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Statement by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
at the
Opening of the 1988 session of the UNICEF Executive Board

New York
18 April 1988

[Talloires Declaration attached]



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FOR INFORMATION

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Executive Board
1988 session

Statement by Mr. James P. Grant

Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund

at the Opening of the 1988 session of the UNICEF Executive Board

New York - 18 April 1988

I join our Chairman in extending greetings and a warm welcome to the members of the Executive Board and observers, the representatives of UNICEF National Committees and non-governmental organizations, and other friends and colleagues.

I also wish to express particularly warm regards for our Chairman. She is not only a distinguished and accomplished leader of her government and authority on health care, well experienced on the international scene not only in UNICEF but in our sister organization, WHO, but she also, for many of us, personally symbolizes much of UNICEF. Indeed, those of us who first came to know her at the Executive Board session in Rome, accompanied by her infant child, often think of her as the real life model for UNICEF's distinctive emblem - the mother and child encircled in the nurturing olive branches of peace. I know that Chairman Maruping's leadership during these two weeks will make a major contribution to the success of this meeting, and continue the process of strengthening the understanding and partnership between UNICEF Secretariat and Board - just as she has played that role actively throughout this year in the travels she has described and her various other duties in our behalf.

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Madame Chairman, I must, of course, take a moment to comment on the very sad personal event of eighteen days ago, and of the incredible experience of these past weeks as I have been enveloped in a near tidal wave of tender, loving support and comfort. I should begin by saying, as I have mentioned to many friends already, that had Ethel and I, in mid-March, been told that the next two weeks would be the last we would have together, we could not have done a much better job in planning them. We had the opportunity, in travelling to Bhutan and India, to share extended "quality time" together, talking about family and friends, work and home, hopes and concerns. There was no doubt from our conversations, and the two weeks of meetings, visits and tours, that we both loved the work in which we have been engaged; that we loved the people with whom we have had the opportunity to work; and we loved the sense of purpose and accomplishment which all who are involved in this work called "UNICEF" can rightfully feel with satisfaction and pride. It was a wonderful trip and a wonderful time to the final hour, surrounded by friends and family. It simply had a terribly unhappy final moment, on Good Friday as the full moon rose over the Taj Mahal.

In the moments that followed, our UNICEF colleagues and counterparts in India demonstrated once again, through the night, their ability to deal effectively and swiftly with the most difficult and trying of situations. And in the days that followed, I have been deeply moved and strengthened by the efforts made by many staff and friends to ensure that all whose lives Ethel touched could share, and did share, in the comfort and strength which we all can draw by remembering the contributions which those who leave us have made to our world and to our lives.

She was a remarkable woman; an extraordinary human being. I am grateful not only for the 45 years - really, 47, from when we first met - that we had together, but also that she had the opportunity to share many years with so many of you; that her life was so enriched by her contacts, friendships and shared endeavours with you and with so many others of UNICEF's immediate and extended families; and that you had the opportunity "to walk with her a little while".

Thank you very much for your friendship, and your support.

* * * * *

Madame Chairman, in the past several months since most of the documents submitted to the Executive Board were completed, and in the two months since our Pre-Board meeting in February, there have been a number of significant developments which importantly affect our work and the context with which the Board should consider the issues before you. Rather than spending my time today reviewing all those issues, I think I should limit myself to a brief reporting on these more recent developments.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

In early March, the United Nations Human Rights Commission approved the first reading of the draft Convention on the Rights of the Child - a critical step leading toward achievement of the General Assembly's declared goal, encouraged by this Executive Board, to complete action on the Convention during the 44th General Assembly in 1989, as a fitting commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Child.

Members of the Executive Board will recall that the proposal for a Convention originated with the Government of Poland, which proposed that the world community's expectations for its children ought to be legally codified as part of the observance of the International Year of the Child in 1979. We all know, of course, that few good things move as quickly as we might hope - especially when we lawyers are involved! The drafting process has moved slowly, and you will recall that UNICEF was frequently criticized through most of this decade by many governments and especially by many non-governmental organizations for the modesty of our involvement in supporting the drafting process and encouraging its advancement. Just two years ago, in 1986, the Board instructed the Secretariat to "...participate in the work of the drafting of the Convention..." as it emphasized that the drafting "...should be concluded without any further delay".

Our role in this process is not to be drafters, but to support the drafters; not to negotiate, but to provide information and counsel to governments as they negotiate; and, most of all, to encourage all involved to move forward so that the world might soon have a universally accepted codification of the standards expected for the survival, protection and development of children.

Members of the Board will find the current text of the Convention reprinted in the excellent booklet published by UNICEF in India, which is available today. This booklet - which also contains commentaries and statements about the need for a Convention, various briefing materials, and relevant excerpts from the SAARC Summit declarations of 1986 and 1987 endorsing the Convention - is a very interesting example of how UNICEF country offices and National Committees can tailor information about the Convention to their own audiences, and make important contributions to public debate by helping people and decision-makers to understand and appreciate the Convention in terms relevant to their own concerns and responsibilities. I highly commend this booklet to you.

