



Child-friendly version of
A World Fit for Children



Global Movement
for Children

Child-friendly version of
A World Fit for Children



Global Movement
for Children

The Global Movement for Children (GMC) aims to create a global force for change for children everywhere – from the village to the United Nations. It plans to build a world wide constituency of organisations and individuals that will promote child rights, take action to implement those rights, and facilitate the commitment at all levels of society to make 'a world fit for children'.

The founding partners of the Movement are; BRAC, (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee), CARE International, Netaid, Plan International, Save the Children, World Vision International and UNICEF.

Published in 2002 by the Global Movement for Children
www.gmfc.org

© Global Movement for Children

Produced by Save the Children on behalf of
the Global Movement for Children.

Contents

What is in this document?	Page
Introduction	v
A young person's guide to the 2002 United Nations Special Session on Children	i
A World Fit for Us	
Child-friendly version of <i>A World Fit for Children</i>	13
I. Declaration	15
This section provides background information and introduces the principles that governments want to follow.	
II. Review of progress and lessons learned	19
This section looks at what has happened since the last major international meeting on children in 1990.	
III. Plan of action	22
A. Creating a World Fit for Children	22
This section explains how governments will build a world that treats children better.	
B. Goals, strategies and actions	31
This section looks at what governments want to do and how they plan on doing it.	
This includes sections on:	
Promoting healthy lives	31
Providing quality education	37
Protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence	42
Combating HIV/AIDS	52
C. Mobilising resources	57
This section looks at what is needed to make things happen.	
D. Follow-up actions and assessment	61
This section looks at how governments will report back on the work they do and how they will measure their successes and failures.	
Dictionary	64

Introduction

In May 2002 the countries of the world met in New York to decide what should be done to improve the lives of children.

The main result of that meeting – which was called the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children – was a document called *A World Fit for Children*. This document describes the promises made by governments to improve the lives of children for the next 10–15 years. It also describes how they will find the resources they will need and the ways in which they will make sure the promises are being fulfilled.

This publication aims to put *A World Fit for Children* into the hands of children and young people so that you know what the governments of the world have promised. The original document, however, can be difficult to read so we have prepared a ‘child-friendly’ version in order to make it easier to understand.

We hope that this child-friendly version will enable children and young people to play a part in:

- making sure that the promises made in New York are achieved
- checking that everyone is doing what they have promised to do.

Children and young people played a big part in all the work that went on around the New York meeting. During the preparations for the meeting, for example, there was a wide range of events and activities involving children and young people in many different countries and regions. Some of these are described in the ‘Guide to the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children’ which opens this publication.

At the meeting itself children and young people were present in large numbers. They came as representatives of their governments, as representatives of children’s organisations and as representatives of national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Some of the children and young people had their own meeting – called the Children’s Forum – just before the main meeting and they produced their own statement which they called ‘A World Fit for Us’ (this document is also included in this publication). At the main meeting, for the first time ever, children spoke directly to the UN General Assembly which represents most of the governments of the world. Children and young people were also involved in the meeting in lots of other ways.

The children and young people in New York, and the children and young people who were involved in the preparations in their own countries, all agreed that children and young people needed to be involved in what happened after the main meeting in New York. We hope that this child-friendly version of *A World Fit for Children* will provide some information to help make this happen.

This child friendly version of *A World Fit for Children* was prepared by Save the Children, an international NGO which works in more than 100 countries around the world. Throughout the preparations for the meeting in New York Save the Children produced a continuously updated version of the document as it was being discussed by the governments of the world. This was used by children and young people (and some adults too!) to find out what was happening and to help them talk to their governments about making changes.

Save the Children is a member of the Global Movement for Children (the GMC) which was created in 2001. The Global Movement for Children aims to create a global force for change for children everywhere – from the village to the United Nations. It plans to build a world wide network of organisations and individuals, which will promote child rights, take action to implement those rights and facilitate the commitment at all levels of society to make “a world fit for children”. The founding partner organisations of the GMC are; BRAC, (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee), CARE International, Netaid, Plan International, Save the Children, World Vision International and UNICEF.

The Global Movement for Children is very happy to publish this child-friendly version of *A World Fit for Children* as a part of its efforts to give children across the world an opportunity to understand what the governments of the world have promised to do for you. We hope that it will enable many children to take action to ensure that those promises are kept.



A young person's guide to the 2002 United Nations
Special Session on Children

A young person's guide to the 2002 United Nations Special Session on Children

This guide has been developed to give you a clear picture of what took place at the United Nations Special Session on Children which was held in New York, 8–10 May 2002. On the following pages you will find information about:

- What was the United Nations Special Session on Children?
- Events that led up to the United Nations Special Session on Children.
- Details about what happened at the United Nations Special Session on Children.
- Information about documents that were discussed at the United Nations Special Session on Children.
- And more...

Before you get started here is some important information ...

The United Nations

Often referred to as the “UN” for short, it was created after the Second World War. It provides a place for all the countries of the world to discuss problems and deal with issues that affect them all. It has a key role in trying to maintain international peace and security. The United Nations is based in New York and Geneva, but also has offices in other countries.

The UN General Assembly

The United Nations is made up of 189 countries that are all represented in the UN General Assembly. The General Assembly is like a parliament of the nations which meets in New York to discuss the world's most important problems. Although the UN is not a world government, it is a place where countries can agree how they want to work together to tackle issues.

What is a ‘Special Session’ of the UN General Assembly?

Every year the UN General Assembly meets on a regular basis to discuss various questions. Sometimes the General Assembly decides to have a ‘Special Session’ to discuss a particular problem or issue for a few days. Since the United Nations was founded the General Assembly has held over 20 ‘Special Sessions’. They have looked at issues such as social development, women and disarmament. In June 2001 the General Assembly held a Special Session to look at how the world should deal with HIV/AIDS. May 2002 was the first time, in the history of the United Nations, that a Special Session on Children has been held.

Why was there a Special Session on Children?

In 1990 there was a major international meeting on children called the World Summit for Children. It agreed to 27 goals that the governments of the world would try and achieve for children. The 2002 Special Session on Children was an opportunity to look at what had happened to children since 1990 and to make new promises aimed at improving the lives of children for the next 10 to 15 years.

Definition of a child

Using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), a child is considered to be any human being below the age of 18 [UNCRC Article 1]. The definition therefore includes babies, small children, older children and young people.

The Secretary General

Kofi Annan is the head of the United Nations, called the Secretary General. He was elected in 1997 as the UN's seventh Secretary General. He has since been re-elected for a second period of four years.

UNICEF

This is the United Nations Children's Fund, originally set up in 1946 as the UN International Children's Emergency Fund. UNICEF is the main organisation in the United Nations that works for the protection, survival and development of children. It works closely with governments around the world to provide services to children such as medicines, vaccines, water, food and schooling.

This guide gives you a brief look at information relating to the Special Session on Children. If you want **more information** check out one of the web sites below. Good luck!

www.gmfc.org

www.savethechildren.net

www.unicef.org

www.crin.org

The road to the 2002 UN Special Session on Children: how did we get there?

1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

On 20 November 1989 the United Nations General Assembly promised certain things to children by formally adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (also known as the UNCRC). The UNCRC provides the framework for the promotion and protection of the basic human rights of all children, everywhere, all the time.

The UNCRC explains that children's rights include the right to:

- be protected from all types of harm
- be provided with things they need to survive and grow
- take part in community and political life
- grow up in their own family, culture, language and religion whenever possible.



2. The 1990 World Summit on Children

In 1990 governments held a big meeting called "The World Summit for Children" in New York. The main goal of the meeting was to agree to promises and commitments to improve the lives of children. At this meeting they promised to always put the best interests of children first, in both good times and bad times. They made 27 promises for children which they said they would achieve by the year 2000 and which they put in a document called the "World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action".

3. National Programmes of Action

After the 1990 World Summit for Children, world leaders returned to their home countries. They now had to look at ways to make the promises a reality in their home countries. Many countries developed what is called, "A National Programme of Action". These Programmes of Action explained how governments would achieve the goals and promises they had made. In order to do so, many said that they would work together with non-governmental organisations, other levels of government, the business community and civil society groups. These Programmes also explained how governments would collect information and see what was happening to the wellbeing of children. This information would help them to develop programmes to deal with any problems that came up.



4. The Mid Decade Review

- Review processes are like a 'report card' for governments

In February 1996 countries were asked to submit a report detailing the progress they had made so far in achieving the goals and promises they had made at the World Summit for Children. Part of the reason for this was that some of the promises made at the 1990 World Summit for Children were meant to have been achieved by 1995. These short five-year promises were supposed to make it easier to fulfil the other promises by the year 2000. By 1996 a few things had improved, BUT a lot of work still needed to be done. All the people and governments involved were asked to increase their efforts and remember their promises.

5. The 'End-Decade Review' processes

Ten years after the World Summit for Children, each government was expected to give a full report detailing their achievements and failures over the last ten years. Governments were not the only groups to contribute to the reports. In some cases non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, religious groups, the media, children and young people and others also contributed to the details of the report.

The results of these 'end-decade reviews' – the achievements and failures – can be found in the UN Secretary General's Report, "We the Children".

Visit www.unicef.org for the full report.



6. The three Prepcoms

To get ready for the Special Session on Children in May 2002, preparations needed to be made. In the months leading up to the Special Session on Children there were three meetings of the Preparatory Committee (or 'Prepcom') responsible for organising the Special Session. These meetings were all held in New York at the United Nations building. Their dates were:

- The 1st Prepcom – May 2000
- The 2nd Prepcom – January 2001
- The 3rd Prepcom – June 2001

The main purpose of the Prepcoms was to look back on the successes and failures of the past ten years, to discuss future priorities, to begin preparing the next action plan, and to make detailed plans for the UN Special Session on Children.

7. Regional processes

Regional preparatory meetings were held in 2000 and 2001. These meetings were an opportunity for people to gather and discuss the key issues concerning children in their own regions. The main topics of discussions at these meetings were:

- a review of the achievements and failures since 1990
- preparations for the 2002 Special Session on Children
- an opportunity to look forward and think about new commitments in that region.

Five major regional meetings were held:

1. The 5th Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy in the Americas, Kingston, Jamaica – October 2000
2. The South Asia High Level Meeting on Investing in Children, Kathmandu, Nepal – May 2001
3. The 5th East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation, Beijing, China – May 2001
4. The Berlin Intergovernmental Conference for Children in Europe and Central Asia, Berlin, Germany – May 2001
5. The Pan-African Forum on the Future of Children, Cairo, Egypt – May 2001



8. The United Nations Special Session on Children

In May 2002 it was time for governments to think about their new promises for the next 10 to 15 years.

