

7. Requests the Secretary-General to inform the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its twelfth session of the measures taken by the Member States to achieve the objectives of the present resolution.

13th plenary meeting  
24 May 1990

## 1990/20. Prison education

### *The Economic and Social Council,*

*Affirming* the right of everyone to education, as enshrined in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>31</sup> and in articles 13 to 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>32</sup>

*Recalling* rule 77 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners,<sup>33</sup> which states, *inter alia*, that provision shall be made for the further education of all prisoners capable of profiting thereby, that the education of illiterates and young prisoners shall be compulsory and that the education of prisoners shall be integrated with the educational system of the country so far as practicable,

*Recalling also* rule 22.1 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules),<sup>34</sup> which states that professional education, in-service training, refresher courses and other appropriate modes of instruction shall be utilized to establish and maintain the necessary professional competence of all personnel dealing with juvenile cases, and rule 26, which stresses the role of education and vocational training for all juveniles in custody,

*Bearing in mind* the long-standing concern of the United Nations about the humanization of criminal justice and the protection of human rights and about the importance of education in the development of the individual and the community,

*Bearing in mind also* that human dignity is an inherent, inviolable quality of every human being and a precondition for education aiming at the development of the whole person,

*Bearing in mind further* that 1990, the year in which the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders is to be held, is also International Literacy Year,<sup>35</sup> the objectives of which are directly relevant to the individual needs of prisoners,

*Noting with appreciation* the significant efforts made by the United Nations, in preparing for the Eighth Congress, to give more recognition to prison education,<sup>36</sup>

1. *Recommends* that Member States, appropriate institutions, educational counselling services and other

organizations should promote prison education, *inter alia*, by:

(a) Providing penal institutions with educators and accompanying services and raising the educational level of prison personnel;

(b) Developing professional selection procedures and staff training and supplying the necessary resources and equipment;

(c) Encouraging the provision and expansion of educational programmes for offenders in and outside prisons;

(d) Developing education suitable to the needs and abilities of prisoners and in conformity with the demands of society;

2. *Also recommends* that Member States should:

(a) Provide various types of education that would contribute significantly to crime prevention, resocialization of prisoners and reduction of recidivism, such as literacy education, vocational training, continuing education for updating knowledge, higher education and other programmes that promote the human development of prisoners;

(b) Consider the increased use of alternatives to imprisonment and measures for the social resettlement of prisoners with a view to facilitating their education and reintegration into society;

3. *Further recommends* that Member States, in developing educational policies, should take into account the following principles:

(a) Education in prison should aim at developing the whole person, bearing in mind the prisoner's social, economic and cultural background;

(b) All prisoners should have access to education, including literacy programmes, basic education, vocational training, creative, religious and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education, higher education and library facilities;

(c) Every effort should be made to encourage prisoners to participate actively in all aspects of education;

(d) All those involved in prison administration and management should facilitate and support education as much as possible;

(e) Education should be an essential element in the prison régime; disincentives to prisoners who participate in approved formal educational programmes should be avoided;

(f) Vocational education should aim at the greater development of the individual and be sensitive to trends in the labour market;

(g) Creative and cultural activities should be given a significant role since they have a special potential for enabling prisoners to develop and express themselves;

(h) Wherever possible, prisoners should be allowed to participate in education outside the prison;

(i) Where education has to take place within the prison, the outside community should be involved as fully as possible;

(j) The necessary funds, equipment and teaching staff should be made available to enable prisoners to receive appropriate education;

<sup>31</sup> General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

<sup>32</sup> See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>33</sup> See *Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.88.XIV.1), sect. G.

<sup>34</sup> General Assembly resolution 40/33, annex.

<sup>35</sup> See General Assembly resolution 42/104.

<sup>36</sup> See A/CONF.144/IPM.4 and 5 and Corr.1 and A/CONF.144/RPM.1 and Corr.1, 3 and Corr.1 and 2, 4 and Corr.1 and 5 and Corr.1.

4. *Urges* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its International Bureau of Education, in co-operation with the regional commissions, the regional and interregional institutes for crime prevention and criminal justice, other specialized agencies and other entities within the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations concerned and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, to become actively involved in this process;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary funds:

(a) To develop a set of guidelines and a manual on prison education that would provide the basis necessary for the further development of prison education and would facilitate the exchange of expertise and experience on this aspect of penitentiary practice among Member States;

(b) To convene an international expert meeting on prison education, with a view to formulating action-oriented strategies in this area, with the co-operation of the regional and interregional institutes for crime prevention and criminal justice, the specialized agencies, other intergovernmental organizations concerned and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council;

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to inform the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, at its twelfth session, of the results of his endeavours in this area;

7. *Invites* the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, at its twelfth session, to consider the question of prison education.

*13th plenary meeting  
24 May 1990*

#### **1990/21. Implementation of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice**

##### *The Economic and Social Council,*

*Bearing in mind* the Milan Plan of Action<sup>29</sup> and the Guiding Principles for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Context of Development and a New International Economic Order,<sup>30</sup> adopted by the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders,

*Bearing in mind also* the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power,<sup>37</sup> the Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty,<sup>38</sup> the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials,<sup>39</sup> the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary,<sup>40</sup> the

<sup>37</sup> General Assembly resolution 40/34, annex.

<sup>38</sup> Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/50, annex.

<sup>39</sup> General Assembly resolution 34/169, annex.

<sup>40</sup> *Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August–6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.I), chap. I, sect. D.2.

Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners,<sup>33</sup> the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules),<sup>34</sup> the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions,<sup>41</sup> and the Model Agreement on the Transfer of Foreign Prisoners,<sup>42</sup>

*Bearing in mind further* the Procedures for the effective implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners,<sup>43</sup> the Procedures for the effective implementation of the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary<sup>44</sup> and the Guidelines for the effective implementation of the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials,<sup>45</sup>

*Noting* the difficulties that countries have found in supplying complete and accurate replies to the questionnaires designed to measure the extent of compliance with those standards and procedures,

*Acknowledging* the important role the United Nations has played, and continues to play, in the development of those standards and procedures through its quinquennial congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders and the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control,

*Recognizing* the valuable contribution of the United Nations to those endeavours through its human rights activities, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>31</sup> the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>32</sup> the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto,<sup>32</sup> and the Second Optional Protocol thereto, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty,<sup>46</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child,<sup>47</sup> the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment<sup>48</sup> and other relevant instruments,

*Recalling* General Assembly resolutions 40/146 of 13 December 1985, 41/149 of 4 December 1986, 42/143 of 7 December 1987 and 44/162 of 15 December 1989 on human rights in the administration of justice,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/53 of 28 May 1987 and 1989/68 of 24 May 1989 on the review of the functioning and programme of work of the United Nations in crime prevention and criminal justice,

*Recalling further* Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/63 of 24 May 1989 on the implementation of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice,

*Welcoming* the steps taken by the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and by the

<sup>41</sup> Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/65, annex.

<sup>42</sup> *Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August–6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.I), chap. I, sect. D.1, annex I.

<sup>43</sup> Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/47, annex.

<sup>44</sup> Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/60, annex.

<sup>45</sup> Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/61, annex.

<sup>46</sup> General Assembly resolution 44/128, annex.

<sup>47</sup> General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex.

<sup>48</sup> General Assembly resolution 43/173, annex.