Preparations for and observance of the Anniversary

Resolution entitled “Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family” (document A/67/L.10/Rev.1) and approved by the General Assembly, in November 2012.

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [...], concerning the proclamation of preparations for, and observance of the International Year of the Family and its tenth and twentieth anniversaries,

Recognizing that the preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year in 2014 provide a useful opportunity to draw further attention to the objectives of the International Year for increasingly cooperation at all levels on family issues and for undertaking concerted actions to strengthen family-centred policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Noting that the family-related provisions of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s and their follow-up processes continue to provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centred components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Noting also the importance of designing, implementing and monitoring family-oriented policies, especially in the areas of poverty eradication, full employment and decent work, work-family balance, social integration and inter-generational solidarity,

Recognizing that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children and that children, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Cognizant of the need for continued inter-agency and regional cooperation on family issues in order to generate greater awareness of this subject among the governing bodies of the United Nations system,

Convinced that civil society, including research and academic institutions, has a pivotal role in advocacy, promotion, research and policymaking in respect of family policy development and capacity building,

1. Encourages Governments to continue to make every possible effort to realize the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes and to integrate a family perspective into national policymaking;

2. Invites Governments and regional intergovernmental entities to provide for more systematic national and regional data on family well-being and to ensure support for constructive family policy developments, including the exchange of information on good policies and practices;

3. Urges Member States to view 2014 as a target year by which concrete efforts will be made to improve family well-being through the implementation of effective national policies, strategies and programmes;

4. Encourages Member States to continue their efforts to develop appropriate policies and programmes that address family poverty, social exclusion, work-family balance and inter-generational issues and to share good practices in those areas;

5. Also encourages Member States to promote the delivery of family-centred benefits, such as social protection and social transfer programmes to reduce family poverty and prevent the inter-generational transfer of poverty;

6. Further encourages Member States to strengthen provisions for parental leave, extend flexible working arrangements for employees with family responsibilities, promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, enhance parental involvement and support a wide range of quality childcare arrangements in order to improve work-family balance;

7. Encourages Member States to support social integration and inter-generational solidarity through the provision of social protection assistance and investments in cross-generational facilities, volunteering programmes for youth and older persons and mentoring and job-sharing programmes;

8. Urges Member States to create a conducive environment to strengthen and support all families, recognizing that equality between women and men and respect for all the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members are essential to family well-being and to society at large, noting the importance of reconciliation of work and family life and recognizing the principle of shared parental responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child;

9. Invites Governments to continue to develop strategies and programmes aimed at strengthening national capacities to address national priorities relating to family issues;

10. Invites Member States to consider under-taking activities in preparation for the twentieth anniversary of the International Year at the national level;

11. Invites Member States, United Nations agencies and bodies, regional communities, civil society organizations and academic institutions to continue providing information on their activities in support of the objectives of and preparations for the twentieth anniversary of the International Year and to share good practices and data on family policy development;

12. Invites Member States, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions to support, as appropriate, the preparations for regional meetings in observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year;

13. Encourages Governments to support the United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities to enable the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to continue research activities and provide assistance to countries, upon their request;

14. Recommends that United Nations agencies and bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, research and academic institutions and the private sector play a supportive role in promoting the twentieth anniversary of the International Year;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, through the Committee for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, on the preparations for the observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year at all levels;

16. Decides to consider the topic “Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family” at its sixty-eighth session under the sub-item entitled “Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family.”
Family Enrichment programs

Combination of people and material aimed at providing parents with pedagogical ideas and guides for educating their children at different ages. There is a specific program for each stage of childhood, and for the different training needs of other members of the family. The moderator specializes in a particular Family Enrichment program, and responsible for coordinating courses related to it, training the moderators who give the program, and collecting suggestions from moderators and participants in order to pass them on to the Technical Committee.

Family Enrichment center

They are set up as associations with Boards of Directors, made up of at least three couples. Their function is to promote, gain finance for, and coordinate Family Enrichment courses within their geographic areas, with the support of team leaders and moderators in the case study methodology.

Family Enrichment course

The application of a training program to a particular group of parents. Participation in the course requires parents to make a personal effort, attending small group and general meetings.

Case method

A particularly participative methodology, which has proven to be very effective in fields of knowledge and human activity where subjectivity guides our action and is used in business schools for executive education, and its educational value in the field of family education lies in the fact that parents become active participants in the training process, learning in a very practical way how to recognize and analyze problems, to increase the level of communication with their partner to reach a decision on what measures to take, and how to apply those measures to different situations.

Case

This is the presentation of a real-life family story which contains elements related to the topic to be discussed in the Family Enrichment session.

Technical notes

Theoretical exposition, with scientific rigor, of aspects related to the topic to be discussed in the Family Enrichment session. Intended to help participants as they analyze cases and make decisions.

