and by the family

Governments and NGOs, taking into account the UN action plan for the International Year of the Family (1994) are invited to take the following action in setting targets on older persons in the family

- Develop and enhance skills whereby older men and women may fulfil their roles as family leaders counsellors and care givers *This could also mean training for the elderly in mediation techniques and in transmitting and evaluating traditional values in new situations*

- Promote, enhance and support family caregiving. This would include, among other things, information and training on care giving, housing and rental subsidies for multi-generational families, provision of respite care, remuneration for unpaid long-term care-giving and consideration of time spent in caregiving for pension scheme calculations
- Establish support groups for families with special problems and special caregiving needs, such as those having to deal with dementia and physical disabilities
- Integrate the issue of ageing into national activities for the International Year of the Family (1994)

Education and media targets

"... In many of the world's societies, the elderly still serve as the transmitters of information, knowledge, tradition and spiritual values. This important tradition should not be lost."

"There is also a need to educate the general public with regard to the ageing process. Such education must start at an early age in order that ageing should be fully understood as a natural process. The importance of the role of the mass media in this respect cannot be overstated."

Governments, NGOs, educational bodies and the media taking into account the principles and recommendations of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which focus on older persons, are invited to consider the following action in setting targets on education and the media:

- Launch information, education and communication campaigns to promote positive images of ageing and aging as a subject of general social relevance in which everyone participates. These campaigns should be initiated by or directed towards policy makers, educators, practitioners, religious leaders, publicists, older persons, families and the general public. These could be tied in with observance of 1 October, the International Day of Older Persons

- Incorporate information on ageing in primary and secondary school curricula, as well as specialized information and courses on ageing in post secondary level social, health, political, religious, economic, architecture planning and design studies among others.
- Provide key roles for older persons as voluntary or paid resource persons in literacy programmes public awareness campaigns and education programmes on cultural traditions and heritage the environment substance abuse and other areas
- Provide literacy education and continuing education for older persons
- Integrate the subject and activities of ageing into national events and meetings
- Disseminate and apply the United Nations Principles for Older Persons" Endorsed by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session in 1991 the 18 principles briefly address questions of independence participation care self fulfilment and dignity

Social welfare targets

"Social welfare services can be instruments of national policy and should have as their goal the maximizing of the social functioning of the ageing. They should be community based and provide a broad range of preventive remedial and developmental services for the ageing, to enable them to lead as independent a life as possible in their own home and in their community remaining active and useful citizens."

Governments and NGOs taking into account the principles and recommendations of the former UN Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, are invited to take the following action in setting targets on social welfare

- Enact legislation to ensure equitable access for older persons to social welfare services
- Examine and determine the most equitable and efficient mix of public and private incentives which encourage the development and provision of services and opportunities for older persons

As noted in the Plan of Action, this should include the reduction and elimination of "constraints on informal and voluntary activities, and eliminate or relax regulations which hinder or discourage part time work, mutual self help and the use of volunteers alongside professional staff in providing social services or in institutions for the elderly"

- Give recognition to services providers including informal caregivers of older persons, by providing training adequate compensation and a positive public image
- Strengthen or establish a community-based continuum of care programmes. These programmes should aim at developing supportive partnerships for care between the informal and formal sectors

Employment/income security targets

" Many developed countries have achieved universal coverage through generalized social security schemes. For the developing countries, where many if not the majority of persons live at subsistence levels, income security is an issue of concern to all age groups. The social security programmes launched tend to offer limited coverage

Governments, NGOs, workers and employer groups, taking into account the principles and recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO) focusing on older persons, are invited to use the following guide in setting targets on employment and income security

- Institute a national programme to promote productive ageing. This programme would encourage access to credit for older persons so they may engage in income-producing and/or voluntary service on behalf of themselves, their families and their communities. Such activities could include drawing on community based skills banks of older persons, self-employment, the development of second careers, senior cooperatives and part time jobs including as trainers and teachers, health-care providers and volunteers
- Establish, strengthen and implement schemes or strategies to provide income security for all older

persons at levels appropriate to the national economic and social infrastructure. This would entail a variety of approaches, including a possible attachment to the workforce through continued productive work on a voluntary basis, adaptation of working conditions to the physical abilities of the older person, training and retraining and remuneration and credit for contributions to the informal sector economy including farming, caregiving and child care. These approaches may be considered as well as more traditional public pension schemes

- Establish a "safety net" where pension and other schemes do not exist or are inadequate. This would entail targeting resources to poor and needy groups of the elderly with special attention given to disabled, widowed, isolated frail elderly persons as well as refugees
- Examine options available to older workers for flexible and gradual withdrawal from, and extension of, formal employment in accord with national and social infrastructures and resources

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Towards a society for all ages

International Year of Older Persons 1999

Ageless thinking in the next millenium

"It is fitting for the last year of the millennium to be the International Year of Older Persons, with the theme 'towards a society for all ages' — a society that does not caricature older persons as pensioners, but sees them as both agents and beneficiaries of development."

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan,
1 October 1998

The silent revolution

The technological revolution has captured the public imagination, and its impact on all walks of life has been discussed and felt for many years.

By contrast, the far-reaching effects of the demographic revolution have been relatively ignored. It has been called "the silent revolution" yet its effects are being felt by every individual, family, neighbourhood and nation throughout the world.

Individuals are living longer than ever before. Twenty years have been added to the average life expectancy worldwide in the past 50 years (1950-2000) — an effect of improved health systems and nutrition.

