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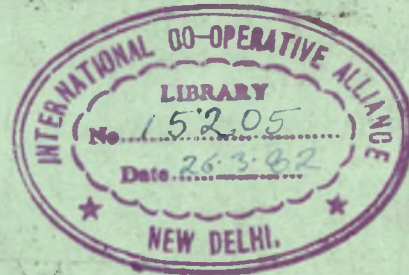
UNESCO MEDIUM-TERM PLAN - 1984/1989

Statement submitted to the

Director General of UNESCO

by the

International Co-operative Alliance



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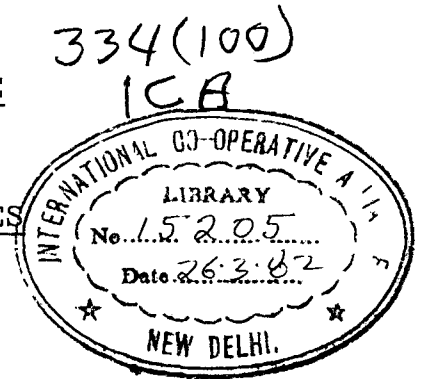
Summary of Recommendations to UNESCO

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UNESCO MEDIUM-TERM PLANSTATEMENT SUBMITTED BY THE  
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCEPART I - AN ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL ISSUESINTRODUCTION

How do co-operators look at the world of the 1980s and beyond? This was the main theme for discussion at the 27th Congress of the ICA held in Moscow in October 1980, and which resulted in a statement on "Co-operatives in the Year 2000"\* The methodology used was similar to that adopted by UNESCO for the preparation of its medium-term plan. The ICA commenced the study by analysing the main problems to be faced in the world of today and tomorrow, by consulting its member organisations, and by arranging a discussion at the world forum for co-operatives. The purpose was to identify the most important priorities and tasks which co-operative organisations should set themselves in confronting the great challenges of the next two decades - hunger, illiteracy, unemployment, pollution and underdevelopment. In that process, the ICA observed three dimensions of the global situation and identified seven priority fields for action.

WORLD TRENDS AND PROBLEMS

The opinion is now widely held that the world in 1980 stands at the threshold of dangerous and troubled times. Some

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\* A copy is submitted with this statement

observers believe there is hope that we can look forward to improved economic conditions by 1985, but they are almost all agreed that the first half of this decade will be difficult, from whatever angle we view it. As for the last years of the century, the 1990s can be seen only as a decade clouded in uncertainty and apprehension.

### The Three Dimensions

#### 1. Economic

In the western economies, growth will be slow for several years, and in some countries will be close to zero. Inflation can now be seen not merely as an economic indicator of the times but as a threat to civilization itself. There will be a steady move towards protectionist tariffs in an attempt by governments to save local industry, and there is generally falling confidence in orthodox economics and the conventional market economy.

This gloomy economic picture is not confined to western countries. The nations of Eastern Europe appear to be no less affected. The implications of economic stagnation and its effects on world trade and aid for developing countries, already beset by problems of debt, energy costs, and increasing food import bills, are obvious.

The complexity of the contemporary world economic situation is in its combination of short and longer term difficulties, its many contradictions; and its persistent, deeply embedded, and ill-understood problems. Traditional solutions are clearly inadequate. The failure of so many

technical aid and development programmes over the past thirty years to produce the results hoped for is an indication of this inadequacy. New, unconventional and imaginative approaches which go beyond a reliance on action by governments, which evoke and encourage the involvement of people as a whole, and which simulate mutual action based on equity and social justice are called for.

## 2. Social

If the economic situation is gloomy and uncertain, the general social picture is also complex and often confusing. In education, youth does not have much confidence in traditional institutions. Professionalism does not speak with the authority it once commanded. The impact of education on poverty, as promised and predicted a quarter of a century ago, has turned out to be disappointing.

Poverty of the stubborn and endemic kind continues to be a major social problem, even in the highly industrialised and affluent societies. Henry George's epitome of society as "Progress and Poverty" is still as fitting for many countries as when he wrote it a hundred years ago; and the gap between rich and poor will almost certainly grow in the next two decades if present economic indicators are reliable.