The Special Session on Children was held 8–10 May 2002. Governments were the main participants but many other organisations and people were included, such as non-governmental organisations, children's advocates and children themselves. It gave the world a chance to see how children's lives had improved over the past ten years and what still needed to be accomplished in the future. It was also an opportunity to improve the way the world views and treats young people.

What happened at the United Nations Special Session on Children?

There were four main things that happened at the Special Session:

1. Governments decided what they should do to improve the lives of children over the next ten years.

Their discussions resulted in a document that explains the promises governments have made and the actions they will take to improve the lives of children. This document is called *A World Fit for Children*. The document says that there are four key issues facing children that need to be looked at in particular – health, education, HIV/AIDS, and the protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation.

The 'Plan of Action' in this document is supposed to guide what governments will do for children in the future.

A child-friendly version of *A World Fit for Children* can be found in this publication and also at www.gmfc.org and www.savethechildren.net.

2. While governments discussed the future and the next steps that needed to be taken, they also looked back at the past and the promises they had made at the 1990 World Summit for Children. The progress made during the 1990s in improving the lives of children, and the obstacles governments faced, can be found in a report called 'We the Children' which was written by UNICEF on behalf of the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan. Its main conclusion is that the governments did not keep most of the promises they made to children in 1990 because they did not invest enough money in children (for example, in schools or clean water supplies). In addition, the rich countries did not give enough help to poorer countries to help them achieve the goals. However, lots of good things did happen and many children have benefited from these achievements and from the efforts that governments made.

A child-friendly summary of this report is available at www.savethechildren.net.

3. Just before the Special Session there was a three day meeting of some of the children and young people who went on afterwards to attend the Special Session. This meeting was called the Children's Forum and was organised for two reasons. Firstly, in order to prepare children and young people for the Special Session by explaining what was going to happen and how they could get involved. Secondly, to give them the chance to discuss the issues that were going to be debated at the

Special Session. The result of their discussions was a statement called 'A World Fit for Us' which comes immediately after this guide. It was read to the representatives of the governments of the world meeting in the UN General Assembly on the first day of the Special Session.

4. During the three days of the United Nations Special Session on Children, there were three 'roundtables' where governments discussed key issues about the new promises they were making to children around the world. A 'roundtable' is a way of describing a meeting where different people make presentations and governments read out statements they have prepared earlier. Each of the three roundtables had two children as official speakers and other children were also present representing their governments.

There were also lots of other events going on in the UN building and outside it. Some of these were organised by governments and some by non-governmental organisations. They discussed a wide range of problems and issues that affect children. They were not part of the main business of the meeting but were an opportunity to hear from children and adult 'experts' about what should be done for children. Children and young people played a big part in many of these events – chairing them, speaking at them and being in the audience.

Who attended the Special Session?

The Special Session was a meeting of governments who agreed together on what they wanted to do for children. The main people at the Special Session were government 'delegates' – people who represented their governments. Some of them worked in New York for their government and others came from the capital of their country. Some of them were heads of state (such as Presidents) but there were also Prime Ministers, ministers and other politicians. Most of the government delegates, however, were civil servants or officials. There were also many government delegates who were under 18 years of age!

There were also many 'delegates' from non-governmental organisations [NGOs] who came to the Special Session to talk about the situation of the children in their country or to highlight particular issues such as child labour or refugee children. There were many under-18s among these delegates too.

There were also representatives from UN and other international organisations. The largest number came from UNICEF, which had done a lot of the work to make the Special Session happen. Others represented agencies such as the UN organisation looking after refugees or the World Bank (which lends money to poor countries to help them develop).

What happens now?

After the Special Session, governments returned home and began to work on how they will be able to fulfil the new promises they made to children. By the end of 2003 many governments will have developed a 'National Plan of Action' (NPA) to help achieve the goals set out in the Outcome Document. Governments will have to make regular reports on how well they are doing.

Children and NGOs should be involved in trying to develop their country's NPA and in making sure that the governments do their best to keep their promises.

Save the Children consulted with thousands of young people around the world and asked them to share their ideas and experiences about how they think young people might be involved in preparing their country's NPA.

These ideas have been brought together into a report called **Shaping a Country's Future with Children and Young People**. Accompanying the report are a set of guidelines for governments, civil society and also for children and young people on how they can be involved in developing their country's NPA. The report and the guidelines can be found at www.savethechildren.net.

A World Fit for Us

The Children's Forum message was delivered at the opening of the UN General Assembly's Special Session on Children, 8 May 2002, by child delegates Gabrielle Azurduy Arrieta (Bolivia) and Audrey Cheynut (Monaco). It was the first time that children addressed a formal session of the United Nations on behalf of children.

We are the world's children.

We are the victims of exploitation and abuse.

We are street children.

We are the children of war.

We are the victims and orphans of HIV/AIDS.

We are denied good-quality education and health care.

We are victims of political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental discrimination.

We are children whose voices are not being heard: it is time we are taken into account.

We want a world fit for children, because a world fit for us is a world fit for everyone.

In this world,

We see respect for the rights of the child:

- governments and adults having a real and effective commitment to the principle of children's rights and applying the Convention on the Rights of the Child to all children,
- safe, secure and healthy environments for children in families, communities, and nations.

We see an end to exploitation, abuse and violence:

- laws that protect children from exploitation and abuse being implemented and respected by all,
- centres, and programmes that help to rebuild the lives of victimized children.

We see an end to war:

- world leaders resolving conflict through peaceful dialogue instead of by using force,
- child refugees and child victims of war protected in every way and having the same opportunities as all other children,
- disarmament, elimination of the arms trade and an end to the use of child soldiers.

We see the provision of health care:

- affordable and accessible life-saving drugs and treatment for all children,
- strong and accountable partnerships established among all to promote better health for children.

We see the eradication of HIV/AIDS:

- educational systems that include HIV prevention programmes,
- free testing and counselling centres,
- information about HIV/AIDS freely available to the public,
- orphans of AIDS and children living with HIV/AIDS cared for and enjoying the same opportunities as all other children.

We see the protection of the environment:

- conservation and rescue of natural resources,
- awareness of the need to live in environments that are healthy and favourable to our development,
- accessible surroundings for children with special needs.

We see an end to the vicious cycle of poverty:

- anti-poverty committees that bring about transparency in expenditure and give attention to the needs of all children,
- cancellation of the debt that impedes progress for children.

We see the provision of education:

- equal opportunities and access to quality education that is free and compulsory,
- school environments in which children feel happy about learning,
- education for life that goes beyond the academic and includes lessons in understanding, human rights, peace, acceptance and active citizenship.

We see the active participation of children:

- raised awareness and respect among people of all ages about every child's right to full and meaningful participation, in the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- children actively involved in decision-making at all levels and in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating all matters affecting the rights of the child.

We pledge an equal partnership in this fight for children's rights. And while we promise to support the actions you take on behalf of children, we also ask for your commitment and support in the actions we are taking, because the children of the world are misunderstood.

We are not the sources of problems; we are the resources that are needed to solve them.

We are not expenses; we are investments.

We are not just young people; we are people and citizens of this world.

Until others accept their responsibility to us, we will fight for our rights.

We have the will, the knowledge, the sensitivity and the dedication.

We promise that as adults we will defend children's rights with the same passion that we have now as children.

We promise to treat each other with dignity and respect.

We promise to be open and sensitive to our differences.

We are the children of the world, and despite our different backgrounds, we share a common reality.

We are united by our struggle to make the world a better place for all.

You call us the future, but we are also the present.



Child-friendly version of *A World Fit for Children*

Getting started!

You are about to read a document that is very important to children and young people around the world.

What is it?

The document is called “A World Fit for Children”. It is also known as the ‘Outcome Document’. It outlines the promises that world leaders and governments have made for children for the next ten years. They made these promises at a meeting of the United Nations in New York in May 2002 that was called the ‘Special Session on Children.’

What you are about to read is a ‘child-friendly’ version of the document.

We believe that it is important for children and young people to know what is in this key document. This child-friendly version is meant to help make it easier for you to use. It might seem like there are a lot of pages but we felt it was important for you to know what was in the original document and to have the same information as adults.

The original document can be found on the UNICEF web site – www.unicef.org – where you can also find lots of other useful information about the Special Session on Children. This child-friendly version follows the same format and paragraph numbering as the original document.

When you are reading this document you will find that some information is in boxes. That is where we have added a heading or other information that is NOT in the original text in order to explain something more clearly.

After this document you will also find a ‘dictionary’ which lists some of the words used in the document and their meanings. It is there to help you out with some of the more difficult words that can be found throughout the document.

How will this document be used?

World leaders will use it for the next ten years as their Plan of Action to try and make the lives of children better.

The child-friendly version of the actual text of the document starts on the next page.

I. Declaration

1. At a meeting 11 years ago **world leaders** made promises that they would give every child a better future. That meeting was called the World Summit for Children.
2. There is a report written by the Secretary General of the United Nations that talks about the **positive changes** that happened over the past ten years. This report is called "We the Children".

Here are some examples of the positive changes:

- Millions of young lives have been saved.
- More children are in school.
- More children are involved in decisions that affect them.
- Important agreements have been made to protect children.

BUT These improvements have been uneven and many things remain to be done, especially in developing countries. Not enough good things have happened. World leaders have not fulfilled the promises made 11 years ago at the **World Summit for Children**.

In this document you will read words like "we", "us" and "our".

Who is "we"?

"We" are the world leaders, governments and heads of state that have made the promises written in this document.

3. We are determined to **change the world** for and with children. Through action in our own countries and co-operation between countries we commit ourselves once again to fulfil the promises we made at the World Summit for Children and to do something about other new problems that have emerged. This will help us achieve other promises we have made recently at other UN meetings and conferences, in particular the United Nations Millennium Declaration.
4. We once again promise to take action to promote and protect **the rights of each child** – every human being below the age of 18 years, including adolescents. We are determined to respect the dignity and to secure the wellbeing of all children. We accept that the Convention on the Rights of the Child and documents related to it contain a full set of international legal standards for the protection and wellbeing of children. We also recognise the importance of other international laws which can be used to help children.

What is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Also known as the UNCRC it is a United Nations document that sets out the human rights that all children have. Every country except the United States of America and Somalia has said that they will use it as the basis for the way they treat children.

5. We promise to create a **world fit for children**. We want to see long-lasting human development that includes the best for every child. This human development will be based on:
 - democracy
 - equality
 - non-discrimination
 - peace
 - social justice
 - the links between all human rights, including the right to development.
6. We recognise and support parents, families and legal guardians as the main people who care for children. We will help them nurture, protect and provide **the best possible care** for their children.
7. We ask all people to join us in **a global movement** that will help build a world fit for children by supporting our pledges to the following principles and objectives:
 - (1) **Put Children First.**
In all actions that affect children, the best interests of the child will be one of the first things we think about.
 - (2) **Fight Poverty: Invest in Children.**
We promise once again to make a major reduction in poverty within a single generation. We all agree that to get rid of poverty we must invest in children and realise their rights. Immediate action must be taken to stop the worst forms of child labour.