I should mention that these kind of efforts have indeed been very successful, as during my trip to Asia last month I was assured by both the Prime Minister of the country with the world's largest child population - India, and by the King of one of the world's less populous countries - Bhutan, of their personal commitments to moving the Convention forward.

I should also mention that in the past months the Convention effort has enlisted the active support of a number of new champions, including our own

Goodwill Ambassador, Liv Ullmann, who participated in meetings and activities associated with the meeting of the Working Group on the Convention earlier this year, and will continue her efforts, with the encouragement of the Human Rights Centre, as a world spokesperson for the Convention. And, also, a group of Nobel Laureates who participated in the conference convened in Paris in January by President Mitterand and Peace Laureate Elie Weisel continue to lobby in behalf of the Convention, having addressed appeals to the Working Group in January and to the Children's Rights Forum organized by the NGO Committee on UNICEF this past Friday and Saturday in the General Assembly Hall.

Working together for children

Madam Chairman, four international gatherings and one national meeting held in the past six weeks particularly illustrate the breadth and depth of the growing "grand alliance" of traditional and non-traditional forces which are working together for children.

International Task Force on Child Survival

In mid-March, the International Task Force on Child Survival (often known as the "Bellagio Group") held its third full meeting since 1984, at Talloires, France. The meeting included the executive heads of WHO (Dr. Mahler), the World Bank (Mr. Conable), UNICEF, and of many of the principal bilateral assistance agencies, including Margaret Catley-Carlson of CIDA (Canada), Fritz Staehelin of Switzerland, Carl Tham of SIDA (Sweden), and Alan Woods of USAID (United States), as well as senior leaders of the Italian, Dutch, FRG, Danish, French, British, and other aid agencies, UNDP, the Rockefeller Foundation, Rotary International, ICDDR,B and other NGOs. From developing countries, Ministers and Secretaries of Health of China, Brazil, Colombia, India, Mexico, Nigeria and Uganda participated, along with senior officials from Indonesia, Pakistan and Senegal. Together, obviously, these participants represented, at executive levels, the vast majority of the world's official development assistance flows and a substantial majority of the world's children, from each developing continent.

The Talloires meeting assessed the remarkably accelerated progress being made in immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections and safe motherhood and family planning, and noted the indispensable role in this progress played by a vast multitude of allies, including not only national governments and multi-lateral and bilateral agencies, but non-governmental organizations and movements, private and voluntary groups, businesses, the media, and many, many individuals.

The meeting's convenors - the World Bank, UNDP, WHO, UNICEF and the Rockefeller Foundation - declared at the conclusion that this progress "demonstrates that resources can be mobilized and that rapid and effective action can be taken to combat dangerous threats to the health of children and mothers ... and commit ourselves to pursue and expand these initiatives in the 1990s". Based on this confidence and determination, the Declaration of

Talloires, which I append to my statement today, not only embraces the possible goals suggested in Part I (Children in a Global Context) of my Report of the Executive Director to this Board [E/ICEF/1988/2 (Part I), pages 12-13], but goes beyond those suggestions to propose Year-2000 goals of the eradication of polio (which, "with the eradication of smallpox, [would] represent a fitting gift from the 20th to the 21st centuries") and the virtual elimination of neonatal tetanus deaths, as well as specific targets for the reduction of measles, diarrhoea deaths, acute respiratory infections, and maternal mortality (by at least half, from the current annual toll of 500,000). The Declaration also encourages efforts to improve the quality and coverage of educational services and to reduce to less than 1 per cent severe malnutrition of children under 5. Throughout, the Declaration asserts our determination that the progress we are making can only be affirmed if it is sustained progress through provision of primary health care services, and not merely one-time achievements of targets.

Symposium on Child Survival and Development in Southern Africa

Last month's Symposium of Artists and Intellectuals on Child Survival and Development in Southern Africa, convened in Harare, Zimbabwe, under the executive chairmanship of Mrs. Sally Mugabe assisted by UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Harry Belafonte, represents one of the most recent and most stellar of the growing number of non-traditional approaches to broader, stronger, more sustained action for the benefit of children. Following upon the similar but more modest meeting of African artists and intellectuals in Dakar, Senegal, in 1987, the Harare Symposium was truly an African initiative, supported by UNICEF, and with external solidarity manifested through the participation of a limited number of international personalities, including our own colleague, Lisbet Palme, of the Swedish National Committee for UNICEF; Jean [Mrs. Andrew] Young, who chaired the United States National Commission for IYC; and Mathilda [Mrs. Mario] Cuomo, who chaired the New York State Commission for IYC. Daniele [Mrs. Francois] Mitterand of France had also planned to participate, but was compelled to cancel at the last moment for personal reasons.

In the context of the terrible situation afflicting children in especially difficult circumstances in southern Africa, the Harare Symposium sought to stimulate and exchange ideas on the role that Africa's cultural leaders can play in their own countries to help empower families with the knowledge that could dramatically reduce the current devastating toll of children's lives lost and wasted in southern Africa.

