



PERMANENT MISSION OF
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON CHILDREN

STATEMENT BY

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Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Children

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Mr. President

It gives me great pleasure to join you and the Secretary General in welcoming everyone that has assembled for this Twenty-Seventh Special Session. I have the honour to present the report of the Preparatory Committee as contained in document A/S-27/2/Add.1 Parts I and II.

We are here to witness the culmination of more than two years of dedication and extremely intense labour by all concerned. The efforts of the Preparatory Committee have led to this gathering of world leaders that will result in the adoption of a plan of action that marks a new decade of commitment to address the unfinished agenda of the 1990 World Summit for Children; as well as new and emerging issues which affect the lives of children; and take concerted action to place the interests of children at the forefront of development policies.

To oversee the arrangements for the special session, the Preparatory Committee was established in accordance with resolution 54/93 of December 7, 1999. The Committee began its work with the election of a five-member Bureau made up of Ambassadors from Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Mali and Jamaica.

In addition to its organisational session, the Committee held three substantive sessions, several extended Bureau meetings and numerous informal consultations.

Decisions on organisational matters for the Special Session including the three interactive round tables and participation of speakers other than Member States including children, NGOs and other civil society representatives are contained in Part I of this report.

A series of seven panel discussions were held throughout the preparatory process. These panels elaborated several key themes that run throughout the outcome document, namely: review and assessment, including constraints encountered in implementing the goals of the World Summit; emerging issues; future actions for children; adolescent development and participation; the girl child; and the subject of the two optional protocols of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

Another significant feature of the preparatory process was the five regional meetings held after the first substantive session. These meetings were jointly organised by UNICEF and took place in Beijing, Berlin, Cairo, Kathmandu and Kingston. They produced their own declarations that have been extremely important in assessing progress and highlighting regional concerns and priorities. These regional declarations have been put together into one convenient document for participants at this special session with symbol A/S-27/13.

The Report of the Secretary-General entitled: *We the children: end-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children*, is contained in document A/S-27/3. The report was introduced to delegations in July 2001 at the third substantive session of the Committee. At that time delegations engaged in a substantive discussion of this very comprehensive report which serves as a companion to the outcome document and is based on over 130 national reports, reports from UN entities and from the follow-up and assessment procedures established by UNICEF after the 1990 World Summit.

The draft outcome document *A World Fit for Children* which I have the honour to present for consideration by the Assembly, is divided into three main sections.

The Declaration is a political reaffirmation to complete the unfinished agenda of the World Summit for Children and to address emerging issues. It contains ten imperatives that have been used to mobilise a groundswell of support for a global movement that will help to build a world fit for children.

The Declaration is followed by a review of progress and lessons learned that provides a summary of accomplishments and shortfalls since 1990 World Summit on Children. Section three, the Plan of Action, sets out our vision of a world fit for children, in which all children:

- get the best possible start in life;
- have access to quality basic education, including primary education that is compulsory and available free to all; and
- have ample opportunity to develop their individual capacities in a safe and supportive environment.

This section also identifies the broad range of partners who are called to action in the best interests of children. The Plan of Action further sets out goals, strategies and actions in four areas:

- Promoting healthy lives
- Providing quality education
- Protecting children from abuse, exploitation and violence; and
- Combating HIV/AIDS

Within each of these areas, specific goals have been outlined, including *inter alia*, developing and implementing policies and programmes in early childhood development and adolescent health; reaffirming education as a key factor in eradicating poverty and reducing child labour; protecting children from all forms of sexual exploitation including paedophilia, trafficking and abduction; and reducing the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among 15 to 24 year olds. You will also note that several intermediate goals and targets have been identified that will strengthen our progress toward achieving the 2015 goals of the Millennium Declaration.

The Plan of Action affirms that in order to achieve the goals and targets within the four key areas, additional human, financial and material resources are required, nationally and internationally and calls for enhanced international cooperation to achieve global funding targets.

Finally, *A World Fit for Children* addresses follow-up actions and monitoring to be taken at the national, regional and international levels. It also requests the Secretary-General to report regularly to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Plan of Action.

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Bureau and the members of the Preparatory Committee, I would like to pay tribute to UNICEF and the leadership of the Executive Director, Ms. Carol Bellamy. In its role as Substantive Secretariat, UNICEF's contribution to the work of the Preparatory Committee has been immeasurable. I would also like to thank members of the UN Secretariat who continually performed miracles to accommodate the changing needs of the Committee. I am deeply grateful to the Vice-Chairpersons: Ambassadors Chowdhury and Schumacher, for their support and assistance in guiding the work of the Preparatory Committee.

Finally, to all members of the Committee, I am truly thankful to you for the hard work and the commitment displayed throughout the process.

Thank you, Mr. President.