One of the characteristics of present-day society is a growing awareness of social problems. People seem determined to dig out facts and expose the weaknesses in the social fabric and hunt for causes and solutions. The neglect of the aged, the abuse of children, and exercise of status and privilege,

denial of civil liberties, the treatment of aborigines, damage to the environment, political corruption, or the public cost of private property, including the automobile, are some of the many problems of concern.

The trend towards community is another feature of modern society that is of great significance. In many regions, there is a fairly strong back-to-the-land movement, and rural decline has slowed down or even halted in some places as young people seek a simple lifestyle closer to nature. A new generation seems to want to return to ways and values their ancestors abandoned, and if there is one thing feared and hated by mankind the world over, it is the thought of nuclear war.

### 3. Political

There is a growing scepticism of political action and of the ability of the state to solve the great human problems of mankind. Political tensions, and a sense of deprivation in many groups, give rise to instability and confrontation.

The political mood of the time is also often reflected in considerable dissatisfaction with the performance of the public service, and there is often tension between government and its employees on the one hand, and the employees and the general public on the other. Citizens in many countries are demanding "freedom of information" in matters that were long closed to them.

Probably the most significant political trend is the strong move of ethnic minorities all over the world towards self-determination and independence. There is hardly a major

nation without a loud and vigorous minority calling for separation and autonomy, or at least some degree of devolution in cultural, ethnic and social affairs. Personal freedom is not the norm all the world over, and there is probably less freedom of the press than there was, say, twenty-five years ago.

## The Seven Fields

### 1. Energy and Resources

One of the crucial matters for all humanity in the next twenty years will, of course, be the use of energy and control of dwindling natural resources. So, just on the basis of energy alone, those of us who live through the two remaining decades of the century are going to see profound changes in their way of life. Mankind simply cannot go on using and wasting with abandon, and this applies, not only to oil and energy, but to all the earth's resources, especially water, minerals and forests. However, in our preoccupation with oil and other sources of energy, we must never forget land as the most important resource in the long term.

### 2. Population and Food

One of the harsh realities of our time is that the majority of people in the world go hungry and suffer from malnutrition while substantial food surpluses are created in some areas. We know for sure that the struggle to feed mankind will be long and hard, lasting well beyond the year 2000. Clearly, as long as it depends on the rich countries for food, the third world

will be poor. In the long term, only the third world can feed the third world. The food industry in all its aspects - methods of production, world markets, processing, food subsidies, imports and consumer protection - can all be expected to change rapidly in the next twenty years. Population growth in many parts of the world has grave implications for the adequacy of food supplies in particular, but also for the provision of basic shelter, employment and social services.

### 3. Employment

If full employment is a mark of a healthy economy and high unemployment a mark of a sick one, then we have good reasons for worry over the near future. Again, as with the new phenomenon of stagflation, a new factor in the job market is appearing in the highly industrialised countries, the total disappearance of jobs. When better times return, these jobs will not open up again.

Because of technological advances, futurists are predicting fundamental changes in the pattern of employment in the new era. They believe that a significant proportion of the working population will work only part-time as employees in the traditional way and will supplement their normal income by working in an informal economy, in the home or at casual jobs and with groups of people in communal, small-scale industry.

### 4. The Environment

Whatever else may be said about the century now approaching an end, it must be recorded as the period in which mankind has done more to poison and destroy the environment than in all

previous eras of history. The industrial revolution of modern times, beginning about 200 years ago, started society on the road to destruction and spoilage of the whole human habitat. The degradation of the environment has gone hand in hand with wasteful use of resources and disturbance of the delicate balances of nature. If governments will only divert some of the astronomical sums of money and resources away from armaments and towards protection of the environment, there is yet hope for mankind on this score.

##### 5. Science and Technology

The world of the year 2000 will, to a very great extent, be a technological world directed, for better or worse, by the machines and inventions of the past few decades and the two decades that lie ahead. In the present context, we are mainly concerned with the human and social consequences of science and technology. Who will control it? What is the end of it all? A central question is that of ownership and control of technology. Will it be used to benefit all mankind, or only to make profits for investors, or for war and aggression? How can the use and control of technology be democratised?