(3) Leave No Child Out.

Every girl and boy is born free and equal in every way. All forms of discrimination affecting children must end.

(4) Care for Every Child.

Children must get the best possible start in life. The survival, protection, growth and development of healthy and well-nourished children is the most important start to human development. We will make real efforts to fight diseases and major causes of hunger. We will take care of children in a safe environment so that they can learn and be physically, mentally, emotionally and socially healthy.

(5) Educate Every Child.

All boys and girls should be able to have and complete a primary education that is:

- free
- something all children must attend
- of good quality.

Boys and girls should have equal access to primary and secondary education.

(6) Stop Harming and Exploiting Children.

Children must be protected against any acts of violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination, as well as against all forms of terrorism and hostage taking.

(7) Protect Children from War.

Children must be protected from the horrors of war. Using international law, children living in areas occupied by another country must also be protected.

(8) Fight HIV/AIDS.

Children and their families must be protected from the terrible impact of HIV/AIDS.

(9) Listen to Children.

We believe that children and adolescents can help to build a better future for



Benposta school, Colombia

JENNY MATTHEWS

everyone. We must respect their rights to express themselves and to participate in all matters that affect them, according to their age and maturity.

(10) Protect the Earth for Children.

We must protect our natural environment with its huge variety of life, its beauty and its resources, all of which make human life better both now and in the future. We will do everything we can to protect children from the effects of natural disasters and environmental problems.

8. For this Declaration and Plan of Action to be turned into **action**, we need to see:
- fresh commitment from political leaders
 - more resources found and made available at both national and international levels.

Because of the urgency and importance of the special needs of children we need this to happen as soon as possible.

9. Using all these principles and goals we agree to the **“Plan of Action”** in section III below.

We believe that together we will build a world where all girls and boys can enjoy their childhood:

- where they can play and learn
- where children are loved, respected and cherished
- where their rights are promoted and protected, without any kind of discrimination
- where their safety and wellbeing are more important than anything else
- where children can develop in health, peace and dignity.

II. Review of progress and lessons learned

10. The promises that came out of the **1990 World Summit for Children** are some of the most carefully checked and implemented promises of the 1990s. Reviews were held every year at national level and progress reports were presented to the General Assembly. Global reviews were held in the middle of the 1990s and then again at the end of the 1990s. The review at the end of the 1990s included meetings of Heads of State and other senior government officials at regional meetings in Beijing, Berlin, Cairo, Kathmandu and Kingston. These meetings:
- reviewed progress
 - ensured follow-up to the 1990 World Summit and other important conferences
 - asked for renewed commitment to achieving the promises of the 1990 World Summit
 - planned actions for the future.

Supporting the efforts by governments, many different groups participated in the reviews, including:

- children
- young people's organisations
- academic institutions
- religious groups
- civil society organisations
- parliamentarians
- the media
- United Nations agencies
- donors
- major national and international non-governmental organisations.

11. As talked about in the Secretary General's report, which looks at what has happened since the World Summit for Children, the 1990s was a decade of **great promises** and **limited achievements** for the world's children. Good things that happened were:
- The 1990 World Summit for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child helped to make children more important politically.
 - A record number of countries (192) agreed to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
 - 155 countries prepared special programs of action to fulfil their promises made at the World Summit.
 - Regional promises were made.
 - International laws and institutions strengthened the protection of children.
 - Practical results were achieved:
 - today there are three million less children dying each year than ten years ago
 - polio is almost gone forever
 - through salt iodization, 90 million babies are protected every year from losing some of their ability to learn.
12. Much more still needs to be done. The resources that were promised at the World Summit at national level and international level have not all been provided. Important **challenges** remain:
- More than ten million children die every year. Most of these deaths could be stopped.
 - 100 million children are still out of school – six out of every ten of them are girls.
 - 150 million children suffer because they don't have enough food.
 - HIV/AIDS is spreading very, very quickly.
 - There is ongoing poverty, and people continue to be left out and discriminated against.
 - Not enough money is being put into social services.

The things listed below, as well as other things, can slow down national efforts to end poverty and ensure the wellbeing of children:

- the payments made by countries that owe money to other governments or financial institutions (for example banks)
- too much military spending
- armed conflict
- one country taking over land belonging to another country
- hostage taking and all forms of terrorism
- resources that are not being used properly
- the childhood of millions is still devastated by the worst forms of dangerous and exploitative child labour; the buying and selling of children including adolescents and other forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.

13. Because of what has happened over the last ten years we know that the needs and rights of children must be seen as very important in all **development efforts**. We have learned many lessons:

- Change is possible – and children's rights are a good starting point.
- Policies must address two things:
 1. things that directly affect or exclude groups of children
 2. other deeper and wider causes for the gaps in the protection of children and the abuse of their rights.
- Action should be carefully directed to make sure that change happens quickly, while also involving people and making sure that the results of such action will last.
- Actions should build on children's strengths and their ability to recover quickly from difficulties.
- Special help will be given to programmes that help children in early childhood and those that help families, especially families in difficult circumstances, as these will provide long-lasting benefits for child growth, development and protection.

III. Plan of action

Now that we know WHAT we want for children, the next question is HOW do we make it happen?

The answer to that is found in this **Plan of action**.

The first section explains how we will build a world that treats children well.

The second section lists the **Goals** we will try to achieve and the **Strategies and Actions** we will use to achieve them.

The main issues we will address will be:

- Health
- Education
- Abuse, violence and exploitation
- HIV/AIDS

A. Creating a World Fit for Children

14. A world fit for children is one where:

- All children have the best possible start in life.
- All children have access to a quality basic education, including a free primary education that every child must attend.
- All children and adolescents have the chance to make the most of their potential in a safe and supportive environment.
- We will make children's physical, mental, spiritual, social, emotional, and cultural development, as well as their ability to reason and understand, one of the most important issues for us at national and global levels

Helping families

15. The family is the **basic unit of society** and should be strengthened, protected and supported. It has the first responsibility for the protection, upbringing and development of children. All institutions of society should respect children's rights and wellbeing and provide suitable assistance to parents, families, legal guardians and other caregivers so that children can grow and develop in a safe and secure environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. We must keep in mind that in different cultural, social and political systems, various forms of the family exists.
16. We also know that lots of children live **without parents** – for example, orphans, children living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children, children affected by trafficking, sexual and economic exploitation and children in prisons. Special efforts are needed to support these children and all those that care for them. We also need to help children to protect themselves.
17. We are determined to **support** parents, families, others who care for children and children themselves to get information and services in order to help children survive, develop, be better protected and participate.

Stopping poverty

18. **Poverty** is the biggest thing that stops us from meeting the needs and protecting and promoting the rights of children. We need to deal with poverty in many ways, including:
- providing basic social services
 - creating employment opportunities
 - making small loans available
 - investing in infrastructure such as roads and water supplies
 - reducing the monies owed by poor countries
 - practising fair trade.



**Child drinking from a water pump,
Mozambique** LIBA TAYLOR

Poverty hurts children the most because it damages the development of their growing minds and bodies. Ending poverty and reducing inequalities must be one of the most important goals in all development efforts. Many of the goals and strategies discussed at other United Nations meetings, especially the Millennium Summit, provide useful international frameworks for us in our efforts to end poverty and to protect the rights and promote the wellbeing of children.

Making technology and economic growth work for children

19. We recognise that **globalisation** and **interdependence** are opening new opportunities for the growth of the world economy and the development and improvement of living standards around the world. These opportunities are being created through trade, investment, and advancements in technology, including information technology.

At the same time, there remain serious challenges, including serious financial problems, insecurity, poverty, exclusion and inequity within and among societies. There are big problems preventing the least developed countries and countries with changing economies from working with and participating fully in the global economy. Unless the benefits of social and economic development are shared by all countries, a growing number of people in all countries and even entire regions will remain **on the edges of the global economy**. We must act now to overcome the obstacles affecting people and countries. We must also realise the full potential of opportunities presented for the benefit of all, in particular children.

We are committed to:

- an open, fair, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory joint trading and financial system
- investing in things like education and training that will enable children to share in the benefits of new developments in information and communication technologies.

Globalisation offers opportunities and challenges. Developing countries and countries with changing economies face special difficulties in responding to those challenges and opportunities. Globalisation should include everyone equally. There is a strong need nationally and internationally for policies and actions that will help developing countries and countries with changing economies respond to the existing challenges and opportunities. These policies should be developed and implemented with the full participation of these countries and high importance should be given to achieving progress for children.

Fighting discrimination

20. If a child experiences **discrimination** of any kind (based on the child's or his/her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other views, national, ethnic or social origin, wealth, disability, birth or anything else) it sets him or her apart from everyone else and makes it difficult for the child to develop to the fullest. We will do our best to stop discrimination against children.
21. We will do everything we can to make sure all **children with disabilities and special needs** have full and equal rights and freedoms – including access to health, education and recreational services. We will ensure their dignity is recognised, help them to get by on their own and make sure they can actively participate in their communities.
22. We will do what is needed to end discrimination, to provide special support, and to ensure equal access to services for **indigenous** children, **vulnerable groups** of children and children belonging to **minorities**.
23. Achieving what we want for children, especially for girls, will be easier if **women**:
- fully enjoy all human rights and freedoms, including the right to development
 - are able to participate fully and equally in all aspects of society
 - are protected from all forms of violence, abuse and discrimination.

We are determined to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the **girl child** during her life. We want to give special attention to her needs so that all her human rights are protected, including the right to be free from harmful practices, sexual exploitation and situations that force her to do things against her will. We will promote equality between the sexes and make sure girls have equal access to social services like education, nutrition, healthcare, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, vaccinations and protection from diseases that cause the most deaths. We will ensure that the different perspectives of boys and girls are part of all development programmes and policies.

24. We also realise that we need to address the changing role of men in society as **boys, adolescents and fathers**. We recognise the challenges facing boys in the world today. We will encourage parents to share the responsibilities of educating and raising children. We will do everything we can to make sure that fathers have opportunities to participate in their children's lives.

25. Each country must aim to reduce the differences between **different groups** of children, especially:
- discrimination on the basis of race
 - differences between girls and boys
 - differences between children who live in rural areas and those who live in towns and cities
 - differences between rich and poor children
 - differences between children with and without disabilities.

Stopping environmental damage

26. To take care of the health and wellbeing of children we need to act on many **environmental problems and trends**. These include global warming, the loss of the ozone layer, air pollution, dangerous wastes, exposure to dangerous chemicals and pesticides, bad sanitation, poor hygiene, unsafe drinking water and food, and poor housing.



