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**PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT:
PROGRESS REPORT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

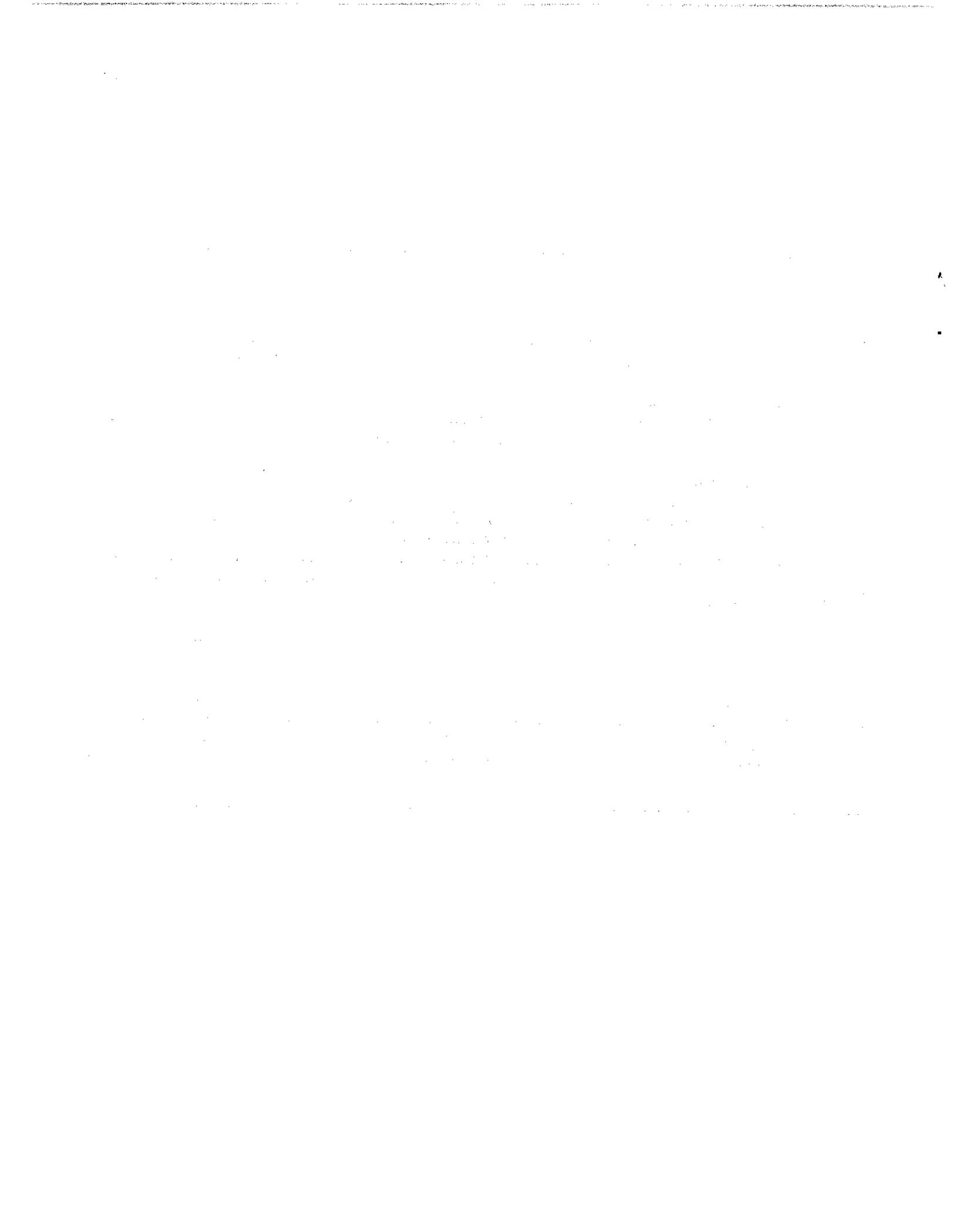
The paper briefly outlines the preparatory activities for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD.94) scheduled to be held in Cairo, Egypt, in September 1994.

At the global level, these activities cover the six expert group meetings, three preparatory committee meetings, five regional conferences and five thematic round-table meetings. For each of these, the scope and main conclusions and/or recommendations are presented.

