

1997/20. Children with disabilities

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁶⁰ and other international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁶⁹ which proclaim that the rights therein should be ensured equally to all individuals, without discrimination,

Recalling also the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities⁷² and the Long-term Strategy to Implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons to the Year 2000 and Beyond,⁷³ as well as the various resolutions and declarations adopted by the General Assembly relating to persons with physical, mental and psychological disabilities, including the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons⁷⁴ and the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons,⁷⁵

Recalling further the disability provisions in the results of international conferences, including the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, held at Salamanca, Spain, in 1994⁷¹ and the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen in 1995,⁷⁶

Welcoming the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission for Social Development on monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities,⁷⁰

Noting with appreciation the activities in support of disability issues carried out by non-governmental organizations,

Convinced that disability is not inability and that it is critically important to take a positive view of abilities as the basis of planning for persons with disabilities, in particular children with disabilities,

1. *Recognizes* the need for special attention to be directed towards children with disabilities and their families or other caretakers;

2. *Notes with concern* the large numbers of children who have become disabled physically or mentally, or both, as a consequence of, *inter alia*, poverty, disease, disasters, landmines and all forms of violence;

3. *Urges* both Governments and the Secretary-General to give full attention to the rights, special needs and welfare of children with disabilities;

4. *Invites* Governments, concerned United Nations organizations and bodies, including the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization, and non-governmental organizations, especially those of persons with disabilities, to conduct awareness-raising activities, with a view to combating and overcoming discrimination against children with disabilities;

5. *Encourages* further cooperation among Governments, in coordination, where appropriate, with the United Nations Children's Fund, other relevant United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations, to nurture the talents and potential of children with disabilities by

developing and disseminating appropriate technologies and know-how;

6. *Encourages* Governments to include data on children when implementing rule 13 on information and research of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities;⁷²

7. *Urges* Governments to ensure, in accordance with rule 6 of the Standard Rules, that children with disabilities have equal access to education and that their education is an integral part of the educational system, and also urges Governments to provide vocational preparatory training appropriate for children with disabilities;

8. *Invites* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue its programme activities aimed at the integration of children and youth with disabilities into mainstream education and to provide appropriate assistance to Governments, at their request, in designing and setting up programmes to encourage the creative, artistic and intellectual potential of children, including those with disabilities;

9. *Calls upon* Governments to ensure the participation of children with disabilities in recreational activities and sports;

10. *Emphasizes* the right of children with disabilities to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and urges Governments to ensure the provision of equal access to comprehensive health services and the adoption of holistic approaches to the total well-being of all children with disabilities, in particular children at highest risk, including refugee, displaced or migrant children, children living in situations of violence and its immediate aftermath, children living in disaster areas, street children and children in squatter colonies;

11. *Encourages* Governments to contribute to the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability;

12. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur, in monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules, to pay special attention to the situation of children with disabilities, to pursue close working relations with the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its monitoring role with respect to the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁶⁹ and to include in his report to the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-eighth session his findings, views, observations and recommendations on children with disabilities.

36th plenary meeting
21 July 1997

⁷² General Assembly resolution 48/96, annex.

⁷³ A/49/435, annex.

⁷⁴ General Assembly resolution 2856 (XXVI).

⁷⁵ General Assembly resolution 3447 (XXX).

⁷⁶ See *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution I, annexes I and II.