People are ageing too, an effect of declining mortality and increasing longevity. By 2030, several industrialized countries will have one-third of their population over age 60. By 2150, the world as a whole will have a third of its population over 60.

"We need 'to put the main focus on ageing', noted Ambassador Julia T. de Witte at the launching of the International Year of Older Persons on 1 October 1998 at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

We need "ageless thinking" — and this calls for a new mental framework or window through which we see things. For centuries people saw the world as flat when everything was explained in terms of a flat world. When the world was proven to be round, new kinds of thinking, structures, terms and images developed. Similarly, seeing ageing as a lifelong and society wide phenomenon — not only a phenomenon pertaining to older persons — calls for a shift in thinking. That shift is the underlying message of the theme of the International Year "a society for all ages".

Investing in the individual

Many of today's very old persons find themselves unprepared. They are "surprised survivors", noted Dr Gunhild Hagestad, keynote speaker at the launch of the Year. They are "demographic and social pioneers", exploring a new age for old age.

No longer can grandparenting be equated with old age, since grandparents now range in age from 35 to 105, and their grandchildren from newborns to retirees. No longer can an increasing population of older persons be narrowly defined as, for example, patients or pensioners.

Life capabilities have their genesis in early life. More of today's youth can expect to live longer than their forebears, but in very different circumstances. Anticipating a long life, youth may be encouraged to think of life ahead as a marathon, requiring a particular kind of preparation and pacing in the accumulation of "capital" or resources.

Human capital is needed, including relational and work skills and healthy lifestyles. Social capital must be nurtured in terms of social solidarity and networks.



towards a society for all ages

Economic capital also needs to be acquired throughout the lifecycle including savings and pensions

For these types of capital or resources to be accumulated throughout life adult years need flexibility of work home and social life This is true for men and women alike Currently, work is structured as an all or nothing proposition leaving the unemployed with material poverty and the over employed with 'time poverty'

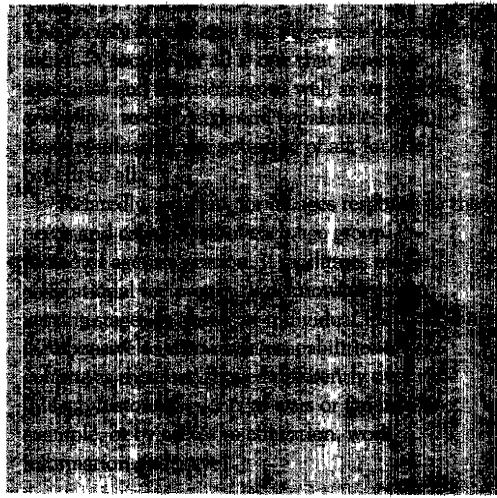
Mid life becomes a pivotal phase in a long life being a transitional time between young adulthood usually devoted to family formation and career establishment and late adulthood when family forms frequently change and second careers are sought including ones that could be sustained into the highest ages Echoing the well recognized transitional nature of adolescence as a critical time for investing in building up life and work skills, some writers have opted to use the term 'middlescence' for mid life so as to gain similar investments in it in preparation for late life

As individual capabilities are expanded over the entire lifecycle so is a society's capability expanded and the common good augmented

Fostering enabling environments

It is helpful to think of the individual and society as two entities living in a symbiotic relationship And just as individual lives are changing so too is group life whether this be the family neighbourhood extended community or nation Ageing and migration are factors changing group demographic structures And the evolution of values as for example regarding the advancement of women is having a profound impact on the various roles and relationships within social groups

Families have been called the first resource and last resort for its members providing a launching pad at the start of life and a landing pad at its end As grandparents begin to outnumber grandchildren



creating what has been called the inverse family pyramid it is important to maintain the family's social network particularly as family members are increasingly dispersed in the home country and abroad

The outmigration of youth to cities is leaving many rural communities with a high percentage of older persons And a reverse migration from the inner cities has also in some places left large concentrations of isolated older persons Older neighbourhoods tend to be safer more stable They also tend to be relatively neglected by service providers Age integrated facilities and harmonized health and social services are needed at the local level Rural and urban development schemes need to foster age-integrated living environments

With the growth of civil society, including voluntary and professional associations a new social wealth is emerging Communities of interest including retirees associations, usually act locally but think globally being local cells of national and global networks Such communities provide solidarity for like minded individuals while enabling them to reach out to others in collaboration or competition. Youth

and elders may, for example, compete for political influence and jobs — or they may choose to collaborate on peace-building, environmental protection and various community development schemes that benefit everybody.

A new paradigm at the national level above all requires the creation of opportunities for participation at all phases of life — work for all who want it, and adequate supports services for those who need them. The new agendas of civil society now being promoted by many nations should explicitly include older persons, especially those for whom participation is most difficult.

Summary

Moving towards the society for all ages will require policies that simultaneously strengthen (a) individual lifelong development into late life, focused on self help and independence and, relatedly, (b) enabling environments of families, neighbourhoods, communities of interest and broad societal institutions based on principles of reciprocity and interdependence.

It will require an openness to new ways of perceiving, valuing and ordering reality in the next

century as longevity increases and population ageing affects the organization of society. While explorations of the society for all ages must be made within the scope of national aspirations and capabilities, the transformations of individual life and the institutions of society will be common features everywhere.

While taking a broad and long term approach to individual and population ageing, the concept of a society for all ages must complement and reinforce attention to the immediate — and sometimes emergency — needs of today's elders, particularly income security, health care and gender dimensions.

The United Nations Principles for Older Persons and the International Plan of Action on Ageing provide policy frameworks for addressing the situation of older persons.

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