Song and dance performance by pupils at Imekua Primary School, Mtwara Province, Tanzania PIETERNELLA PIETERSE

27. **Good housing** helps families to stay together; helps to make people socially equal and strengthens feelings of belonging, security and unity. This is essential for the wellbeing of children. We recognise that ending the housing shortage and dealing with other needs like water and electricity is very important, especially to children living in marginalised communities at the edges of towns and cities and in remote rural areas.
28. We will do things to **manage** our natural resources and to **protect** and **conserve** our environment to make sure they are available in the future. We will work to:
- change wasteful ways of producing and consuming resources, recognising the principle that, because different states make different contributions to such environmental problems, states have common but different responsibilities
 - help to educate all children and adults to respect the natural environment for their health and wellbeing.

Using international agreements

29. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and its related documents contain a full set of **international legal standards** for the protection and wellbeing of children. We also recognise the importance of other international documents relevant to children.

Among other principles, the principles of:

- the best interests of the child
- non-discrimination
- participation
- survival and development

will guide our actions concerning children, including adolescents.

We urge all countries to consider signing, agreeing to and using the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its related documents and International Labour Organization Conventions 138 and 182 as soon as possible. We urge all the countries which have agreed to use the Convention on the Rights of the Child to fulfil their promises and to look at, and consider withdrawing, any limits they have placed on the use of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially those that go against the aims and purpose of the Convention.

30. There are documents related to the Convention on the Rights of the Child that deal with the issues of children involved in **armed conflict** and **the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**.

We welcome the fact that these have now become international law and urge state parties to fully implement them.

31. We, the governments participating in the special session, commit ourselves to implementing this **Plan of Action** using these steps:
- a) As appropriate, putting in place effective national laws, policies and action plans and using resources to fulfil and protect the rights and to ensure the wellbeing of children.
 - b) To promote and protect the rights of children, we will set up or strengthen national institutions such as independent ombudspersons for children, where appropriate, or other institutions.
 - c) We will set up national monitoring and evaluation systems that will look at the impact of our actions on children.
 - d) We will increase widespread awareness and understanding of the rights of the child.

Partnerships and participation

32. To make this present Plan of Action succeed, we will **work much more closely** with the following groups of people and use lots of different ways to **involve people** in working towards our common aim – the wellbeing of children and the promotion and protection of their rights.

(1) **Children, including adolescents**, in order to help them meet the challenges of life, must be encouraged and supported to use their right to express their views freely. They should:

- learn how to feel good about who they are
- gain knowledge and skills (including decision-making skills, communication skills and ways to deal with conflict).

Their **right to express themselves freely** must be respected and promoted and their views taken into account in all matters affecting them. The views

of the child will be given due weight appropriate to the age and maturity of the child.

We should help children make the best use of their energy and creativity to help them to **shape what is happening** around them, their societies and the world of the future.

Disadvantaged and forgotten children, particularly adolescents, need special attention and support so they can:

- access basic services
- feel good about themselves
- prepare themselves to take responsibility for their own lives.

We will do our best to develop and use programmes that will promote the meaningful involvement of children, including adolescents, in **decision-making**. This will include decisions made within families, schools and at the local and national levels.

- (2) **Parents, families, legal guardians and other caregivers** have the most important role and responsibility for the wellbeing of children. They must be supported in bringing up their children. Our policies and programmes should promote the sharing of the responsibility between parents, families, legal guardians and other caregivers and society as a whole.
- (3) **Local governments and authorities** through stronger partnerships at all levels, among other approaches, can make sure that children are at the centre of people's thinking about development. Ideas such as 'child-friendly communities' and 'cities without slums' can be used by mayors and local leaders to improve the lives of children.
- (4) **Parliamentarians or other people that make laws** are important if this Plan of Action is to become a reality. To be successful they will need to:
 - encourage awareness raising
 - adopt the necessary laws
 - provide financial resources
 - make sure things are being done well.

- (5) **Non-governmental organisations and community organisations** will be supported in their work. When appropriate, they should be helped to become involved in issues relating to children. They have a special role to play in promoting and supporting positive behaviour and helping to create an environment that will ensure the wellbeing of children.
- (6) **The private sector** and big business have a special contribution to make, from working in ways that look after communities and the local environment to providing resources, including new sources of money, for projects that help children.
- (7) **Religious, spiritual, cultural and indigenous leaders** because of their influence on so many people, have a key role in speaking out for children. They can make the goals and targets of this Plan of Action a priority in their communities and encourage and inspire people to take action for children.
- (8) **The mass media and its organisations** can increase awareness of what is happening to children, calling attention to the challenges facing them. It should also play a more active role to inform children, parents, families and the general public on things that are happening that protect and promote the rights of children. It should also contribute to educational programmes for children. The media should be aware of its influence on children.
- (9) **Regional and international organisations**, especially all parts of the United Nations and international financial bodies that provide funds for development should be encouraged to work together. They can play a key role in making things happen more quickly for children.
- (10) **People who work directly with children** have great responsibilities. It is important to improve the way they are viewed, their confidence and their professionalism.

B. Goals, strategies and actions

33. Since the 1990 World Summit for Children, many United Nations meetings and review processes have agreed to goals and targets to help children. We want to **renew our commitment** to all these promises. We want the children of today and the future to have opportunities their parents never had. As a step towards achieving these goals, we agree to achieve the promises which remain unmet and to address the new promises below during the next ten years (2000–2010).
34. Taking into account the best interests of the child, we commit ourselves to **putting into practice** the following goals, strategies and actions, with changes to suit the specific situation of each country and the different situations and circumstances in different regions and countries throughout the world.

I. Promoting healthy lives

What are the problems?

35. Because of **poverty** and not enough access to basic social services:
- More than ten million children under the age of five die every year from sickness and hunger that could be avoided. Almost half of those children are new babies.
 - More than 500,000 women and adolescent girls die every year because of difficulties relating to pregnancy, childbirth and lack of enough food. Many more are injured or disabled.
 - More than one billion people cannot get safe drinking water.
 - 150 million children under five years of age are malnourished.
 - Over two billion people do not have access to safe toilet facilities.

What do we want to do?

36. We want to change this situation by giving all children a safe and healthy start to life. We will do this by providing good basic healthcare for everyone in all communities, by making sure that everyone has the information they need and places to get advice, by providing safe water and toilet facilities, and by



Boy washing at a water point in Chittagong, Bangladesh DAN WHITE

encouraging children and adolescents to live a healthy life. Over the next ten years, we therefore promise to:

- a) Reduce by at least a third the rate at which children under one and under five die. This will help us reach our goal of reducing it by two-thirds by 2015.
- b) Reduce by at least a third the rate at which women die while giving birth. This will help us to reach our goal of reducing it by three-quarters by 2015.
- c) Reduce by at least a third the number of children under five years of age who do not get enough to eat, with special attention given to children under two years of age. Also, to reduce the number of babies born who weigh too little by at least one-third.
- d) Reduce by one-third the number of households who do not have access to safe and low-cost drinking water and clean toilet facilities.
- e) Create and put into practice national policies and programmes for young children that will make sure children's physical, social, emotional, spiritual and mental development is significantly better than before.
- f) Develop and put into practice national health policies and programmes with goals and measures to promote the physical and mental health of adolescents.
- g) Everyone of an appropriate age will have access to reproductive health through healthcare systems. This will happen as soon as possible and no later than 2015.

How will we do it?

37. To achieve these goals and targets we will carry out the **strategies and actions** listed below. When carrying out these strategies and actions we will keep in mind the best interests of the child and the national laws, religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of the people. We will also keep them in agreement with all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The strategies and actions are as follows:
- (1) We will make sure that the health sector makes a priority of reducing illness and death among **women giving birth and very young babies**. Women, in particular adolescent expectant mothers, will have access to:
 - the care for mothers and babies during pregnancy that is necessary and that they can afford
 - well equipped and well staffed healthcare services for mothers
 - people with good training to help when babies are being born
 - emergency care for mothers and babies
 - when more specialist care is needed, we will make sure that women can be moved on to get that care and have transportation to take them there
 - care for mothers and babies after the baby is born
 - family planning to promote, among other things, mothers being safe during their pregnancy and while giving birth.
 - (2) We will provide access to appropriate, user-friendly and high-quality **health education, information** and **basic healthcare services** to all children.
 - (3) For all people of an appropriate age, we will address the **promotion of their healthy lives**, including their reproductive and sexual health. This will all be in agreement with the commitments and outcomes of recent UN conferences and summits, including the World Summit for Children, the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit on Social Development, the 4th World Conference on Women and their five-year reviews and reports.
 - (4) As quickly as possible we will support child health and survival and try to make sure there are less **differences** in the health of children between and within developed and developing countries. We will pay special attention to ending the number of unnecessary and avoidable deaths among girl babies and children.

- (5) Protect, promote and support the **breastfeeding** of babies (without any other kind of baby food) until they are six months of age and continued breast-feeding until two years of age and older, with a mix of breastmilk and other safe and appropriate foods. Provide mothers living with HIV/AIDS with advice about feeding their babies so that they can make free and informed choices.
- (6) Special attention must be given to caring for mothers and children **before and after birth**, as well as essential medical care **at birth**. Such attention should be especially given to those living in areas without access to services.
- (7) Fully **immunise** at least nine out of ten children under one year of age nationally; each smaller individual areas of the country should have at least eight out of ten children immunised.

Reduce by one-half the deaths that occur from **measles** by 2005.

Eliminate **tetanus** in mothers and very small babies by 2005.

Give children everywhere the benefits of new and improved vaccines and ways of avoiding sickness.

- (8) Make sure **polio** will no longer exist anywhere in the world by 2005.
- (9) Get rid of **Guinea worm disease**.
- (10) We will strengthen the development of younger children by providing appropriate **services and support for parents**, particularly during pregnancy, birth, infancy and early childhood. These services and supports will be given



**Street children
in Vietnam**
DAN WHITE

to parents, including parents with disabilities, families, legal guardians and caregivers to help a child's physical, mental, social, and spiritual development and their ability to reason and understand.

(11) There are many methods – which are known to work and which do not cost too much – to bring down the number of children getting sick and dying because of **disease and malnutrition**. We will use these methods more often to do the following:

- reduce deaths caused by bad **chest infections** among children under five years of age by one-third
- reduce deaths caused by **diarrhoea** among children under five to half of what it is now
- cut deaths due to **tuberculosis** by one half as well as the numbers affected by it
- reduce the number of people affected by parasites in their stomachs, cholera, diseases passed on during sex, HIV/AIDS and all forms of hepatitis.

We will make sure that there are good and affordable ways of dealing with all of the things listed and that they can be made use of by highly marginalised areas or populations.