Global Conference of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival

Last week in Oxford, England, an extraordinary collection of the world's spiritual and parliamentary leaders convened to seek a common vision of how to reconcile and unite in common purpose humanity's moral and practical priorities. Central among these, of course, is the survival of our children - fundamental not only to humanity's morality, but also to our practical survival.

In a broader sense, the Oxford convocation is reflective of the very fundamental role which both religious institutions and national parliaments have played in advancing the Child Survival and Development Revolution. I will not again recount the litany of leading actions and contributory interventions by religious institutions, leaders and networks in support of child survival activity. This Executive Board last year cited just one such example, when you awarded the Maurice Pate Memorial Award to the Catholic Church in El Salvador. The role of the Holy See and Catholic authorities in scores of countries is well known, as is the great contribution made by Al Azhar University, and by countless imans, priests, pastors, and lay leaders and other religiously-motivated individuals from every major faith. Similarly, parliamentary initiative can be credited with much of the great advances which we have encountered, in both industrial and developing countries, in financial, programmatic and political support for child survival activities. These two forces are among the strongest contributors to our advance.

Children's Defense Fund in the United States

The fourth gathering in these past weeks which illustrates the growing grand alliance for children was the national conference of the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, DC, which I had the privilege to address. I mention this meeting - of several thousand professionals and volunteer activists in child welfare, health and education, as well as many others - because it reflects a rapidly increasing convergence of forces in industrial countries which recognize the imperative of early intervention by society to protect and nurture the child, especially in times of economic distress and fiscal constraint. I shared the platform at this convention with the president of a university, the chairman of a major industrial corporation, and a Navy admiral (in fact, the former Chief of Naval Operations who now chairs President Reagan's National Commission on AIDS). I shared not only the platform, but also the message. We found that we were all saying the same thing: that the future begins with children. Not simply the future of our countries as an abstract generality, but the future of our economies, the future of our national defenses, the future of our research and intellectual capacities, and the future of our cultures and social fabric. It is a future that fails if it is a future burdened with wasted, crippled lives, grieving families, uneducated and unstimulated minds, and devastated hopes.

As I noted in my address to that conference, the growing grand alliance in the United States includes not only those whom we traditionally expect to be concerned with such issues as maternal health and nutrition, infant care, and education, but also such non-traditional child advocates as business leaders, the military, political candidates and incumbents, the media, and many, many more.

Two such advocates in our host country perhaps best capture the challenge for industrial countries as well as developing countries. New York's Governor Mario Cuomo, in calling for a "Decade of the Child" in his annual address to the state legislature, insisted that "The problem of our children demands a

bold and broad commitment of government at all levels, in partnership with the whole community". And the Congressionally established National Commission on Infant Mortality has reminded the American people that "So many of society's problems can be traced in one form or another to a poor start in life. Children born today will be our leaders in the year 2020. What are we doing today to ensure their start in life allows them to be intellectually, physically and financially able to lead us through the next century?".

The 1988 NGO Forum

Finally, Members of the Board will hear much more later this week about the 1988 Forum organized by the NGO Committee on UNICEF. Entitled "Children's Rights - An Agenda for Action", this year's Forum held on Friday in the General Assembly hall and on Saturday at UNICEF House, brought together an unprecedented 800 or so people to develop an action agenda on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to meet the global challenge of AIDS. The Forum heard such speakers as Margaret Papandreou, President of the Women's Union of Greece and wife of the Prime Minister; former UNICEF colleague Stephen Joseph, now the New York City Health Commissioner; and also former UNICEF colleague Margaret Catley-Carlson, President of CIDA. For so many organizational representatives to participate in the Forum is one more manifestation of the magnitude of the great alliance of forces now mobilizing for children.

I do know, Madam Chairman, that some delegates have questioned the Secretariat's use of the term "Grand Alliance for Children", wondering if this represents some major new commitment of finance, programme or staff. The answer to that question is no; we are, however, seeking to restructure and redeploy UNICEF's assets so that we can more effectively support the greatly increased and still growing network of allies pioneered by UNICEF's partners, our National Committees. The Grand Alliance, as I have tried to illustrate by these five recent examples, is simply the increasingly strong - and still stronger - engagement of a vast array of governmental authorities, international agencies, non-governmental organizations, public and private institutions and entities, and individuals, working together - sometimes in direct partnership, sometimes in collaborative and complementary activity, and often wholly independently and through their own motivation - to advance and accelerate society's commitment to children. To the extent that UNICEF has a formal "programme" of building this alliance, it is only in the sense that we are building upon - sometimes consolidating and expanding, sometimes recapturing, and sometimes newly enlisting - that broad array of allies that was initially most visible in the International Year of the Child in 1979, and whom the General Assembly and this Executive Board have charged us to retain, sustain and enlarge in active partnership, as fulfillment of our responsibilities as lead agency of the United Nations system for co-ordinating the development aspects of follow-up activities to the IYC.

