



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Inter-American
Development
Bank

WORLD SUMMIT

FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Copenhagen, Denmark, 6-12 March 1995

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro
A JOINT STATEMENT

by

The Director-General
of UNESCO

and

The President
of the Inter-American
Development Bank



World Summit for Social Development

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by

Federico Mayor,
Director-General
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Enrique V. Iglesias,
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Fundação Cuidar o Futuro ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



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ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



World Summit for Social Development



**A JOINT STATEMENT TO
THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO AND
THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN
DEVELOPMENT BANK**

WSSD, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995

Towards an integrated view of development

1. A new century is about to begin. The peoples and the nations of the planet should seize this opportunity to commit themselves to ensuring, for present and future generations, a world of peace, solidarity and sharing, a world of democracy and respect for human rights, and a world where material and spiritual living conditions make true dignity possible for everyone.

2. UNESCO and the IDB take the opportunity, on the occasion of the World Summit for Social Development, to address this joint declaration to the international community and to state our conviction that, for urgent ethical, economic and political reasons, the social dimension must be a central component in the development process. This goal and the principles that sustain it, call us to action. If we dream of a better world, for us and for our descendants, we must set to work to build it. We have this chance, not only as individual persons and communities or nations, but also as the world community, like a rich, varied and extended family. In this endeavour, an integrated approach to development should be our shared strategic framework: a human, global and sustainable development.

3. We deliberately call it human, because it should have human beings, both communities and individuals, at the very heart of its motivations and concerns; global, because it should seek to encompass harmoniously the various dimensions of human existence; and sustainable, because we should bear in mind the interests not only of present generations but of future ones, too, whom we want to inherit a better world. This human, global, sustainable development can and should be the development of the XXIst century: the product of a courageous and clear-sighted choice in favour of a new social reform – a social reform that should be put into motion now. In Latin America, it has already begun in the minds of its people; it should now be rooted in our actions.

The ethical, economic and political urgency of social reform

4. First and foremost, this vision of the development process and the social reform it necessarily entails, constitute an ethical imperative. Having achieved a significant level of development, Latin America should not continue with the current levels of extreme poverty, income inequality, social marginalization and, too often, outright exclusion. Such a situation can only lead to social upheaval, violence, and further disintegration.

5. Yet this social reform is also an economic imperative: in today's internationally competitive environment, a country's success is directly linked to the creative capacity of its people and to its capacity to absorb technology, develop new products and constantly adjust organizational structures. Extreme poverty, great income inequalities, social marginalization and exclusion are incompatible with the characteristics of a modern human resource base, which calls for a well-trained work force, within a community of informed and committed citizens. Without basic standards of social equity, the social fabric begins to unravel and political intolerance grows, creating a climate that deters investments. Hence, rather than a mere consequence of economic success, this kind of social development and the social reform that should bring it about are actually essential conditions on which the viability and efficiency of the region's economy rest.

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6. Given the increasing pressures on governments in the region to attend to social demands, the social reform is also becoming a political imperative, and the decision to tackle it a welcome manifestation of political realism.

7. Hence, poverty and exclusion should be contained. Yet the common goal of the social reform must be their drastic reduction and eventual eradication from our societies.

Essential characteristics of social reform

8. However, for this social reform to lead towards a process of development that will truly be human, global and sustainable, it needs to be based on a national consensus and concerted efforts. It should not be a "foreign" and abstract paradigm, alien to local realities, but rather based on the endogenous socio-cultural characteristics, resources and capacities of each nation. The promotion of a meaningful national dialogue surrounding these issues is, therefore, the primary task in which the international community, through its specialized agencies, could play

a uniquely important role. Produced and embraced by a nation's own social actors (political parties and movements, religious organizations and institutions, public and private enterprises, trade-unions, non-governmental organizations, etc.), this social consensus will thus become the basis for both the legitimacy and the continuity of the main thrusts of the social reform. More than a set of policies adopted by a given government, social reform should hence become a true policy of the State.

9. Another *sine qua non* to make social reform a truly viable and endogenous process is its harmonious integration with the cultural universe of each nation, taking into account for this purpose the cultural variety of its population, particularly when this variety is a salient feature of its cultural identity. The local cultural context, the cultural traditions, the values, the means, the symbols, and the practices that sustain the cultural identity of the communities and the nations should thus be present as the soul and the unique fingerprint of the reform, made in the image of the population it is supposed to serve. For the reform to bring about human, global and sustainable development, it should be one that puts down roots into, and springs from, the very humanity that it seeks to help. The same national dialogue which should bring about the consensus whose implementation will transcend the commitments of one government and truly become the policies of the State, should also be an appropriate tool with which to identify both the terms and the forms of this necessary cultural adaptation, without which no meaningful change can take root.

