

File Sub: CF/EXD/SP/1990-0024

Message by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
upon the 12th anniversary of the
Mainichi Shimbun

21 June 1990



UNICEF Alternate Inventory Label



Rcf0006H50

Item # **CF/RAD/USAA/DB01/1998-02192**

ExR/Code: **CF/EXD/SP/1990-0024**

Mainichi Shimbun 12th Anniversary, Japan . Message by James P. Grant
Date Label Printed 04-Dec-2001

cover + 1p + 0b



United Nations Children's Fund Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia
Детский Фонд Организации Объединенных Наций 联合国儿童基金会 منظمة الأمم المتحدة للطفولة

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upon the 12th anniversary of the

Mainichi Shimbun

It is with great pleasure that I congratulate the Mainichi Shimbun and the Mainichi Social Welfare Foundation on the 12th anniversary of their fundraising campaign for the underprivileged people of the world. All of us in UNICEF appreciate Mainichi's special concern for the plight of children and mothers of the developing world.

We have entered the 1990s on a new wave of international concern for the survival, protection and development of children, and that concern is increasing rapidly. For example, the unanimous adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations on 20 November 1989, and subsequent progress toward ratification and implementation of the new charter, indicate a new promise in many countries to fulfill the needs of the younger generation and to ensure that their rights are met. Also, the World Summit for Children, to be held at United Nations headquarters in New York on 29 and 30 September, will mark the first time that leaders from around the globe - East, West, North and South - have met for a single common purpose, joining hands to try to resolve some of the universal problems that children encounter in surviving and developing into adulthood. The overall aim of the World Summit is to put children high and firmly on the agenda of the 1990s, giving them priority - or "first call" - on the world's resources in good times or bad, war or peace.

This historically unprecedented World Summit is envisioned as the launching of a decade of government action and society-wide mobilization for the benefit of children, built upon the encouraging experience of the 1980s in which major progress for children was made despite difficult economic conditions and constrained resources.

I sincerely hope that all of those who acknowledge Mainichi Shimbun's 12 years of activity on behalf of the underprivileged people of the world on the occasion of their anniversary will join forces with UNICEF in this mobilization to give children - all children - the first call.