Sustaining UNICEF

UNICEF is, of course, financed through the voluntary contributions of governments, organizations and individuals; supported through the voluntary

efforts of millions of citizens; and dependent in our programmes upon the voluntary cooperation and collaboration of all with whom we work. That voluntary support and cooperation is dependent upon the confidence and trust which we engender.

Questions...

I regret very much that some developments in the past year or so have somewhat jeopardized that confidence.

I refer, of course, particularly to the questions raised by the External Audit of our 1986 accounts and related matters. Even though none of these questions have suggested the slightest financial wrongdoing or impropriety by any individual or UNICEF management, the very fact that any questions were raised and the Audit opinion was delayed has created a climate of uncertainty about the strictness and thoroughness with which UNICEF observes and enforces appropriate operating procedures, and whether the Secretariat's zeal to advance its programmes and objectives is allowed to bend or stretch the rules by which we should be accountable.

Allowing such a climate to exist is unacceptable.

The fact that our work is for children should never be used as an excuse for sloppiness. Our need for flexibility to respond most effectively to the needs of children does not absolve us from the scrupulous observance of every rule and regulation. The very characteristics of resourcefulness and vision which have made UNICEF one of the most popular and supported of organizations must not undermine that trust.

It is surely a relief for all of us - Secretariat and Board alike - that the expanded audit has resulted in a "clean" audit opinion. Errors or questioned reporting have been corrected. Questions about procedure have been answered, or new interpretations and instructions have been established. Some remaining issues require resolution by the Board.

But the matter is not past. Any lingering sense of doubt can only be relieved by the evidence of our future performance.

I want to make clear to the Board that your Secretariat - including this executive management - have heard the message of the past year. We have agonized too much; we have worked too many hours - thousands of hours, through many nights and too many weekends - to answer the questions which were raised and provide the information required; we have hurt too much from this, to not make absolutely sure that these kinds of questions do not recur. We will not accept that such doubts - founded or unfounded - should arise again.

We have clearly recognized that some degree of tightening of our procedures and accountability is required. Many new measures have already been instituted; more are in preparation. Procedures for monitoring budget performance have been strengthened. A computerized country office accounting

system, known as the Field Voucher System, is being installed. UNICEF Financial Regulations and Rules have been adopted. The redesign of the Comptroller's System is underway and is expected to be completed by end 1989. These short-term and long-term initiatives are detailed in the Report of the Executive Director (Part II). Other measures for defining or clarifying various policies which require approval by bodies such as the ACABQ, the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations and the Executive Board are being actively pursued.

I have sent the Board of Auditors' Report on the Expanded Audit to every Regional Director, Representative, and Division Director. I have little doubt that they will all read it carefully. I expect that it be read by each of their managers. I have instructed them to use the Report as a tool to address any financial and management issues that may occur within their offices, and to ensure that we have nothing less than the best management practices. And I have made clear my expectation, and I shall continue to do so quite firmly and insistently, that we in UNICEF must not only be competent managers, as I believe we are, but that we must also be seen to be competent managers if we are to retain and sustain the confidence and trust that is absolutely essential to our work.

...and confidence

I am very pleased, of course, that Members of the Board, and all of our supporting governments, while concerned by the questions which were raised, nevertheless recognized the technical nature of those questions, and appreciated that UNICEF's integrity, competence and essential purpose were never at question. While your governments may have seen some of our procedures as sloppy, you have also appreciated that, at heart, our management is sound. This continuing confidence has surely been demonstrated by your continuing - indeed, dramatically increasing - support. Our income for both General Resources and Supplementary Funding increased significantly, rising from a total of \$455 million in 1986 to \$572 million for 1987. While a significant part of this increase can be attributed to exchange rates, the substantial actual increase is, obviously, much appreciated. It is particularly noteworthy that in 1987, Sweden provided UNICEF more funding than ever before received from any country. The Swedish contribution exceeded \$80 million, followed by the United States at approximately \$70 million and Italy at approximately \$68 million.

It is also extremely encouraging that, among other early good signs for 1988, the Government of the United States has already paid its entire increased 1988 General Resources contribution, having presented us with the largest single cheque ever received by UNICEF - \$53.9 million - in early March. Moreover, the U.S. has since contributed more than \$30 million additional in Supplementary funds, including \$25.5 million signed to us while I was in India last month to support India's immunization programme - the largest EPI effort in the world. And still other projects for Supplementary funding are currently in negotiation with the United States, resulting in a probable total U.S. contribution in 1988 surpassing \$100 million.

Virtually all of UNICEF's largest contributors - Sweden, Italy, Finland, Canada, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Denmark and Switzerland, and others - have increased their General Resources pledges for this year, with increased pledges anticipated from other major donors, such as Japan. Norway continues to lead the world in per capita support - at approximately \$7 annually - for UNICEF's General Resources.