- (12) We want to reduce by half the number of people suffering from **malaria**. We want 60% of all people at risk of malaria to sleep under protective bednets, especially children and women.
- (13) We want to improve the **amount and quality of food** that mothers and children, including adolescents, receive. We will do this by helping families have secure supplies of food and making sure they have access to basic social services and good caring practices.
- (14) We will support groups of people and countries suffering from **serious food shortages and famine**.
- (15) We want families, communities, schools, healthcare facilities and **marginalised boys and girls** to have increased access to good health, nutrition and childcare. We will do this by making health and education systems work better and by expanding social security systems.
- (16) Reduce the number of children injured in **accidents** or through other causes. We will do this by developing and using good ways of preventing accidents before they happen.

- (17) Make sure that children with disabilities and special needs have access to **all the services they need**, including rehabilitation and healthcare services. We will encourage family-based care and support for the parents, families, legal guardians and caregivers of these children.
- (18) We will provide special help to children suffering from **mental illnesses** or **psychological disorders**.
- (19) We will encourage **physical, mental and emotional health** among children, including adolescents, through play, sport, recreation, and artistic and cultural expression.
- (20) We will develop and put into practice policies and programmes aimed at stopping children, including adolescents, from using **narcotic drugs, mind-altering substances and inhalants** except for medical purposes. These programmes will reduce the negative effects of drug and substance abuse. We will also support special policies and programmes that prevent or stop children from using tobacco and alcohol.
- (21) We will develop policies and programmes for children, including adolescents, that will reduce **violence and suicide**.
- (22) If a person does not have enough **iodine, vitamin A or iron** they can get sick. By the year 2005 no one will suffer from any sickness because of not having enough iodine. By the year 2010 problems of not getting enough vitamin A or iron will be solved. Anaemia will be reduced by one-third by 2010. We will also speed up the work being done to reduce other problems of not having enough vitamins or minerals. We will do this by encouraging more variety in what people eat and by adding vitamins or minerals to, or improving, what people do eat.
- (23) So that everyone has access to **safe drinking water and good sanitation facilities**, we will help the family and community take more responsibility for the services they have and teach people how to change their ways of behaving in order to be healthier. This information will also be given through schools.
- (24) We will deal with any differences found in health and access to basic social services, including healthcare services for **indigenous children and children belonging to minorities**.
- (25) We will develop laws, policies and programmes, as appropriate, at national level and improve co-operation between countries so that children are not exposed to harmful **pollution** in the air, water, soil and food.

2. Providing quality education

38. **Education** is important.

- Education is a human right.
- Education is key to reducing poverty and child labour.
- Education is key to promoting democracy, peace, tolerance, and development.

What are the problems?

- More than 100 million children, most of them girls, are not in primary school.
- Many children in school have teachers that are untrained and underpaid.
- Many schools are overcrowded, unhealthy and do not have good equipment.
- One in three children do not complete five years of school, which is the minimum needed to reach a basic level of reading and writing.



Student at the Carlos Mariátequi school, Lima, Peru HOWARD DAVIES

What do we want to do?

39. As agreed at the World Education Forum meeting in Dakar, it is very important to make sure that by 2015 all children have access to and complete a **good-quality, free primary education** that they all must attend. We will also try to make secondary education gradually more available. To make this happen we agree to meet the following targets:
- a) For all boys and girls, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, we will expand and improve a wide range of early childhood care and education.
 - b) We will reduce by half the number of primary school-age children who are not in school. We will ensure that nine out of ten children of this age are in school or alternative good-quality education programmes before 2010.
 - c) We will get rid of differences in boys' and girls' education in primary and secondary school by 2005. We will focus on making sure girls have equal and

full access to a good-quality basic education in which they do well. We will achieve gender equality in education by 2015.

- d) We will improve all aspects of the quality of education. Children should gain measurable and recognised results from their education, especially in reading and writing, working with numbers and important life skills.
- e) We will make sure that the learning needs of all young people are met through access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- f) We will make sure that the proportion of adults able to read and write increases by 50% by 2015, especially among women.

How will we do it?

40. To achieve these goals and targets, we will carry out the following **strategies and actions**:

- (1) We will develop and put into practice special plans so that it is easy for all children and adolescents to go to school and that it will not cost their families too much money.
- (2) We will support new programmes that encourage schools and communities to search more actively for **children who have dropped out, or are left out**,



Students at the Carlos Mariátequi school, Lima, Peru
HOWARD DAVIES

of school and from learning. We want these programmes to pay special attention to girls and working children, children with special needs and children with disabilities, and help them enrol, attend, and successfully complete their education. We will involve governments as well as families, communities and non-governmental organisations as partners in the educational process. Special measures should be put in place to prevent and reduce drop-out from school due to, among other things, getting a job.

- (3) We understand that:
- Educational services must be of good quality.
 - Education providers must be skilled.
 - Non-formal education and alternative kinds of education can be a good and valuable experience.
 - Keeping all of this in mind, we will bring formal and non-formal education closer together and make them work more effectively together.
- (4) We will make sure that all basic education programmes:
- are open to children with disabilities and special learning needs
 - fully include these children
 - respond to their needs.
- (5) We want **children belonging to minorities and indigenous children** to have the same access to quality education as other children. We will try to provide education in ways that respect their heritage. We will try to provide educational opportunities for them to understand and maintain their cultural identity, including their language and values.
- (6) We will prepare special plans so that the **quality** of education is better and it meets the needs of all children.
- (7) We will work with children to create a **child-friendly** setting for them to learn where they will feel safe and protected from abuse, violence and discrimination, and where they are healthy and encouraged to learn. Education materials should promote and protect human rights and the values of peace, tolerance and equality between men and women. We use the opportunity given to us by the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001–2010) to improve our work in this area.

- (8) To strengthen **early childhood care and education for younger children**, we will provide services and develop and support programmes aimed at families, legal guardians, caregivers and communities.
- (9) We will provide education and training opportunities for **adolescents** so that they are able to find a way of supporting themselves afterwards.
- (10) We will design, where appropriate, and put into practice programmes that allow **pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers** to complete their education.
- (11) We will push for the development and use of programmes, especially in schools, for children including adolescents that will:
 - prevent and discourage the use of **tobacco and alcohol**
 - detect, oppose and prevent the buying, selling, trading and using of **narcotic drugs and mind-altering substances**.

We will do this by, among other things, promoting mass media campaigns that will focus on the harmful effects of these substances and the risk of addiction. We will also take the necessary action to deal with the real causes of these problems.

- (12) We will promote new programmes that encourage poor families to find ways for their children to enter and attend school.

We want to avoid their children **having to work** in ways that get in the way of their schooling.
- (13) We will develop and use programmes that will get rid of **differences in boys' and girls' access to school**. Gender stereotypes and discrimination in school systems, courses and materials will also be eliminated, no matter what the reasons given for them.
- (14) We will improve the importance, confidence, training and professionalism of **teachers**, including those working with children in their early years. We will make sure teachers are paid sufficiently for what they do and we will provide them with opportunities and reasons to develop their skills.
- (15) Make sure that **management structures** in schools, communities and at national level are responsive, that they involve others in making decisions, and that they have to report back on how well they have done their work.

Children at an informal school for working children in Uttar Pradesh, India

DARIO MITIDIERI



- (16) We will meet the special needs of **children affected by crises** by making sure that education is provided during and after crises. We will also carry out education programmes which encourage a culture of peace, help prevent violence and conflict, and encourage the rehabilitation of victims.
- (17) We will provide accessible **recreational and sporting opportunities and facilities** at schools and in communities.
- (18) **Information and communication technologies** are changing quickly. We will use this to help provide education, including open and distance education, at an affordable cost while reducing differences in access and quality.
- (19) We will develop ways to lessen the impact that **HIV/AIDS** has on education systems and schools, students and learning.

3. Protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence

What are the problems?

41. Hundreds of millions of children are suffering and dying from war, violence, exploitation, neglect and all forms of abuse and discrimination. Around the world children live in especially difficult circumstances, including children who are:
- badly injured or disabled for the rest of their lives by armed conflicts
 - forced from their homes or countries as refugees
 - suffering from natural and man-made disasters (including exposure to radiation and dangerous chemicals)
 - suffering because they are the children of migrant workers and other socially disadvantaged groups
 - victims of racism, racial discrimination and other related prejudices.

The buying and selling of children, the smuggling of children, the physical and sexual exploitation of children, the abduction of children and the economic exploitation of children are daily realities for children in all regions of the world. Violence in the home and sexual violence against women and children also remain serious problems.

In several countries, economic sanctions have had effects on the people, in particular women and children.

What are “sanctions”?

Sometimes a government or a group of governments will try to punish another country when they do not agree with something the other country has done. A government can punish another government by giving less aid, by not giving aid at all, or by preventing the trade of goods between countries (including food and medical supplies). These restrictions are called sanctions.

42. In some countries, the situation of children is made worse by one-sided actions by individual states that do not follow international law and the Charter of the United Nations. These actions create obstacles to trade relations among states,

slow down social and economic development, and hurt the wellbeing of the population in the affected countries, with particular consequences for women and children, including adolescents.

What do we want to do?

43. Children have the right to be **protected** from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. Societies must put an end to all forms of violence against children. We therefore promise to:
- a) protect all children from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence
 - b) protect children from the effects of war and ensure that everyone obeys the international laws that protect people in times of war
 - c) protect children from all forms of sexual abuse including paedophilia, the buying and selling of children, and children being taken or kidnapped
 - d) act immediately and effectively to do what is needed to stop the worst forms of child labour as defined in International Labour Organisation Convention No. 182. We will build on and put into practice new ways of eliminating kinds of child labour that are unacceptable under international agreements.

When we talk about the “worst forms” of child labour we are using the definition given by the International Labour Organization, also known as the ILO. The worst forms of child work are listed below.

- All forms of slavery. This includes child soldiers and children who are being bought, sold or traded.
- The sexual exploitation of children. This includes children being used for pornography and prostitution.
- Involving children in the buying, selling and production of illegal drugs.
- Work that is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

- e) improve the situation of millions of children who live in very difficult situations.

How will we do it?

44. To achieve these goals we will carry out the following **strategies and actions**:

General protection

- (1) We will develop systems that will make sure every child is **officially registered** at the time of birth or soon after, so that every child is able to have the right to have a name and nationality, as agreed in national and international laws.
- (2) Encourage all countries to introduce and improve the enforcement of **laws, policies, and programmes** to protect children from all types of violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation. These should protect children whether at home, in school or other institutions, in the workplace or in their community.
- (3) Take special action to get rid of **discrimination** against children because of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. We will make sure all children have equal access to education, health and basic social services.
- (4) People who commit **crimes against children** will not be allowed to escape justice. The punishment they receive for such crimes will be made widely known.
- (5) We will take steps to avoid and prevent any one-sided actions by a country that go against **international law** and the **Charter of the United Nations** and slows down the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries. We are concerned specifically about children and women and any actions that get in the way of their wellbeing and make it difficult for them to fully enjoy their human rights. These rights include the right of everyone to a standard of living good enough for their health and wellbeing and their right to food, medical care and the necessary social services. We will make sure that food and medicine are not used as tools for political pressure.
- (6) Raise awareness of the **illegal** nature and the **damaging** effects of failing to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation.
- (7) We will encourage preventive, supportive and caring services to be put in place for **children in trouble with the law**. We will also encourage justice systems specifically for children, bearing in mind the principle that offenders

should give something back to their victims. These justice systems will fully protect children's rights and will have staff that are specially trained to help children return to ordinary life.

