

# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## WSSD PREPCOM III HIGHLIGHTS FRIDAY, 20 JANUARY 1995

Both working groups continued their first reading of the Declaration and the Programme of Action. According to the original programme of work, they were expected to complete the first reading of both texts before the end of the first week. Given the slow pace, it is unlikely that this goal will be reached until the beginning of the second week.

### WORKING GROUP I

**COMMITMENT 5:** (equity and equality between the sexes) The EU agreed to the chapeau but replaced "equity" with "equality." Pakistan said that Islamic countries could not accept unqualified equality between the sexes. The US referred to women's contribution to social progress. Canada referred to the eradication of gender discrimination. The G-77 and China proposed "dignity" after "full" and "of opportunity" after "equality." In a spirit of compromise, "opportunity" was dropped and "dignity" was included. In **5(a)** (promote change), the EU's inclusion of women with disabilities and the US's addition of "structures" were accepted. The Russian Federation said that equality between the sexes could not be achieved, however the Chair pointed out that biological differences were not being discussed. In **5(b)** (gender balance in decision-making), the G-77 and China referred to collective organization at grassroots levels and affirmative action. The EU added integration of a gender perspective. Norway proposed removing restrictions to women's rights to land-ownership and credit. The Holy See supported the rights of the girl-child. The US added access to education and property. Consensus was reached incorporating the various proposals. In **5(c)** (elimination of exploitation), the G-77 and China included the elimination of all kinds of violence and discrimination against women. The EU added a new (b)(bis) on the equitable partnership between the sexes in family life. In (c), the EU added references to sexual exploitation, trafficking and human rights and the US referred to domestic violence and rape. The G-77 and China preferred a collective reference to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Women. EU text on the general rights of women was accepted, pending further discussion by the G-77 and China, who, supported by the US, added a reference to the right to development. Norway proposed Cairo language for a new (c) bis on reproductive health care. The Holy See referred to international literacy. The G-77 and China agreed to review the EU proposal for **5(bb)** on equitable partnership in family life and society. In **5(d)** (ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination), the G-77 and

China deleted "removal of reservations" and added the target of the year 2000. The EU suggested Vienna language, "removal of reservations which run counter to the goals and purposes of the Convention," as a compromise. The G-77 and China insisted on their proposal, arguing that many developing countries have reserved for religious and cultural reasons. Delegates agreed to refer to the Cairo and Geneva instruments. Delegates also agreed to the G-77 and China proposal on measuring women's work in the unpaid and domestic sectors. The EU bracketed "measuring."

**COMMITMENT 6: (Africa)** The G-77 and China replaced "promoting" with "accelerating." Costa Rica referred to countries "consolidating peace and solidarity," and the G-77 and China noted that amendments made by its individual members would have to be dealt with "within the family." The EU accepted the G-77 and China's proposal. They also proposed a new 6(a) on national structural adjustment policies and development strategies for trade, human development and democratic institutions. The G-77 and China reserved on structural adjustment and Zimbabwe and Mauritania noted that Commitment 7 dealt with this. They could not accept restructuring without social safety nets and called for Commitment 6 to focus only on Africa. The Chair suggested that SAPs should not be included here, but that reference should be made to economic reform efforts undertaken in Africa and LDCs. The G-77 and China objected to the US qualifier "as appropriate" and to Japan's reference to south-south cooperation. In **6(b)** (external debt), Switzerland proposed language on finding a realistic and comprehensive solution to the external debt problem by taking urgent actions on a case-by-case basis. The G-77 and China objected to the references to "realistic" and "case-by-case." Canada, Japan, and the EU proposed texts were transmitted to the drafting group, despite Benin's concern that the group should not deal with such a political matter. **6(c)** (support for African reform efforts) was agreed, subject to Costa Rica's request for a reference to Central America. In **6(d)** (ODA), the US and the EU did not accept the language and proposed "increase the impact of ODA." The G-77 and China strongly objected to the proposal, noting that what they are asking for is a "living up to" of existing ODA commitments, especially for LDCs in Africa. Australia added "consistent with countries' circumstances and their capacities to assist." The Chair suggested that the Working Group consider Chapter V (Implementation and Follow-up) before considering Commitments 7, 8 and 9. However, some delegations preferred to deal with the financial matters in the Commitments. The Rio Group preferred to continue with the Commitments because it had a new proposal. The G-77 and China said that it had not received prior information on the procedural change. The US wanted to add two

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new paragraphs in Commitment 6, one dealing with ratification of the Desertification Convention and support for African countries in this matter, and the other on measures to deal with communicable diseases, particularly the HIV virus. Benin added malaria. Guyana requested that the second paragraph not be limited to Africa. The G-77 and China noted that references to diseases like AIDs, malaria and tuberculosis were relevant for the entire world.

**COMMITMENT 7:** (Structural Adjustment Programmes) The G-77 and China wanted to ensure that structural adjustment programmes eradicate poverty, generate full and productive employment and develop social integration, which the EU accepted. Switzerland suggested that SAPs be designed as an integral element of comprehensive national development strategies, which the G-77 and China reserved on. It was consequently withdrawn. The US preferred "promoting" instead of "ensuring."