In the non-governmental sector, I would like to express our appreciation to our National Committees not only for their increasingly greater contributions - noting particularly that the Swiss National Committee's contribution this year for the first time will exceed \$2 per citizen - but also for their efforts which contribute so strongly to strengthening the climate for governmental support. And, of course, the climate for both governmental and non-governmental support has been substantially enhanced by the devoted efforts of all of our Goodwill Ambassadors: Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, who travelled to Mozambique last year and continues to promote UNICEF in Japan; Liv Ullmann and Harry Belafonte, whose efforts I have already mentioned; Peter Ustinov and Sir Richard Attenborough, whose films Gandhi and Cry Freedom have been important financial benefits to UNICEF as well as advocacy benefits for the principles of the United Nations; and our new Special Ambassador, Audrey Hepburn, whose recent visit to Ethiopia and subsequent tour in North America and Europe has dramatically carried the message of urgent need and valid promise for that troubled country.

I would also like to mention our appreciation to the Secretary-General and Mrs. Pérez de Cuéllar, whose personal initiative has arranged a potentially multi-million dollar concert and dinner programme in the General Assembly hall on 26 May for the benefit of children affected by AIDS. Having asked UNICEF to assist in this event - a concert re-creation of the musical HAI R - and having arranged for UNICEF to receive one-half of the proceeds, the Secretary-General has subsequently enlisted Their Majesties, King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain, and Mrs. Nancy Reagan of the United States, as their co-chairmen.

The contributions of your Governments, the funds which developing countries commit to implementing the projects which UNICEF assists, and the support of our National Committees and other allies, are the lifeblood of our work. You sustain us. We are grateful for your support. We are determined to continue to earn it.

The most urgent challenge

Madame Chairman, as we approached this Executive Board session, one central issue clearly stood out from among all others as the most urgent challenge - not only for this Board to consider, but for the world to address. That is that the economic crisis of the 1980s has slowed and reversed the important hard-won momentum for social progress achieved in most developing countries since independence, with vulnerable children and mothers suffering the greatest adverse impact. Lack of resources to sustain health,

education and other basic services will render many in the population of the least developed countries - especially the countries of sub-Saharan Africa - unable to participate in their country's development. Indeed, they will likely represent more a burden than the contribution they can - and should - be to every country's pursuit of a better life for its citizens. As shown in Figure 1 from Part I of my Executive Director's Report, per capita incomes are, on average, down since 1980 in Latin America by some 10 per cent and in sub-Saharan Africa [Figure 2] by a staggering 20 per cent - and no early major improvement is yet in sight. President Nyerere's poignant query, "Must we starve our children to pay our debts?", is all too often, in Latin America as well as in Africa, still being answered, in actuality, in the affirmative. At the same time, the industrial world is denied the growing markets in the developing world which would so vastly facilitate the massive restructuring now required of the United States, with its vast deficits, and Japan and Western Europe (particularly the FRG), with their vast surpluses. Earlier this year, an important study by the Overseas Development Council reminded us that U.S. exports alone to the Third World would have been \$60 billion higher in 1986 if their development momentum of the 1970s had been maintained. That momentum must now, somehow, be restored if global tragedies are to be avoided for poor and rich countries alike.

Figure 1

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA 1980-1986 (1980=100)

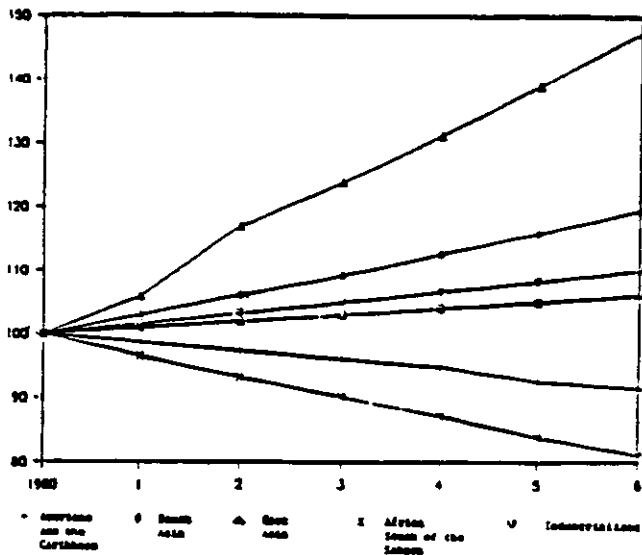
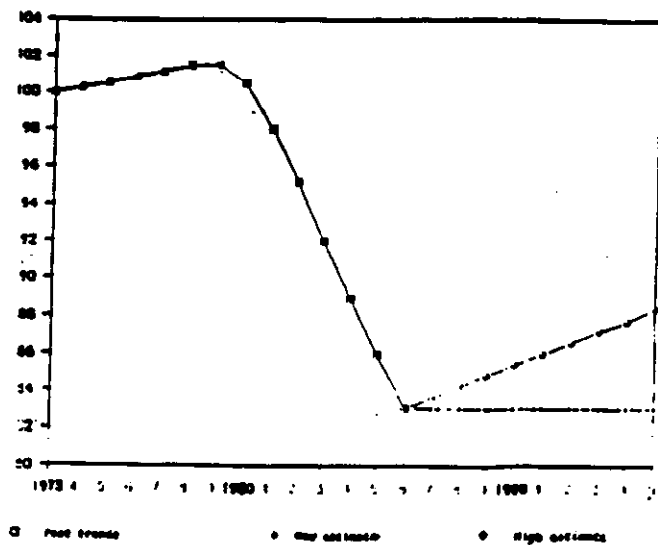