At the regional level, the thrust of the first two Regional Population Conferences held in Accra Ghana (1971) and Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania (1984) respectively (i.e., APC.1 and APC.2), is presented as a prelude to providing the highlights of the third African Population Conference (APC.3, 1992). In the case of APC.3, the scope and recommendations are outlined. Among the latter were the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development, the Follow-up Committee set up by the Conference for the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the five-year programme of activities of the Follow-up Committee.

At the national level, the paper outlines the main activities undertaken by the Governments of ECA member States as recommended by the ICPD secretariat.

The paper concludes with the two main actions on which the secretariat wishes the Conference to deliberate. These include urging UNFPA and other donors to provide the resources required for implementing the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and calling on ECA member States to define their focal points for accelerating the implementation of the recommendations of APC.3.



I. INTRODUCTION

1. On the occasion of the nineteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers, some background information was provided on the status of preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD.94), planned to be held in Cairo, Egypt, in September 1994. The Cairo Conference is a follow-up to similar conferences held in Rome (1954), Belgrade (1965), Bucharest (1974) and Mexico City (1984), respectively. The Bucharest Conference marked a turning point for the international community, with the adoption by consensus of a World Population Plan of Action (WPPA), marking the beginning of awareness-raising about population issues.

2. The objective of this report is to provide an update on the preparatory activities for the Cairo Conference at the global, regional and national levels.

A. Global activities

3. Six expert group meetings, three preparatory committee meetings, five regional conferences and five thematic round-table meetings were held as planned at the global level in preparation for ICPD.94. Three key activities, i.e., the review and appraisal of the WPPA, the seventh Population Inquiry and the monitoring of population trends and multilateral population programmes were also to be undertaken. Together, the deliberations and outcomes of the various meetings, conferences and activities were aimed at fostering global understanding, to date, of population-development interrelationships.

4. The six Expert Group Meetings were held, as follows:

- (a) Population, Environment and Development, New York, 20-24 January 1992;
- (b) Population Policies and Programmes, Cairo, 12-16 April 1992;
- (c) Population and Women, Gaborone, Botswana, 22-26 June 1992;
- (d) Family Planning, Health and Family Well-being, Bangalore, India, 26-30 October 1992;
- (e) Population Growth and Demographic Structure, Paris, 16-20 November 1992;
- (f) Population Distribution and Migration, Santa Cruz, Bolivia, 18-22 January 1993.

5. The first meeting, held in New York, appraised current trends in population and environment, focused on their implications for sustained economic growth and sustainable development and drew the conclusion that in many contexts, detrimental impacts on the environment would best be reduced by a combined strategy of slowing population growth, rationalizing population distribution, alleviating poverty, lessening environmentally dangerous consumption patterns and promoting the application of appropriate technologies and management regimes. Among other things, it was stressed that since population growth, persistence of poverty and environmental degradation were intrinsically interlinked, development policies should aim at tapping the beneficial potential of this synergy.

6. Recognizing the stabilization of global population within the shortest possible period as an internationally recognized goal, the second meeting dwelt on modalities for modifying rapid population growth rates as well as the desiderata for formulating and implementing effective population policies; noted the fundamental importance of research for policy and programme formulation; and emphasized the need to consider the

mobilization of resources for research in population as an integral part of strategies for coping with population problems.

7. Focusing on women's economic activity and its relationship to fertility and child health and welfare, the Gaborone meeting endorsed reproductive choice as a basic right, paid particular attention to the needs of adolescents, agreed on a research and data collection agenda on women; and recommended that governments strengthen their efforts at promoting and encouraging the active involvement of men in all areas of family responsibility, including family planning, child-rearing and housework.

8. The fourth meeting reiterated the age-old truism that socio-economic development simultaneous with family planning programmes greatly enhances the effectiveness of the latter. It then devoted attention to the role of NGOs in family planning, identified abortion as a major public health concern, and urged governments to support the family through public policies and programmes as well as the need to provide women with opportunities for personal development and greater autonomy within the family and society at large.

9. The Paris meeting reviewed past trends and future prospects of population growth and age structure and their consequences for long-term sustainability at the global level and emphasized the importance of long-term planning to anticipate the changing needs over time of the young, elderly and working-age populations.

10. The final expert group meeting appraised current trends in population distribution and migration and their interrelations with development and paid special attention to the challenge posed by the growing number of refugees and asylum-seekers.