For our purpose here, one of the most far-reaching technological changes is taking place in the field of communications. We are now in the era of instant information. Radio, television and satellites have brought the whole world into our homes. The influence of the mass media on our lives is mind-boggling, and the political power that comes from ownership and control over any mass medium, including



newspapers, magazines and wire services, is frightening for these form the vital nervous system of society.

#### 6. Corporate Power

The outgrowth and extension of the large corporation in modern times is the multinational corporation. This has become a potentially sinister form of corporate power, especially in the third world, where weak or subservient governments are all too susceptible to their machinations and financial manipulations. It is quite likely that, in the last two decades of the century, the spread of corporate power and the multinationals will be checked somewhat and brought under closer control by wary governments, acting in response to popular demand by informed and alert citizens. The work of the UN Commission on Transnational Corporations provides evidence of the dangers inherent in the growth of influence of such bodies.

#### 7. Urbanisation

The balance between urban and rural is constantly changing, with the shift gradually going, for better or worse, towards the former. The implications of greater and greater urbanisation are, of course, incalculable and are of immense significance for co-operatives. It means a larger and larger proportion of people depending on a smaller proportion for food, and increasing strains on the public services of great cities.

#### The Third World

We might begin by pointing out some strange anomalies about the third world and its economies. For example, while

the third world is known as the poor world, it is also the home base of some of the richest people on earth, and the elite of many poor countries not only command enormous wealth, but also enjoy great social power. This becomes a complicating factor in international aid. Also, some third world countries are rapidly emerging as industrialised nations. Four of them - South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore - have reached the level that their exports are impinging on the manufacturing industries of the older developed economies. And while we usually think of India as one of the poorest of nations, at the same time, its industrial output places it among the ten leading manufacturing countries of the world.

Some of the main factors and indicators of the third world are:

- It is now recognised that the gap between the rich and poor nations is not closing but becoming ever wider. Though there are some bright spots on the development horizon, the third world cannot "catch up" in the foreseeable future or at the present rate. Only earth shaking changes can correct the imbalance between the haves and have-nots, and the present world situation gives little hope for the aims of a New Economic Order. In some countries, especially the poorest forty or so, a whole new economic and social infrastructure will have to be constructed.
- The trickle-down theory of development does not work. The poor remain poor. The flow and impact of aid needs to be reversed to begin at the bottom of the economic

and social structure. Too much development aid results in an expanded public service rather than economic growth and relief of poverty.

- Third world countries generally have suffered from over-concentration on prestige projects and the wrong kind of development, often to the neglect of agriculture. Food production, rural development and employment should take priority over other sectors and interests.

- A number of negative and retarding forces continues to be a burden on third world development. One is expenditure on arms. Half the big spenders on arms are developing countries. Their military spending in 1976 was reported to be US \$ 56.3 billion, and it has greatly increased since then. Second, and not unrelated to the first, is indebtedness, which is now in the range of US \$ 300 billion, and continues to increase by astronomical sums. About twenty per cent of export earnings of the third world goes only to service foreign debts. Third, is the "brain drain", the loss of many of the best trained and capable men and women through migration to the richer countries.

- Land reform is one of the most pressing needs.

- The Brandt Commission speaks less of aid than of the necessity for a drastic restructuring of relations between rich and poor countries for mutual survival.

## PART II - IMPLICATIONS FOR CO-OPERATIVES

In very broad outline, this is the kind of world we are entering in the last years of the twentieth century. The implications for the co-operative movement as a whole, and its various parts as well, are all-important.

- On the positive side, many people the world over are going to be looking for alternatives in trying times and will turn to the co-operative way of self-help and voluntary action as they did in large numbers in the great depression of the 1930s in Europe and North America. And as so many developing countries have done in recent years. The next two decades may well be a period of unprecedented growth for co-operatives, in terms of the number of people involved.
- In some areas of general public need, housing and health services for example, as demand grows or governments cut expenditures in order to retrench, people will be inclined, and in some places compelled, to organise co-operatively to meet their needs.
- If economic depression becomes severe, voluntary and unpaid labour will become a proportionately larger part of the economy. It is already much greater than we imagine. From the time a mother wipes a child's nose to the time when a volunteer community worker assists an aged person, unpaid work is an important factor which is reflected, but does not appear in official statistics. The GNP could decline while the standard of living is actually rising.