Figure 2

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 1973-1986 (1973=100)



And while the economic constraints in the least developed countries, particularly those in Africa, will be the most extreme, there will also be serious problems in sustaining social sector advance in many other countries of the Americas, Asia and the Middle East. Indeed, economic decline in many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean closely follows the pattern of sub-Saharan Africa, often further exacerbated for the poorest population groups by adjustment measures initiated to cope with the decline.

In these circumstances, the capacity of most countries even to maintain present levels of protection and services for their children is sorely limited. Sustained progress and acceleration will surely be beyond reach, and whole new generations of children will be consigned to early death or permanent disability and ill-health.

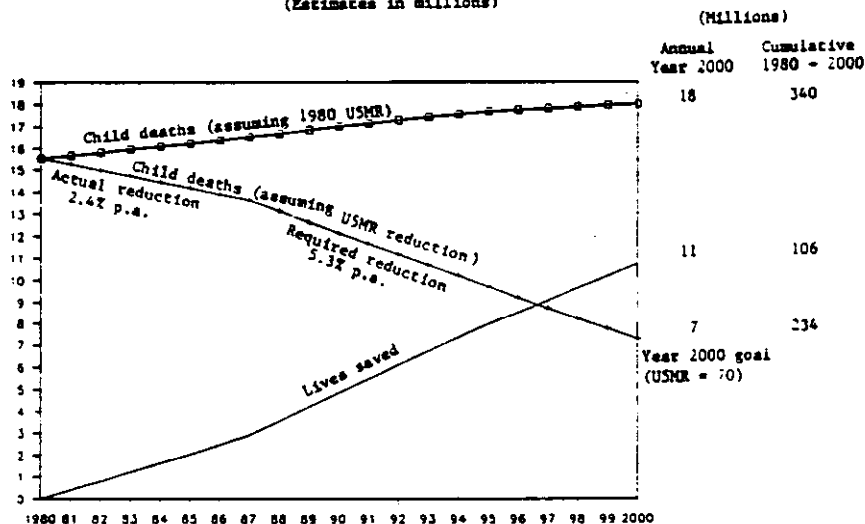
Even given this extremely adverse situation for so many in UNICEF's "constituency", I sought in the special "Part I" of my Report to the Board to assert that human and social progress is still possible. New initiatives will be needed. The countries themselves - with the collaboration and assistance of the international community - will need to exert special efforts to sustain and protect the achievements made already. Important - indeed, monumental - new goals are possible, with overcoming the worst aspects of mass poverty among children and mothers within reach, if we can develop low-cost approaches in other fields of activities equivalent to those already under way in the area of CSD.

The historic and unprecedented opportunity and challenge for the world's children in the next decade must be met through the mobilization of both external and domestic resources. The industrialized world needs to provide increased resources to the developing countries, aimed explicitly at poor countries and the poorer people within them, which would contribute to the regeneration of growth and recycling of resources. The developing countries, on the other hand, need to explore innovative ways of financing recurrent costs, essentially mobilizing internal resources through community financing, different means of cost-recovery and support through the private sector. Figure 3 of Part I illustrates the potential gains which can be achieved if we are successful in supporting what the Talloires Declaration says is do-able by the Year 2000 - with the resulting saving of so many tens of millions of child lives while slowing population growth as well.

Figure 3

ALTERNATIVE GLOBAL PROJECTIONS OF CHILD DEATHS AND LIVES SAVED

Children under five years of age: 1980-2000
(Estimates in millions)



Model A deaths
The 1980 under-five mortality rates remain constant to the year 2000.

Model B deaths
Up to 1987, the under-five mortality rates are unchanged by the United Nations Population Division. From 1987, mortality rates decline to reach their CSDR targets by the year 2000, i.e. either an under-five mortality rate of 70 or half their 1980 rate, whichever is lower.

Lives saved
i.e. the difference between Model A deaths and Model B deaths.

The "Bamako Initiative", launched by the African Ministers of Health at the WHO Regional Committee meeting in September 1987, is one example of combining increased international finance and domestic resource mobilization in a mutually reinforcing and synergistic manner for that part of the world - sub-Saharan Africa - which is in most distress. As with the early stages of any initiative, there will be many doubts and uncertainties as efforts are launched to mobilize internal and external response to the crisis. But the serious needs and major potential gains should also be emphasized.