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10. The renewed pattern of development prompted by the social reform aims at a significant improvement of the material and spiritual well-being of the population. We should always bear in mind that people are the most important asset for the development of nations; they are active agents who accumulate capital, develop national resources, build social, economic and political organizations, and carry forward national development. This is why education is not only an essential human right but also a prerequisite for the exercise of other rights, for the strengthening of democracy and for active and creative participation by everyone in the development process. Increased investment in national human resources should therefore be one of the first priorities of development.

11. In order to make such aims feasible, there is also an urgent need for the reorganization and relocation of human settlements. Major cities, as the main scene of ongoing social change, have become extreme illustrations of the complexity of the problems of national development. They have become almost impossible to manage. Fragmented, sprawling urban zones, where problems of unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, the weakening of human solidarity, crime and violence are concentrated, are the result of the urban bias in national (public and private) economic policies and of the decreasing attention paid to the pressing problems of rural

zones, particularly in the developing regions, where poverty, unequal distribution of resources and lack of incentives such as land, credit, technologies, education and culture, lead to a permanent and ever-growing migration into the urban areas. To avoid major social and ecological catastrophes in all the major cities all over the world, a policy of urban decentralization to the rural areas, and its linkage with coherent rural development policies, are essential and urgently needed.

The management of social reform

12. Although in the forefront of our minds, social reform should now be translated into specific actions. It should start with efforts to build a broad, long-term, domestic, social and political consensus. Yet, *how* to introduce policy changes to achieve top priorities is at least as important as asking *what* those policy objectives and top priorities must be. For this purpose, major innovations in administrative, budgetary and institutional implementation structures will be required. Careful attention must therefore be paid to the question of balancing centralization with decentralization; to such issues as the responsibilities of the State and those of the private sector and the individual; and to the role of actors such as non-governmental organizations, religious institutions, trade-unions and the armed forces. Indeed, a particularly important aspect of this institutional endeavour is to make the implementation of social reform a truly participatory process in which all stake-holders would have a say, maintaining the integrity of the social and political consensus that will ensure the continuity and sustainability of the reforms.

13. The changes to be effected in institutional structures and policy-making mechanisms so as to move in the direction of social reform, should be based on reliable information derived from sound policy research and assessment. That is why developing national skills in social policy design and evaluation and in the management of social transformations is a basic prerequisite of social reform. Consequently, a deliberate policy of endogenous capacity-building should be applied.

Towards increased international co-operation for social development

14. The mandates of both our institutions for the fostering of social development and their commitment to it will enable new avenues of co-operation to be opened up in the Latin American and Caribbean region. The conjunction of significant funding and management

experience together with the necessary support provided by policy research, analysis and design, would provide the countries of the region with renewed opportunities for launching socio-economic action programmes of lasting impact.

15. Over the years, UNESCO and IDB have successfully co-operated in many areas. Now, on the occasion of this World Summit for Social Development, and inspired by it, we commit ourselves to establishing a permanent consultation mechanism through personal representatives, in order to strengthen cooperation between our two institutions.

16. Both at the international and at the regional level, we are convinced that unless we learn the "management of the intangible," including those socio-cultural factors that are the source of such tensions in the world today, global human security will surely elude us. The "lost decade" cannot, and should not, reoccur; the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean have a right to expect a modernization process which leads to the enjoyment of a culture of peace.

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experience together with the necessary support provided by policy research, analysis and design, would provide the context of the region with technical opportunities for teaching socio-economic policy instruments of leading impact.

12. Over the years, UNCTAD and IDB have successfully co-operated in many areas, both on the occasion of the World Summit for Social Development and inspired by it, we remain committed to establishing a permanent consulting mechanism through personal relationships, in order to strengthen cooperation between our two institutions.

13. Both in the international and at the regional level, we are convinced that unless we learn the "management of the intelligible," including those socio-cultural factors that are the source of social tensions in the world today, global human security will surely elude us. The "lost decade" cannot and should not recur; the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean have a right to expect a transformation process which leads to the enjoyment of a culture of peace.

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