THE WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE
Bucharest, August 19—30, 1974

The World Population Conference, a prestigious international meeting held in our country, represents the climax of the manifestations organized within the World Population Year. For nearly two weeks, representatives of governments from almost all the countries of the world discussed in a spirit of collaboration one of the most topical issues of the contemporary world— the rapid growth of the population and the present and future implications of this growth. In contradistinction to the world population congresses of 1954 (in Rome) and of 1965 (in Belgrade), where the population was the object of discussion of scientists, at the Bucharest World Population Conference, the problems of the population were discussed at a government level, the main place being held by the seeking and formulation of the immediate and long-range ways and means of action.

The conference debates took place in plenary meetings and commissions. The problems discussed in the plenary meetings approached the theme "Recent Demographic Evolution and Future Prospects" and the following problems were discussed in commissions: "Population and Economic and Social Development" (Commission I); "Population, Resources and Environment" (Commission II); "Population and the Family" (Commission III). A special working group has elaborated the World Population Plan of Action.

The results of the debates were finalized in the reports of the three commissions, in the report of the working group and in the general report of the conference. The Conference adopted the resolutions proposed in the three commissions (eight in Commission I, three in Commission II and six in Commission III), as well as, the recommendations formulated (one in Commission I and three in Commission II). The Conference has also adopted the World Population Plan of Action drawn up by the working group.

Considered as the main document of the Conference, the World Population Plan of Action comprises, in essence, a series of recommendations meant to provide the population policies with a most scientific substantiation and implicitely with an increased efficiency. The world population plan of action

clearly formulates the principle of national sovereignty in establishing the objectives of the population policy and the means for its implementation. As regards the relationship between population and development, the World Plan of Action underlines that the population policy represents a component element of the policy of economic and social development.

Obviously, nobody expected the Bucharest meeting to lead to the solving of the complex population problems. However, from the numerous regional meetings which preceded the Conference, a new outlook was looming out in approaching the population problems and in placing them within the natural framework of development. From this point of view, the Bucharest Conference represents a reference moment, the debates having clearly outlined the fact that the essential solving of the population problems could not be achieved without the elimination of the present discrepancies between the developed and the underdeveloped countries, without the liquidation of the phenomon of underdevelopment and the creation of conditions for the economic progress of the developing countries. The Malthusianist and neo-Malthusianist theories have suffered a categorical failure in Bucharest, the realism and scientific tackling of the problems clearly imposing themselves as regards the causes of the serious problems which at present face the population on greater part of our planet and as regards the real solution to these problems. The resolutions and recommendations of the Conference as well as the World Population Plan of Action adopted in Bucharest are significant in this respect. More than ever, it can be affirmed now that any tackling of the population problems, of the ways and means for solving them must take into consideration the great desiderata of the contemporary world aiming at the creation of a juster world, the establishment of new relations among states, the liquidation of underdevelopment, the bridging of economic gaps, the elimination of the policy of dictate and force or threat by force. It can thus be affirmed that the Bucharest conference has, through the problem approached and the spirit in which it took place, marked an important moment in the efforts made by the world community for solving the outstanding issues of the contemporary world.

The World Population Conference also evinced the ever more important role played by the developing countries in choosing the ways and means for putting into practice efficient population policies, placed in the context of the general strategies of development. The representatives of the developing countries have imposed their points of view in all problems discussed.

The fact that our country has played host to such an important meeting attests to Romania's constant attachment to the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter. At the same time, the Bucharest Conference represents our country's wish actively to contribute to promoting international cooperation in the settlement of the complex problems facing mankind today. It is to be expected that the governments of the countries put into practice the conclusions of the Bucharest Conference. As a matter of fact, the solving of the complex population problems requires continued efforts also in the future for creating a world of equity and social justice, of peaceful co operation. The Bucharest Conference represents just the important land-

mark in this direction and we have every reason to believe that — as the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceauşescu said at the opening session — "this conference will exert a powerful influence on international life and will represent a strong stimulus in uniting the efforts of the nations for the achievement of new policy of peace and international collaboration, of a juster and better world, in which the peoples should fruitfully cooperate for their welfare and happiness, for the progress and civilization of mankind in general".

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