As I propose in Part I, to reverse present trends and achieve these objectives, three major lines of action are required:

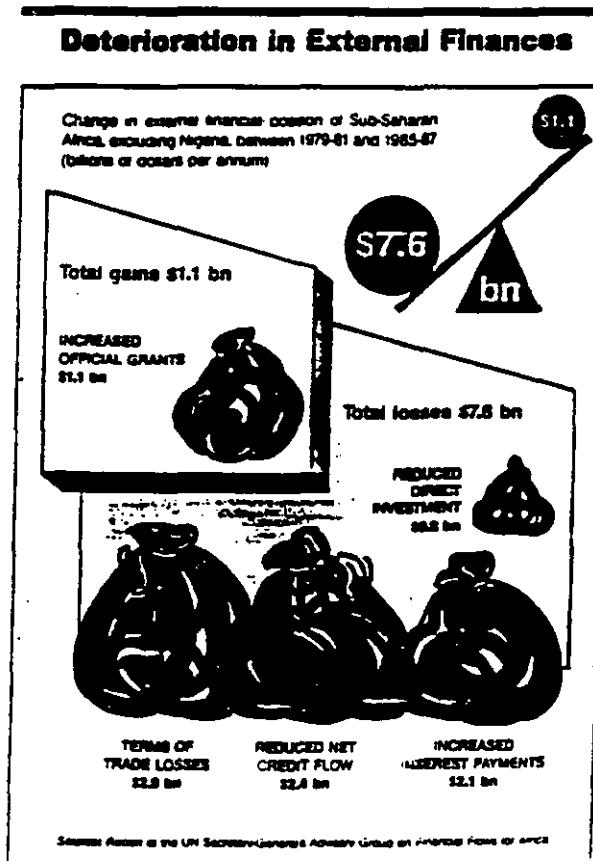
First, sustained enlargement of the "grand alliance for children", encompassing support ranging from the child survival and development revolution and "Adjustment with a Human Face" to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, placing children squarely on the political agenda of all countries and appropriate organizations.

Second, relevant goals for the fourth development decade need to be defined and focused, building up from country and subregional levels to a meaningful strategy for action which will attract widespread public interest and national and international support.

And third, a special initiative for Africa and the least developed countries needs to be defined and developed to provide sustained economic support from international and domestic resources, and to sharply reverse the deterioration in external finances which was so strongly emphasized earlier this year by the Report of the Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Financial Flows for Africa [Figure 4].

Clearly, the implications of the above include some major actions which far surpass the role and capacity of UNICEF even though the welfare of many of the world's children will be directly affected by the extent to which these initiatives are developed and implemented.

UNICEF, however, has historically demonstrated a particular capacity to help the world become aware of unacceptable conditions and to recognize realistic opportunities for



changing those conditions. Our 41-year history parallels, and surely contributed to, the emergence of a world ethic which no longer permits millions of children to perish in sudden emergencies of drought or famine, but demands a response from people and Governments. The Executive Board should therefore consider whether UNICEF has a unique contribution to make which could thrust the world one more giant step forward in the protection of children.

It is accepted that, in any civilization, morality marches no faster than capacity. However, UNICEF has helped to demonstrate, through its ongoing work of past decades, and especially through participation in the CSD initiatives of this decade, that the world today possesses a greatly increased capacity to prevent - at low societal and financial cost - a majority of the deaths and disablement of so many millions of children annually in the silent emergency of avoidable malnutrition and infection. Does this not now require that UNICEF accelerate its efforts to encourage Governments and society to bring our sense of morality to par with our increasing capacity, and to take the readily available actions which are not only necessary but also now realistically possible to put the mass deaths of children on the shelf reserved for slavery, colonialism, racism and apartheid - which are no longer conscionable to humankind? Have we now an opportunity to help the world establish the right of children to survive, to grow in health and to be protected and nurtured in their growth to full potential?

Madame Chairman, I believe that a most important challenge for this Executive Board in these next two weeks is to try to begin to answer these questions. Isn't this an area where UNICEF should lead more actively in stimulating awareness of the issues and serious discussion at the country and international levels on what can be done? How can UNICEF best collaborate in this undertaking with our other partners in the United Nations system? How should we explore these ideas with the countries concerned, developing countries and donor community alike?

How do we find ourselves, two weeks from now, having not only dealt wisely and efficiently with the normal business before this Board, but also having taken major new steps into the future for children?

We look forward to working with you in this effort.

DECLARATION OF TALLOIRES

12 March 1988 - Talloires, France

Remarkable health progress has been achieved during the past decade. Global recognition that healthy children and healthy families are essential for human and national development is steadily increasing. Consensus has been reached on the strategy for providing essential community primary health programmes. The international community has become engaged in partnership with national governments in the creation of successful global programmes, ensuring the availability of financial support and appropriate technologies. These include:

immunization programmes, which now protect more than 50% of infants in developing countries with polio or DPT vaccines, preventing some 200,000 children from becoming paralyzed with polio and over a million children from dying each year from measles, whooping cough, or neonatal tetanus;

diarrhoeal diseases control programmes which now make life-saving fluids (particularly oral rehydration salts) available for 60% of the developing world population, the use of which may be preventing as many as 1 million deaths annually from diarrhoea;

initiatives to control respiratory infections which hold promise in the years ahead of averting many of the 3 million childhood deaths from acute respiratory infections each year in developing countries not prevented currently by immunization;

safe motherhood and family planning programmes which are so important in protecting the well-being of families.