11. Among the common issues addressed by the six meetings were:

- (a) The perspective of integrating population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development;
- (b) International experience accumulated in the field of population during the preceding two decades through intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and the formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies and programmes;
- (c) The human rights dimension of population programmes;
- (d) The central role that women play in development;
- (e) The vital importance of the family as a cornerstone of society;
- (f) The critical importance of the accessibility of services (particularly in reproductive health) for promoting social equality and accelerating development efforts;
- (g) The special needs of subpopulations (children, adolescents, the elderly, the very old, women and migrants);
- (h) Issues raised by the AIDS pandemic;
- (i) The role of governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community participation in the development process;

(j) The fundamental importance of research and data collection efforts for policy and programme formulation; and

(k) The international donor community in partnership with governments and NGOs of recipient countries.

12. ECA participated in each meeting and contributed a paper giving the experience of African countries on the issues addressed. The ICPD secretariat prepared a synthesis of the deliberations which provides information on the organization, representation, scope, documentation and recommendations of all the meetings. A total of 162 recommendations were adopted.

13. The thematic round-table meetings were organized, as follows:

(a) Women's Perspectives on Family Planning, Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights, Ottawa, 26-27 August 1993;

(b) Population Policies, Programmes and HIV/AIDS, Berlin, 28 September - 1 October 1993;

(c) Population and Development Strategies, Bangkok, 17-19 November 1993;

(d) Population and Sustainable Development in the post-UNCED Period, Geneva, 24-26 November 1993;

(e) Population and Communication, Vienna, 2-3 December 1993.

14. Finally, the five Regional Population Conferences were convened by the regional commissions and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as follows:

(a) Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, Denpasar, Indonesia, 19-27 August 1992;

(b) Third African Population Conference, Dakar, 7-12 December 1992;

(c) European Population Conference, Geneva, 23-26 March 1993;

(d) Arab Population Conference, Amman, 4-8 April 1993; and

(e) Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, Mexico City, 29 April-4 May 1993.

15. Three of these regional conferences (i.e., Asia, Africa and the Arab region) adopted a declaration; one a consensus statement (Latin America and the Caribbean) and one a set of recommendations on population and development (Europe). A total of 348 recommendations and an overview of the regional common concerns and priorities prepared by the ICPD Secretariat will greatly enrich the deliberations of the Cairo Conference.

16. As follow-up to the regional conferences, the following subregional meetings have been held:

(a) For the Maghreb countries, a Meeting on Population and Development, Tunis, 7-10 July 1993;

(b) South Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Population and Sustainable Development, Port Vila, Vanuata, 6-10 September 1993; and

(c) South Asian Ministerial Conference on Women and Family Health, Katmandu, 21-23 November 1993.

17. To elicit the participation of NGOs at the ICPD, interagency coordination of activities has also been promoted. Approximately 400 accredited NGOs were represented at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for ICPD in May 1993. The third session of the Committee will take place at United Nations Headquarters from 4 to 22 April 1994, following the twentieth session of the Population Council. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in resolution 1993/76, has also decided to convene pre-Conference consultations in Cairo on 3 and 4 September 1994.

B. Regional activities

18. The Conference of Ministers was informed, during its nineteenth meeting, that development efforts at the regional level had been geared towards alleviating poverty since the post-independence decade. The first African Population Conference (APC.1, Accra, 1971) highlighted the close interrelationship between population trends and socio-economic development and underscored the need to improve national capability in data collection, analysis and utilization of findings therefrom in the formulation and implementation of national population programmes as integral parts of overall national development strategies.

19. It is to be recalled that APC.2 (Arusha, 1984) adopted the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action (KPA) on Population and Self-reliant Development.

20. The main aim of APC.3 (Dakar, 1992) was to review the efforts made and constraints experienced by member States in implementing the KPA recommendations and to make suggestions for the future. Besides adopting the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development, the Conference also:

(a) Examined the concept of sustainable development and discussed the prerequisites for achieving it;

(b) Examined the ability of African families to raise and educate their young in contexts of increasing poverty, deprivation and escalating political tensions;

(c) Reviewed some of the emerging population problems since adopting the KPA, including the deterioration in public health, continuing high fertility, questions arising from the structure of the population, environmental damage, AIDS and poverty; and

(d) Reviewed the formulation and implementation of population policies in selected African countries.

21. The Dakar/Ngor Declaration, which will constitute the African Common Position to be presented at the Cairo Conference, comprises a preamble, principles and objectives and three main sections.