Empowering families

As the last report by the Secretary-General about Family notes, the momentous demographic, social and economic changes occurring around the world affect families not-withstanding, the family remains the basic societal unit of reproduction, consumption, asset-building and—in many parts of the world—production. Families bear the primary responsibility for the development, education and socialization of children. They provide material and nonmaterial care and support to their members and are the backbone of intergenerational solidarity and social cohesion. The achievement of development goals depends, to a significant extent, on how families are empowered to fulfill their numerous functions. Accordingly, family-oriented policies have a unique role to play in helping families to fulfill their functions and benefit society at large. ([46/62-E/2013/3])

Using the term ‘empowerment’ in UN documents has become quite popular. Event though it is not a ‘closed concept’ yet—it was originally developed by Paulo Freire from the 1960s and onwards—it is usually defined as “enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes” ([World Bank’s 2002 Empowerment Sourcebook]). Consequently, it has been used with reference to human groups considered to be discriminated in some way (empowerment of women, of handicapped or of any other group). [Report on the Fifteenth Session, we consider especially appropriate to take advantage of it to apply this concept to family, as we will actually do in the coming Sessions.]

We try this way to consolidate a meaning fit to human nature requirements, from the four dimensions of empowerment.

Social Empowerment

It is about the removal of social, political, legal and economic barriers to the active participation of certain social groups in society. There is no doubt that families find those barriers in many countries when they want to share their views and offer their opinions for consideration in the public square. That is why we propose social recognition as the first level for family empowerment.

Economic empowerment

It enables marginalized people to asset greater control over their resources and life choices, especially including decisions on investments in health, housing and education. It is difficult to find three more important fields in which many families often need help to fulfill their role. Therefore, we consider all different forms of economic help, such as tax benefits, parental leave entitlements, educational grants and other ancillary services, as a second level for family empowerment.

Political empowerment

It is concerned especially with state and social institutions that serve people’s needs, and entails an emphasis on constructing responsive government and cultivating citizen participation. Too often, the effort, time, effort and money families invest in their children finds no social or economic incentive from the society benefiting from them, because there are no political instruments to implement it, such as tax transfer programs. The report that the United Nations and other international institutions are making for the voice of civil society to be heard—and, more specifically, families as the basic building blocks of society—is to be welcome and encouraged.

Legal empowerment

It refers to the possibility of people to demand and exercise their rights while at the same time strengthening institutions so that they can better respond to the needs of people. Again, family rights are often ignored and no legal instruments can be found to advocate on their behalf. In that sense, we feel that the consolidation of family as subject of rights has to be studied in depth and developed consequently.

The link with the family is well based in the 2010 Report of the Secretary-General on the Follow-up to the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, which states that the very contribution of families to the achievement of development goals continues to be largely overlooked, while there seems to be a consensus on the fact that, so far, the stability and cohesion of communities and societies largely rest on the strength of the family.

In effect, the very achievement of development goals depends on how families are empowered to contribute to the achievement of those goals.

Declaration of the Civil Society

We propose this attached Declaration of the Civil Society in which the basic contents of UN resolutions about the International Year of the Family are included, as well as the main recommendations of the different Group Meetings, particularly the European one organized in Brussels.

The preambulatory clauses mention what we consider crucial aspects for these preparations. Consequently, the operative clauses of the resolution address different agents with specific recommendations for each one of them: Member States, Governments and civil society organizations.

We aim to enmil many politicians, academics and representatives of NGOs in every country as we can, so that we can present it together with (a) the main recommendations of international organizations in the Commission for Social Development to be celebrated in February 2014. We also hope that its content, can become a part for the contents of a resolution by the UN General Assembly on the occasion of this anniversary.

Family system

This is the name used for the application of the case method to family training, giving it unique aspects. In ... system is more focused on the couple than on the subject.

Team leader

This function is carried out by one of the couples participating in a program. Their role in the help to the other couples is to get to know each other and guide the small group sessions in which they participate.

Course coordination couple

This is the name used for the application of the case method to family training, giving it unique aspects. In addition to the traditional three stages of the case method, which are (1) individual analysis, (2) discussion of the case in small groups, and (3) general discussion, we add an intermediary stage: the discussion of the case by the couple. This means that the family system is made up of a team consisting of one individual analysis, (2) discussion of the case by the couple, (3) discussion of the case in small groups, and (4) general discussion, led by an expert. The family system is more focused on the couple than on the subject.

Moderator

This is a mother or father who, having been trained in discussion group methodology, can help families to make choices and to understand the barriers they find in many countries when they want to share their views and offer their opinions for consideration in the public square. That is why we propose social recognition as the first level for family empowerment.

Family Watch

The Family Watch is a think tank committed to researching the family and finding solutions to the problems it faces. Findings are presented in the form of reports, proposals and initiatives that aim to deepen society’s knowledge of the family and encourage its full participation in all spheres of life, as it performs in society. It was inspired by IFJD and its role is to coordinate all the institutional relations on behalf of IFJD.