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## CSW HIGHLIGHTS 3 APRIL 1995

The CSW continued to work on the draft Platform for Action during the morning and evening, and decided during an afternoon session to extend the CSW for three days, until 7 April. The Plenary met during the morning to discuss draft resolutions and during the afternoon to discuss the extension. Negotiations on Sections H (Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women) and J (Insufficient mobilization of the mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society) in Chapter IV (Strategic Objectives and Actions) continued in closed informal-informal sessions during the morning. During the evening, the informal-informal groups were to continue consideration of Section H and begin consideration of Section K (Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment).

### PLENARY

The Plenary, chaired by Ms. Patricia Licuanan (Philippines), convened Monday morning to hear from NGO representatives and consider draft resolutions under Agenda Items 3 (Preparations for the FWCW) and 6 (Priority Themes). The rules of procedure were also scheduled for discussion.

The convenor of the NGO Forum, Ms. Supatra Masdit, noted that the venue for NGOs at the FWCW had been changed due to structural problems with the original venue. The alternative site offered is in a scenic area near the Beijing airport, 45 minutes from the conference center. NGOs have expressed concern about adequate access to the negotiations. In response, China stated that his country attached great importance to the plans for the FWCW and the NGO Forum, but noted that the conference required many resources for a developing country. Given the structural problems at the original site, the Chinese preparatory committee decided that the venue should be changed to one near the airport. Shuttle buses would be provided.

Ms. Bella Abzug, speaking for the women's caucus, said the FWCW should be a high point in the advancement of women. She regretted that the centrality of women's full participation had not been recognized during this final preparatory session, and noted the contrast with PrepComs for Vienna, Cairo and Copenhagen. She called on the CSW to end exclusion of NGOs. Women in the gallery rose, held up "gender" placards and applauded a reference

to bracketed language. Sudan objected to NGO criticisms of the CSW. He noted that "we must come to realize that we are trying to reach a common denominator."

Delegates then turned their attention to draft resolutions. The EU introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/1995/L.20, "Accreditation of NGOs to the FWCW," under Agenda Item 3 (Preparations for the FWCW). The EU thanked the Chair for setting up a working group on accreditation. The draft resolution requests the Secretariat to invite NGOs who had not received accreditation by March 15 to submit further details, and for the Secretariat to forward their recommendations with full explanations for any non-accreditation to ECOSOC. The EU noted that NGO participation at recent world summits has been important, and recalled that NGO accreditation at the WSSD had continued right up to the opening. The Chair said action would be considered at the Tuesday Plenary.

Ms. Licuanan handed over the Chair to Ms. Natalya Drozd (Belarus), to resume consideration of Agenda Item 6 (Priority Themes). Peru re-introduced draft resolution E/CN.6/1995/L.16/Rev.1, "Integration of displaced rural women into development processes," which was revised due to translation difficulties. Delegates adopted the text.

The Chair then introduced Agenda Item 3(d) (Draft Rules of Procedure). The US said he had consulted with many delegations and requested that consideration of the draft rules be delayed until all other substantive work has been completed. In view of the large number of amendments, he asked that consideration be taken up by ECOSOC. The EU agreed and offered to issue its amendments. Secretary-General Mongella said that postponement would reflect on the CSW's ability to complete its task, and added that there would be a problem of NGO access. Nigeria noted the useful input of the NGOs and suggested immediate consideration of the draft rules. Delegates were invited to submit amendments for circulation, and the Chair agreed to postpone discussion until the Tuesday Plenary.

Chair Licuanan opened the afternoon Plenary and announced that the Bureau proposed extending the conference two days, until Thursday 6 April, so that negotiations could continue in informal-informal groups for the remainder of Monday and all day Tuesday. Wednesday and Thursday would be spent processing the results of the text to be sent to Beijing. Three informal working groups would be used.

A lengthy debate ensued. Argentina asked for a reconsideration of the plan, but the Chair noted that all texts should be negotiated at least once before Beijing. Ecuador noted that nations whose

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delegates must return to their capitals on Wednesday would be at a disadvantage. Honduras noted the disadvantage posed for poorer countries. The Chair recognized their concerns, but noted that the alternatives were worse. Other options considered by the Bureau were to reconvene the group for an intersessional, one-week period or to go to Beijing with undiscussed text. Kuwait suggested extending the Beijing Conference by two days. Algeria suggested that ECOSOC could devote two days to the text.

The US stressed the need to do a good negotiating job and to complete consideration of all texts. The Philippines also stressed the need to finish in NY what was started in NY. Secretary-General Mongella urged delegates to agree to continue with the work. She noted the UN's support for the work on the draft Platform, and stated that the Secretary-General had offered support for three extra days. The EU asked for a suspension of the meeting, for time to consult.