- (8) We will protect children from **torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**. We call upon all governments of all States, especially States that have not yet stopped using the death penalty, to fulfil the promises they have made through various sections of human rights instruments. This includes articles 37 and 40 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Articles 6 and 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- (9) End **harmful traditional or customary ways of behaving** that damage the rights of children and women – for example, getting married at a very young age, being forced to marry and female genital mutilation.
- (10) Find ways to give special protection and help to **children that do not have parents or other family members** to care for them.



**Children in Pyay, Myanmar –
the boy in the torn shirt
is scavenging for food**

DEAN CHAPMAN

(11) For children:

- living in **disadvantaged social situations**
- children who are **at risk**, including:
 - orphans
 - abandoned children
 - children of migrant workers
 - children working and/or living on the street
 - children living in extreme poverty

we will do what is needed to:

- prevent their situations
- protect these children
- help the children recover from their experiences
- help these children return to live normal lives in society
- make sure they have access to education, health and social services.

(12) Protect children from ways of being **adopted or fostered** which are illegal, exploit them or that are not in their best interests.

(13) Address cases of **international kidnapping** of children by one of their parents.

(14) We will fight and prevent the use of children, including adolescents, in the illegal production, buying and selling of **narcotic drugs and mind-altering substances**.

(15) We will support **programmes** that stop the use of children, including adolescents, in the buying, selling and trading of narcotic drugs and mind-altering substances.

(16) For children, including adolescents, who are dependent on drugs, mind-altering substances, inhalants and alcohol, we will provide **treatment** and do what is needed to help them **recover from their dependency**.

(17) Following international law and humanitarian law, we will provide protection and assistance to **refugees** and people who have been forced from their homes, the majority of whom are women and children.

- (18) Make sure that children affected by **natural disasters** (eg floods and earthquakes) receive help quickly and effectively through better planning and preparation for emergencies. They will receive all possible help so they can return to normal life as soon as possible.
- (19) We will encourage action to protect children from **violent or harmful web sites, computer programmes and games** that damage the mental development of children. We will take into account the responsibilities of the family, parents, legal guardians and caregivers.

Protection from armed conflict

- (20) We will do more to protect **children affected by war**. We will do what is needed to protect children living in areas occupied by another country.
- (21) We will make sure that issues relating to the rights and protection of children are:
- properly included in the development of **peacemaking processes** and **peace agreements**
 - included, when appropriate, in United Nations peacekeeping operations and peace-building programmes.

Where possible, we will involve children in these processes.

- (22) We will end the recruitment and use of children in war that goes against international law. We will make sure that children are taken out of combat and that weapons are removed from them. We will do what is needed to make sure they are able to recover physically and mentally and then help them to rejoin society.
- (23) The people responsible for the things listed below will no longer go **unpunished**:
- the killing of people because of their race or religion
 - crimes against humanity
 - war crimes.

Where we can, we will not allow these crimes to be forgiven even when other crimes are forgiven in order to help make a fresh start. When trying to find the truth and ensure justice after a war, we will make sure that serious abuses involving children are dealt with and that child-sensitive procedures are provided.



Boy who had polio earlier in his life, Kinshasa, DR Congo

TIM HETHERINGTON/NETWORK PHOTOGRAPHERS

- (24) **Terrorism** hurts the development and wellbeing of children. We will take practical action against all forms of terrorism.
- (25) All civilian, military and police workers involved in **peacekeeping operations** will receive training and education on:
 - children's rights
 - child protection
 - international humanitarian law.
- (26) Reduce the unlawful trade in **small and light weapons** and protect children from **landmines, unexploded bombs and shells and other war materials**. We will provide assistance both during and after war to children who have been victims.
- (27) We are determined to strengthen international co-operation, including sharing in the costs of, and co-ordination of, **humanitarian assistance** to countries helping people who have been forced to leave their countries. We will also help all those people who have been forced to leave their homes or countries, including children and their families, to return to their homes in safety and with dignity. We will also help them to smoothly become part of their societies once again.
- (28) With the necessary international co-operation, we will develop and put in place policies and programmes for the protection, care and wellbeing of **children who have been forced to leave their countries** and children looking for protection in another country. We will also provide basic social services for these children, including access to education, healthcare and food.
- (29) We will give priority to programmes that help children and families **find each other and come together**. We will continue to monitor the care given to children who are alone and/or who have been separated from their families when they left their country or home.
- (30) We will watch closely how **sanctions** affect children. We will urgently do what is needed to take away the bad effects of sanctions on women and children. All our actions will follow international law.
- (31) We will do what is needed to protect children from being taken as **hostages**.

- (32) **Girls** are particularly vulnerable to armed conflict and have special needs. We will do what is needed to protect and provide for girls affected by armed conflict.

Combating child labour

- (33) It is important to act immediately and take effective action to forbid, and put an end to, the **worst forms** of child labour as quickly as possible. We will do what is needed to help children recover from their experience of such forms of child labour and re-enter society. These things can be done, among other ways, by providing access to free basic education and wherever possible, training to help them find better jobs.
- (34) Countries will **work together** to end the worst forms of child labour. We will help each other through more support from richer countries for less developed countries including support for social and economic development, universal education and programmes for ending poverty.
- (35) We will develop and put into practice programmes that protect children from:
- economic exploitation
 - work that is dangerous
 - work that will get in the way of a child's education
 - work that is harmful to a child's health or to her or his physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
- (36) We will protect children from all forms of economic exploitation by **mobilizing national partnerships and international co-operation** and we will improve the conditions of working children by, among other things:
- providing free basic education and work training for working children
 - getting working children back into the education system in every way possible
 - encouraging support for social and economic policies that aim to end poverty and provide families, particularly women, with employment and ways of earning money.

- (37) When developing countries ask for help we will **work together** to help them deal with child labour and its causes, including helping them by finding ways to end poverty. We will not try to protect our economies and trade by linking the way workers are treated in other countries to decisions about whether or not to give those countries access to our markets to sell their exports.
- (38) We will improve the **collection and examination of data** on child labour.
- (39) Everything that we are doing relating to child labour should be **included** in our other development efforts and our efforts to end poverty. In particular, in our policies and programmes relating to health, education, employment and social protection.

Elimination of trafficking and sexual exploitation of children

- (40) We will take **urgent action**, nationally and internationally, to end the sale of children and their organs, sexual exploitation and abuse, including the use of children for pornography, prostitution and paedophilia. We will fight existing markets for these activities.
- (41) We will make sure that **people know** about the damaging effects of sexual exploitation and abuse (also done through the internet and the buying and selling of children) and that these are against the law.
- (42) We will involve **companies and businesses**, including the tourism industry and **the media**, in a campaign against the trade in children and the sexual exploitation of children.
- (43) We want to understand and take action on the **reasons** why children are bought, sold, traded and sexually exploited.
- (44) We will ensure the **safety, protection and security** of victims of sexual exploitation and the trade in people. We will provide assistance and services to aid their recovery and help them return to society.
- (45) We will do what is needed, at all level and as appropriate, to **criminalize and punish effectively** all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including:
 - exploitation and abuse within the family or for commercial purposes
 - child prostitution
 - paedophilia

- child pornography
- child sex tourism
- the buying and selling of children
- the sale of children and their organs
- engagement in forced child labour
- any other forms of exploitation.

We will do this using all relevant international instruments and we will ensure that when the criminal justice system deals with children who are victims, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

- (46) We will **collect information** on the trade in children across national borders and share it between countries, in regions and internationally. We will strengthen the ability of officials at borders and in the justice system to stop the trading of children and provide or strengthen training so that they respect the dignity, human rights and freedoms of all victims of such trading, especially women and children.
- (47) We will take necessary steps, including better working between governments, intergovernmental organisations, businesses and non-governmental organisations, to stop criminals using new technology such as the **internet** to sell children and to involve children in sex work, child sex tourism, paedophilia, pornography and other forms of abuse and violence against children and adolescents.

4. Combating HIV/AIDS

45. HIV/AIDS is having an extremely damaging effect on children and on those who care for them.

What are the problems?

- 13 million children have been orphaned by AIDS.
- Nearly 600,000 babies are infected with HIV every year by transmission of the disease from mother to child.
- Millions of young people infected with HIV live with discrimination as a result of having the disease but cannot get the advice, care and support services they need.

What do we want to do?

46. To fight the terrible effect of HIV/AIDS on children we agree to take urgent and forceful action, as agreed at the United Nations Special Session on HIV/AIDS. We agree to place priority on the following **goals and promises**:



The Basuku youth group, from Uganda, who do drama, singing and poetry performances about HIV/AIDS and other sexual health issues

TIM HETHERINGTON/
NETWORK PHOTOGRAPHERS

- a) By 2003 we will put in place **national goals** that can be achieved within a specific time frame and that will help us to fulfil the following internationally agreed promises:
- Reduce the rate at which young people aged 15 to 24 years are infected by HIV by:
 - a quarter in the worst affected countries by 2005
 - a quarter in the world as a whole by 2010.
 - Increase our efforts to achieve these goals.
 - Challenge gender stereotypes, attitudes and gender inequalities relating to HIV/AIDS.
 - Encourage men and boys to become more actively involved in achieving these promises.
- b) By 2005 we will lower by 20% the proportion of infants infected with HIV. By 2010 we will lower by 50% the proportion of infants infected with HIV. We will do this by:
- making sure that 80% of pregnant women who get care during their pregnancy have access to HIV/AIDS information, services and counselling
 - increasing the access of HIV-infected women and babies to effective treatment to avoid mothers infecting their children
 - making sure HIV-infected women have the help that they need offered to them, including confidential counselling, testing, treatment and access to special drugs and therapies to protect their children and babies. It is also important that they receive this care on a continued basis.
- c) By 2003 we will develop national policies and by 2005 we will be using these national policies so that governments, families and communities will be able to provide care and support to children who have lost their parents because of HIV/AIDS, as well as to HIV/AIDS-infected girls and boys, by:
- providing counselling, social and mental support
 - making sure they go to school and have shelter, good nutrition, health and social services in the same way as other children
 - protecting them from all forms of abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, trade in children and the loss of property passed down to them by their parents or relatives who have died.

