

Earth Negotiations Bulletin

A Reporting Service for Environment and Development Negotiations

Vol. 10 No. 25 Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Monday, 16 January 1995

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WSSD

The World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) will take place from 6-12 March 1995, in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Summit, called for by UN General Assembly Resolution 47/92 in December 1992, will bring together Heads of State or Government from around the world to agree on a Programme of Action to alleviate and reduce poverty, expand productive employment and enhance social integration.

ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

The Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the WSSD held its organizational session in New York from 12-16 April 1993. Amb. Juan Somavía (Chile) was elected Chair and representatives from the following nine countries were elected to the Bureau as Vice-Chairs: Australia, Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Latvia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland and Zimbabwe. Denmark, the host country, serves as an *ex officio* member of the Bureau and as a Vice-Chair. The PrepCom also adopted decisions on the working methods of the Bureau, the participation of NGOs, national preparations for the WSSD, mobilization of resources for the Trust Fund, a public information programme, the tasks of the PrepCom, expert group meetings, and the dates for the Summit and the PrepCom sessions.

PREPCOM I

The first session of the PrepCom met in New York from 31 January - 11 February 1994. The objective of PrepCom I was to define the expected output and provide elements for inclusion in the documents to be adopted at the Summit. The first week of the session was devoted to opening statements from governments, NGOs, UN agencies and other intergovernmental organizations. During the second week, delegates drafted a series of decisions to help guide the Secretariat and the PrepCom in the preparation of the expected outcomes of the Summit.

By the conclusion of PrepCom I, delegates had agreed on the existence, format and basic structure of a draft Declaration and draft Programme of Action, as well as the possible elements to be included in these documents. Delegates agreed that the draft Declaration should contain three parts: a description of the world social situation; principles, goals, policy orientations and common challenges to be addressed by all actors at the local, national, regional and international levels; and an expression of commitment on issues relating to implementation and follow-up. The Declaration should be concise and focused, and reaffirm international agreements, instruments, declarations and decisions

adopted by the UN system that are relevant to the Summit. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a draft negotiating text on the basis of the contents of the 11 objectives and three core issues stated in paragraphs 5 and 6 of General Assembly Resolution 47/92.

PREPCOM II

The second session of the PrepCom met from 22 August - 2 September 1994, at UN Headquarters in New York. During the course of the two-week session, delegates focused primarily on the texts of the draft Declaration and Programme of Action to be adopted in Copenhagen. The Secretariat's initial draft met with much criticism for both its structure and content. Delegates spent most of the first week reviewing the Secretariat's text. Their drafting suggestions on the Programme of Action were then incorporated into a new compilation text, which was distributed at the end of the first week. Although the Secretariat, the Bureau and the delegates had hoped that the PrepCom would be able to produce a draft negotiating text by the conclusion of the session, this was not to be the case. Instead, the result was an unmanageable 200-250 page document containing the compilation text and all the amendments proposed by delegates during the second week. As a result, the Bureau was requested to convene intersessional informal consultations in October to facilitate the preparation of a new draft text to serve as the basis for negotiations at the third and final PrepCom.

INTERSESSIONAL INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

Intersessional informal consultations were held in New York from 24-28 October 1994. The purpose of this intersessional session was to give delegates the opportunity to identify areas of convergence and divergence in both the draft Programme of Action and the draft Declaration. The specific goal was to provide enough guidance both to the Secretariat and PrepCom Chair Amb. Juan Somavía to produce an integrated negotiating text. During the course of the week-long consultations, frustration seemed to pervade the informal Committee of the Whole, which dealt more with the structure than the substance of the Programme of Action. Meanwhile, the real substantive work was carried out in Amb. Somavía's consultations on the Declaration. It was apparent from the start of this session that the Declaration must serve as the philosophical basis for the Programme of Action, and that matters of substance in the Programme of Action could not be tackled until some degree of resolution was reached with the Declaration.

There was agreement that the Declaration must be infused with a strong "presidential tone," with strong commitments on the empowerment of women, the special needs of Africa and the least

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developed countries (which many regard as the true test of the Summit's success) and the need for socially responsible structural adjustment programmes. The key issue on poverty is how to make the related commitments clear, credible and realistic. In the area of employment, it was felt that there is a lack of appreciation for the implications of the economic globalization process. The most difficult issues were the creation of an enabling international economic environment and implementation and follow-up. While there is general agreement that the substantive decisions must be accompanied with commitments to make the necessary resources available, much disagreement remained on the possible sources and modalities. Likewise, few concrete proposals were generated on the issues of implementation and follow-up and the possible improvement of existing institutions.