- The economic outlook for the 1980s and 1990s is sombre indeed. Rising energy prices are bound to accelerate inflation, and, as trade unionists try to maintain their living standards by seeking higher wages, governments may try to contain inflation with tough monetarist policies. Such policies are likely to lead to more unemployment in industrialised countries. Economic difficulties being faced by the richer countries will exacerbate the economic problems of the poorer countries. The task of the international co-operative movement is to show how relevant co-operatives are to the tough problems that face the world.
- Rural development that touches upon all aspects of life in an integrated way is, no doubt, the greatest single need of the third world. This is one of the most important tasks in which the world co-operative movement should be engaged in the next two decades and beyond.

#### CO-OPERATIVE PRIORITIES

All this suggests that of the choices and options open to co-operators, the following claim priority:

##### Priority One : Food

##### Co-operatives for Feeding a Hungry World

Few people will argue with the statement that co-operatives have been most successful in the many fields touching upon agriculture and food. If there is any particular business in which co-operatives have proven skills and knowhow, it is in the production, processing, and marketing of food all over the world.

As part of Priority One, national co-operative movements of the world should give first place to development programmes assisting the organisation of peasants and small farmers of the third world. In summary, there are good reasons for predicting that, from a global viewpoint, the most valuable contribution of co-operatives to mankind by the year 2000 will be in food and the conquest of world hunger.

### Priority Two : Productive Work

#### Co-operatives for Employment

Here, it is suggested that, next to food, employment in various kinds of workers' industrial co-operatives will be the greatest single contribution of the global co-operative movement to a new economic order. The current widespread interest in the potential of industrial co-operatives for contributing to social and economic development is a strong indicator of this.

### Priority Three : Conservation

#### Co-operatives for the Conserver Society

In a situation of scarce resources and inequitable distribution, let consumers' co-operatives, by emphasis on economy and frugality, give a lead and abandon the frills and waste of the post-industrial consumer society. The customer is not always right : the consumer often has to be protected from his/her own bad habits and desire for pampering and self-indulgence. In a saner society, a co-operative may be judged more by what it refuses to sell than by how much it sells. Co-operatives must give a lead for conservation and against waste, for a wiser, more equitable, use of scarce resources.

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## Priority Four : Social Environment

### Building Co-operative Communities

In a world full of doubts and uncertainties, there are still some things one can be quite sure of and, at this point, we shall consider three. The first is the certainty that the world of the future will be increasingly urban. The great majority of mankind in the next century will be living in large towns and cities, even though there is a noticeable movement back to the land in some countries.

The second certainty is that no one type of co-operative alone is capable of bringing about substantial change in the prevailing economic systems and social orders, unless it be the rural multipurpose co-operative providing a wide range of services. But, generally, many different types of co-operatives founded on identified need will be required, particularly in urban areas.

The third certainty concerns planning and organisation, and the level at which planning takes place and organisation is formed. Because of the pile-up of current problems and general disillusionment with high-level planning, less attention will likely be given to macro and much more to micro-level planning. This development can be for the good, particularly insofar as it brings people at the grassroots into participation in planning and encourages self-help and self-reliance.

Putting these three certainties together suggests that co-operative development in the future must involve great numbers of urban people (as well as rural) and planning for

community organisation of a wide variety of co-operative services. The end of the planning should be the creation of co-operative communities. Not in the utopian sense of community, but in the sense of typical urban groupings; neighbourhoods and districts using many kinds of co-operatives to the extent that the co-operative way becomes a very important, if not dominant, factor in the lives of those involved. It is this line of reasoning on which Priority Four is based : Building Co-operative Communities.

In the rural areas, particularly in the third world, the village is the natural community grouping. But the large city is essentially an agglomeration of human beings who, in the average or typical situation, have only casual relationships, and are often total strangers. For many urbanites, the city is a sea of loneliness and alienation. There is usually no bond other than proximity holding them together. To most people, where they live in the city may be a certain apartment building, a neighbourhood, a suburb, but rarely a living community in the same way that a village is a community. The great objective of co-operatives should be to build community, create villages, many hundreds of them, within the larger urban setting. Around many economic and social needs, co-operative organisations can be formed which will have the combined effect of creating community. Co-operatives of all kinds will have the effect of turning a neighbourhood inward to discover its own resources and start the services required. The co-operative idea, of self-help, sharing common interests and needs, can be the social adhesive holding an urban area together and transforming it into community.