How will we do it?

47. To achieve these goals we will use the following **strategies and actions**:

- (1) By 2003 we will make sure that **national and financial plans to combat HIV/AIDS** have been developed and are being used across different sectors. These plans will:
 - address the problem in a real and honest way
 - confront the negative labels or judgements people use
 - address silence and denial
 - address the parts of the problem related to people's gender or age
 - eliminate discrimination and marginalization
 - involve partnerships with civil society, businesses, people living with HIV/AIDS, vulnerable groups and people most at risk, especially women and young people
 - receive money from national budgets as far as possible, without excluding other sources of funding, including aid from richer countries
 - fully promote and protect all human rights and freedoms, including the right to the highest physical and mental health possible
 - include a gender perspective
 - address risk, vulnerability, prevention, care, treatment, support and reducing the impact of the problem of HIV/AIDS
 - strengthen the ability of the health, education and legal systems to play their part.
- (2) By 2005, make sure that, in full partnership with youth, parents, families, educators and healthcare providers, at least 90% and by 2010 at least 95% of young men and women aged between 15 and 24 years have access to:
 - **information and education**, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education
 - the necessary **services** to develop the life skills needed to reduce their risk of HIV infection.

Children from Phnom Penh, Cambodia, receive information, literature and advice about sexual health issues DAN WHITE



- (3) By 2005 we will have developed and made good progress in using overall **care strategies** to:
- ensure that families, community-based care and healthcare systems, including informal care, are better able to provide and monitor treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS, including children. They will also be able to provide better support for individuals, households, families and communities affected by HIV/AIDS.

We will improve:

- the ability and working conditions of healthcare workers
 - the usefulness of supply systems, financial plans and arrangements for giving people access to medicines they can afford, as well as a variety of treatments, technologies and good-quality medical, sickness-easing and mental healthcare.
- (4) By 2005, we will have done things to make sure **women and adolescent girls** have a greater ability to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection. We will do this by:
- providing healthcare and other services, including sexual and reproductive health
 - providing education to prevent infection that encourages gender equality while being sensitive to cultural and gender-sensitive issues.
- (5) By 2003, we will develop or build on plans, policies and programmes that recognise the importance of the **family** in reducing vulnerability, because of its

ability to educate and guide children while taking into account cultural, religious and ethical factors.

These plans, policies and programmes will reduce the vulnerability of children and young people by:

- giving both boys and girls access to primary and secondary education (including HIV/AIDS education for adolescents)
 - ensuring safe and secure environments, especially for young girls
 - providing more good-quality, youth-friendly information and sexual health education and counselling services
 - making reproductive and sexual health programmes stronger
 - involving families and young people, wherever possible, in planning, using and evaluating HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes.
- (6) Refugees, internally displaced people, especially women and children and other people affected by **war, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters**, are more at risk of being exposed to HIV infection. By 2003 we will develop and start using national plans that will include HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, care and treatment in programmes and actions that deal with these emergency situations. We will also consider HIV/AIDS when dealing with international assistance programmes.
- (7) We will make sure that all children who are **orphaned or made vulnerable** because of HIV/AIDS are able to fully and equally enjoy all human rights and that they do not experience discrimination. We will encourage an active and visible effort that will remove the negative labels or judgements these children experience.
- (8) When individual developing countries increase the money they use to fight HIV/AIDS, we will encourage the international community to provide help and support to these efforts by providing **extra development assistance**. This assistance should be particularly focused on:
- the countries most affected by HIV/AIDS, especially sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean
 - countries where HIV/AIDS is at high risk of increasing
 - other regions where resources to deal with HIV/AIDS are very limited.

C. Mobilizing resources

48. The **goals** that we have set:

- promoting healthy lives, including good nutrition and the control of infectious diseases
- providing quality education
- protecting children from abuse, exploitation, violence and armed conflict
- combating HIV/AIDS

can all be achieved and are not too expensive for the global community.

49. Each individual country has the greatest responsibility for making sure that it **fulfils the promises** in this “Plan of Action”. Each country must create an environment in which the wellbeing of children is secured and the rights of each and every child are promoted and respected. To make all this happen new and additional resources will be needed at national and international levels.

50. Investments in children which are maintained over the medium to long term bring lots of **benefits**. Doing this, and respecting children’s rights, makes it possible to have a fair society, a strong economy and a world without poverty.

51. We will need a lot more money, materials and people, nationally and internationally, in order to see all these promises fulfilled. Internationally, countries in the North will have to work with countries in the South, and countries in the South will have to work with other countries in the South.

52. Therefore, we promise to do our best to achieve the following **global goals and actions** for making resources available for children:

- a) We thank the richer countries that promised to put aside part of their income to **help poor countries** (0.7% of their gross national product) and have done this. We ask those that have not yet done this to do so as soon as possible. We will not spare any efforts to reverse the declining amount of aid given to developing countries. We also agree to make sure that we give special help to the very poorest countries where children are in special need (between 0.15% and 0.20% of the gross national product of the richer countries to help these poorest countries).

- b) Without waiting any longer, we will put into practice the process by which the **poorest countries that owe lots of money** do not have to pay all that money back. We will also cancel all money owed by these countries to individual countries. In return, these countries will make promises to end poverty and use the savings (from not paying back the money they borrowed) to pay for programmes for ending poverty, particularly ones related to children.
- c) We call for **speedy and joint action** to address the problems of the money owed by the:
- least developed countries
 - low-income developing countries
 - and middle-income developing countries.

We want to see action taken in a way that is all-inclusive, fair, long lasting, and focused on development. We will use various national and international actions to make their debts manageable in the long term. This will improve their ability to deal with issues relating to children. Actions include reducing debt owed by a country if that country puts funding into projects aimed at meeting the needs of children.

- d) We will increase and improve the **access of products and services from developing countries to international markets** through, among other things:
- reducing tariff barriers through negotiations between countries
 - eliminating non-tariff barriers which unjustifiably reduce the trade of developing countries, according to the trading system shared by many countries.

Tariff barriers are taxes that are put on goods produced in one country when they enter another country. Tariff barriers protect the goods produced in the home country, but increase the cost of goods coming in from another country.

- e) We believe that **increased trade** is essential for the growth and development of the least-developed countries. We will work to improve special access for the least-developed countries to the international market. We will do this by working towards the goal of duty-free market access without limits for all

products coming from the least-developed countries in the markets of developed countries.

- f) We will find new and much higher levels of both national and international resources for **social development** to reduce differences within and between countries. We will make sure existing resources are being used as well as possible. Social spending that helps children will be protected as much as possible during both short-term and long-term financial and economic problems.
 - g) We will look into new ways of finding more public and private money including, among other things, **reducing** the amount of unnecessary money we spend on **military needs**, while taking into consideration the security needs of a country. This will include reductions in trading, producing and obtaining weapons and other arms.
 - h) We will change the way we spend our national budgets and the way richer countries help developing countries so that we are able to make sure all children have access to **basic social services**.
53. We will give special attention to meeting the needs of the world's **most vulnerable children** in developing countries, especially in the least-developed countries and in sub-Saharan Africa.
54. We will also give **special help** to the needs of children in:
- Small Island Developing States
 - developing countries that have no access to seas
 - transit developing countries
 - other developing countries
 - countries that have economies going through a change from communist to market systems.
55. We will encourage **technical co-operation** between countries so that we can share our good experiences and methods in making the commitments in this plan a reality.
56. Meeting our goals and hopes for children deserves **new partnerships** with civil society, non-governmental organisations and the private sector as well as new arrangements for gathering together additional resources, both public and private.

57. **Big companies** must always follow the laws of countries where they are based or work. Big companies should take responsibility for helping people and the environment and be encouraged to help achieve social development goals and work towards the wellbeing of children by, among other things:

- (1) promoting more corporate awareness of the inter-relationship between social development and economic growth
- (2) providing legal, economic and social rules that are fair and secure so as to support private sector initiatives that will achieve these goals
- (3) encouraging partnership between business, trade unions and civil society at country level to help achieve our goals.

We ask the private sector to examine how their actions affect children. When new information is found and new developments are made, we ask that they are made available to children, especially the children in greatest need. This includes developments and information in the areas of science, medical technology, health, improvements to food, protecting the environment, education and communication.

58. To achieve this Plan of Action it is important that the United Nations, its agencies, other international organisations, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and civil society co-ordinate their efforts and work in co-operation.



Boy working in his family's field in Legambo Woreda, Ethiopia TIM HETHERINGTON

D. Follow-up actions and assessment

59. As a matter of urgency and if possible by the end of 2003, we will develop or strengthen national and, where appropriate, regional **action plans**. These action plans will have clear, measurable goals and targets which will have to be achieved by an agreed date. They will be based on the Plan of Action found in this document and will take into account:

- national laws, religious and ethical values, and the cultural backgrounds of its people.
- the best interests of the child
- all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We will strengthen our **national planning** and make sure there are the necessary co-ordination, implementation and resources. We will include the goals of this Plan of Action in:

- our national government policies
- national and sub-national development programmes
- our plans to end poverty
- our work across various sectors
- and other relevant development plans.

This will all be done in co-operation with relevant civil society actors, non-governmental organisations working for and with children, as well as with children themselves, depending on their age and maturity, and their families.

60. We will monitor how we are doing at national level and, where appropriate, regional and global levels and **judge our progress** towards achieving our goals in this Plan of Action at national, regional and global levels. We will improve our ability to collect and analyse information.

We will look for information that may show differences based on such things as sex and age. We will support a wide range of child-focused research.

We will work together internationally to improve our ability to collect data and information. We will also improve the ability of local communities to check on progress made, and contribute to assessment and planning.

61. We will **review our progress** at national and sub-national levels on a regular basis so that we can deal with problems in a better way and make things happen more quickly. At regional level, such reviews will be used to share best practice, strengthen partnerships and speed up progress. Therefore:
- a) We encourage every country that already presents reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child to consider also including information on action taken and results achieved in the implementation of this Plan of Action.

The Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child is a group of experts on children from all over the world who meet in Geneva three times a year to hear what governments have been doing to protect and promote children's rights. The experts are elected by the governments of the world. Each country that has adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child must submit a regular report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child that explains what the country is doing to ensure that the rights of the child are realised in their country.

- b) We ask the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the world's lead agency for children, to continue to prepare and distribute information on progress made in support of this Declaration and Plan of Action. We ask that they do this in close co-operation with:
- governments
 - relevant funds
 - programmes
 - the specialised agencies of the UN system
 - other UN organs
 - all other relevant actors.

We ask that the governing bodies of the specialised agencies ensure, as best they can, that the fullest possible support is given by these agencies for the achievement of the goal outlined in this Plan of Action. We ask that they keep the General Assembly of the United Nations fully informed, through the Economic and Social Council and using existing reporting frameworks and

procedures, of progress being made and additional action that may be required during the coming decade.

c) We ask that the UN Secretary-General report regularly to the UN General Assembly on the **progress made** in implementing the Plan of Action.