22. The first section contains 42 recommendations, 36 of which are addressed to African Governments in the areas of population, socio-economic growth and sustainable development; family; fertility and family planning; mortality, morbidity and AIDs; urbanization, migration and physical planning; refugees and displaced

persons; women in development; children; youth; data collection, analysis, information dissemination, training and research; information, education and communication; private and non-governmental organizations. The remaining recommendations are addressed to subregional/regional groupings, ECA and UNFPA and the international community.

23. The thrust of this section is that no population policy can be implemented without a peaceful and stable political and social environment. It also calls on African Governments to integrate these policies and population programmes in their development strategies and to strengthen the social sectors. Environmental issues and food security are given special attention. Quantitative population targets are set, like reducing the annual growth rate from today's 3 per cent to 2.5 per cent by the year 2000 and to 2 per cent by the year 2010. Life expectancy at birth should increase to at least 55 years for the region, infant mortality should decrease to less than 50 per 1000, child mortality to less than 70 and contraceptive prevalence should increase from its present insignificant level to 20 per cent by the year 2000 and 40 per cent by the year 2010. Maternal mortality should be reduced by 50 per cent.

24. The second and third sections (with six recommendations) focus on resource mobilization and follow-up mechanism for implementing the various recommendations. ECA, UNFPA, the World Bank, OAU and ADB, among others, are called upon to implement the recommendations and to promote joint activities within their respective mandates. It confirms the ECA mandate to monitor and evaluate its implementation. In particular, the international community is invited to increase its support to Africa.

25. The Declaration also invited the ECA Executive Secretary to establish a Follow-up Committee of member States in cooperation with OAU, ADB and UNFPA to be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations and assist member States during the preparatory process of ICPD.

26. The secretariat presented a report on the third African Population Conference (including the Dakar/Ngor Declaration) to the nineteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for economic development and planning which took note of the report, together with the Declaration; endorsed the composition and terms of reference of the Follow-up Committee; and decided that an open-ended committee of member States with the APC.3 Bureau as core members (Senegal, Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Namibia) should be constituted.

27. The functions of the Follow-up Committee include the following:

(a) Providing assistance to African countries in the preparatory process and follow-up activities of the ICPD, consistent with the directives of the Preparatory Committee of the ICPD;

(b) Defining actions and programmes of highest priority to be undertaken by African countries, United Nations agencies, donors, IGOs and NGOs for the implementation of the Declaration and the KPA;

(c) Reviewing progress in the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and preparing relevant reports, including:

(i) annual reports on the activities of the Follow-up Committee;

(ii) analytical reports assessing factors and issues contributing to, or affecting the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration (every two years); and

- (iii) comprehensive evaluation reports (every five years) on the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration;
- (d) Defining strategies for resources mobilization for the implementation of the KPA and the Dakar/Ngor Declaration;
- (e) Establishing the Working Group assisting the Follow-up Committee.

28. ECA has developed a five-year programme of activities for the implementation of the APC.3 recommendations, including the monitoring/evaluation process, the convening of the inaugural meeting of the Follow-up Committee and the mobilization of available experts and the institutions that will work to backstop the efforts of the member States.

29. In order to streamline the agenda of the Meeting of Experts at APC.3, a Round-table was organized by the Union for African Population Studies (UAPS) on the structure and dynamics of family formation in Africa. The debates covered all relevant issues affecting the changing African family in a changing environment including the importance to girl's education; improving rights of widows and children; programmes to reduce teenage pregnancies; establishment of social security systems; problems of AIDS; and the need to change norms and values which support a large family size.

C. National and other activities

30. With a view to encouraging maximum national participation in the preparatory process for the Conference, the Secretary-General of ICPD invited all countries to establish national committees on population to serve as focal points for national preparatory activities. As of 30 November 1993, more than 100 countries had informed the ICPD secretariat of the establishment of such committees.

31. The principal activities of the national committees include the preparation of the national report on population and public awareness initiatives, both for the Conference and for population issues in general. The secretariat of ICPD sent the guidelines for the preparation of the national reports to governments through their Permanent Missions to the United Nations in July 1992 with a 30 September 1993 deadline for submission of reports.

II. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

32. The Conference is called upon to request:

- (a) UNFPA and other donors to make resources available for the implementation of the five-year programme developed by ECA for the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration; and
- (b) Member States to designate, if not already done, their focal points for the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration at the national level.