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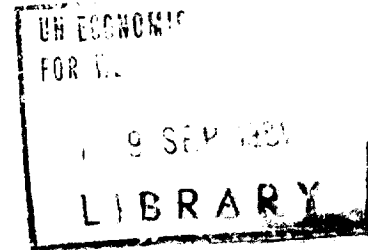
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International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations

Development Decade

(Note of the Executive Secretary)

At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 35/56 (5 December 1980) containing the International Development Strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade and proclaiming 1 January 1981 as the date of commencement of the Decade. The Strategy document was presented as an annex to the resolution (E/ECWA/122/Add.2).

The Strategy is one of the most important documents issued by the international community. It represents a fact-filled compendium of the results of major efforts in the economic and social disciplines and the expert knowledge gained from the practical experience of the international community, as submitted to numerous international conferences and meetings. The document was two years in preparation.

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Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 33/193, which called for the preparation of a strategy for the third United Nations development decade, the United Nations system undertook a variety of activities to that end. All United Nations organizations and bodies proceeded to evaluate the findings of specialized studies and to draft recommendations in specific areas. Those drafts and recommendations were then examined by the Co-ordinating Committee, which was composed of representatives of all United Nations organizations and bodies. They were also examined in studies submitted to meetings of specialized sub-committees of the Co-ordinating Committee, which also considered the studies and recommendations of the Development Planning Committee. The latter Committee was composed of a group of experts who met in their professional capacity. Questions related to the drafting of the strategy were discussed at the meetings of the Preparatory Committee established by the General Assembly for that purpose. The draft Strategy was then discussed at length and in detail by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1980 and, finally, by the General Assembly itself at its eleventh special session, which was devoted to the evaluation of progress in the establishment of a New International Economic Order, the promotion of the accelerated development of the developing countries and the promotion of international economic development through a new round of comprehensive negotiations. The finished document was then adopted at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

This comprehensive document has become the principal set of guidelines for the orientation of development activities and the major instrument for the implementation of development policies the world over for the decade of the 1980s. It derives its particular significance from the position it occupies in the over-all effort to establish the New International Economic Order, which was the subject of two General Assembly resolutions: resolution 3201 (S-VI) and resolution 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 on the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The Strategy is also based on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which was adopted in General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, and resolution 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation.

The Economic Commission for Western Asia contributed ideas and concepts which were incorporated in the Strategy document. Thus, ECWA adopted resolution 76 (VI) at its sixth session which was held at Baghdad from 28 April to 2 May 1979. In that resolution, the Commission decided "to set up an intergovernmental committee of development experts for the purpose of preparing, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Commission, a report on the views of the ECWA region on the international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade". The secretariat also prepared a working paper which was discussed by the Intergovernmental Committee at its meetings held at Beirut from 29 to 31 August 1979. The Committee adopted the working paper after introducing a number of modifications and adding new ideas, which it also included in its report. That report was then submitted to the Commission at its seventh session which was held at Baghdad from 19 to 23 April 1980. During that session, the Commission established a sub-committee, which made further additions to the Intergovernmental Committee's report. Pursuant to the report of the Sub-committee, which requested that some figures be updated and that the various ideas put forward be integrated in a single document, and following the Commission's approval of the Sub-committee's report, the secretariat, after a comprehensive review of the matter, issued an amended document embodying the Development Strategy for the ECWA Region and distributed it to the Governments of the ECWA member States. That document then became the source of major guidelines for development activities in the region and the contribution of the region to the international effort to draft an international development strategy. (E/ECWA/122/Add.1, Parts I and II).

While the draft Strategy was under deliberation, the Development Planning Committee undertook a survey of the problems and priorities of development and the requirements of development policy at the regional and the subregional levels. At the request of that Committee, ECWA prepared a paper entitled "Development problems and prospects of the ECWA region in the 1980s (E/ECWA/122/Add.3)." In that paper, a number of major sectors, problems and issues were examined in the light of the document on the Development Strategy for the ECWA Region. The

paper also proposed a number of ways in which the international community could assist in carrying out the Strategy and in supporting policy priorities at the regional and the subregional levels. The paper served as a basis for the discussion that took place between the ECWA secretariat and the mission sent by the Development Planning Committee in September 1980. The paper was then submitted by the secretariat for detailed examination at the seventeenth session of the Development Planning Committee which will meet to study the regional and subregional dimensions of the International Development Strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade.

The secretariat hereby submits to the Commission these major documents - the International Development Strategy and the Regional Development Strategy - as well as the study on development problems and prospects in the region, so that the Commission may take appropriate action. In submitting these documents, the secretariat feels that the impact of the International Development Strategy on the region should be monitored closely and that the implementation of both the International and the Regional Strategies deserves intensive follow-up and evaluation throughout the Decade. This need is particularly cogent, because in the new round of comprehensive negotiations that took place at the current session of the General Assembly no noticeable progress was registered, and because a world conference is expected to be held shortly for comprehensive negotiations on international economic co-operation for development. It is hoped that at that conference the more developed countries will make greater concessions in favour of the developing countries, thereby creating a more favourable climate for carrying out the International Development Strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade.

Significantly enough, the substance and the guidelines of the International Development Strategy and those of the Regional Development Strategy are in perfect agreement with the spirit of the Joint Arab Economic Action Strategy and the National Economic Action Charter which were adopted at the Eleventh Arab Summit Conference on 26 November 1980. It is hoped that the funds allocated for development in the resolution on the Arab Development Decade will contribute to the success of the Development Strategy for the ECWA Region.