After the 50 minute break, the EU stated that negotiations must take place under the best conditions possible. He noted that delegations need time to consult before discussing the sections on health and human rights, and requested that consideration of health be delayed another day. He proposed that the negotiation deadline be Wednesday night, not Tuesday, and that work continue until Friday. He also requested information about the work schedule from now until Friday, and stressed that the decision to extend the conference should be taken as soon as possible so that ECOSOC could officially extend the conference.

The G-77/China agreed with the EU proposal to extend negotiations to Wednesday and the conference to Friday. Mexico supported the EU proposal but stressed that negotiations must finish by Wednesday night. Australia noted that the conference had covered 10 areas of work in two weeks, but had only two days to finish five areas of work. Egypt requested that there be only two working groups so that smaller delegations could participate in all negotiations.

The Chair insisted that three groups were needed to finish by Wednesday night. The Plenary formally adopted the extension. The G-77/China noted that submissions on the girl child were due by 11:00 am on Tuesday, and that negotiations on that section would start Tuesday afternoon. The Chair suggested that the rules of procedure could be negotiated by one of the informal groups. Canada noted that the deadline for written submissions on the Declaration were also due Tuesday morning. The group discussing health was to discuss procedural matters Monday evening and begin substantive negotiations Tuesday morning. Informal Group I, chaired by Ms. Freudenschuss (Austria) in Room 9, will consider Sections K (environment) and I (human rights) of Chapter IV. Informal Group II, chaired by Ms. Licuanan (Philippines) in Room 7, will consider Chapter IV, Section H (mechanisms) and the proposed section on the girl child. Informal Group III, chaired by Ms. O'Neil (New Zealand) in Room 5, will consider Chapter IV, Section C (health) and the Declaration.

### **INFORMAL-INFORMALS**

During the morning, two informal-informal groups met to discuss Sections H (Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women) and J (Insufficient mobilization of the mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society) of Chapter IV (Strategic Objectives and Actions).

In Section H, paragraph 140 (national machineries), delegates added references to implementation and mobilization of support. In paragraph 140 (bis) (regional and international levels), a reference to cultural development was added. Paragraph 141(bis) (regional

bodies) was bracketed. The first three sentences of paragraph 141(ter) (definition of national machinery) were reformulated, deleting references to: decentralized services; national administration; influencing and monitoring policy-making; the executive; and the responsibility of other actors. A reference to the advancement of women was added. In the first bullet of 141(ter), references to government "structure" and "falling under the responsibility of a Cabinet Minister" were bracketed. A new bullet referring to decentralized planning, implementation and monitoring from the grassroots up, with links to NGOs and community organizations, was introduced.

In Section J, delegates considered two additional strategic objectives regarding equal access of women to new technologies of communication and global networks and women's rights to communication. Delegates agreed that elements from the additional text could be incorporated into earlier paragraphs, and a contact group was assigned the drafting task.

### **PERSISTENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AND VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHTS OF THE GIRL CHILD**

The G-77/China proposed adding a section to Chapter IV (Strategic Objectives and Actions) on the girl child and distributed a copy of their initial position. Other delegates' amendments are due to the Secretariat Tuesday morning, and discussion of the compiled version is scheduled to begin once the discussion of Chapter IV, Section H (mechanisms) is completed. The following is a brief description of the G-77/China draft.

The introduction to the section notes the challenges that the girl child faces, including lack of access to primary schooling, nutrition and health care services, and notes that all barriers must be eliminated. The nine strategic objectives call on actors to: eliminate discrimination against the girl child; ensure elimination of negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls; increase public awareness on the value of the girl child; eliminate discrimination against girls in the areas of education, skill development and training; eliminate discrimination in the areas of health and nutrition; discourage child labor and protect young girls on the job; eradicate violence against the girl child; sensitize the girl child about social, economic and political issues and problems; and strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl child.

Governments are to: implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; support NGOs' efforts to promote changes in negative attitudes and practices towards girls; promote human rights education in all educational programmes; and adhere to international instruments regarding child labor. Governments, international and non-governmental organizations are called on to: conduct research on the situation of girls; establish special programmes to discourage harmful attitudes and practices; generate awareness by decision-makers of the disadvantaged situation of girls; promote full participation of girls in extracurricular activities; establish peer education and outreach programmes; take action to protect girls from all forms of violence; enable girls to articulate their views; and provide an environment conducive to the strengthening of the family.

### **THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY**

**INFORMAL-INFORMALS:** All work is expected to take place in informal-informal groups today. The Sections on health, the environment, and mechanisms are expected to be taken up at the beginning of the day.