## WORKING GROUP II

Amb. Richelle reported on the progress of the informal contact groups. Amb. Butler's drafting group reached Paragraph 22 of the Declaration and removed 95% of brackets. Working Group II's informal group removed 80-90% of the Chapter I brackets. The Holy See stressed the importance of transparency in this process. Richelle then cautioned that Chapter II's structure could be jeopardized by the number of proposed amendments.

### CHAPTER II, ACTIONS: A. THE FORMULATION OF INTEGRATED STRATEGIES

**PARAGRAPH 23:** (public efforts to [reduce/eradicate] poverty) New sub-paragraphs proposed by Canada (employment-intensive techniques) and Australia (defining poverty reduction objectives) were opposed by delegates felt that they belonged elsewhere in the text. **PARAGRAPH 24:** (integrate goals into planning) The G-77 and China proposed integration of poverty eradication goals at both regional and national levels, but the EU objected. In **24(a)** (analyze and adjust policies), the G-77 and China objected to the relevance of the Holy See's reference to impacts on family stability, so it was bracketed. The US and Australia supported a Canadian proposal to analyze gender policy implications, but the G-77 and China proposed that it be placed elsewhere. In **24(b)** (public investment policies), delegates accepted the Canadian proposal for policies compatible with long-term improvement of livelihood. In **24(c)** (low-income and rural communities), the Canadian proposal regarding land reform was temporarily withdrawn. The Australian-proposed **24(c)(bis)** (displaced populations) was also withdrawn in favor of later placement. In **24(d)** (environmental protection), delegates accepted the G-77 and China's reference to consensus agreements and conventions. In the US-proposed **24(d)(bis)** (mitigate effects of natural disasters), the EU deleted the reference to vulnerable groups. The G-77 and China changed "incidence" to "impact" and added cyclones to the disaster examples. The G-77 and China objected to the Canadian alternative to **24(e)** (mechanisms to coordinate efforts). The US withdrew its proposed **24(new f)** (integrate concerns into strategies).

**PARAGRAPH 25:** Paragraph **25(b)** (policies affecting people in poverty) was adopted ad referendum. In **25(b)(bis)** (strengthening education at all levels), "basic education opportunities" was proposed by Switzerland. Lesotho said basic education usually implies basic skills for survival. The US pointed out that this paragraph could be moved to **25(d)**. The G-77 and China stated that empowerment of the poor means access to basic education. In **25(c)** (participation in social policy-making), Canada, supported by the US and Australia, suggested "an emphasis on capacity building and community-based management and ensuring respect for the culture and rights of indigenous communities." The

EU, supported by the G-77 and China, said this placed too much emphasis on sectors. Paragraph 25 (new d) (educating people about their rights) was placed between brackets. **PARAGRAPH 26:** (evaluate poverty programs) In **26(a)** (developing poverty indicators), the EU, the US and the G-77 and China found "unemployment" to be preferable to "employment status." The Holy See proposed including "language groupings." The US, supported by Algeria, replaced "race" with "ethnicity." In **26(b)** (monitoring achievements), the US proposed listing the sectors in which goals and targets are to be monitored, but the EU disagreed. In **26(c)** (public awareness), delegates accepted the G-77 and China's reference to NGOs. The G-77 and China proposed deleting the reference to focusing on progress or failure in meeting goals, but the US stressed the importance of information on progress.

**PARAGRAPH 27:** (fostering an enabling environment for poverty reduction) In **27(d)** (societies disrupted by conflict), the Russian Federation, supported by Armenia, could not accept any formulation where countries with economies in transition were not given their own paragraph. Lithuania, the EU, the US, Romania, Ukraine, Australia, and Norway and the G-77 and China suggested a paragraph between (b) and (c): "Strengthening the capacities of countries with economies in transition to develop social protection systems and social policies for the reduction of poverty."

### PART B: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**PARAGRAPH 28:** (productive opportunities for low-income communities) In Canada's **28(a)(bis)** (sustainable infrastructure investments), "community and regional" was changed to "local and community." The G-77 and China's paragraphs **28(aa)(bis)** (diversification in countries dependent on primary commodities) and **28(c)(bis)** (commodity diversification) were bracketed pending combination by the G-77 and China. In **28(b)** (promoting rural production), delegates accepted a US reference to promoting micro and small-enterprises. In **28(d)** (strengthening organizations of small farmers), Peru's reformulation of the Holy See's amendment, supported by the US and the G-77 and China, reads: "including assistance in providing viable economic alternatives for groups, especially farmers, involved in the cultivation and processing of crops used for the illegal drug trade." In **28(new e)** (rural development), Sudan added promotion of "comprehensive" rural development. **PARAGRAPH 29:** (opportunities for small farmers) In the chapeau, the US requested the addition of "sustainable" agriculture, and the EU requested that if "sustainable development" is not included in the chapeau, it should be included in each sub-paragraph. In **29(c)** (protecting traditional rights to land), the US wanted to delete "traditional," while Benin pointed out that this position does not take into account the situation in Africa. The EU supported paragraph **29(new f)** (promoting institutional investment).

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**WORKING GROUP I:** The Working Group may begin consideration of Chapter V (Implementation and Follow-Up) today.

**WORKING GROUP II:** The Working Group will meet today for three sessions. It is likely that the group will begin consideration of Chapter III (Productive Employment and the Reduction of Unemployment).

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