## PART III - IMPLICATIONS FOR UNESCO MEDIUM-TERM PLAN

### THE SEVEN AREAS OF SPECIAL CONCERN

As indicated, and commented upon, in Part I of this paper, the ICA identifies seven areas of special concern to the future of mankind. They are:

1. Energy and Resources
2. Population and Food
3. Employment
4. The Environment
5. Science and Technology
6. Corporate Power
7. Urbanisation

### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN

In responding to these in its Medium-Term Plan, we believe UNESCO could give special attention to the following:

#### 1. Awareness of Problems

The technical study and analysis of many of the problems enumerated, and their causes, is the business of several other specialist agencies, eg. the World Bank, FAO, ILO, UNIDO, etc., and not directly that of UNESCO. A great many highly significant reports and studies are produced by these agencies as well as by UNESCO itself. In the main, however, it is likely that the message and advocacies contained in them do not reach more than a select and specialist audience, particularly because of the sophisticated language frequently used.

It should be the business of UNESCO to help elucidate the findings of these studies and the purpose of programmes that result from them; and to improve the awareness of those in authority as well as the masses of people as to the problems, their causes, and possible solutions. What is being suggested here is that UNESCO, as the agency with special responsibilities in education and science, should accept a direct responsibility within its own programme for helping to spread knowledge and awareness of the results of work of other agencies as well as those of its own. Generally, a great deal more inter-agency co-operation is required, and UNESCO should play a leading role in this.

Examples of the studies we have in mind include the annual World Bank Development Reports (that for 1980 analysed the effectiveness of educational inputs as compared to other investments); the FAO study on Agriculture 2000; and (though not a UN report) the Brandt Commission Report. It might well be said that there is now a greater need for awareness and action than for more studies and reports. Within its own programmes related, for example, to the New Economic Order and to integrated rural development, UNESCO should seek to emphasise awareness and action in the light of the many studies available. There is an important implication here for the concepts of democracy and participation. For intelligent participation in self-development people have to be aware of the real nature and scale of the problems confronting them and informed as to the possible solutions available.

## 2. Educational Programmes

Education in all its many aspects and varieties is the special function of UNESCO. There is still much scope for development and action far beyond the framework of existing programmes: Despite all the efforts of the past decade, globally the number of children without education continues to rise, and illiteracy to increase. Little real progress has been made in radically improving educational facilities and opportunities for adult people, and for rural populations in particular. There is still too little direct support for popular movements and too little action, as distinct from aspiration, for the involvement and participation of local people in programmes of development. There is insufficient emphasis on self-help and self-reliance as primary and essential elements in development.

The burden of such arguments is that the next Medium-Term Plan should reflect carefully considered, and firmly established, priorities in UNESCO's programme. A limitation of resources and the compelling nature of the problems discussed in Part I of this paper makes that unavoidable. The ICA would urge such firm priorities be established and that these be related to the seven areas we have identified.

The role of education in securing progress in regard to these is beyond question; which makes education itself a matter of the highest priority. Within the education programme, however, we would urge more attention to adult and rural education; more involvement of popular movements; and more emphasis on the concepts of self-help, self-reliance, and self-development.

### 3. Communications

Obviously, the whole field of communications is closely related to education, particularly in mass media programmes. The facilities of the press, of radio and television, of suitable literature and pictorial broadsheets, etc., all have to be both effectively exploited and managed. Again, in this context, the ICA believes that popular movements, as distinct from governmental authorities, have an important role to play, and would urge consideration for such to be reflected in UNESCO's Programme. In particular, we would request that consideration be given to assistance for the development of co-operatively owned press in the developing countries including training for co-operative journalists.