62. We promise once again to **spare no effort** in continuing to create a world fit for children. We will build on the achievements of the last ten years and we will be guided by the principles of a 'first call' for children. Working together with a wide range of partners, we will lead a global movement for children that creates an unstoppable momentum for change. We make this sincere promise with the understanding that, in giving high priority to the rights of children, to their survival, and to their protection and development, we serve the best interests of all humanity and ensure the wellbeing of all children in all societies.

Dictionary

There may be a few words in the Child-friendly version of A World Fit for Children that are hard to understand.

So we are giving you a small dictionary to help you out with some of the more difficult words.

- Access** to be able to use or benefit from something (eg education or healthcare services).
- Adapted** the way something changes – or is changed – to make it fit or suitable for doing something.
- Adolescent** young people between the ages of approximately 10 and 18.
- Affordable** something that someone with an average or low income can pay for.
- Anaemia** commonly called 'low blood count'. The poor condition of someone's blood as a result of sickness (like malaria) or not having enough nutrients in the body, like iron.
- Child pornography** pictures of children – usually photographs or videos – and/or writing about children, which are meant to sexually excite or please an adult. This could be in books, in magazines, movies, on the internet, etc. Child pornography is against the law and is a serious form of child abuse.
- Child prostitution** when a child occasionally or regularly has sex, or takes part in sexual activities, with other people (adults or other children) in return for money, favours or any other rewards. Children may be forced into prostitution by other people, or because they have no other way to survive. Child prostitution is against the law and is a serious form of child abuse.
- Civil society** all those organisations (such as NGOs, trade unions, churches and faith groups, charities, women's groups, environmental movements, community groups and associations) which result from people getting together to help each other or help other people. Every kind of organisation that is not part of government or the private/business/commercial sector.
- Committee on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [the UNCRC]** a group of experts on children from all over the world who meet in Geneva three times a year to hear what governments have been doing to protect and promote children's rights. They are elected by the governments of the world.

Compulsory	something you have to do, are required to do, something unavoidable.
Deficiency	a lack of something which results in a problem.
Democracy	a system of government based on free elections involving all adults choosing their elected representatives; also includes respect for freedom of speech, religion and opinion and the respect for the rule of law.
Development	giving people more control over their lives and more choices about how they live. This requires them to have their basic needs satisfied (for example, for food, money and shelter). Also sometimes defined more narrowly as economic growth.
Disabilities	physical (such as lacking part of an arm or leg or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body) or mental problems. But disability also needs to be seen as the disadvantage which results from the way societies are organised which takes little or no account of people who have such difficulties and excludes them from ordinary social life.
Discrimination	the unequal treatment of people because of prejudices or preferences against someone's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, disability, etc.
Economic growth	an increase in the production of all kinds of goods (such as cars, clothes, food, cooking pots and petrol) and services (such as banks, hospitals, shops, bars, hotels and taxis).
Eliminate	get rid of.
Exploitation	mistreatment, taking advantage of someone, using someone selfishly. As in making a child work to pay off their parent's debts or making them do dangerous or illegal work in order to make someone else better off.
Fair trade	paying a 'fair' price for goods produced in developing countries so that the ordinary people making the product are given a good price for what they grow or make.
Female genital mutilation (FGM)	the removal of the sensitive part of a girl's or young woman's sexual organs for cultural reasons.

- Gender** the way in which different cultures and societies understand the biological differences between men and women; what it means to be feminine and masculine in particular cultural and social settings, and how this influences ideas about what women and men, and girls and boys will do and how they will behave.
- General Assembly** one of the six major bodies or parts of the United Nations and the one where most discussions between governments take place. Each government has one vote. A lot of the General Assembly's work goes on in six smaller committees. As well as its regular meetings, the General Assembly can call Special Sessions to discuss important issues.
- Generation** the group of people in a country's population who were all born about the same time. For example, your grandparents are one generation, your parents are one and you are yet another generation. Depending on the country, a generation spans between 15 and 30 years.
- Global community** all the people of the world or all their governments.
- Globalisation** the way in which economic and social change is becoming more and more global as a result of the growth of international trade, political changes and developments in computer and communications technologies. Some people also see it as being the result of the growing power of large companies which operate in many different countries of the world. One of the results of globalisation has been the way in which more and more developing countries have become part of the world economy.
- HIV/AIDS** Human Immunodeficiency Virus [HIV] is what causes Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome [AIDS] by infecting cells of the body. By causing the breakdown of the body's own system of protection it results in various serious symptoms and diseases which can result in death. HIV infection is spread through unprotected sex (without a condom) or through exposure to blood from injecting drugs into the body (via contaminated needles or syringes). HIV can also be transmitted from mother to child through birth or by breastfeeding or through blood transfusions.
- Hostage taking** when someone is taken away by force and is used as part of a negotiation or other bargaining process by threatening to hurt them (eg to get a government to do something).
- Hygiene** the things we can do to clean ourselves (like washing our hands) and keep healthy.

Immunisation	protecting people from diseases by giving them a mild but not dangerous form of the disease, which builds up the body's defences.
Indigenous	the original or native inhabitants of a place; the people who first lived in a place. Often now in danger from other people who want control over their land or resources.
Instability	when a country is suffering from a bad economic, social, military or political situation which makes it difficult to carry on as normal.
Integration	bring together different groups (for example, children with and without disabilities; children from different races or ethnic groups) so that they are treated equally and enjoy the same use of services, etc.
Intellectual development	the growth of the mind; an increase in understanding, the ability to analyse a problem and other and mental skills
Investments	something you put money into in order to make something happen at a later date (such as investing in a factory to produce cars or investing in children in order to make healthier and well-educated adults)
Iodine	a chemical element that is needed in very small amounts by people to stay healthy. Without iodine people can suffer from an ugly swelling in the neck and/or from problems in their mental development.
International Labour Organization (ILO)	was founded in 1919 to advance social justice and better living conditions throughout the world. In 1946 it became the first specialised agency associated with the United Nations. Its work is agreed by representatives of three groups with equal status: workers, employers and governments. Child labour is a key focus of work for the ILO.
ILO Convention 138	States agree to work towards effectively ending child labour. It also says that States will raise the age at which children can start working to an age that is appropriate to the child's physical and mental development.
ILO Convention 182	the aim of this convention is to stop the worst forms of child labour. The convention clarifies what are the worst forms of child labour and says what governments should do to stop them from happening.
Justice system	all the people and procedures (such as courts, judges, lawyers and prisons) that societies create in order to deal with crime and people who have broken the law.

Law enforcement	people whose job it is to make sure that people obey the law (eg policemen).
Malnutrition	the result of not getting enough of the right types of foods (which provide nutrients such as protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals) to grow well and be healthy. Malnutrition can also result from poor health conditions which make it difficult for the body to absorb the necessary nutrients.
Millennium Development Goals	these are eight goals that governments agreed to reach by the year 2015. They are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reducing poverty and hunger• making sure everyone goes to primary school• making sure that boys and girls are treated equally and that women are empowered• reducing the number of children that die before their 5th birthday• improving the health of mothers• reducing the number of people who are affected by HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases• making sure that the environment is around for future generations• work together for development.
Natural resources	things that people can use which are provided by nature and which can be found around us (such as oil, coal, fish, diamonds, water and trees).
Negotiations	discussions to agree to or arrange something.
NGO (non-governmental organisation)	any organisation which is not part of government (and which is also not a business or company aiming to make a profit) which exists to help people who have some sort of problem (such as poverty or disability) or to protect something (such as animals or plants) which is in danger.
Orphaned	when one or both a child's parents have died.
Paedophilia	adults wanting to have sexual relationships with children. Paedophiles are adults who are sexually attracted by children. They may try to form relationships with children, including touching them or showing them pictures to do with sex. It is a form of child abuse and against the law.

Participation	being involved in, playing a part in, something. Having your voice heard and being taken seriously – usually when decisions are being taken about something. However, participation can also be 'tokenistic' – meaning that you're not being taken seriously and it's only happening to keep you happy or because it looks nice.
Physical development	the growth of the human body and its various organs towards a fully developed state.
Poliomyelitis (Polio)	a serious disease caused by a virus which often results in physical disability.
Pollution	something that damages or spoils the environment/the natural world (such as dangerous chemicals, gases or rubbish). Pollution is often dangerous to people's health and to the survival of animals and plants when it gets into the air, water or the ground.
Poverty	the state of having so little resources (such as money or land) that you are unable to get the basic necessities of life (such as food, clothes, and housing) and to join in the life of your local community or society.
Priority	the most important thing or one of the most important things.
Refugees	people who are forced to move from their homes into another country as a result of dangers and/or threats such as war, natural disaster, political persecution, etc.
Sanitation	effective and safe ways of getting rid of human waste in order to protect people's health.
Secretary General	the head of the United Nations, elected by all the governments of the world. Currently Kofi Annan, who was elected in 1997, and who is the UN's seventh Secretary General.
Sexual exploitation	mistreating, abusing and/or taking advantage of someone by involving them in sex work or sexual activity which is illegal or inappropriate.
Social development	the way in which societies evolve and become more complex in order to deal with social issues like health, education, poverty, crime and homelessness.
Standards	a measure of the performance expected in doing something; the level of achievement that needs to be reached in doing something.

Strategies	plans for achieving an agreed goal or objective.
Stunted growth	when a person is too small (low height) for their age, most often resulting from malnutrition.
Technology	industrial or other processes which involve using scientific or other knowledge to solve problems or produce things.
Terrorism	acts of violence (eg attacks, bombings, kidnapping) used by organised groups of people to try and achieve political goals such as a change of government.
Tobacco	a plant whose leaves are dried and prepared before being used for smoking in cigarettes, pipes or cigars.
Trafficking	illegal trading (that is, buying and selling) in people, especially women and children. Often occurs across the borders of different countries, especially between richer and poorer countries.
UNICEF	the United Nations Children's Fund, originally set up in 1946 as the UN International Children's Emergency Fund. The main organisation in the United Nations which works for the protection, survival and development of children. It works closely with governments around the world to provide services to children such as medicines, vaccines, water, food and schooling.
United Nations	created after the Second World War to provide a place for all the countries of the world to discuss problems and deal with issues that affect them all. It has a key role in trying to maintain international peace and security. The United Nations is based in New York and Geneva, but also has offices in other countries.
United Nations Millennium Summit	This was a meeting that took place in September 2000, with many Heads of State of the member countries of the UN. At this meeting, the governments said that they would work together to make sure that the Millennium Development Goals would be reached by the year 2015.
Upholding	supporting something (such as a law or a traditional way of doing something) by actions or behaviour.