The structure of the draft Programme of Action underwent a considerable metamorphosis as a result of a proposal by the G-77 on the first day. Delegates welcomed the G-77's proposed reorganization and agreed to request the Secretariat to reorganize the Programme of Action in line with the G-77's proposal. Once agreement was reached on the structure, delegates started to discuss the substance of the Programme of Action. However, since these intersessional informal consultations were not intended to be negotiating sessions, few delegates were prepared with concrete or substantive proposals. Nevertheless, delegates concluded the session with optimism for the success of the Summit.

DOCUMENTATION FOR PREPCOM III

A/CONF.166/PC/24: Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters. This document contains the provisional agenda for the PrepCom, which includes the following items: 1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters; 2. Accreditation of non-governmental organizations; 3. Status of the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development (Trust fund and public information programme); 4. Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development: draft declaration and draft programme of action; 5. Provisional agenda and organization of the WSSD; and 6. Adoption of the report of the Preparatory Committee.

A/CONF.166/PC/25: The status of the preparations for the WSSD. This note by the Secretariat includes the status of the Trust Fund and the public information programme.

A/CONF.166/PC/26: Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Symposium on Social Development.

A/CONF.166/PC/27: Seminar on the ethical and spiritual dimension of social progress. This meeting was held in Bled, Slovenia, 28-30 October 1994. The topics discussed included: an international code of ethics and the need for the Social Summit to be centered on the values of compassion and solidarity with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

A/CONF.166/PC/11/Add.2: Note by the Secretariat on accreditation of non-governmental organizations.

A/CONF.166/PC/L.22: Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development: draft declaration and draft programme of action. This document was prepared by the Secretariat following the intersessional informal consultations.

The draft declaration contains the following sections: the Introduction; Current Social Situation and Reasons for Convening the Summit; Principles and Goals; and Commitments.

The nine commitments are: (1) creating an enabling economic, political and legal environment conducive to social development, at all levels; (2) eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive

national actions and international cooperation; (3) enabling all people to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work, and to maintain the goal of full employment; (4) promoting social integration and participation of all people by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just; (5) achieving full equity and equality between women and men and recognizing and enhancing the participation of women in social progress and development; (6) promoting the economic, social and human resource development of Africa and the least developed countries; (7) ensuring that structural adjustment programmes include the social development goals of eradicating poverty, generating productive employment and enhancing social integration; (8) increasing and utilizing more efficiently the resources assigned to social development to achieve the goals of the Summit through national action and international cooperation; and (9) strengthening the framework for cooperation for social development through the UN and other multilateral institutions.

The draft programme of action contains five chapters. Chapter I, "An enabling environment for social development," contains the following sections: A. A favorable national and international economic environment; and B. An enabling political and legal environment. Chapter II, "Eradication of Poverty," contains the following sections: A. The formulation of integrated strategies; B. Improved access to productive resources and infrastructure; C. Meeting the basic needs of all; and D. Enhanced social protection and reduced vulnerability. Chapter III, "Productive employment and the reduction of unemployment," contains the following sections: A. The centrality of employment-intensive growth in policy formation; B. Education, training and labor policies; C. Enhanced quality of work and employment; D. Enhanced employment opportunities for groups with special needs; and E. A broader conception of work and employment. Chapter IV, "Social Integration," includes: A. Responsive government and full participation in society; B. Non-discrimination, tolerance and respect for diversity; C. Equality of opportunity and social justice; D. Responses to special social needs; E. Equitable treatment and integration of migrants, migrant workers, refugees and displaced persons; and F. Violence, crime and drug abuse.

Chapter V, "Implementation and follow-up," includes: A. National strategies; B. Involvement of civil society; C. Mobilization of financial resources; D. The role of the UN system; and E. Periodic assessment of social conditions and social progress in the world.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Plenary will meet briefly this morning to approve: the method of work for the first week; NGO accreditation; and other outstanding procedural matters.

PROGRAMME OF WORK: By mid-morning, the Plenary will be transformed into a Committee of the Whole (chaired by Amb. Somavía) to take up formal negotiations on the Declaration and Chapter V of the Programme of Action. At the same time, a separate working group (chaired by Amb. Richell) will meet to commence negotiations on the Programme of Action. These two working groups will meet simultaneously throughout the week in order to complete first readings of both texts by Thursday evening. A Plenary will be held on Wednesday to address the organization of work for the Social Summit and the possibility of establishing a contact group. Amb. Somavía is also expected to hold informal consultations on the programme of work for the second week.