### 4. Relations with Non-Governmental Organisations

The ICA acknowledges the present policies and efforts of UNESCO to involve the NGOs in its policy formulation and programmes. The invitation to make this submission is evidence of that approach. But, we believe that much more needs to be done in this direction. We accept that UNESCO is an association of governments which has to work with and through governmental authorities. Nevertheless, there is much scope for bringing the NGOs more directly and positively into engagement with UNESCO's programmes in particular and with development programmes generally.

UNESCO recognises the importance of voluntary people's organisations and accepts the case for involvement of such bodies in development work. There is no need to argue it here.

There is, however, the need to urge much greater use of these agencies at every level. UNESCO itself should gear much more of its assistance to programmes involving NGOs, and particularly those representative at the international level of people's organisations, as distinct from professional and specialist bodies. It should strongly advocate that UNESCO National Commissions and member states should involve the NGOs in national programmes. And it should include direct assistance to the promotion and development of NGOs, particularly those working in or concerned with the rural sector. It is worthwhile reflecting that had not NGOs existed before the United Nations was born (the ICA was founded in 1895), it would have been found necessary to invent them in order to achieve the UN's objectives.

5. Assistance for Co-operatives

Co-operative organisations have, for more than a century, been recognised as being among the most significant of the great popular movements in economic and social reform and development. There is no need to elaborate here in justification of that claim. UNESCO is well aware of it.

A basic principle of co-operation, now and throughout its history, is a commitment to education as an essential prerequisite in self and social development. Co-operatives are conceived of as being both economic and educational agencies for that purpose. In many diverse cultures and economies, co-operatives have proved their relevance to the basic needs of people. In developing countries throughout the world,

co-operatives are officially recognised as a principal instrument of development. The Secretary-General of the United Nations regularly reports to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly of the UN on the progress of co-operative development, thus recognising its great significance to UN's purpose. In the current session, the Secretary-General's Report is entitled "National Experience in the Promotion of the Co-operative Movement".

Several of the UN specialist agencies have sections specialising in assistance to co-operatives. UNESCO does not. The ICA believes it should have, and that this unit should be particularly concerned with providing technical guidance and help in co-operative education and training. Assistance is required in the provision of materials for training and education at the field level in developing countries; in teacher training; in management training; in translation of materials into the vernacular; and in educational research. The ICA already has programmes covering these fields, for example, the Co-operative Education Materials Advisory Service. But much more needs to be done.

The ICA would also strongly urge that UNESCO should become a member of the Committee for the Promotion of Aid to Co-operatives (COPAC).

## PART IV - SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. UNESCO should seek to promote greater inter-agency collaboration, particularly in regard to the use and application of the many technical studies on world development problems produced within the UN system, and by other authoritative bodies. There is a greater need for awareness and action than for more reports.

2. UNESCO should establish firm priorities in its wide ranging programme, and these should relate in particular to the New International Economic Order and to the programme for integrated rural development. Within this context, there should be:

- (a) More provision for adult and rural education, including the literacy programme;
- (b) More - much more - involvement of popular movements;
- (c) More emphasis on the concepts of self-help, self-reliance and self-development.

3. There should be more support for mass media facilities owned and operated by popular movements and, in particular, assistance for co-operatively owned press and for the training of co-operative journalists.

4. NGOs, both national and international, should be brought more directly and more positively into engagement with UNESCO's programmes. In particular:

- (a) Priority should be given to programmes intended to promote participation of non-governmental associations at every level;

- (b) A much larger part of UNESCO's programme should involve the direct and active participation of INGOs and NGOs;
- (c) There should be a recommendation to UNESCO National Commissions and member states that NGOs should be actively and directly involved in national programmes;
- (d) UNESCO should include the promotion and development of non-governmental organisations, particularly those representative of the masses of poor and under-privileged people, in its programme, and provide adequate funding for it.

5. Involvement of UNESCO in NGO educational programmes is crucial because the more leaders and members of NGOs are trained, the greater contribution they can make to development programmes. The ICA would gladly enter into a joint five/seven year programme for this purpose with UNESCO and kindred organisations.

6. UNESCO should establish a special section responsible for assisting the promotion and development of co-operatives, with special reference to assistance for co-operative education and training; and should become a member of the Committee for Promotion of Aid to Co-operatives (COPAC).