Progress to date demonstrates that resources can be mobilized and that rapid and effective action can be taken to combat dangerous threats to the health of children and mothers, particularly in developing countries.

This progress is the result of:

enthusiastic world-wide agreement for the development of health strategies based on primary health care;

the commitment of national governments, multi- and bilateral development agencies, non-governmental organizations, private and voluntary groups and people in all walks of life to give priority to these programmes;

co-ordinated action by the sponsors of the Task Force for Child Survival: UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP, WHO and the Rockefeller Foundation.

We, The Task Force For Child Survival, conveners of the meeting "Protecting the World's Children - An Agenda for the 1990s" in Talloires, France on 10-12 March 1988:

1. **EXPRESS** appreciation and admiration for the efforts made by the developing countries to reduce infant and child deaths through primary health care and child survival actions.

2. **COMMIT OURSELVES** to pursue and expand these initiatives in the 1990s.

3. **URGE** national governments, multi- and bilateral development agencies, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and private and voluntary groups to commit themselves to:

increase national resources from both developing and industrialized countries devoted to health in the context of overall development and self-reliance;

improve women's health and education, recognizing the importance for women themselves, recognizing women's contribution to national development and recognizing that mothers are by far the most important primary health care workers;

accelerate progress to achieve Universal Childhood Immunization by 1990 and to sustain it thereafter;

accelerate progress to eliminate or markedly reduce as public health problems the other main preventable causes of child and maternal mortality and morbidity, striving to reach sustained universal coverage of children and mothers by the year 2000;

assure the development of new vaccines and technologies and their application, particularly in developing countries, as they become appropriate for public health use;

promote expanded coverage of water supply and sanitation;

/....

pursue research and development, including technology transfer, in support of the above actions.

4. **SUGGEST** that the following be considered by national and international bodies as targets to be achieved by the year 2000:

the global eradication of polio;

the virtual elimination of neonatal tetanus deaths;

a 90% reduction of measles cases and a 95% reduction in measles deaths compared to pre-immunization levels;

a 70% reduction in the 7.4 million annual deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of 5 years which would occur in the year 2000 in the absence of oral rehydration therapy, and a 25% reduction in the diarrhoea incidence rate;

a 25% reduction in case/fatality rates associated with acute respiratory infection in children under 5 years;

reduction of infant and under five child mortality rates in all countries by at least half (1980-2000), or to 50 and 70 respectively per 1000 live births, whichever achieves the greater reduction;

a 50% reduction in current maternal mortality rates.

Achievement of these targets would result in the avoidance of tens of millions of child deaths and disabilities by the year 2000, as well as a balanced population growth as parents become more confident their children will survive and develop. The eradication of poliomyelitis would, with the eradication of smallpox, represent a fitting gift from the 20th to the 21st centuries.

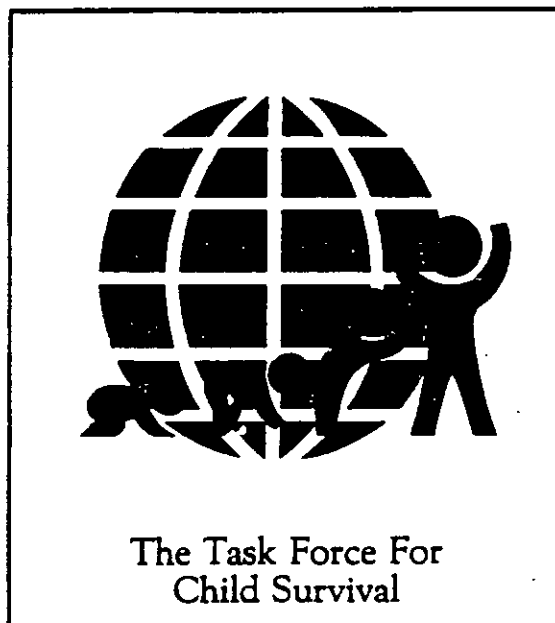
5. **DRAW** world attention to the potential for enlarging upon the successes outlined above to encompass low cost, effective initiatives to:

improve the quality and coverage of educational services to obtain universal primary education and 80% female literacy, and

virtual elimination of severe malnutrition of under five children while also significantly reducing moderate and mild malnutrition in each country.

6. **WELCOME** the progress being made in drafting the Convention on Rights of the Child and join the United Nations General Assembly in urging completion of the Convention in 1989, the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Child.

We are convinced that vigorous pursuit of these initiatives aimed at protecting the world's children will ensure that children and mothers - indeed whole families - will benefit from the best of available health technologies, making an essential contribution to human and national development and to the attainment of Health For All By The Year 2000.



**PROTECTING THE
WORLD'S CHILDREN:
AN AGENDA FOR THE 1990's**

March 10-12, 1988