



# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The World Summit for Social Development opens today at the Bella Center in Copenhagen, Denmark and will continue until 12 March 1995. The Summit will bring together over 100 heads of State and Government from around the world to agree on a political Declaration and Programme of Action to alleviate and reduce poverty, expand productive employment, and enhance social integration.

**Editor's Note:** *The Earth Negotiations Bulletin will provide daily summaries of the negotiations, with special coverage of the work of the Main Committee. As part of our first issue at the Summit, we have provided a brief history of the negotiations on the Draft Programme of Action and the Declaration.*

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WSSD

In December 1992, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 47/92, "Convening of a world summit for social development," and set the process in motion for organizing a meeting of heads of State or Government to tackle the critical problems of poverty, unemployment and social integration.

### ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

The WSSD PrepCom 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. 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. The Secretariat was asked to

prepare a draft negotiating text on the basis of the contents of the objectives and three core issues contained 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' comments and 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 this 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 negotiation text for PrepCom III.

### INTERSESSIONAL INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

The PrepCom met in New York for a week of intersessional informal consultations from 24-28 October 1994. This intersessional session gave 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.

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 on 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 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 was how to make the related commitments clear, credible and realistic. In the area of employment, it was felt that there was a lack of appreciation for the implications of the economic globalization process. The most difficult issues were creation of an enabling international economic environment and implementation and follow-up. While

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there was general agreement that the substantive commitments must be accompanied by commitments to make the necessary resources available, much disagreement remained as to the possible sources and modalities. Likewise, few concrete proposals were generated around the issue 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, thus, easily 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 a negotiating session, few delegates were prepared with concrete or substantive proposals. Nevertheless, delegates concluded the session with optimism for the success of the Summit.

### PREPCOM III

The third PrepCom met from 16-28 January 1995, at UN Headquarters in New York. During the two-week session, delegates negotiated the texts of the draft Declaration and Programme of Action to be adopted in Copenhagen. After grueling marathon sessions of the two working groups and numerous informal consultative groups, delegates succeeded in reaching agreement on approximately 95% of the document.

Despite difficult debates and periodic retreats from consensus language from the Earth Summit in Rio, the Human Rights Conference in Vienna and the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, PrepCom delegates managed to agree on several important issues underlying the Summit. For example, this is the first time that the international community has expressed a clear commitment to eradicate absolute poverty. In addition, no other UN documents have ever addressed the need for socially-responsible structural adjustment or for greater accountability to the UN system of the Bretton Woods institutions. In addition, despite hard brackets around language on the debt question and the 20:20 initiative, there has been considerable movement on these issues. Finally, where the Earth Summit legitimated the participation of NGOs in UN negotiating processes, the WSSD PrepCom highlighted the fact that the empowerment of civil society is a *sine qua non* for good, sound social development policy. Despite these important advances, PrepCom III deferred a number of issues to this final negotiation session. Issues to be resolved include:

#### DRAFT DECLARATION AND COMMITMENTS:

placement of the reference to countries with economies in transition; provision of a legal framework in accordance with national laws; provision of "adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources;" respect for ILO conventions, workers' rights and the right to work; protection of human rights with respect for State sovereignty; access to the "widest range" of health care services; and cancellation [or reduction] of bilateral debt. A tenth commitment on education was briefly discussed at PrepCom III, however the text will be negotiated for the first time here in Copenhagen.

#### DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTION

##### Chapter I. An Enabling Environment for Social

**Development:** reorientation of agricultural policies; debt elimination; increased ODA; reduction of inequities arising from excessive accumulation of wealth by speculative or windfall gains; collective bargaining rights; and removing obstacles to self-determination for occupied peoples. **Chapter II.**

**Eradication of Poverty:** the origins of poverty; the impact of economic sectors on families; the development of poverty and

vulnerability indicators that include family stability; the "traditional" rights to resources of pastoralists, fishery workers, and nomadic and indigenous people; health-care access for low-income communities; the development of national strategies for improving maternal/reproductive health care; and the provision of adequate social safety nets under structural adjustment programmes. **Chapter III. The Expansion of Productive Employment and the Reduction of Unemployment:** ratification and/or enforcement of ILO conventions; consideration of the needs of indigenous people in employment and training programmes; and efforts to incorporate unremunerated work in national accounting systems. **Chapter IV. Social Integration:** early integration of migrants into society; illicit arms trade; ratification and implementation of human rights treaties; and minimization of the impact of structural adjustment policies on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. **Chapter V. Implementation and Follow-Up:** references to new and additional resources and available funding sources; poverty eradication; the ODA target; the 20:20 initiative; references to countries with economies in transition; ILO consideration of the social dimensions of liberalized international trade; and strengthened UN capacity for gathering information and developing social development indicators.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**PLENARY:** The first meeting of the Plenary is scheduled to begin at 10:00 am today. United Nations Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali will open the session. After his opening remarks, delegates will then elect the President of the WSSD. The Prime Minister of Denmark, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, will give opening remarks and move directly to the adoption of the rules of procedure (A/CONF.166/2) and adoption of the agenda (A/CONF.166/1). The Plenary will then elect the 27 Vice-Presidents, the Rapporteur and the Chair of the Main Committee. The President is likely to establish the Main Committee and announce the organization of work for the week. The general exchange of views will commence with statements by the Philippines (on behalf of the G-77/China), France (on behalf of the EU), Chile, Malaysia, Jordan, Venezuela, Slovakia, Mali and the Ukraine. The afternoon session should include statements by UNDP, Norway, Kuwait, Iran, WHO, Italy, Republic of Korea, Barbados, Senegal, Syria, Seychelles, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Papua New Guinea and several NGOs.

**MAIN COMMITTEE:** The first session of the Main Committee will convene immediately after the opening Plenary. As announced by Amb. Somavia in the informal consultations that were held on Saturday 4 March, the Main Committee will continue negotiations of the outstanding issues in the draft Declaration and chapters I and V of the Programme of Action. An informal contact group will be established to take up chapters II, III, and IV. A separate working group will address the proposed commitment on education. These two groups will report back to the Main Committee by Wednesday night for formal adoption of their work. The Main Committee is expected to complete its work by Wednesday evening to allow for document translation in time for the arrival of the heads of State and Government. Look for a note by the Secretariat on organization and procedural matters, which will include a proposed timetable for the work of the Summit.

**VOICES OF YOUTH:** UNICEF is hosting an exhibit of the recommendations that youth around the world have submitted to world leaders through Voices of Youth, an interactive electronic system on the global Internet. *Voices* features more than 500 messages submitted from 30 countries on all continents. The on-line system is located in the NGO Forum, in the UN agencies section near the main entrance to the Global Village.